The Professions of Soldiers:
A Critical Examination of the Assignment of Military Tasks

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Abstract
Since the end of the second world war, the United States has employed increasing numbers of civilians to accomplish military tasks, while soldiers are being diverted to complete tasks one might expect to be done by civilians. Why are civilians taking tasks from the military, the military taking tasks from civilians, and why do they sometimes share the task? The literature on private security companies examines the role of civilians in military operations, while the literature on military professionalism examines the role of soldiers in military operations. In this work, I bridge the gap between these two literatures by considering civilian and military professions on equal terms: I argue that military and civilian professions compete for responsibility over tasks, and gain that responsibility by demonstrating a competitive advantage in accomplishing the task. To answer these questions, I use process tracing in the case of countering insurgents in Vietnam, 1960-1968.

Introduction

What does it mean to be a soldier? Historically, soldiers controlled the legitimate use of force on behalf of the state. Yet since the end of the Second World War in the United States, an increased number of public sector employees and private contractors have been engaged in tasks that were previously the sole purview of the soldier. During the height of the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq, civilian contractors were being employed in large numbers. In fact, "more than one-half of the personnel the United States has deployed in Iraq and Afghanistan since 2003 have been contractors."[1]

While contracters were being employed to train local police and army, guard government facilities, and protect ex-pats,[2] soldiers were working as peacekeepers, building schools, digging wells, arbitrating local disputes, and completing other reconstruction projects.[3] Such unexpected task assignment is also present in the public sector, specifically in the Department of Defense. According to a Department of Defense Report on Cyber Operations Personnel, "Defensive Operations" is made up of predominately civilian employees, who constitute 78% of the total workforce. In contrast, military personnel dominate the "Operations and Maintenance" workforce, making up 81% of that total workforce.[4]

These surprising patterns in task assignments are not new. In fact, over the past fifty years, the United States has consistently employed more civilians and fewer soldiers, despite the relative costs. Since 1967, active duty military has dropped from 59% to 46% of the overall

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[1] Avant and DeNevers, 2013, "Military Contractors and the American Way of War." *The Modern American Military*. David M. Kennedy, ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press, p. 135.

[2] Avant, Deborah. 2005. "Private security companies." *New Political Economy* 10:1, pp. 121-131.

[3] Dao, James. 2002. "Threats and responses: Reconstruction: U.S. shifts emphasis in Afghanistan to security and road building." *The New York Times*; Waldman, Amy. 2002. "A nation challenged: Kandahar: U.S. soldiers wearing many hats as Afghans look to them for help." *The New York Times*; Wong, Edward. 2004. "The struggle for Iraq: The soldiers; divided mission in Iraq tempers views of G.I.'s." *The New York Times*.

[4] Department of Defense. 2011. *Department of Defense Cyber Operations Personnel Report.* Washington D.C.: Department of Defense.

manpower employed by the Department of Defense. Meanwhile, civilians and contractors increased from 36% to 47%. But this change in the manpower mix cannot be explained by relative costs. The Department of Defense had consistently spent a higher percentage of their budget on civilians and contractors than on active duty military.[5]

In this paper, I explore the question of who has responsibility for the legitimate use of force on behalf of the state: who is a soldier in the modern world. Specifically, I ask why civilians gain responsibility for some conflict-related tasks, the military for others, and for still others there is a mixed outcome. I argue that the military and civilian personnel are professionals competing for responsibility over tasks, and gain that responsibility by demonstrating that they can provide a superior value to the U.S. government in accomplishing that task. In this paper, I use the case of countering insurgents in Vietnam during the years 1960-1968 as an illustrative case study to examine the decision making process that drives task assignment.

In the 1960s, the United States committed itself to preventing a communist takeover in the country of Vietnam. The communists operating in South Vietnam, known as the Viet Cong, consisted of an insurgent group that was terrorizing government officials and recruiting and taxing the rural population in hopes of establishing a communist government over a reunified Vietnam.[6] Today, there is widespread agreement that the proper strategy to counter an insurgent threat requires participation by both military and civilian agencies.[7] Yet, during the period of

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[5] The cost percentages for active duty military include DHP, Retired Pay, and Family Housing costs.

[6] Herring, George C. (1979) *America's Longest War: The United States and Vietnam, 1950-1975*. New York: John Wiley & Sons.

[7] For example, according to Andrew Krepinevich, "the elements of a successful strategy for the counterinsurgent involve securing the government's base areas, separating the guerilla forces from the population, and eliminating the insurgent infrastructure. In an area infested by insurgency, the army must concentrate enough force to either destroy or expel the main body of guerillas in clear-and-hold operations to prepare the area for pacification, that is, for those actions taken by the government to assert its control over the population and to win its willing support…To be successful, counterinsurgency requires coordination among many government organizations, of which the military is only one, albeit the largest. Because of the political and social nature of the conflict and the myriad nonmilitary institutions involved, a unified approach that orchestrates the multidimensional elements of the

U.S. involvement in Vietnam, the U.S. Army was given overwhelming support, resources, and authority. Why did the civilian agencies, who arguably make up the majority a modern conception of good counterinsurgency strategy, fail to obtain the same level of support and responsibility? This result is particularly puzzling given the widespread recognition of the need for a combined strategy.

This paper examines the dominance of the U.S. Army during the period of U.S. involvement in Vietnam. In particular, it examines three instances in which the civilian agencies (CIA, AID, and the Department of State) attempted to gain increased responsibility for combating the Viet Cong, and why they failed to make any significant progress.[8] I argue that the U.S. Army gained dominance over all aspects of countering the Vietnamese insurgents because policymakers saw the Army as the more competent, dedicated, and efficient profession in completing the task.

The paper begins with a review of the literature on military professionalism. Next, I consider the two possible answer to the question posed: competitive advantage and bureaucratic politics. I use set theory and process tracing to test the theories against the case of countering insurgents in Vietnam.

Literature Review

Existing literature addresses two separate puzzles. The central debate in the military professionalization literature is centered on the role of the soldier. Scholars like Huntington, Janowitz and Stepan examine the changing role of the professional soldier over time. While they

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government's counterinsurgency strategy is essential. " Krepinevich, Andrew (1986) *The Army and Vietnam.* Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, p. 13-15

[8] I focus on the historical debate about the appropriate response to providing assistance to a foreign state suffering an insurgent threat.

acknowledge the additional roles, both bureaucratic and political, that soldiers have taken on in the last century, they do not address the increasing role that civilians outside the military bureaucracy have played in military carrying out military tasks.[9] Other scholars, like Avant and Singer, have examined Private Military Companies (PMCs) and their impact on U.S. military operations. However, none have addressed the question of why civilian and military professions gain dominant responsibility for specific conflict-related tasks.[10]

The literature on PMCs examines the role of civilians in military operations, while the literature on military professionalism examines the role of soldiers in military operations. In this paper, I bridge the gap between these two literatures by considering civilian and military professions on equal terms by asking: why does the military gain responsibility for some conflict related tasks, civilians for others, and in still other cases, they share the task?

I draw on literature in sociology, which studies "professionalism."[11] Specifically, Andrew Abbott's innovative book: *The System of Professions: An Essay on the Division of Expert Labor*, theorized that there existed a "system of professions" wherein professions, defined as, "an exclusive occupational group applying somewhat abstract knowledge to a particular case," competed over rights and responsibilities to tasks.[12] If a profession wanted to win the competition

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[9] Huntington, Samuel P. (1957) *The Soldiers and the State: the Theory and Politics of Civil-Military Relations*. Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press; Janowitz, Morris (1960) *The Professional Soldier: A Social and Political Portrait*. Glencoe, IL: Free Press; Stepan, Alfred. 1973. "The new professionalism of internal warfare and military role expansion." In *Armies and Politics in Latin America*. New York: Holmes & Meier

[10] Avant, Deborah D (2000) "Privatizing military training." *Foreign Policy in Focus* 5:17; Avant, 2005; Avant, Deborah (2007) "Contracting for services in U.S. military operations." *PS, Political Science Politics* 40:3, pp. 457-460; Avant and DeNevers, 2013. Singer, P.W. (2002) "Corporate Warriors: The Rise of the Privatized Military Industry and Its Ramifications for International Security" *International Security*. 26:3, pp. 186-220; Singer, P.W. (2003) *Corporate Warriors: The Rise of Privatized Military Industry*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press; Singer, P.W. (2005) "Outsourcing War" *Foreign Affairs*. 84:2, pp. 119-132.

[11] see for example: Carr-Saunders, A. and P.A. Wilson (1933) *The Professions*. Oxford: The Claredon Press; Wilensky, Harold L. (1967) *The Rise of Professionalism: A Sociological Analysis*. New York: Basic Books; Larson, Magali Sarfatti (1977) *The Rise of Professionalism: A Sociological Analysis*. Berkley: University of California Press.

[12] Abbot, Andrew (1988) *The System of Professions: An Essay on the Division of Expert Labor*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, p.8

and receive full control over the task, it needed to have a competitive advantage over the other professions.

The theory functions analogously to the market theory of firms. Professions, like firms are considered unitary actors who want to self-perpetuate and grow. As such, they seek to gain control over emerging tasks. Professions gain control over these tasks when they have a competitive advantage relative to other professions who are also attempting to gain control of the task.

Theory

As it is currently formulated, the "system of professions" theory lacks an explicit cause of competition. I argue that in the military case, competition of professions over tasks is a function of scarcity. The emergence of any new task is inherently scarce in the sense that a profession cannot risk foregoing an attempt to claim responsibility for it, because there is a high level of uncertainty as to if and when another new military task might emerge. New tasks are attractive because they add to a professions' budget (or budgetary priority) and overall influence. Thus, professions compete for responsibility for tasks because it maximizes their ability to self-perpetuate and grow.

In the military case, competition for tasks is filtered through government decision making. Policymakers have an incentive to assign tasks to the profession that will provide the most "bang for their buck." U.S. government policymakers evaluate the competitive advantage of professions and assign responsibility for tasks to the profession that provides a greater value in accomplishing the task than its competitors.

H1: The task assignment process is driven by the U.S. Government's perception of the profession's capacity to fulfill the task.

This hypothesis may be falsified if a profession gains rights and responsibilities for a task despite its lack of competitive advantage and the assignment was driven by lobbying on the profession's behalf by a presidential adviser.

Alternative Explanation: Bureaucratic Politics Theory

I test my theory against a rival explanation, that of bureaucratic politics. In my theory, I argue that while not focused solely on the military, Abbott's "system of professions" concept can aid in understanding why civilian professionals are engaged in traditional military tasks. Yet, when asked to apply his theory to military professionalism, Abbott argued that Morton Halperin's theory of bureaucratic politics was a better fit. Therefore, I concentrate on the Bureaucratic Politics Model as originally theorized by Graham Allison and later Morton Halperin as the most salient and satisfying alternative explanation to my question.[13]

Both Halperin and Allison were working on models that specified decision-making in foreign policy as driven by the role of bureaucratic bargaining. These scholars argued that in order to explain decisions, it is necessary to examine the decision-makers, or players. Players come to the bargaining table with a specific viewpoint on the issue at hand that is influenced by the bureaucratic organization to which they belong. The players then engage in political bargaining. This political bargaining leads to a decision.[14]

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[13] A theory diagram and operationalization of the set theoretic variable can be found in Appendix A.
[14] Allison and Halperin (1972) "Bureaucratic Politics: A Paradigm and Some Policy Implications" *World Politics*. 24:Supplement: Theory and Policy In International Relations, pp. 40-79; Halperin, Morton, and Pricilla A. Clapp with Arnold Kantor (2006) *Bureaucratic Politics and Foreign Policy*, 2nd Edition. Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press; Allison, Graham and Philip Zelikow (1999) *Essence of Decisions: Explaining the Cuban Missile Crisis*, 2nd Edition. New York: Longman.

H2: *The selection process for the assignment of new military tasks is driven by political bargaining between organizationally influenced policymakers within the U.S. government.*

This hypothesis is falsified if an assignment becomes apparent, but cannot be traced back to bargains between political actors. It may also be falsified if players who have superior bargaining or political advantages do not achieve their desired outcome. The hypothesis is weakened, though not falsified, if evidence of organizational influence is absent from policymaker stances.[15]

Case Study: Countering Insurgents in Vietnam, 1960-1968

The task of countering insurgents in Vietnam was a new military task, resulting from a change in the type of service demanded by President Kennedy. In 1961, Kennedy announced a foreign policy focused on preventing the steady erosion of the Free World through limited war, which included guerilla warfare. Kennedy stated that the role of the United States in these conflicts would be to provide assistance to local forces at work against overt attack, subversion, and guerilla warfare.[16] While counterinsurgency was not historically unprecedented, the United States had never before conducted counterinsurgency operations to aid to a foreign government.[17]

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[15] This claim is due to the critiques of Miles Law that Allison and Zelikow, 1999, acknowledge. This has been tested by Marsh and Jones, 2014, and they also found that rather than determining player stances, Miles Law should be interpreted as strongly predicting player stances.

[16] Kennedy, John F. (1961) "Special Message to the Congress on the Defense Budget," March 28. Available at: http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=8554; Accessed February 9, 2016.

[17] Previous experience with Counterinsurgency operations in the Philippines and in Nicaragua utilized direct governing authority and different tactics. Linn, Brian McAllister (1989) *The U.S. Army and Counterinsurgency in the Philippine War, 1899-1902*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press; Macak, Richard J. (2008) "Lessons from Yesterday's Operations Short of War: Nicaragua and the *Short Wars Manual*," in *U.S. Marines and Irregular Warfare, 1989-2007*, ed. Col. Stephen S. Evans. Quantico: United States Marine Corps University, p. 82.

Abstract Knowledge and the Genesis of Competition

While both the military and the civilian agencies—CIA, AID, and the State Department—agreed that the Viet Cong insurgents in South Vietnam were a threat, they differed in their approach to dealing with it because the civilian agencies and the military were distinct professional organizations that each applied their unique body of abstract knowledge to the task of counter-insurgency.

The military viewed insurgents[18] as partisan agents operating under the regular forces of a foreign nation.[19] The Army saw the Viet Cong as supported and supplied by the North Vietnamese Communists.[20] In order to determine the appropriate response to this threat, the Army turned to military doctrine.[21] The Army did not possess a coherent body of doctrine specifically concerning countering insurgencies.[22] Between 1945 and 1965, over ten different field manuals[23] made reference to some sort of counter-insurgent strategy or tactics. These manuals were regularly edited and revised, with recommendations changing frequently. Despite the lack of an explicit doctrinal manual referring to counterinsurgency, it is clear that there was some consensus that the Army, as a whole, could and should be able to deal with insurgents[24] using basic military principles, including emphases on the offensive, mobility, and cutting supply

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[18] In much of the Army literature, the reference is to "guerillas." In this paper, I use the term "insurgents" throughout for clarity and consistency.

[19] Peterson, 1989

[20] Krepinevich, 1986

[21] Benjamin M. Jensen offers a useful analysis of doctrine as a body of professional knowledge in his paper "The Doctrine Puzzle: Knowledge Production in Military Organizations" presented at the International Studies Association Annual Convention, New Orleans, February 18-21, 2015.

[22] In 1958 all doctrine concerning counter-insurgency was taken out of field manuals, when FM 31-20 and FM 31-21 were combined. However, in 1960, a new edition of FM 7-100 was released containing seven pages on counter-guerrilla warfare. Then, in 1961, FM 31-15, *Operations Against Irregular Forces* was published, and was updated later that decade as FM 31-16, *Counterguerrilla Operations*. Sources disagree as to the publication date of FM 31-16. Krepinevich, 1986, states that it was published in 1967, but Birtle, Andrew J. (2006) *U.S. Army Counterinsurgency and Counterinsurgency Operations Doctrine, 1942-1976*. Washington, D.C.: Center of Military History, states that it was first published in 1963.

[23] Including: FM 27-10, FM 30-20, FM 30-21, FM 31-15, FM 31-16, FM 31-22, FM 33-5, FM 41-10, FM 100-1, FM 100-5. From Birtle, 2006.

[24] Krepinevich, 1986 p. 37, 43

lines.[25] In short, in order to defeat the insurgency in the South, the Army argued that the lines of supply and communication between the North and the South needed to be cut, and attrition tactics should be used against conventional forces.[26]

In contrast, the civilians viewed the insurgents as being indigenous and part of a political movement within a country that existed independent of external support.[27] In order to counter this strategy, the civilians turned to their abstract knowledge base: political and economic systems.[28] If the insurgents are indigenous to the population, then the obvious way to counter the insurgent movement is to win over the population to your side. Commonly known as the "hearts-and-minds" strategy, the prescription called for "gaining control of villages, providing security against communist forces, working with peasants, and introducing reforms to improve [the peasants'] lives."[29] In the words of CIA director Hilsman: "we must institute a program of civic action which will tie the villagers to their districts and to their central government."[30] The CIA, AID, and the State Department argued that winning the political loyalty of the population was a critical first step in countering the insurgency because political loyalty was a prerequisite for providing local security.[31] A memo from the Embassy in Vietnam to the Department of State underlines this assertion: "the more we can think and speak of Viet-Nam struggles in terms of

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[25] Birtle, 2006; Nagl, John A. (2005) *Learning to Eat Soup with a Knife: Counterinsurgency Lessons from Malaya and Vietnam*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

[26] Peterson, 1989

[27] Peterson, 1989

[28] The State Department is tasked with the diplomatic mission of the United States, and thus has a body of abstract knowledge that views tasks from a distinctly political point of view. The CIA, when it was established in 1947, was tasked with collecting foreign intelligence and conducting covert action: both highly political in nature. CIA (2013) "CIA Vision, Mission, Ethos & Challenges" at https://www.cia.gov/about-cia/cia-vision-mission-values. Accessed February 10, 2016. AID was created with the express purpose of uniting development into a single agency responsible with administering aid to foreign countries to promote social and economic development. AID (2015) "AID History" at www.AID.gov/who-we-are/AID-history. Accessed January 30, 2016.

[29] Hess, 2009 p 112

[30] *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1961-1963, Volume II, Vietnam, 1962, Document 54. Accessed May 15, 2016. Available at: https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1961-63v02/d54

[31] Hunt (1995) *Pacification: The American Struggle for Vietnam's Hearts and Minds*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, p 18

'pacification and winning the allegiance of the people' as contrasted with 'winning the war' the more we will find success."[32] In Vietnam, the CIA's goal was to provide support such that the threatened government of South Vietnam could gain popular support. AID's mission was to focus on economic development and modernization.[33]

In sum, both the U.S. Army and the civilian governmental organizations were attempting to aid the Vietnamese government in countering insurgent operations. Both also referred to their efforts as pacification, meaning "those actions taken by [or on behalf of] the government to assert its control over the population and win its willing support."[34] The difference was in the prioritization of actions that would gain the South Vietnamese government control: the Army believed that military and combat aspects of counterinsurgency should be dealt with first, whereas the civilian governmental organizations believed that in order to stop the escalating violence, addressing the needs and concerns of the rural population was most important.

U.S. Army Strategy: "Search-and-Destroy"

The U.S. military became involved in South Vietnam as early as 1954, with the creation of the Military Assistance Advisory Group (MAAG). MAAG was established to provide military support to the newly formed South Vietnamese Army (ARVN). In 1961, under "Operation Beef-up" the MAAG was reorganized under the Military Advisory Command to Vietnam (MACV).[35]

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[32] *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1961-1963, Volume II, Vietnam, 1962, Document 85. Accessed May 15, 2016. Available at: https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1961-63v02/d85
[33] Blaufarb, 1977
[34] For clarity, I use a modification of Krepenevich's (1986) definition of pacification, p. 13
[35] Herring, 1979

Ground troops were introduced in 1965, and were shortly after given the authority to engage in combat with the enemy.[36] Ground troops remained in Vietnam for the next eight years; the final troops pulled out in 1973, with the signing of the Paris Accords.[37] During the time that the ground troops, under the command of General William Westmoreland, were present in Vietnam, they followed a strategy best known as "search-and-destroy." In military terms, the strategy is more correctly termed a war of attrition. The relatively limited manpower of the Vietnamese made attrition a practicable strategy in South Vietnam,[38] it emphasized the Army's advantages in firepower and strategic mobility, and came with the promise of fewer casualties.[39]

In short, "the army would search out and destroy as many insurgents as possible as quickly as possible, convincing the [Viet Cong] that they could not win."[40] As Westmoreland stated, "I had to get on with meeting the crisis within South Vietnam, and only by seeking, fighting, and destroying the enemy could that be done."[41] Despite the frequent use of the words "search-and-destroy" even by Westmoreland himself, the strategy focused more on cutting the enemy off from their base areas and supplies: bunkers, tunnels, rice and ammunition caches, and training camps were primary targets.[42]

Pacification was also part of the Army's strategy.[43] Westmoreland envisioned pacification efforts and combat with main force units to be accomplished under a division of labor. The

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[36] Ambrose, Stephen E. and Douglas G. Brinkley (2011) *Rise to Globalism: American Foreign Policy Since 1938*. London: Penguin Books.
[37] Anderson, David L. (2002) *The Columbia Guide to the Vietnam War*. New York: Columbia University Press.
[38] Gen. Westmoreland, William (1976) *A Soldier Reports*. Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Company, Inc.
[39] Krepinevich, 1986
[40] Krepinevich, 1986 p. 151
[41] Westmoreland, 1976 p. 153
[42] Westmoreland, 1976
[43] There is some discrepancy in the literature as to when precisely pacification was to occur. Hunt, Richard (1995) *Pacification: The American Struggle for Vietnam's Hearts and Minds*. Boulder: Westview Press, describes

ARVN would focus primarily on pacification while the U.S. Army would focus primarily on the main force units. However, each U.S. division was assigned to a semi-permanent base within their tactical area of responsibility. While at the base, the soldiers were to aid the ARVN in their area with pacification and civic action projects.[44]

The logic behind the strategy of attrition and the division of labor for pacification is fairly straightforward. Westmoreland saw the strategy of attrition as the only workable solution given the political constraints. First, he could not expand the war into Laos, Cambodia or North Vietnam. Second, he did not have enough troops to hold onto captured territory, which was uninhabitable and had no intrinsic value except that the enemy was trying to use it. Third, the enclave strategy would not force the enemy to negotiate since it caused them little damage, and the enemy had shown they only negotiated when they were hurting.

Finally, the division of labor between the ARVN and the U.S. Army was designed to capitalize on the strengths of each. The U.S. Army possessed heavy firepower, which would be most advantageous when used against the main force units. In contrast, the ARVN had greater compatibility with the people of South Vietnam, and therefore would supposedly be better suited to working in more populated areas. This division of labor was endorsed by the success of American forces in the major battle at Ia Drang Valley in 1965.[45]

Pacification as beginning during the second phase. In contrast, Westmoreland (1976) states that Pacification was to occur during all three phases of the strategy. Likely, this discrepancy is over the definition of pacification as by the U.S. Army (Hunt) or by any group in South Vietnam (Westmoreland). I have chosen to represent Westmoreland's point of view for the purposes of this work.

[44] Westmoreland, 1976

[45] The bloody battle produced 1,200 KIA for the North Vietnamese and 200 for the American forces. Krepinevich, 1986.

Civilian COIN and Mr. Vietnam

Throughout the period of American involvement in Vietnam, the CIA, AID, and the Embassy ran multiple programs designed to counter the insurgent threat presented by the Viet Cong.

The CIA ran four major programs: Static Census Grievance Program, the Revolutionary Development (RD) Cadres, the Provincial Reconnaissance Units (PRUs), and the Civilian Irregular Defense Groups (CIDG). Each program was designed to counter the insurgents on a political level: either through collecting intelligence that could be used against the insurgents (i.e. Static Census Grievance Program) or conducting clandestine operations against the Viet Cong (i.e. CIDGs, RD Cadres, PRUs).

The first three programs were eventually folded into the Civil Operations and Revolutionary Development Support (CORDS), under the U.S. Army. The CIDGs, were also taken over by the Army, but at an earlier time. CIDGs were begun by the CIA in 1961,[46] to to arm and train the villagers in exchange for the villagers declaring support for the South Vietnamese government.[47] The CIDGs were staffed by a team comprised of both U.S. Special Operations Forces and South Vietnamese Special Forces.[48] But when the CIA requested an additional sixteen U.S. Special Forces teams, the Army began calling the Special Forces back to deploy them in Laos and North Vietnam. At this time the CIDG program was declared non-covert and no longer under CIA control.[49] Thus, in November 1962, Operation SWITCHBACK

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[46] Nagl, 2005

[47] Department of the Army (1989) *Vietnam Studies: U.S. Army Special Forces, 1961-1971.* Washington D.C.: Center for Military History.

[48] Moyar, Mark (1997) *Phoenix and the Birds of Prey: The CIA's Secret Campaign to Destroy the Viet Cong.* Annapolis: Naval Institute Press.

[49] Krepinevich, 1986; As Deborah Avant notes in *Political Institutions and Military Change* (1994, Ithaca: Cornell University Press), the desire of Army Special Forces to operate independently from the CIA combined with the MACV's interest in having control over all operations occurring Vietnam created the momentum that removed the CIDG programs from the authority of the CIA, p. 61.

began[50] with the goal of bringing all CIDGs under the control of MACV by July 1963. MACV pulled all remaining U.S. Special Forces out of the program and staffed it fully with the South Vietnamese Special Forces, which eventually caused the program to peter out.[51]

While the CIA ran the bulk of the programs during the early 1960s, several other public agencies and private organizations were also active in the civilian driven "hearts-and-minds" pacification strategy, including the United States Information Agency and the Joint U.S. Public Affairs. However, the most prominent of these was the newly formed United States Agency for International Development (AID).[52]

AID was in charge of a variety of programs, including: New Life Development, the National Police Field Forces, and the Open Arms or "Chieu Hoi" program, and AID also ran the Vietnamese ports.[53] In addition to the economic development assistance that AID gave to the people of South Vietnam,[54] AID knew that these economic gains needed to be protected from the taxation of the Viet Cong,[55] which inspired the emphasis on the National Police Field Force program. In addition, AID saw the need to reintegrate Viet Cong members who were swayed by the better life the South Vietnamese government was offering, which inspired the Chieu Hoi program.

In 1966, the Johnson Administration decided that there needed to be a "Mr. Vietnam," someone in charge of all pacification efforts in Washington. To that end, Johnson appointed

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[50] Department of the Army, 1989

[51] Nagl, 2005; Krepinevich, 1986; The CIDG concept was briefly resurrected under the Marines in the form of Combine Action Platoons (CAPs) from 1965-1969. However, throughout the Marines' run, the program was plagued by lack of training, personnel problems, and a wide variance in success level, Peterson, 1989.

[52] Originally, the acronym for this agency was "AID." Today, we refer to the same agency as "USAID." For clarity, I use "AID" throughout.

[53] This was in addition to the work AID did in support of nation-building in areas of public administration, economic stabilization, education, and public health.

[54] These programs included construction projects, medical programs, and food distribution programs. Peterson, 1989.

[55] see Moyar, 1997, chapter 2 for a detailed description about the ways that the Viet Cong taxed the population.

Robert Komer, from CIA and NSA, to the position of chief adviser to the president on pacification.[56] Komer was "authorized to draw support from the secretaries of state, defense, treasury, agriculture, health, education, and welfare; the administrator of AID; and the directors of the CIA and USIA."[57]

In his new position, Komer suggested three ways to change the American practice of pacification in Vietnam. First, he suggested giving full control of all U.S. pacification efforts to Deputy Ambassador Porter. As a second option, Komer proposed separate civilian and military commands in Vietnam, while putting a pacification officer in MACV. Finally, Komer suggested giving all support to General Westmoreland, and placing full responsibility for pacification efforts on MACV.[58]

In response to these suggestions, Johnson first created the Office of Civil Operations (OCO) under Deputy Ambassador Porter in November 1966, giving State Department officials authority over all civilian agencies engaged in pacification.[59] However, the unification was not complete: "Porter lacked the authority to transfer funds from one program to another, an impediment that hampered the reprogramming of money and resources to deal with unexpected problems."[60] In addition, Johnson gave the OCO a ninety-day trial period to show marked improvement in pacification efforts, and the OCO struggled to fill all personnel positions within this time period. In many ways, it was clear that the OCO was not given a fair chance to succeed in any meaningful way. Rather, the decision to implement the OCO can be viewed as "a way to prepare the civilian agencies for their placement under military command."[61]

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[56] *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1964-1968, Volume IV, Vietnam, 1966, Document 102. Accessed May 15, 2016; Available at: https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v04/d102
[57] Hunt, 1995, p. 73
[58] Hunt, 1995
[59] Moyar, 1997
[60] Hunt, 1995, p. 83
[61] Hunt, 1995; Moyar, 1997, p. 48

Placement of civilian agencies under military command came with the creation of CORDS in 1967.[62] CORDS was placed under military control because the military held most of the resources in Vietnam, pacification required establishing security in the country side, and the government administration outside of Saigon was already primarily under military control.[63]

In the literature on CORDS, the level of civilian authority within the program is often called remarkable.[64] While it is true that for the first time, civilians were integrated into the military line of command, CORDS leadership emphasized these civilian roles in order to reassure the civilian agencies who were now under military control. In fact, the military did curtail the amount of power the civilians had,[65] and Komer was upset about where his position fell in the over all hierarchy with American operations in Vietnam.[66] In addition, throughout its existence, military personnel outnumbered the civilians 6:1.[67]

Decisions Made

At each of several critical decision points, the military—specifically, the U.S. Army—was given authority and responsibility for the practice of counterinsurgency in Vietnam. First, in 1962, when the CIA's clandestine CIDG pacification program began to bear fruit, Secretary of Defense McNamara declared the program non-covert, and ordered its placement under the

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[62] Hess, 2009; The primary goals of CORDS was to protect the rural population from insurgents and to generate rural support for the government of South Vietnam. Of secondary importance was neutralizing the VC. Komer, Robert (1971) "Impact of Pacification on Insurgency in South Vietnam," *Journal of International Affairs*. 25:1, pp48-69. For a complete list of new programs under CORDS, see Hunt, 1995, chapter 7; and Komer's 1971 article.

[63] Komer, 1971

[64] see for example, Moyar, 1997 p. 49; Krepinevich, 1986, p. 218; even Komer himself was quick to point out the level of civilian control in his 1971 article.

[65] For example, Westmoreland made sure that Komer's title was not that of commander in order to ensure that he would not have control over any American troops should Westmoreland or his deputy commander be out of commission. Hunt, 1995.

[66] See Hunt, 1995 p. 87

[67] Krepinevich, 1986, p. 218

Department of Defense.[68] Almost immediately, a 'phase down' of CIDG forces began and CIDG personnel were absorbed into another force or were demobilized. The goal was to reduce these troops from 116,000 to 0 by 1965.[69]

Second, when it became clear that AID was unable to keep track of the resources it was utilizing in its programs, the programs were placed under the authority of the U.S. Army.[70] Specifically, AID lost its responsibility for maintaining the Vietnamese ports in 1966.[71]

Third, when the civilians made a last stand to introduce their concept of counterinsurgency through winning the "hearts and minds" of the Vietnamese population, the military was given final and full authority over the program. The OCO was dropped in favor of CORDS, which fell under the authority of the MACV. Even though civilians were integrated into the military line of command, General Westmoreland was still at the top of the hierarchy. Further, the position of Komer, as head of CORDS, was not as prestigious or powerful in the larger war effort as he had expected.[72] Thus, it is clearly observed that over time, the U.S. Army gained full control of all programs related to countering the insurgents in Vietnam.

Analysis

My theory of Competitive Advantage hypothesizes that the selection process for the assignment of a new military task is driven by the decision-makers' perceptions of the relative

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[68] Krepinevich, 1986 p. 72; *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1961-1963, Volume III, Vietnam, January-August 1963, Document 18. Accessed May 15, 2016. Available at: https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1961-63v03/d18

[69] *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1961-1963, Volume III, Vietnam, January-August 1963, Document 18. Accessed May 15, 2016. Available at: https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1961-63v03/d18; The last vestiges of this program, the Marines who ran the CAPs, were also slowly but surely reintegrated back into the main force units of the U.S. military forces. Peterson, 1989

[70] Hunt, 1995 p 73

[71] *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1964-1968, Volume IV, Vietnam 1966, Document 149. Accessed May 15, 2016. Available at: https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v04/d149

[72] Hunt, 1995

competitive advantages. If my theory is correct, I should expect to see discussions among policymakers that focus on the relative capability of either profession to fulfill the task, at each of the three critical decision points identified above.

In contrast, bureaucratic politics argues that decisions are reached as a result of political bargaining. If the bureaucratic politics theory is correct, I should expect to see political deals being made over assignments.[73]

To uncover the process by which policymakers arrived at these decisions, I relied primarily on the publicly available *Foreign Relations of the United States*, and the *Pentagon Papers*, surveying all documents related to Vietnam.[74]

CIDG under MACV

Competitive Advantage (H1). In 1962, the CIDG program, originally run by the CIA, was declared non-covert and was transferred to the MACV via Operation SWITCHBACK.[75] Under the CIA, the CIDG program utilized both U.S. and South Vietnamese Special Forces. The MACV argued that enough South Vietnamese special forces had been trained to allow the U.S. Special Forces to concentrate on another area of operations, directly against the Viet Cong.[76] Further, Commander in Chief (Pacific) Felt, noted that the Army's plan for CIDG was focused on a phase down of CIDG forces, with the understanding that they would no longer be needed as the areas they patrolled came under control of the South Vietnamese government.[77]

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[73] For a full list of evidentiary requirements for both hypotheses, see Appendix A.
[74] Future iterations of this paper will include archival documentation from the Johnson Library and the National archives, which I will be visiting in the summer 2017.
[75] Nagl, 2005; Krepinevich, 1989
[76] Krepinevich, 1989
[77] *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1961-1963, Volume III, Vietnam, January-August 1963, Document 18. Accessed on May 15, 2016. Available at: https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1961-63v02/d54

In short, the Army argued that they could accomplish the same goals, but do it in less time and with fewer Americans. Such a plan starkly contrasts with the CIA requests for additional personnel. The CIA's relative lack of personnel and efficiency as compared to the MACV impacted the decision to turn over the CIDG program to the MACV. In sum, McNamara's decision to shift control of the program from the CIA to the MACV was caused by his perception of the relative personnel availability and efficiency of the CIA and the U.S. Army.

Bureaucratic Politics (H2). Evidence that discussions were held between policymakers is not present in either the *Foreign Relations of the United States* or the *Pentagon Papers*.[78] Discussion appears to have been confined to the Office of the Secretary of Defense. The topic of the CIDG program did re-emerge in internal memos when policymakers were considering the move to CORDS. However, these memos primarily outlined the displeasure with the way that the U.S. Army handled the CIDG program after Operation SWITCHBACK.[79]

Vietnamese Ports under MACV

Competitive Advantage (H1). In 1966, control of the Vietnamese ports was transferred from AID to MACV.[80] Throughout the time that AID was involved in countering insurgents in Vietnam through port regulation, policymakers were concerned with its capability to do so. For example, beginning in 1962, concern was already being noted about AID. In a memo from a joint meeting with the State Department and the Joint Chiefs of staff, it was noted that "AID is

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[78] While a lack of evidence cannot lead to hypothesis falsification, it also cannot lead to hypothesis verification. Therefore, for this decision, the role of bureaucratic bargaining in determining the reassignment of the CIDGs remains unclear.

[79] *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1964-1968, Volume IV, Vietnam, 1966, Document 248. Accessed May 15, 2016. Available at: https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v04/d248.

[80] *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1964-1968, Volume IV, Vietnam 1966, Document 149. Accessed May 15, 2016. Available at: https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v04/d149

the weakest element in the civic action program…we should not expect too much from AID."[81] Later that year, government officials on the policy planning council discussed turning over AID programs to the military: "Perhaps if there were no lack of skilled people, technicians and administrators, both the long and short-range activities could be carried out…it would be inefficient to ask for a special administrative arrangement in AID for the war in Vietnam…the program as a whole would be run by a military officer answering directly to the military commander."[82]

By 1966, government officials were discussing serious concerns about the AID's ability to effectively run the ports. AID's lack of efficiency was deemed the greatest issue, and could easily be overcome by giving the MACV full control over the Vietnamese ports.[83] In a memo from Komer to President Johnson, Komer clearly outlines both the problem and his proposed solution: "AID is simply not geared up to the unfamiliar task…the lead time is great and AID is understandably less efficient. Hence, my solution is for our military to…take over scheduling of AID shipping, Saigon port, the bulk of in-country transport, medical supply, etc. Otherwise, we simply won't get the job done soon enough."[84]

Bureaucratic Politics (H2): While discussion about the decision to move the Vietnamese Ports does occur in the record, the discussions operate almost opposite to what bureaucratic politics might suggest. First, the problem with AID's port operations was originally raised at a meeting with the majority of the President's major advisers. While the meeting

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[81] *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1961-1963, Volume II, Vietnam, 1962, Document 54. Accessed on May 15, 2016. Available at: https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1961-63v02/d54

[82] *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1961-1963, Volume II, Vietnam, 1962, Document 63. Accessed on May 15, 2016. Available at: https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1961-63v02/d63

[83] *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1964-1968, Volume IV, Vietnam 1966, Document 149. Accessed May 15, 2016. Available at: https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v04/d149

[84] *Foreign Relations of the United States,* 1964-1968, Volume IV, Vietnam, 1966, Document 155. Accessed on May 15, 2016, Available at: https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v04/d155

minutes are brief, there is no recorded discussion or debate over AID's competence.[85] Over the next few months, Komer, and his deputy, Leonhardt take up the port issue and argue strongly for the placement of the ports' operation under the MACV.[86] One might expect Komer and Leonhardt, being civilians, would argue in favor of civilian agencies.[87] These arguments run counter to the organizationally driven arguments bureaucratic politics predicts. Further, the record does not include evidence of significant disagreements with Komer and Leonhart's assessment that AID needed to be relieved of responsibility for port operation. Bargaining, as bureaucratic politics predicts, does not appear to have taken place.

OCO/CORDS under MACV

Competitive Advantage (H3). After Komer was named Special Adviser to the President for pacification in Vietnam, he almost immediately recognized the capacity of the U.S. Army in accomplishing the task of countering the Vietnamese insurgents. In 1966, Komer asked the MACV to keep an eye on the CIA's RD Cadre programs, citing the CIA's lack of personnel as the reason the agency was unable to do the entire job.[88] Komer reiterated the importance of capability again in a memo to Secretary of Defense, McNamara, stating, "the military are much better set up to manage a huge pacification effort…The alternative of unified management under civilian control falls down because most assets involved are military, and because only the US military staff and advisory resources in Vietnam are big enough to manage pacification on the

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[85] *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1964-1968, Volume IV, Vietnam, 1966, Document 140, Accessed May 15, 2016. Available at: https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v04/d140.

[86] *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1964-1968, Volume IV, Vietnam, 1966, Document 149, Accessed May 15, 2016. Available at: https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v04/d149; *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1964-1968, Volume IV, Vietnam, 1966, Document 171. Accessed on May 15, 2016, Available at: https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v04/d155.

[87] In particular, Komer's background was in intelligence and included work for the CIA. Leonhardt's was in the State Department.

[88] *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1964-1968, Volume IV, Vietnam, 1966, Document 171. Accessed on May 15, 2016, Available at: https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v04/d171

scale we seek."[89] In a memo to the President, Komer again reiterated his belief that the military was more capable and should therefore be assigned the task: "Give pacification to Westy [General Westmoreland]. You've heard my voice on this. I'll just say again that we won't get up real momentum in pacifying hamlets until you give it to the only people who can do most of the job." [90]

When President Johnson finally weighed in on the question of task assignment, it was clear that the military's relative capability influenced his decision. In a letter to the U.S. Ambassador to Vietnam, Henry Cabot Lodge, Johnson wrote, "There does not seem to me to be any difference between your ideas of what is needed to make pacification work, and those of my chief advisers and myself. Bob McNamara and the Joint Chiefs realize, as does General Westmoreland on the basis of the dispositions he is increasingly making, that a limited number of U.S. combat forces must be detailed to be the catalysts for the Vietnamese…As a matter of fact, getting the U.S. military more heavily engaged in refocusing the ARVN on the heart of the matter is one reason why we here have seriously considered charging MACV with pacification. I hope you will ponder whether this is not in the end the best way to achieve the aim you seek."[91]

Bureaucratic Politics (H3). Unlike the first two decisions, evidence of organizationally influenced arguments are clearly present in the creation of the OCO and CORDS. When it became clear that the U.S. government was considering assigning the task to a single profession responsibility for all programs related to countering the insurgents in Vietnam, the CIA began advocating for a civilian rather than military assignment. The agency used a variety of

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[89] *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1964-1968, Volume IV, Vietnam, 1966, Document 249. Accessed on May 15, 2016. Available at: https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v04/d249
[90] *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1964-1968, Volume IV, Vietnam, 1966, Document 262. Accessed on May 15, 2016. Available at: https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v04/d262
[91] *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1964-1968, Volume IV, Vietnam, 1966, Document 310. Accessed on May 15, 2016. Available at: https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v04/d310

arguments. In response to a memorandum from Komer on the issue, the CIA wrote: "the most serious defect in the memorandum arises from its misconception of the nature of pacification, which prompts action recommendations we feel would be counterproductive…He [Komer] goes on to argue that improvement in the pacification effort is 'essentially a matter of better management of US/GVN resources, and of generating enough resources to meet the need.' Management and resources are both important, but the essential aspect of pacification is one of doctrine. Without the proper doctrine, management and resources can accomplish little."[92] Here, the CIA argues that despite their relative lack of competitive advantage, they should be given responsibility for the task because they have the right ideas about how to accomplish it. The argument is highly organizationally influenced.

CIA Director Helms made a very similar argument in July 1966 when he addressed the issue of turning over the CIA's RD Cadre Program to the military: "The problem of supervision of the RD Cadre teams is one on which I believe our Station is making considerable progress at this time, although I cannot contest your statement that we cannot match the MACV presence throughout the districts. Against the apparent desirability of this greater engagement of local Americans with the teams however, I do suggest that some thought be given to the impact of this attention on the mission and political content of the work of the teams."[93] In this example, the CIA is once again emphasizing that their concept of how to do the work is more important than whether or not they have the competitive advantage needed to offer a greater value in accomplishing the task.

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[92] *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1964-1968, Volume IV, Vietnam, 1966, Document 174. Accessed on May 15, 2016. Available at: https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v04/d174
[93] *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1964-1968, Volume IV, Vietnam, 1966, Document 181. Accessed on May 15, 2016. Available at: https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v04/d181

A few months later, after Secretary McNamara formally recommended to the President that MACV take over all programs related to countering the insurgents in Vietnam, the CIA reiterated their argument that the military lacked the right approach: "the fact remains that revolutionary development (which is what we ought to be talking about, not pacification) can only succeed if it is something in which the civil populace engages itself. If an attempt is made to impose pacification on an unengaged populace by GVN or U.S. military forces, that attempt will fail."[94]

Despite the CIA's repeated arguments that approach mattered most, they were unable to make their voices heard at the bargaining table. In fact, there is little evidence that the CIA's arguments went beyond internal memos to be voiced at high level decision-maker meetings. True bargaining does not appear to actually have occurred at the highest decision making levels. The two actors that one might expect to be heavily engaged in debate regarding the assignment of the task, McNamara and Rusk, do not appear to engage in any bargaining with one another at all.

Rather, the majority of discussions regarding the assignment of the task to the military was in a series of correspondence between Robert Komer and President Johnson.[95] Occasionally,

[94] *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1964-1968, Volume IV, Vietnam, 1966, Document 270. Accessed on May 15, 2016. Available at: https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v04/d270

[95] see for example: *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1964-1968, Volume IV, Vietnam, 1966, Document 120. Accessed on May 15, 2016. Available at: https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v04/d120; *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1964-1968, Volume IV, Vietnam, 1966, Document 131. Accessed on May 15, 2016. Available at: https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v04/d131; *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1964-1968, Volume IV, Vietnam, 1966, Document 155. Accessed on May 15, 2016. Available at: https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v04/d155; *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1964-1968, Volume IV, Vietnam, 1966, Document 171. Accessed on May 15, 2016. Available at: https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v04/d171; *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1964-1968, Volume IV, Vietnam, 1966, Document 262. Accessed on May 15, 2016. Available at: https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v04/d262; *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1964-1968, Volume IV, Vietnam, 1966, Document 268. Accessed on May 15, 2016. Available at: https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v04/d311

Secretary McNamara offered an opinion,[96] but there exists no evidence that Secretary Rusk

directly engaged in bargaining on this particular issue. Finally, it is clear that while the CIA,

AID, and members of the State Department were interested in engaging in bargaining, they had

neither high level representation nor the skill and will to enter into real bargaining on the

subject.[97]

While evidence of true bargaining is not present in the written record of the *Foreign*

Relations of the United States or the *Pentagon Papers*, it is possible that it occurred off paper

(especially given that there is evidence that the CIA and AID were against the placement of

pacification programs under military authority). If bargaining took place, then evidence of a

compromised solution might be present.

In this case, the only appearance of something resembling a compromise would have

been the short-lived Office of Civil Operations. In many ways, the OCO was presented as though

it were a compromise. When President Johnson wrote to Ambassador Lodge of the establishment

of the OCO, he referred to it as a compromise: "I am willing to try out for a time a compromise

solution."[98] However, it is difficult to determine whether the OCO was truly a compromise or

whether it was merely the first step in turning over all programs focused on countering the

insurgents over to the U.S. Army.

When it began, the OCO was given a trial period of 90-120 days. During this time, the

OCO was not only supposed to create an organization, but that organization was supposed to be

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[96] see for example: *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1964-1968, Volume IV, Vietnam, 1966, Document 245. Accessed on May 15, 2016. Available at: https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v04/d245; *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1964-1968, Volume IV, Vietnam, 1966, Document 268. Accessed on May 15, 2016. Available at: https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v04/d268

[97] *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1964-1968, Volume IV, Vietnam, 1966, Document 263. Accessed on May 15, 2016. Available at: https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v04/d263

[98] *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1964-1968, Volume IV, Vietnam, 1966, Document 310. Accessed on May 15, 2016. Available at: https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v04/d310

able to show real results. If the OCO did not show "real results" at the end of this time period, the U.S. Government would reconsider placing all programs under the MACV.[99] As the CIA noted, such a time period was hardly a fair trial: "the trial will not be 'fair' if major quantifiable results are anticipated in a matter of months."[100]

If the trial time granted the OCO was designed to fail, as the CIA seemed to indicate, then was the OCO really a compromise or was it rather a stop gap on the way to placing full responsibility with the military? Johnson's correspondence in the period of time leading up to the creation of OCO implies that he had already made up his mind to give the U.S. Army full responsibility. As early as October 5, 1966, Johnson had indicated that he felt strongly that the military should gain control.[101] This was echoed in his letter to Ambassador Lodge; despite calling the OCO a compromise, he indicated that the military might be the best way to achieve success in countering the insurgents.[102] It appeared as though Johnson had finalized his decision to grant the military full responsibility for the task. Yet, if Johnson had indeed made up his mind, why then did he bother creating the OCO? Robert Komer hints at the reason in a memo to the President during the months in which this decision was being implemented: "we've already gone 25% of the way in the right direction. Your letter will set Lodge himself to thinking about whether to go the rest of the way."[103] The OCO can best be considered the preparatory move for transferring control to the U.S. Army.

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[99] *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1964-1968, Volume IV, Vietnam, 1966, Document 290. Accessed on May 15, 2016. Available at: https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v04/d290

[100] *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1964-1968, Volume IV, Vietnam, 1966, Document 248. Accessed on May 15, 2016. Available at: https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v04/d248

[101] Johnson Library, Recordings and Transcripts, Recording of a Telephone Conversation between Johnson and McNamara, Tape 66.27, Side B, PNO 2.

[102] *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1964-1968, Volume IV, Vietnam, 1966, Document 310. Accessed on May 15, 2016. Available at: https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v04/d310

[103] *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1964-1968, Volume IV, Vietnam, 1966, Document 311. Accessed on May 15, 2016. Available at: https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v04/d311

While it is possible that off the books bargaining meetings occurred surrounding the choice to create the OCO, Johnson appeared to have made up his mind long before any such meeting might have occurred. Thus any meetings would likely not have produced the type of discussions and bargaining the theory suggests drives an outcome. In fact, in their internal memos, the CIA indicates that President Johnson had already decided to assign responsibility to the military and that AID and the State Department were struggling to come up with any plausible alternatives.[104]

Falsification

In the theory section, I noted that hypothesis 1 could be falsified if a profession gained rights and responsibilities for a task despite its lack of competitive advantage and the assignment was driven by either the professions' pursuit of the task, or lobbying on the professions' behalf by a presidential adviser. As the above evidence indicates, it is clear that for each major decision, the policymakers were concerned with the professions' capability to fulfill the task when making the decision to place responsibility for all counter insurgent activities under the U.S. Army.

I also noted that hypothesis 2 could be falsified if an assignment becomes apparent, but cannot be traced back to bargains between organizationally influenced political actors. It may also be falsified if players who have superior bargaining or political advantages do not achieve their desired outcome. For the CIDG and the AID ports decisions, a lack of evidence prevents the true falsification of the hypothesis on the grounds that bargaining was not occurring. However, it is clear in the AID ports case, and extremely evident in the CORDS decision that actors were arguing opposite to what their organizational affiliation would suggest.

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[104] *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1964-1968, Volume IV, Vietnam, 1966, Document 263. Accessed on May 15, 2016. Available at: https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v04/d263

The focus of the major policymakers, led by the President, on the military's capability to complete the task of countering the insurgents in Vietnam drove the assignment of the U.S. Army to the task.

Conclusion

The case of counterinsurgency in Vietnam, 1960-1968, is a case of competition for task dominance between the civilians of the CIA, AID, and the Department of State, and the soldiers of the U.S. Army. Based on assessment of the key independent variables of my theory of competitive advantage, a military outcome was overdetermined. In further analyzing the process underlying the decision to place full responsibility for the task with the military, it became clear that concern over the profession's capacity to complete the task drove President Johnson's decision.

As a final note in this study, I want to touch briefly on the subject of the U.S. Marine's Combined Action Platoons in Vietnam. One of the obvious questions that arises in this case study is why the Marines, whose strategy was both more efficient and theoretically more successful, did not become the dominant military group in Vietnam?

I did not do an in depth analysis of the Marines' competitive advantage when compared with the U.S. Army in this paper for two reasons. First, because such an analysis falls beyond the scope of this project, which questions the professional competition between civilians and the military. Second, during their time in Vietnam, the Marines were under the control of the MACV, which was led by members of the U.S. Army. In other words, from the conception of the CAPs, they were under the control of the Army.

However, it is pertinent to ask why, if an enclave or clear-and-hold type strategy was supposedly better at solving the insurgency problem, did the Army not adopt this type of strategy over their search-and-destroy strategy? The answer is in the relative lack of success and high risk of casualties associated with the CAPs. Strictly speaking, the Marines never performed well in the CAPs, and this poor execution meant that the Marines could never demonstrate success. A single cruel or corrupt act by a Marine could undo months of work. Because the Army was not focused on creating relationships, individual soldiers' actions were relatively less problematic in accomplishing their strategy. The Marines also attempted to compete directly with the Army using body counts, but the body counts that came out of the CAPs varied heavily from hamlet to hamlet, making it difficult to argue that the strategy was overall more successful than "search-and-destroy." In addition, CAP Marines were relatively more likely to be wounded or killed than the soldiers associated with search-and-destroy missions.[105] In short, during the Vietnam war, the Marines struggled to prove that their clear-and-hold strategy held the key to being more successful than the U.S. Army's.

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[105] Peterson, 1989

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Appendix A

Competitive Advantage

Evidence Required
The profession has adequate personnel to complete the task.
The profession's personnel have adequate competence to complete the task.
The profession demonstrates an ability to complete the task more efficiently.
The profession appears to give the task higher priority.
The president and other policymakers demonstrate a high level of interest in the profession's ability to complete the task
The president and other policymakers appear to preference competency and efficiency over other arguments (i.e. political, organizational)

Bureaucratic Politics

Evidence Required
An actor takes a policy stand that will benefit his agency budgetarily.
An actor takes a policy stand that is indicative of his agency's mission (i.e. Secretary of State favors diplomacy; Secretary of Defense favors military action)
An actor has and utilizes bargaining advantages that may include: - control over information.   - a personal relationship with the president.   - the ability to threaten to resign   - influence over other bureaucratic actors.   - a willingness to assume responsibility (politically or practically).   - a highly skilled supporting staff.   - public support
An actor engages in politicking, which may include: - bypassing a chain of command or hierarchical agency structures.   - engaging in logrolling   - engaging in exclusionary tactics.
Bargaining Indicators are present, which may include: - No actor getting his or her fully desired outcome.   - Actors make concessions to one another.   - Actors reach agreement on a middle ground.   - Multiple actors decide together on a solution.