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USAF COUNTERINSURGENCY  
DOCTRINES AND CAPABILITIES

1961-1962

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By  
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February 1964

USAF Historical Division Liaison Office

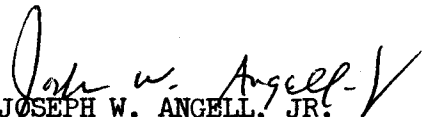
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## FOREWORD

This study concerns a subject that has only recently become of great importance to the Air Force and the national security system of the nation. USAF Counterinsurgency Doctrines and Capabilities traces the upsurge of insurgency movements in many areas of the world and narrates the U.S. actions taken during 1961-62 to develop doctrines and capabilities to counter such movements, with special attention to Air Force actions. The author discusses the meager counterinsurgency capability of the United States when the dangers arose; the impact of President Kennedy's interest in the subject; the development of an Air Force counterinsurgency doctrine; the roles and missions; controversy between the Air Force and the Army; the relationship with the U.S. Strike Command; the acquisition of suitable aircraft; and the buildup of specially trained Air Force counterinsurgency units.

Although this study forms part of a larger History of Headquarters USAF, it is being published separately to make it more readily available throughout the Air Force.

  
JOSEPH W. ANGELL, JR.  
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Liaison Office

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I. THE AIR FORCE'S INITIAL RESPONSE TO  
COUNTERINSURGENCY

When the Kennedy administration took office in January 1961 the United States faced major crises in Cuba, the Congo, Laos, and Vietnam. Each represented a Communist attempt to penetrate the territory of the Free World. Each represented the effort of international communism to exploit the instability of underdeveloped regions. And each represented a breaching of the cold war truce lines that had emerged since the conclusion of World War II. Communism's success in fomenting and intensifying these crises stemmed primarily from its aggressive insurgency program.<sup>1</sup>

Nikita Khrushchev, speaking before the Soviet Communist Party meeting in Moscow on 6 January 1961, provided a comprehensive pattern for world conquest that outlined clearly what the Free World could expect from the Soviets over the next 10 years. He divided war into three categories: world (general) war, which he rejected as too dangerous and unnecessary for the ultimate victory of communism; local (limited) wars, which he feared because of the danger of their developing into a world war; and "wars of liberation," which he indorsed as inevitable and desirable. In regard to the last kind, Khrushchev stated emphatically, "We recognize such wars, and we will help the people striving for their independence . . . . The Communists fully support such wars and march in the front rank with the people waging liberation struggles."<sup>2</sup>

By "wars of liberation," the Soviet leader meant coordinated acts of subversion and covert aggression for the express purpose of installing a

Communist government.\* It was on the weakest nations--those going through a period of transition--that the Communists determined to concentrate their attention. They believed that by exploiting the resentment built up against colonial rule they could associate themselves with the natural desire of the people for independence, status on the world scene, and material progress.<sup>3</sup>

The United States did not oppose the desires of the newly emerging nations. It recognized that the people were in the midst of revolutionary upheaval, but it was determined that these changes would occur free of intimidation from members of the Communist Bloc. Basically it sought the emergence of truly independent nations, with each free to fashion from its own culture and ambitions the kind of society it wanted. The United States was confident that if these nations maintained independence during the transitional period, they would choose their own version of what the Free World would recognize as a democratic society.<sup>4</sup>

The increasing importance of wars of liberation as a form of conflict did not mean a lessening of the long struggle against communism. Khrushchev's recognition of the grave dangers inherent in general war did not remove the threat of Communist domination--it simply forced the most likely level of conflict to the lower end of the spectrum. The threat of general war remained, but additionally the United States and its allies

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\* Wars of liberation have deep ideological and political roots in Communist anticolonial and revolutionary strategy that dates back to the 1920's. The tactics employed are as old as conflict itself. (Memo, Asst Exec, AC/S(I) to AFCHO, 31 Jan 64, subj: AFCHO Historical Study.)

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faced the challenge of covert or indirect aggression--initiated, sponsored, and supported by the Communist Bloc and masquerading under various guises such as "national liberation movements," "popular revolts," and "civil wars." In most instances, these aggressive actions could not be clearly identified as traditional acts of war, warranting a conventional response on the part of the Free World. Rather, they were deliberately pursued at a level below the threshold of what is commonly recognized as limited war. Being both political and military in nature, they might more properly be identified as the "hot" portion of the cold war. \*5

#### Review of DOD Capabilities

After assuming power in January 1961 the new administration gave greater attention to counterinsurgency in all its aspects. Promises of action to meet Communist-inspired insurgency had been a part of the election campaign, and Khrushchev's speech of 6 January added emphasis to the need for decisive measures. 6

At the National Security Council (NSC) meeting of 1 February 1961

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\* The struggle against these actions has been described by many names, with much confusion and misunderstanding. Among the terms coined, adopted, or applied were protracted conflict, sublimated warfare, subterranean warfare, covert aggression, parawars, guerrilla warfare, counter guerrilla warfare, subversion, insurgency, counterinsurgency, and "peaceful coexistence." During 1962 the term counterinsurgency was adopted throughout the government--shortened by the Air Force to COIN. As defined, it is an all inclusive term including those military, paramilitary, economic, psychological, and civic actions taken by a government to defeat subversive insurgency. The primary military contribution to counterinsurgency programs was considered to be the establishment and maintenance of internal security. In addition, civic actions, contributing toward political and socio-economic reform in countries threatened by Communist subversive aggression, were seen as an integral part of the military counterinsurgency effort. This study is primarily devoted to the military aspects of the COIN program.

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the President directed Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara, in consultation with other interested agencies, to examine ways of placing more emphasis on the development of counterinsurgency forces. The Secretary referred this order to the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) on 10 February. But JCS did not fully realize the priority the President was placing on this new area and gave the directive routine treatment. On 3 March it perfunctorily informed the Secretary of Defense that current forces within the Department of Defense (DOD) were competent to handle any eventuality. JCS did, however, list those actions which it had taken or was taking to develop counterinsurgency forces. Included among these was an "examination of the troop basis of U.S. Armed Forces to insure an adequate capability in all types of units required in counterinsurgency operations or in rendering training assistance to other countries."<sup>7</sup>

During the first half of 1961 there were no forces within the military establishment trained specifically to conduct operations against insurgent forces. The U.S. Army had three Special Forces groups, containing approximately 1,800 men, but these groups were designed and trained to conduct guerrilla warfare in support of conventional military operations. They were not equipped to fight a counterinsurgency action. Special Forces units were prepared to train indigenous forces, but their size and organization limited their capability to operate as fighting units. In addition, the Army had a few psychological warfare units and civic action teams and was establishing a counterinsurgency operations and tactics course at the Special Warfare School, Fort Bragg, N.C. Neither the Navy nor Marines had units specifically organized for this type of warfare. They planned on furnishing naval support with available

conventional units to be trained for unconventional warfare.<sup>8</sup>

The Air Force was no better prepared. It possessed no active-duty units whose primary mission was counterinsurgency operations. In February 1951 the Air Force had authorized the organization of air resupply and communication wings to be trained in psychological and unconventional warfare and clandestine intelligence collection activities. Of the three wings activated, one was used effectively during the Korean War, but the Air Force had reduced these wings to two squadrons by 1956 and then deactivated them in 1957 because "no requirement existed" specifically for such operations. In October 1959 the Air Force changed this policy, directing all medium and assault troop carrier units, active and reserve, to attain and maintain capability to support unconventional warfare. These units possessed limited ability in this area by January 1961.<sup>9</sup>

In March 1961 the Air Force had 1,008 aircraft potentially available to meet counterinsurgency airlift requirements. Of these, 304 were in active service: Tactical Air Command (TAC) possessed 96 C-123's and 96 C-130's; United States Air Forces in Europe (USAFE) operated 64 C-130's; and Pacific Air Forces (PACAF) had 48 C-130's. In addition the Air Force Reserve (AFR) had 608 C-119's and 48 C-123's and the Air National Guard (ANG) possessed 48 SA-16's. Unfortunately, the Air Force had few aircrews trained to utilize these aircraft in counterinsurgency operations. The potential capability existing in the troop carrier units had not been developed. Neither had the Air Force established special doctrines for fighter and bomber operations in support of counterinsurgency--normal tactics and techniques were to apply.<sup>10</sup>

Presidential Message and Air Force Planning

The President showed his intense concern with counterinsurgency in his special budget message to Congress on 28 March 1961. He requested all agencies of the Government--particularly the military organizations--to assist him in dealing with the situation. He pointed to the need for a "strengthened capacity to meet limited and guerrilla warfare--limited military adventures and threats to the security of the Free World that are not large enough to justify the label of 'limited war'." He added, "We need a greater ability to deal with guerrilla forces, insurrections and subversion . . . . We must now be ready to deal with any size force, including small externally supported bands of men; and we must help train local forces to be equally effective."<sup>11</sup>

The week following the President's speech was a period of activity within the military establishment. On 3 April 1961 the Secretary of Defense acknowledged the JCS response of 3 March. He indicated dissatisfaction with it and, in line with the sentiment expressed by the President, informed the service chiefs that "the development by the United States of counter-guerrilla forces is a critical requirement in the defense of the Free World and the action which the Joint Chiefs of Staff have taken, or are taking . . . should be pressed with all possible vigor." On 11 April the Joint Staff levied a requirement on the services to submit a quarterly report on the current status of actions being taken.<sup>12</sup>

The Air Force, for some time, had been actively planning its role in any counterinsurgency situation. Even before the 1960 national election, Air Force leaders foresaw that emphasis would be placed on

counterinsurgency no matter who was elected. They prepared a study on cold war problems and presented it to President Kennedy on 28 March 1961. Liking its outlook, he sent it for review to McGeorge Bundy, Special Assistant to the President for National Security Matters. Many of the study's recommendations were subsequently incorporated in the President's program. For example, the Air Force suggested formulation of specific plans for individual countries where insurgency activity appeared imminent; by the end of 1962 there were detailed plans for 11 different countries. It also proposed formation of a cold war task force; in January 1962 the President formed such a group.\* One of the most significant ideas the Air Force presented to the President was the establishment of an international daily situation room. In April 1961 the White House set up the room. Many other ideas were also adopted, and although it was impossible to gauge completely the impact of the study, Bundy informed the chief of the Cold War Division, Directorate of Plans, that it had been substantial.<sup>13</sup>

Since 1958 the Subsidiary Plans Division, Directorate of Plans, had included cold war matters as part of its assigned mission. In September 1960 the Air Force took more definite action when it established the Cold War Strategy Group to study counterinsurgency matters and initiate appropriate staff actions. The following month the Subsidiary Plans Division was reorganized as the Cold War Division to guide and evaluate all USAF cold war activities. In January 1961, Gen. Curtis E. LeMay, Chief of Staff, discussed the new emphasis on counterinsurgency aspects of the cold war with his major field commanders--thus alerting them to the need

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\* See below, p 19.



for Air Force-wide planning and coordination in this area.

Nevertheless, on 13 February 1961, when it published Current Operations Plan (COP) 11-62, establishing the first overall USAF cold war planning program, the Air Force took no formal notice of counterinsurgency. Issued for the period from 1 July 1961 through 30 June 1962, COP 11-62 supported current national policy and DOD plans and directives pertaining to cold war matters and provided guidance on USAF responsibilities, resources, and tasks in this area. Indicative of the Air Force's appreciation of the intensity of the cold war, the COP required annual submission of supporting plans from all major commands. The plan did not cover counterinsurgency per se because it had been prepared in the fall of 1960, before counterinsurgency responsibilities were emphasized. Not until July 1962 was the COP revised to incorporate specific guidance on counterinsurgency.<sup>14</sup>

The Air Force took concrete action early in April 1961 to provide the forces required for possible counterinsurgency operations. At that time, Headquarters USAF directed the Tactical Air Command to organize and equip a unit to (1) train USAF personnel in World War II-type aircraft and equipment; (2) ready a limited number of aircraft for transfer, as required, to friendly foreign governments; (3) provide advanced training of friendly foreign Air Force personnel on the operation and maintenance of World War II-type aircraft; and (4) develop or improve conventional weapons, tactics, and techniques of employment suitable to the environment of such areas as specified by JCS. Headquarters USAF made creation of the unit a matter of priority and instructed that it be brought to complete operational readiness by 8 September 1961. The unclassified nickname for

the project was Jungle Jim.<sup>15</sup>

Consequently, TAC activated the 4400th Combat Crew Training Squadron at Hurlburt Field, Fla., on 14 April. The squadron's table of organization included 16 SC-47's, 8 B-26's, and 8 T-28B's, with an equal number of aircraft to be readily available if required. By 1 July 1961 the unit was fully manned--125 officers and 235 airmen. Headquarters USAF stipulated that when the squadron, or any part of it, was operationally ready it should be capable of rapid worldwide deployment, the first element of the squadron to be en route to any theater of operations within 12 hours after receipt of movement orders and the last element within 24 hours. The 4400th CCTS would normally carry a 30-day flyaway kit of aircraft spares and accessories, while theater commanders would prestock a 30-day level of ammunition for the squadron.<sup>16</sup>

The 4400th had three specific flying roles: airlift, reconnaissance, and air strike. The squadron's training program prepared small cadres for conducting--at the scene of insurgency activity--the training of friendly foreign air forces in these flying roles. This was in line with the U.S. Government's realization that the primary responsibility for dealing with guerrilla warfare had to be assumed by the indigenous population. Since a guerrilla war was an intimate affair--fought not only with weapons but in the minds of the men who lived in the villages and the hills--representatives of a foreign power could not, by themselves, win a guerrilla war. They could help, however, create conditions under which a war could be won, and they could directly assist those who carried the brunt of the burden in the fight for independence.<sup>17</sup> This is what the 4400th CCTS trained its cadres to do.

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Delineation of DOD Counterinsurgency Responsibilities

The military received further guidance in counterinsurgency operations during June and July 1961. On 28 June the President outlined to JCS its cold war responsibilities:<sup>18</sup>

The Joint Chiefs of Staff have a responsibility for the defense of the nation in the cold war similar to that which they have in conventional hostilities. They should know the military and paramilitary forces and resources available to the Department of Defense, verify their readiness, report on their adequacy, and make appropriate recommendations for their expansion and improvement. I look to the Chiefs to contribute dynamic and imaginative leadership in contributing to the success of the military and paramilitary aspects of cold war programs.

On the same day the President directed the Department of Defense to ascertain its resources and requirements for counterinsurgency activities as well as recommend ways of meeting the latter:<sup>19</sup>

It is important that we anticipate now our possible future requirements in the field of unconventional warfare and paramilitary operations. A first step would be to inventory the paramilitary assets we have in the United States Armed Forces, consider various areas in the world where the implementation of our policy may require indigenous paramilitary forces, and thus arrive at a determination of the goals which we should set in this field. Having determined the assets and the possible requirement, it would then become a matter of developing a plan to meet the deficit.

This, the President said, should be done in coordination with the Department of State and the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA).

The President had not defined precisely the cold war responsibilities of the military services. However, Special Assistant Bundy supplied this the next month. He informed the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Defense, and the Director of CIA that any proposed paramilitary operation in the concept stage should be presented to a specially constituted strategic resources group for initial consideration and for approval as necessary by the President. Thereafter, primary responsibility for planning

[REDACTED]

the operation would be assigned to the department best qualified to perform the task. To obtain maximum effectiveness and flexibility within the context of the cold war, the Department of Defense would normally receive responsibility for overt paramilitary (counterinsurgency) operations. Any large paramilitary operation, wholly or partly covert, was properly a DOD responsibility--with CIA in a supporting role--if requiring significant numbers of military personnel, amounts of military equipment exceeding normal CIA-controlled stocks, or military experiences of a kind and level peculiar to the armed services. This put the Department of Defense squarely into the counterinsurgency field. In the future whenever covert action was basically military, it was to be a JCS, not a CIA, responsibility. The impact of the Bay of Pigs fiasco on this decision was obvious.<sup>20</sup>

#### Actions to Strengthen Counterinsurgency Forces

The President's directive of 28 June for an inventory of paramilitary assets evoked an immediate response. On 5 July, Roswell L. Gilpatric, Deputy Secretary of Defense, informed Bundy that he had scheduled a special review of DOD paramilitary assets and capabilities for an upcoming staff meeting. On the 12th, Brig. Gen. Edward G. Lansdale, USAF, Assistant to the Secretary of Defense for Special Operations, submitted to the Secretary a study entitled "Defense Resources for Unconventional Warfare," which listed those units within the three services that he considered available for counterinsurgency actions. The following day General Lansdale suggested to JCS that this study be used as a point of reference for the discussion with the Secretary of Defense scheduled for 17 July.<sup>21</sup>



The Air Force became concerned with this suggestion because the portion of the Lansdale study relating to its capabilities was inaccurate. The study gave too optimistic a picture of the immediate capability of the 4400th CCTS--strike aircraft were not yet operationally ready--and failed to acknowledge the inherent capabilities of the Air Force's regularly constituted tactical and airlift resources. Furthermore, the Air Staff thought that the study was insufficiently broad to satisfy the President's requirements of 28 June and urged the Secretary of Defense to refer it to JCS for corrections, additions, and formal comment. The Secretary accepted the proposal on 17 July, the study was revised, and JCS informed him on 21 July that it now provided an acceptable basis for discussions on guerrilla, counter guerrilla, and countersubversion operations.<sup>22</sup>

Communist successes in southeastern Asia during the summer of 1961 provided the impetus for additional counterinsurgency capability. On 5 September the Secretary of Defense informed his three departmental secretaries that he intended to establish an experimental command in South Vietnam under the Military Assistance Advisory Group (MAAG), as a laboratory for the development of improved organizational and operational procedures for conducting sublimited war (counterinsurgency-type operations). In addition, he stated that a Latin-American country should be chosen for similar purposes with civic action programs.<sup>23</sup>

The Air Staff was enthusiastic over the decision to establish a "laboratory" command in South Vietnam, since it provided an ideal opportunity for an element of the 4400th CCTS to devise and evaluate tactics and techniques and test aircraft and equipment. The Director of Plans

suggested to General LeMay that the Secretary of the Air Force officially indorse the formation of the experimental command in South Vietnam and indicate the Air Force's desire to participate with an element of the 4400th CCTS.<sup>24</sup>

On 19 September 1961, Secretary Eugene M. Zuckert gave his "hearty" indorsement to the plan, calling McNamara's attention to the existing capabilities of the 4400th CCTS, which had achieved operationally ready status a few days earlier. He recommended that an element of the 4400th--possibly composed of four SC-47's, four B-26's, and four T-28's--be given priority consideration as one of the operational units of the experimental command. He also suggested that this element be attached to ARPA's\* Combat Test and Development Center in South Vietnam to assist in developing techniques and equipment for use against the Viet Cong insurgents. Other aircraft could be added to the element for testing purposes as required.<sup>25</sup>

Secretary McNamara found the proposal attractive and indicated his belief that the 4400th element would provide a useful, added capability to the MAAG in Vietnam. On 3 October he asked JCS for its opinion. The Joint Chiefs agreed to the project, and Headquarters USAF began coordinating the projected move with PACAF on 6 October. On 12 October, JCS informed CINCPAC that the decision on placing an element of the 4400th with MAAG, Vietnam, had been made affirmatively "at the highest governmental level."<sup>26</sup>

The detachment--nicknamed Farm Gate--deployed in November 1961 with

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\* Advanced Research Projects Agency, OSD.

four SC-47's, four RB-26's, eight T-28's, and 151 personnel. Since policy did not permit the use of tactical bombers in southeastern Asia and the four B-26's possessed photographic capability, the Air Force had redesignated them as RB-26's. The detachment operated from Bien Hoa airfield, approximately 28 miles from Saigon. On 6 December 1961 the Air Force received authority for Farm Gate aircraft to participate in operations against the Viet Cong, provided at least one Vietnamese crew member was aboard each strike aircraft. During the week of 18 December 1961 the unit flew its first operational sorties. As of 7 January 1962, Farm Gate aircraft had made 59 operational flights, consisting of strikes, photo-reconnaissance, troop and supply drops, and transport support missions.<sup>27</sup>

The Air Force's medium and assault troop carrier units continued to provide most of the airlift support for the training and operations of Army airborne units and Special Forces throughout the year, both in the United States and overseas. In a national emergency they could be assisted by four special-purpose ANG troop carrier squadrons (SA-16 equipped). Conventional air strike and reconnaissance units possessed an inherent capability to contribute to counterinsurgency operations, the extent of their usefulness obviously depending on the level of the conflict.<sup>28</sup>

Air Force leaders recognized, however, that as Army Special Forces grew in number, there would be increasing demands for their support. In August, Army Special Forces had 377 men in Okinawa, 345 in Germany, and over 1,500 at Fort Bragg, N.C. Since these forces were to be increased, the Air Force proposed an expansion of the 4400th to meet the additional requirements. This would mean enlarging the squadron to group size, with approximately 800 personnel, 16 T-28's, 16 B-26's, 12 C-47's, 12 C-46's,

[REDACTED]

and 8 L-28's. Target date for completion was 30 June 1962. The Air Force Council approved the proposal on 8 August and the Chief of Staff on 19 December 1961.<sup>29</sup>

The Air Force concerned itself also with supporting CIA wartime operations. The intelligence agency had accepted requirements from various unified and specified commands to conduct wartime operations in the fields of unconventional warfare, psychological warfare, and clandestine intelligence collection. To accomplish this, CIA required military airlift to move personnel and materiel into and out of enemy-held territory. While many of these support needs could be met by C-130's and SA-16's of the USAF and ANG troop carrier units, CIA felt that the aircraft did not possess the short takeoff and landing (STOL) capability required to support certain planned wartime operations. Consequently, in August 1961, CIA asked JCS to consider development of an aircraft that would combine some of the characteristics of a high-performance aircraft with those of the light liaison-type plane. Pending such development, CIA requested that JCS consider augmenting troop carrier units with a few small aircraft possessing STOL characteristics.<sup>30</sup>

The Air Force carefully studied CIA's augmentation request and replied through JCS in October. The Chief of Staff pointed to the 4400th CCTS, which, as part of its mission, expected to fulfill CIA requirements. The unit possessed C-47's, B-26's, and T-28's and was in the process of adding STOL aircraft. The Air Force had already established a formal operational requirement for a long-range recovery aircraft that might meet CIA requirements, and proposals for development were under consideration. To aid in making a decision, Headquarters USAF suggested that

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CIA provide details on its requirements--specifically, location of planned infiltration/exfiltration sorties, maximum number of people to be transported, and weight and size of the cargo. Since CINCEUR and CINCPAC supported CIA's requirements, the Air Force also requested information from them to provide a basis for determining quantitative requirements for STOL aircraft.<sup>31</sup>

Summary of Actions--1961

The Air Force took many concrete actions during 1961 to appraise and improve its counterinsurgency warfare capabilities. It organized, trained, and equipped the 4400th Combat Crew Training Squadron, dispatched an element of the squadron (two C-47's and their crews) to Mali (Africa) to train the local armed force in airborne operations, and sent a detachment (Farm Gate) to Vietnam to assist the Vietnamese Air Force (VNAF) in counterinsurgency operations. In line with the President's demand that senior military officers be fully indoctrinated in counterinsurgency operations, a number of USAF officers made orientation visits to Laos and South Vietnam. The Air Force inaugurated an experimental project in defoliation of the jungle (Ranch Hand) in Vietnam, furnishing six specially equipped C-123 aircraft.

In response to the needs of CIA and other military requirements, Headquarters USAF let a research and development contract to develop prototype equipment for low-level, day or night, all-weather penetration of unfriendly territory by transport aircraft. In addition, the Air Force contracted for a light STOL aircraft--the L-28 (Helio-Courier)--14 to be delivered to the 4400th by 30 June 1962, with a gradual buildup to 32 aircraft (later reduced to 20).

To supply additional airlift support for Vietnamese operations, TAC augmented PACAF strength in December with a squadron of 16 C-123's (Mule Train). The Air Force also started the expansion of the 4400th CCTS to a four-squadron group, the acquisition of modern helicopters to meet requirements of the unified commanders, and the preparation of an additional detachment of the 4400th for rotational use in South Vietnam.<sup>32</sup>

## II. EXPANDING THE USAF COUNTERINSURGENCY CAPABILITY

The Administration continued to feel through the closing months of 1961 that the Defense Department was devoting insufficient attention to counterinsurgency. In October, Bundy informed Secretary McNamara that DOD had prepared extensive papers evaluating paramilitary (counterinsurgency) requirements but they had not been available when planning the fiscal year 1963 budget. He warned that unless the results of these evaluations were used in current budget considerations another year would be lost or the department would face possible "jury rig" actions at the last minute.<sup>1</sup>

### Presidential Discontent

On 11 January 1962, President Kennedy bluntly informed McNamara that the Defense Department was not giving the "necessary degree of attention and effort to the threat of Communist-directed" insurgency, and he insisted that "the effort devoted to this challenge should be comparable in importance to preparations for conventional warfare." The President made several concrete recommendations for attaining this comparability. Namely, he urged that the services make a thorough study of their officer training programs--beginning at the service academy level and extending through the National War College--to determine whether sufficient instruction in counterinsurgency was being offered. He also called for expediting the program of sending selected officers to South Vietnam to give them combat experience in counterinsurgency operations. The President directed special training for officers assigned to MAAG's and to embassies of countries

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where threats of Communist subversion existed. Finally, he requested that the Army designate a general officer as the focal point for its counterinsurgency activities and JCS also designate a general officer in the Joint Staff to perform similar functions. The President left to the Secretary's judgment similar actions in the Air Force, Navy, and Marines. President Kennedy concluded, "As you perceive from my foregoing remarks, in preparing to meet 'Wars of Liberation' I should like the DOD to move to a new level of increased activity across the board. I expect to direct similar action in other executive departments which have a part to play in this matter."<sup>2</sup>

To assure the proper coordination and to forestall unwarranted duplication on the numerous counterinsurgency actions under way in the military services, the State Department, and the CIA, President Kennedy, on 18 January 1962, appointed the Special Group (Counterinsurgency) as a monitoring agency. Its chairman was Gen. Maxwell D. Taylor, the Military Representative of the President. Other members included the Attorney General, Robert Kennedy; Deputy Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs, Alexis Johnson; Deputy Secretary of Defense, Roswell Gilpatric; Chairman of JCS, Gen. Lyman L. Lemnitzer; Director of CIA, John A. McCone; Administrator, Agency for International Development, Fowler Hamilton; and Special Assistant Bundy.<sup>3</sup>

The functions of the Special Group were to (1) insure proper recognition throughout the U.S. Government that subversive insurgency was a major form of politico-military conflict equal in importance to conventional warfare; (2) insure that such recognition was adequately reflected in the organization, training, equipment, and doctrine of the U.S. armed

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forces and in the programs conducted by all other departments and agencies abroad; (3) keep under review the adequacy of U.S. resources to deal with actual operational situations of insurgency and make appropriate recommendations to increase or adjust these resources; and (4) insure the development of adequate interdepartmental programs aimed at preventing or defeating insurgency in countries and regions specifically assigned to the Special Group.<sup>4</sup>

The President specified that in performing these functions the members of the group would act on behalf of their respective departments and agencies, confine themselves to establishing broad lines of counterinsurgency policy, verify progress in the implementation of approved programs, and make decisions on interdepartmental issues arising out of such programs.<sup>5</sup>

Secretary McNamara referred the President's demands for greater Defense Department emphasis to JCS and requested the services to prepare information for formulating a reply. Many officials felt, however, that much of the President's concern stemmed from inadequate knowledge of the true state of readiness in the counterinsurgency program. Information was available. As early as 11 April 1961 the Joint Staff had established a requirement for a quarterly status report from each service, and JCS received the first on 1 June 1961, the second on 28 August, and the third on 23 December. The Joint Chiefs had not forwarded the first two reports to the Secretary of Defense but presented a consolidated version of the third set of reports--after formal staffing and coordination--to him on 8 January 1962. The report covered the entire "spectrum" of counterinsurgency, and the Air Force maintained that it answered most of the

President's questions. Therefore the Air Force favored sending this status report to the President with additional information as deemed necessary.<sup>6</sup>

The Army and the Joint Staff were tempted to take the position that the military had met all requirements, taken all necessary actions, developed an adequate capability, and only needed a political decision and CIA-State Department participation. The Air Force held this was a dangerous approach and counseled that the reply to the President should state--and show--that considerable progress had been made in developing both a training program and an operational capability but that much remained to be accomplished.<sup>7</sup>

#### Air Force Progress

In his 11 January directive, President Kennedy had specifically indicated dissatisfaction with the Army's counterinsurgency effort but made no mention of the Air Force's program. A check with Brig. Gen. Godfrey T. McHugh, Kennedy's Air Force Aide, revealed however that the President was not particularly pleased with it. Because of this, the Air Force endeavored to answer each applicable point raised in the directive. It insisted that its counterinsurgency measures were "comparable in importance" to its preparations for conventional warfare and that it had established a continuing program to assure that the importance of counterinsurgency was reflected in the organization, training, equipment, and doctrine of the Air Force.

In reference to the President's interest in having a general officer as the focal point for counterinsurgency matters, the Air Force reported that the Deputy Director of Plans for Policy--a general officer--had

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already assumed this role and his Cold War Division had the responsibility for counterinsurgency planning. Also the Directorate of Operations had just organized the Sub-Limited War Group to handle operational matters. (The group became the Counterinsurgency Division on 22 March.)

The Air Force had also formed a task force within the Directorate of Plans to review pertinent White House directives on counterinsurgency and identify areas and specific programs requiring additional attention and effort. Immediately after 11 January the Air Force reorganized the task force and directed it to prepare a Plan of Action (POA) to insure that the Air Force conducted these efforts in an orderly, cohesive, and effective manner. On 1 February 1962 the Vice Chief of Staff issued the POA as a directive to the Air Staff, outlining counterinsurgency responsibilities and identifying 23<sup>4</sup> specific actions to be taken.

The Air Force recognized that there were deficiencies in its counterinsurgency training program and inaugurated an extensive review of all training courses to insure adequate coverage. The Air Force Academy gave the subject sufficient emphasis, but Air University programs needed bolstering, so the Air Force began a special counterinsurgency course there in mid-1962. It indorsed the practice of sending senior colonels and generals to South Vietnam for orientation and training and of providing special training to officers selected as air attaches or for assignment to MAAG's and missions. In fact, the Air Force had started to send officers to Southeast Asia late in 1961 and, based on the success of these visits, had begun identifying those positions in both Headquarters USAF and the major commands that required experience and in-country training in counterinsurgency operations. The first of these officers left for Southeast

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Asia late in January.<sup>9</sup>

The JCS report--forwarded to the Secretary of Defense on 27 January 1962 in answer to the President's criticisms--included an Air Force account of its current position. The report described Air Force doctrine for establishing specially organized, trained, and equipped units for counterinsurgency operations. These specialized units--in being or projected--were tailored in size and composition to meet the specific needs of each situation and were highly mobile and capable of conducting operations from isolated locations. If they could not handle a particular task, conventional tactical units--medium and assault troop carrier squadrons, fighter-bomber and reconnaissance squadrons, and the Composite Air Strike Force (CSAF)--could be used. The Air Force believed that this doctrinal concept was adequate to meet the needs of the present, particularly since it was flexible and subject to quick modification.<sup>10</sup>

The Vice Chief of Staff immediately informed the major commands of the increased interest in counterinsurgency. He told the commanders on 31 January that he had received "the distinct impression" at a meeting with the President that the chief executive was not pleased with progress to date and that the Air Force should put more effort, intelligence, and personnel to improving its capabilities. The Vice Chief instructed the commanders to support these objectives and to indoctrinate fully all of their personnel.<sup>11</sup>

While this guidance to all major commanders emphasized the Administration's approach to the counterinsurgency program and urged that it be supported fully, Headquarters USAF had not lost track of the primary threat to this country--a surprise nuclear attack. The basic USAF mission

was to deter any force from attacking the United States or, failing that, to destroy it. It was this strategic deterrent capability that made it possible and practical to tailor and use various types of small war forces. Therefore the counterinsurgency capabilities that the Air Force was currently improving were in addition to--not in lieu of--the strategic capabilities.<sup>12</sup>

During January 1962 the work of the preceding year began to show concrete results. Farm Gate aircrews were training Vietnamese Air Force personnel in the conduct of air support of counterinsurgency operations and were also flying operational training missions with VNAF personnel. In December the Chief of Staff had approved the proposal to upgrade the 4400th from squadron to group status (which would be done in March 1962), increasing the unit's aircraft from 32 to 64 and its personnel strength from 352 to 792.<sup>13</sup>

Based on its short period of combat experience in South Vietnam, the Air Force in February 1962 presented JCS with a plan for establishing a quick reaction force (QRF). This force, deployed at nine different sites, would provide a quick responsive military capability within 50 miles of any Vietnamese village. Each QRF unit would contain a number of Vietnamese army airborne troops, sufficient USAF or VNAF aircraft to provide airlift, and an element of VNAF strike aircraft (T-28's). Communication teams--Vietnamese when properly trained--were to be placed in villages to communicate with the QRF's and to assist them into the objective area during periods of Viet Cong attack. In addition, the Vietnamese armed forces would be equipped and trained to work in conjunction with QRF units.<sup>14</sup>

This concept complemented the Vietnamese government's "strategic hamlet" plan, which consisted of two basic principles: to establish an effective national government presence in the lowest rural population unit--the hamlet--and to improve security in the countryside by isolating the rural population from Viet Cong pressure. Each hamlet contained defense works behind which the inhabitants could fight off an attack until help arrived.<sup>15</sup>

JCS approved in principle the QRF concept and on 13 March 1962 forwarded it to CINCPAC for his information and use. In April, General LeMay urged an additional step--that JCS secure CINCPAC's evaluation and then take measures to convert the plan into reality. In May the CINCPAC staff recommended that it be incorporated in the South Vietnam counterinsurgency plan then being prepared. By the fall of 1962 the various counterinsurgency plans for Southeast Asia reflected the influence of the QRF concept.<sup>16</sup>

#### Beginning of Service Struggle Over Roles and Missions

The Army's response to the President's directive of 11 January 1962 indicated to Air Force leaders a desire on the part of the Army to assume full responsibility for the military counterinsurgency mission. On 16 January the Army sent the Secretary of Defense a copy of a plan for employing counterinsurgency forces. While the plan was a comprehensive concept outlining in detail how Army forces would be used to support counterinsurgency efforts, it was also extremely narrow in scope--describing counterinsurgency almost entirely in terms of military actions. Army leaders saw counterinsurgency operations as being conducted primarily in an environment of people who live on the land--an environment of soldiers

and ground operations. Thus, the Army maintained, primary responsibility for counterinsurgency belonged to the national indigenous army. With this as a premise, the Army asserted that it should provide the U.S. forces to support the indigenous army. In fact, the Army declared that it could provide forces to put its plan into operation whenever called upon to do so.<sup>17</sup>

Ten days later Deputy Secretary Gilpatric informed the Army that its proposal appeared upon initial examination to offer considerable promise, and that it was under careful study within OSD. He added that General Lansdale would prepare an overall DOD concept for review by the Special Group (Counterinsurgency). On 5 February General Lansdale forwarded the Army's proposal to the Joint Staff and asked that it be analyzed and evaluated. He also wanted Joint Staff comments and suggestions on related Air Force and Navy counterinsurgency programs.<sup>18</sup>

The Air Force believed that the Army's concept, limiting counterinsurgency operations to the environment of people who lived on the land, was an oversimplification of the basic problem. Counterinsurgency normally involved all parts of a nation's social, economic, and governmental structure, not one segment alone; it required the total application of the nation's resources and not just that of the national army. On this basis, the Air Force maintained that no single U.S. service had all the resources to meet counterinsurgency requirements; air, sea, and land forces each had significant contributions to make.<sup>19</sup>

On 13 February the USAF Chief of Staff informed JCS that the Air Force generally agreed with the basic principles of the Army proposal but objected to the unilateral view of a problem with triservice implications.

General LeMay warned that each governmental agency--not only the Army-- was approaching counterinsurgency responsibilities and problems in terms of its own interests, and that the tendency for each service to establish its own worldwide requirements was in reality limiting U.S. flexibility of response. Furthermore, he stated, attempts to consolidate requirements and assets for specific operations--such as South Vietnam-- had thus far produced only a series of unilateral segments rather than a unified program. To alter this situation, the Air Force had prepared and was now forwarding to JCS and General Lansdale a conceptual study based on a DOD view rather than a unilateral service view.

The Air Force study emphasized the total national effort required in counterinsurgency operations and listed the particular skills and "know-how" of the Navy and Air Force useful in counterinsurgency--capabilities ignored in the Army paper. Equally important, the study considered prevention of insurgency situations as opposed to the Army's emphasis on combatting insurgency. In this regard, the Air Force brought out the importance of communications and air transportation in helping an indigenous government maintain control of its outlying districts. Lastly, the Air Force stressed the necessity of a coordinated U.S. and internal DOD approach to the problem. General LeMay requested that the study be considered by the Joint Staff along with the Army's study.<sup>20</sup>

The Joint Staff accepted General LeMay's proposal, recommended that the Army plan be withdrawn, and that a joint position be developed based on the USAF conceptual study. The Army posed no objection to a joint-service paper; however, it requested that its own concept be presented without delay to the Special Group. The Air Force objected, insisting



that unilateral views should not go out of the Defense Department. Instead, a triservice task force should quickly develop a joint doctrine that the Secretary of Defense could present to the Special Group.<sup>21</sup>

Again, the Joint Staff generally supported the Air Force position. At its recommendation, JCS on 28 February notified OSD that the Joint Staff, in cooperation with the services, would formulate joint conceptual and doctrinal guidance, to be ready by 1 April.\* On this basis, JCS asked that the Secretary of Defense consider deferring the submission of the Army concept to the Special Group. (The Air Force would have preferred that JCS delete the word "consider.")<sup>22</sup>

#### USAF Actions to Improve Its Posture

In the struggle to preserve the Air Force mission in counterinsurgency operations, USAF planners recognized that if the Air Force failed to provide adequate air support to the Army, the Army would furnish its own. They recognized also that if counterinsurgency operations were to be kept under joint control--without the Air Force being labeled as obstructionist--the Air Force would have to improve its "extremely limited" capability in this area. In March the Deputy Director of Plans for Policy suggested a reorganization within the Directorate of Plans to provide a staff capability equal to that possessed by the Joint Staff and the Army. They had increased the number of personnel assigned to counterinsurgency matters and elevated their staff organizations to positions directly subordinate to the Director of the Joint Staff and the Chief of Staff, Army.<sup>23</sup>

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\* See below, p 34.

Headquarters USAF took a step in this direction on 28 March when the Director of Plans was named the central point of contact in the Air Staff on counterinsurgency matters for higher governmental echelons. This designation provided a central office, directly responsive to the Chief of Staff and his Operations Deputy, to monitor and coordinate all Air Staff actions while keeping intact the normal functions and responsibilities of staff elements. Each Air Staff organization retained responsibility for counterinsurgency matters within the functional area.<sup>24</sup>

The Deputy Director for Policy also recommended that the Air Force (1) undertake a C-123 modification program to provide a low-cost means of meeting existing STOL requirements; (2) consider the procurement of helicopters having an airlift capability equal to or greater than the Army's Caribou; (3) identify USAF units with Army counterparts in official documents and news releases; (4) support fully Army counterinsurgency training and operational exercises; and (5) acquire greater psychological warfare capability in order to obtain maximum effectiveness from its air operations.<sup>25</sup>

During the spring of 1962 the Air Force continued to expand those forces designated specifically for counterinsurgency. The 4400th Combat Crew Training Squadron attained group status on 20 March 1962. The new organization--with authorizations of 792 personnel and 64 aircraft--contained a headquarters, a tactical reconnaissance squadron, an air transport squadron, and an air materiel squadron. As of 31 March, the group had 434 personnel assigned, 184 more arrived early in April, and the others were due to arrive prior to 24 May.

On 19 April, Headquarters USAF directed the Tactical Air Command to establish the USAF Special Air Warfare Center (SAWC) at Eglin AFB, Fla.

At this time, TAC activated--as part of SAWC--the 1st Air Commando Group and the 1st Combat Applications Group. The 1st Air Commando Group took over the functions, units, personnel, and equipment of the 4400th CCTG. The 1st Combat Applications Group assumed responsibility for developing the doctrines, tactics, procedures, and equipment employed by the Air Force in counterinsurgency operations. On 27 April, SAWC and its two subordinate groups became operational, with an authorized strength of 860 personnel and 82 aircraft.<sup>26</sup>

Force development to this point had been from within Air Force programmed resources in money, materiel, and personnel. It was becoming obvious, however, that to meet the growing requirements for counterinsurgency forces, authorization for additional men and equipment would have to be obtained from the Secretary of Defense. Consequently, in April 1962, USAF planners prepared a preliminary Program Change Proposal (PCP), based on the known and anticipated counterinsurgency requirements of CINCEUR, CINCPAC, CINCARIB, and COMTAC, although they did not receive firm requirements from the unified and component commands until November-December 1962--too late to be of use in formulating this PCP.

The PCP listed several major objectives: conversion of the 1st Air Commando Group to wing status with two strike/reconnaissance squadrons and two combat cargo squadrons; creation of a second wing, similar to the first but having an additional helicopter squadron with oversea detachments in Europe and in the Pacific; conversion of the 1st Combat Applications Group to wing level; and assignment of all three wings to SAWC. In addition, the PCP called for a separate composite squadron in the Caribbean Air Command as a force specifically oriented toward Latin

America. Activation of this expanded force would require DOD support in the form of 5,000 additional manpower authorizations and an additional \$50 million in fiscal year 1963. The number of aircraft would increase from 64 to 254. Military personnel directly assigned to counterinsurgency forces would grow to almost 6,500 by mid-1967. The Air Force estimated the cost of the program for the fiscal year 1962-67 period at \$863.5 million--\$128 million for research and development, \$491.4 million for equipment and facilities, and \$244.1 million for operating costs.<sup>27</sup>

General LeMay reviewed the draft PCP and, on 23 April 1962, approved that portion dealing with fiscal year 1963. He then asked Secretary Zuckert to seek, as a matter of urgency, OSD authorizations for the required manpower and budgetary resources. LeMay maintained that the proposed expansion was essential to provide the Air Force with the capability of conducting highly specialized operations in areas where no modern air defense existed. While tactical forces could be utilized, they were not readily suitable and their use degraded the USAF tactical operational capability for limited and general war.<sup>28</sup>

Secretary Zuckert recognized the urgency of the situation, informed the Secretary of Defense on 9 May of those actions taken and planned, and submitted a preliminary outline of the PCP for OSD's use in its early planning and considerations. Two weeks later, Zuckert forwarded the formal PCP. The Secretary believed that the proposed counterinsurgency program was in line with the President's guidance. He considered the program to be sound and was convinced that it did not impinge on the roles and missions of the other services. Thus, Air Force requirements for counterinsurgency operations included airlift, reconnaissance, and strike

elements--to be used in training friendly foreign military units and in providing air support to both U.S. and allied counterinsurgency forces.<sup>29</sup>

OSD Decision on Army-Air Force Controversy

Since this was the first PCP on counterinsurgency that he had received, Secretary McNamara asked the other services to submit similar proposals. In the interim, he withheld decision on the Air Force's. It was at this time that the divergent views of the Army and the Air Force came into the open.<sup>30</sup>

The Army favored single-service responsibility for counterinsurgency activities throughout the world--with the Army assigned primary responsibility. It took the position that just as the Air Force was assigned primary responsibility for strategic warfare, the Army should have clear-cut dominance in the field of ground combat, including counterinsurgency. The Air Force's efforts to build up its special warfare organization appeared to Army leaders to be a grab for missions traditionally assigned to the Army and Marine Corps.<sup>31</sup>

The PCP submitted by the Army exemplified these views. It proposed the activation of a special warfare brigade with its own aviation support. The Army stated that since counterinsurgency operations took place mainly in an environment of armies, it was not necessary or in the national interest for the Air Force to spend large sums of money on special-purpose forces which merely duplicated--in a less suitable configuration--the units, aircraft, and capabilities already present in the Army structure for battlefield operations.<sup>32</sup>

Air Force planners recognized this approach as a clear attempt by the Army to assume the entire counterinsurgency responsibility, including

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the Air Force aviation role. Traditionally the Army had seen itself as the service solely responsible for land warfare, but during World War II it had recognized that victory was attained by the combined efforts of air, ground, and naval forces. As early as May 1941 official Army doctrine stated:<sup>33</sup>

No one arm wins battles. The combined action of all arms and services is essential to success . . . . The operations of both surface and air forces are directed to the attainment of a common objective . . . . The ultimate objective of all military operations is the destruction of the enemy's armed forces in battle.

In the years after World War II and the Korean War the Army began returning to its older position, claiming sole responsibility for control of land warfare. It was therefore at variance with the official counterinsurgency objectives of the Department of Defense. The Air Force agreed with and supported the statement of the Secretary of Defense in his appearance before the House Subcommittee on DOD Appropriations on 1 February 1962. At this time, Secretary McNamara said:<sup>34</sup>

It is not a case of each service being capable of doing the whole job, because no one service has the capability or could easily acquire the capability of doing the whole job. It is a case of each service being in a position to contribute their specialized techniques to do the job.

In July 1962 the Air Force revised the USAF Current Operations Plan 11-62--first issued on 13 February 1961. The revision, USAF Cold War Plan 11-63, dealt with counterinsurgency at considerable length. It set forth basic concepts, outlined responsibilities of Headquarters USAF and the major commands, and described tasks involving counter guerrilla warfare operations and civic actions. It also specified supporting actions that USAF units would undertake in such areas as training, personnel, and intelligence.<sup>35</sup>

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The Air Force possessed certain inherent capabilities that were well suited to fulfilling the specialized requirements of counterinsurgency operations. Specifically, the Air Force--through the proper application of airpower--could meet requirements for current reconnaissance, highly accurate firepower delivery to support ground troops, quick reaction and flexibility, rapid transport and resupply of ground forces, casualty evacuation, and rapid and dependable communications over enemy territory.

The Air Force felt that the Army intended to ignore these USAF capabilities and conduct air-ground support, airborne delivery of personnel, resupply, and psychological warfare with organic Army aircraft. The Air Force maintained this was unwarranted duplication, since it had the experience, training, facilities, and crews available for tactical support of ground forces. It further maintained that if USAF proposals to expand aircraft inventory and number of units duplicated Army efforts, it was because the Army was flagrantly violating long-time DOD directives that defined service roles and missions regarding the use of aircraft. The Air Force concurred in that portion of the Army's PCP calling for expansion of ground combat capabilities, but it did not consider the proposal to increase the number of Army air instructors and aircrews justifiable.<sup>36</sup>

The Air Force argued from a firm basis. Air support of forces engaged in counterinsurgency operations was an integral part of the tactical air functions assigned to the Air Force and was so reflected in all manuals and directives published jointly by the Army and Air Force. The Air Force could, in addition, cite the Joint Counterinsurgency Concept and Doctrine Guidance issued by JCS on 5 April. This reflected the team concept of joint operations that the Air Force followed in developing

its counterinsurgency plans. It called for organizing, equipping, and providing USAF forces for counterinsurgency operations; for developing-- in coordination with the other services--the doctrine, tactics, procedures, and equipment employed by USAF forces in joint operations; and for participating with the other services in joint training. However, like many joint guidance and policy papers, it was broad in scope and subject to divergent interpretations. It was a guidance paper, not a directive keyed to a specific set of conditions.<sup>37</sup>

JCS examined the Army and the Air Force PCP's carefully and, on 15 August, forwarded split recommendations to the Secretary of Defense. A summary of the Army and Air Force positions pinpointed the service differences over who should provide, operate, and control counterinsurgency aviation. The Army maintained that for economy of effort, avoidance of duplication, and the orderly marshaling of military assets, the Air Force should not develop or acquire aircraft or create organizations that duplicated those already in existence or being developed by the Army. The Air Force held that each service must contribute to counterinsurgency those things peculiar to it, that the air support of counterinsurgency forces was an integral part of its assigned tactical air function, and that acceptance of the USAF PCP would provide a logical and necessary expansion of the Air Force's existing capability to meet the threat of subversive insurgency. JCS recognized the inconsistency in these two positions but informed Secretary McNamara that there was sufficient information available to approve substantial portions of both the Army and Air Force PCP's as they applied to airpower.<sup>38</sup>

The Secretary of Defense did not agree with the JCS views on either



PCP. On 27 August 1962, Deputy Secretary Gilpatric informed the Army that while OSD approved the proposed fiscal year 1963 expansion of the ground element of the Special Forces, it rejected expansion of the Army's aviation element. At the same time, OSD turned down the USAF PCP--without prejudice to current Jungle Jim operations--and instructed the Air Force not to expand its authorized counterinsurgency forces without prior approval. It based this decision on the belief that counterinsurgency aviation requirements could be met from existing and currently programmed resources. These two decisions represented a partial, though negative, victory for the Air Force position. Temporarily at least, the Army's desire to add to its aviation strength was denied, while the Air Force's role of supporting counterinsurgency ground forces was maintained intact. The question of expanding the supporting air forces remained open.<sup>39</sup>

#### The Search for Counterinsurgency Aircraft

The Air Force had used general-purpose tactical aircraft--either World War II vintage or postwar training vehicles--from the beginning of its counterinsurgency operations because these aircraft came the closest to meeting the combat capability requirements, were available, and were in the inventories of the Military Assistance Program (MAP) recipient countries. By early 1962, however, the Air Staff realized that new aircraft would be required as counterinsurgency units gained operational experience and their aircraft became increasingly obsolescent. In February 1962, Headquarters USAF established a continuing program to analyze possible new aircraft for this role and to maintain up-to-date information on current aircraft excess to other requirements.<sup>40</sup>

In the rejected PCP, the Air Force recognized the need for obtaining

better counterinsurgency aircraft on both an interim (1963-65) and long-term (1966-70) basis. For the interim period, the Air Force proposed improving its strike/reconnaissance capability by modifying the T-28. The Air Force planned a T-28D "growth model" that would have a greater weapon capability with the addition of six external-store pylons to carry 3,000 pounds of bombs; have greater performance capability with the installation of a 1,425-horsepower engine; and possess an intelligence capability with the inclusion of a photo-reconnaissance package. The Air Force requested funds to provide three squadrons of the modified aircraft.

In the airlift area, the Air Force expected the C-123 and C-130 transports--with certain modifications--to assume most of the workload during the interim period. To improve the versatility of its C-123 fleet, TAC supplied each aircraft with a fully equipped navigator station and ferry fuel and oil tanks. As a special project, the Air Force modified one C-123 during mid-1962 to improve its STOL capability. The aircraft was fitted with two jet engines for added thrust and a drogue chute to obtain the shortest possible landing roll. During the summer, an operational evaluation of a modified C-130B disclosed means of improving the aircraft's STOL capability. As an immediate step to fulfill those airlift requirements that neither the C-123 nor the C-130B could handle, the Air Force stated a requirement in the PCP for a long-range rotary-wing support system.<sup>41</sup>

The Air Force maintained that the long-term requirements could be met only through procurement of new V/STOL aircraft.\* Early in 1962

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\* V/STOL aircraft have either a short or vertical takeoff and landing capability.

it had drawn up draft SOR's (specific operational requirement) for a V/STOL fighter aircraft and a V/STOL assault transport. By March, Headquarters USAF had distributed these drafts to the major commands for coordination and comment.<sup>42</sup>

The PCP reflected this action. It contained a requirement for 247 V/STOL aircraft to be available by fiscal year 1970. This included 145 CFX-2 V/STOL fighters, 78 CX-8 V/STOL transports, and--pending development and procurement of the V/STOL transport--24 HX-2 helicopters. The OSD disapproval of the PCP on 27 August, however, caused the Air Force to drop any further action to validate the SOR's.<sup>43</sup>

The Navy was also interested in developing counterinsurgency aircraft. The Chief of Naval Operations, in April 1962, recommended to JCS that since counterinsurgency actions were likely to continue for years in South Vietnam and perhaps elsewhere, the requirements for and availability of counterinsurgency aircraft should be determined. He recommended that the Joint Staff study and determine the type and number of aircraft in service inventories that could be utilized for counterinsurgency; the availability of aircraft in production, including civil types, that could be easily modified to provide counterinsurgency air support; and the extent of any research and development effort.<sup>44</sup>

After studying the matter, the Joint Staff reported in May that there would not be enough aircraft available from nonoperational stocks of the military services to meet future demands should the rate of new requirements continue at the rate of the preceding 15 months. The Joint Staff concluded that short-term requirements could be met by using older aircraft as they phased out of the operational forces, by diverting some

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aircraft from an expanded production program, and by procuring modified civilian aircraft. The Joint Staff recommended that the services meet long-term requirements by developing aircraft specifically designed for counterinsurgency operations.<sup>45</sup>

Some members of the Air Staff feared that the Army-Navy interest in counterinsurgency air support could lead to a diminishing of the Air Force mission in this area of conflict. In June, Maj. Gen. Cecil H. Childre, Assistant DCS/Plans and Programs, expressed the view that the DOD policy of using Vietnam as a field laboratory lent encouragement to the Army and Navy to expand their air capability in the counterinsurgency field. He noted that experience in Vietnam had highlighted the effectiveness of and the need for various types of airpower but had also exposed the inadequacy of the Air Force's equipment to do the job. He warned that if the Air Force did not strengthen and expand its air capability the other services would move into the void. Therefore, in addition to modifying existing aircraft for the interim period and acquiring V/STOL aircraft for the long term, the Air Force should secure new aircraft to fill the gap until the long-term requirements could be met. Childre insisted that the Air Force needed better aircraft immediately for both the strike/reconnaissance and the transport missions and should give top priority to obtaining them lest its counterinsurgency role be lost.<sup>46</sup>

In the fall of 1962 the Director of Defense Research and Engineering advocated procurement of a light attack airplane specifically for counterinsurgency operations. Based on a Marine standard operational requirement (Marine SOR IT3.1), the aircraft would have two turboprop engines, a maximum gross weight of 6,500 pounds, the ability to take off over a 50-foot

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obstacle within 500 feet, a maximum cruise speed of 300 knots, a combat radius of 50 miles (with a loiter capability of two hours). DDR&E advocated the development of this aircraft as a joint-service venture not only for U.S. forces but for MAP countries as well.<sup>47</sup>

On 28 November, General LeMay informed Secretary Zuckert that the DDR&E proposal was unacceptable. LeMay agreed that there was a need to replace the T-6's and T-28's used by MAP countries and that both the Air Force and MAP countries should be equipped with the same type of aircraft. However, he had serious reservations on committing significant resources to developing a specialized aircraft that had no potential for other than counterinsurgency operations. LeMay pointed out that (1) the proposed aircraft, except for takeoff characteristics, possessed less performance than could be obtained in any existing primary jet trainer modified for carrying weapons; (2) there was serious doubt on the validity of the estimated research, development, and procurement costs; (3) a completely new system would create new and distinct training and logistical requirements; and (4) most MAP countries would not want a turboprop aircraft because it lacked the prestige appeal of a turbojet.<sup>48</sup>

As a substitute to DDR&E's proposal, the Air Force advocated modifying the T-37 jet aircraft as a trainer/MAP/COIN follow-on to the T-28. Based on combat experience in Vietnam, the Air Force was convinced that a primary trainer, suitably modified, was an effective instrument for counterinsurgency action. A turboprop version of the T-28 was under development, but the number of T-28's available for modification was inadequate to meet combined MAP/COIN demands. On the other hand, the T-37 was in ample supply. The Air Training Command (ATC) possessed 700, and the

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aircraft was still in production. Fourteen MAP countries were programmed to receive it, and 41 aircraft had already been delivered. The T-37 was a proved craft, simple to operate, and air transportable.

In advocating the T-37 as the follow-on to the T-28, the Air Force did not discount the need for V/STOL aircraft to fill the long-term requirements. It was partially the belief in the need for such aircraft that led the Air Force to reject using development funds on any aircraft that did not possess these capabilities. LeMay indicated to Zuckert his intention to submit a V/STOL development proposal in the near future. Zuckert indorsed the position taken by General LeMay and urged the Secretary of Defense to consider this approach to the counterinsurgency requirement.<sup>49</sup>

In December 1962 the Deputy Secretary of Defense approved both the USAF-proposed modification of the T-37 and the twin turboprop aircraft development program favored by DDR&E. He requested the Air Force to submit to DDR&E by 30 January 1963 its plan for conducting the T-37 modification and flight evaluation program.\* The Navy received management responsibility for the turboprop aircraft, with the Army and Air Force participating.<sup>50</sup>

#### Relationship of U.S. Strike Command to Counterinsurgency Forces

On 27 August 1962 the Deputy Secretary of Defense made the relationship of the U.S. Strike Command (STRICOM) to the nation's counterinsurgency forces a matter of discussion within the military. He suggested

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\* The plan, submitted on 1 February 1963, called for modification of two T-37 aircraft to combat configuration. The estimated cost was \$1,800,000 and time for completion was 15 months. (Memo, SAF to DDR&E, 1 Feb 63, subj: Counterinsurgency Aircraft Development, in OSAF 495-62.)

the possibility that STRICOM should have overall cognizance of counterinsurgency and that it should establish a combat development experimental center (CDEC). Gilpatric asked JCS and STRICOM to comment.<sup>51</sup>

Although not expected to assume responsibility for developing equipment, CDEC would develop tactics and doctrines. Because of the interrelationship between equipment, training, tactics, and doctrine, it would probably become the dominant organization. The effect on the 1st Combat Applications Group, responsible for developing USAF's tactics and doctrines was obvious.<sup>52</sup>

Early in September, STRICOM informed JCS that it did not believe that it should have overall cognizance of counterinsurgency. Neither was a CDEC essential to STRICOM. The unified command did recommend, however, that it should have operational control of certain combat-ready Army and Air Force counterinsurgency forces based in the United States.

The Air Force agreed with and supported STRICOM's views. In traditional fashion, it maintained that counterinsurgency forces should be tailored to meet specific requirements, with each service contributing its special skill, but that overall responsibility for application of these capabilities should be centered in a joint command. Thus, STRICOM was the most logical organization to control U.S.-based Army and Air Force counterinsurgency units. The Air Force labeled Army objections to STRICOM's recommendations as a "clear and parochial indication" of its intent to take over the counterinsurgency mission without regard to the effect on the overall U.S. capability to support indigenous armed forces in counterinsurgency actions.<sup>53</sup>

On 28 September 1962, JCS discussed the issue. It accepted STRICOM's

rejection of the CDEC but questioned the proposed assignment of operational control. Eventually, the Air Force gave way to Army's demands, and JCS recommended that STRICOM should not be given operational control of U.S.-based Army and Air Force special warfare forces. \*54

OSD Approval of Expansion--PCP COIN-2

Rejection of the Air Force PCP on 27 August 1962 had come at a time when requirements for specialized counterinsurgency forces were constantly increasing. To meet those demands during the months preceding the rejection, the Air Force had progressively increased the size of the Special Air Warfare Center from its own resources. When the Secretary of Defense rejected the PCP, he instructed the Air Force to discontinue this practice and not to expand its force further without prior approval. At that time the force consisted of 88 aircraft and 1,196 primary-element personnel. This was insufficient, and the Air Force found it necessary to argue for further expansion.<sup>55</sup>

On 12 October 1962 the Air Force submitted a second PCP (COIN-2) to McNamara, calling for a six-squadron counterinsurgency force of 184 aircraft and 2,167 primary element personnel for fiscal year 1964. With this strength, the Air Force could provide one combat applications wing, one air commando wing, and one composite squadron. The air commando wing would consist of three T-28 squadrons with a total of 75 aircraft, an RB-26 squadron equipped with 25 airplanes, and a combat cargo squadron

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\* It was not until February 1963 that the Air Force actually split with the Army and Navy and recommended to the Secretary of Defense that certain special warfare forces be placed under STRICOM. (JCS 1969/460.)



equipped with 12 C-46, 12 C-47, and 14 U-10B (formerly designated L-28B) aircraft. This wing would be stationed in the United States and maintain detachments on rotation overseas. The composite squadron of 46 aircraft (8 T-28's, 8 B-26's, 12 C-46's, 12 C-47's, and 6 U-10D's) would be permanently deployed in Panama under the operational control of CINCARIB to meet counterinsurgency requirements in Latin America.<sup>56</sup>

Throughout 1962, Latin America faced a rising insurgency threat, actively aided and abetted with money and arms from Communist Cuba. While insurgency activity in this area was not comparable to that in Southeast Asia, there was every reason to believe that it would increase. At least five Latin American countries--Columbia, Ecuador, Guatemala, Peru, and Venezuela--experienced varying degrees of insurrection. There were sporadic outbursts of violence incited by Red peasant leaders in the Brazilian countryside. In British Guiana, youthful followers of Cheddi Jagan were being trained for an expected struggle.<sup>57</sup>

In April 1962 an OSD-CINCARIB conference had approved the deployment of a counterinsurgency air unit to the Canal Zone. The Air Force deployed a detachment--Bold Venture--from the 1st Air Commando Group the following month, comprised of approximately 75 personnel and 13 aircraft. It trained indigenous air force personnel, supported Army Special Forces, and provided in-country support of civic actions throughout Latin America. Subsequently, elements of this detachment deployed to Venezuela, Honduras, Guatemala, and the Dominican Republic to provide counterinsurgency training to local forces. In October eight key personnel were attached to the detachment to serve as a cadre for a permanently assigned squadron that would be activated when OSD approved PCP COIN-2.<sup>58</sup>

The Air Force justified the new PCP on the basis of the increasing requirements in Latin America and Southeast Asia. Headquarters USAF anticipated Army resistance to the expansion and, prior to consideration of the PCP by JCS, advised the CAIRC and PACAF commanders to request their respective unified commanders (CINCARIB and CINCPAC) to forward current and anticipated requirements to the Joint Chiefs. Both unified commanders provided excellent support to the PCP; their stated requirements exceeded the capabilities of the six squadrons called for in COIN-2 and furnished guidance for preparation in 1963 of COIN-3. In early November 1962, JCS reviewed and recommended to OSD the proposed expansion.<sup>59</sup>

On 24 November 1962 the Secretary of Defense approved the COIN-2 expansion for fiscal year 1964. Moreover, in view of likely immediate requirements in Southeast Asia, Secretary McNamara requested the Air Force to attain the fiscal year 1964 objectives as soon as possible within the constraints of fiscal year 1963 manpower and budgetary limits. He also indicated that immediate action was necessary to provide air support for the Army, as established under the joint counterinsurgency guidance. The Secretary of Defense had approved the expansion of the ground element of the Army's counterinsurgency forces in August, and by December the force had increased from 5,600 to 8,100.<sup>60</sup>

Status of USAF Forces Employed in Counterinsurgency--December 1962

By 31 December 1962, Headquarters SAWC possessed an authorized personnel strength of 31, the 1st Combat Applications Group had an authorized strength of 51 men, the 1st Air Commando Group 1,537, and the composite

squadron in Panama 548--a total of 2,167. The 1st Air Commando Group had 138 aircraft authorized, and the composite squadron an additional 46, for a total of 184.<sup>61</sup>

The assigned strength was far lower. At the end of 1962, Headquarters SAWC possessed 33 men; the 1st Combat Applications Group--temporarily manned with personnel borrowed from the Air Proving Ground Center and the Army--had no personnel officially assigned; and the 1st Air Commando Group including the detachments in South Vietnam and Panama, contained 965 men. The assigned SAWC aircraft totaled 103--66 in the United States, 24 in South Vietnam, and 13 in Panama.<sup>62</sup>

In November 1961 the Farm Gate detachment of the 1st Air Commando Group had deployed to South Vietnam with eight T-28's, four RB-26's, and four SC-47's. The unit obtained four additional B-26's during the summer of 1962, two of which were diverted to Thailand for use by the Able Mable reconnaissance unit but soon were deployed to South Vietnam. The Farm Gate detachment received four U-10B's in August 1962, which provided STOL capability. In September, PACAF proposed to CINCPAC that Farm Gate be augmented with 5 T-28's, 10 B-26's, and 2 C-47's. Shortly thereafter the Military Assistance Command, Vietnam (MACV), proposed an authorization for an Army aviation unit of 24 aircraft to support Army Special Forces--a proposal closely paralleling the Howze Board report and the Army PCP rejected by the Secretary of Defense on 27 August 1962.\* Early in November, CINCPAC recommended to JCS an augmentation of Farm Gate as proposed by PACAF, with the addition of one B-26. On 4 December, JCS supported

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\* See above, p 36.

[REDACTED]

this recommendation but deleted the one B-26 requested by CINCPAC, and Secretary McNamara gave his approval on 28 December. This provided an authorized strength of 41 aircraft.<sup>63</sup>

By the end of the year, events indicated the need for another augmentation of Farm Gate. The complexion of the war in South Vietnam was changing and had entered a phase requiring sustained day-to-day operations. VNAF and Farm Gate aircraft were averaging about 233 operational sorties per week; of this number, approximately 121 were strike missions. Since this rate of effort far exceeded the capability on a sustained basis, DCS/Operations recommended to General LeMay, on 22 December, an augmentation of the 2d Air Division\* as quickly as possible.<sup>64</sup>

Two TAC C-123 assault transport squadrons were designated specifically to support the counterinsurgency mission in South Vietnam. The first squadron, dubbed Mule Train, deployed in December 1961, and the second, Saw Buck, moved into the area in May 1962. Each squadron possessed 16 aircraft and the combined personnel strength totaled 235. They provided airlift support for both American and South Vietnamese forces.<sup>65</sup>

Early in the South Vietnam counterinsurgency action, PACAF deployed a detachment of four RF-101's to Thailand where, as Able Mable, it performed photo-reconnaissance for all Southeast Asia. By the end of 1962 the detachment had moved to South Vietnam and was flying an average of 16

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All USAF activities in South Vietnam except those of MAAG-AF Division were under the operational control of 2d Air Division. On 8 October 1962 this division replaced 2d ADVON, which had been activated as an advanced headquarters for Thirteenth Air Force on 17 May 1962 and organized on 7 June. (DAF ltr, AFOMO 821M, 17 May 62; PACAF SO 55, 4 Jun 62; DAF ltr, AFOMO 893M, 10 Sep 62.)

[REDACTED]

sorties per week. The detachment of spray-equipped C-123's (Ranch Hand), deployed in December 1961 to defoliate the South Vietnam jungles, had 19 personnel and three aircraft engaged in the test at the end of 1962.<sup>66</sup>

Approval of PCP COIN-2 on 24 November assured the establishment of a composite squadron in Panama. However, as of December 1962 the detachment of the 1st Air Commando Group deployed in April still consisted of only 75 personnel and 13 aircraft.<sup>67</sup>

The total strength of the Air Force stood behind the units specifically designated for counterinsurgency operations. Strategic bombers provided the deterrent which permitted the use of force at the lower levels of conflict. TAC's Composite Air Strike Forces provided a "back-up" to counterinsurgency units should the conflict move to a higher level of action. The Military Air Transport Service and TAC troop carrier units were available to meet any situation that required additional airlift. Directly or indirectly, the entire Air Force played a role in the counterinsurgency mission. Airpower had made a significant contribution to the American counterinsurgency posture and could make an even greater one if properly integrated with the forces of the other services.<sup>68</sup>

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## G L O S S A R Y

ARPA	Advanced Research Projects Agency
CCTS	Combat Crew Training Squadron
CDEC	combat development experimental center
CI	counterinsurgency
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CNO	Chief of Naval Operations
COIN	counterinsurgency
convl	conventional
COP	Current Operations Plan
CSAFM	Chief of Staff, USAF, Memo
DOD	Department of Defense
MAAG	Military Assistance Advisory Group
NSA	National Security Action
NSM	National Security Matters
OSD	Office, Secretary of Defense
PCP	Program Change Proposal
POA	Plan of Action
QRF	quick reaction force
SA	Secretary, Army
SAWC	Special Air Warfare Center
SOR	Specific Operational Requirement
STOL	short takeoff and landing
TASEB	Tactical Air Support Evaluation Board
VNAF	Vietnamese Air Force
V/STOL	vertical or short takeoff and landing

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- 48. AFPDP
- 49. AFPDS
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- 51. AFPMP
- 52. AFPTR
- 53. AFRAE
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- 56. AFRDP
- 57. AFRNE
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- 60. AFSLP
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- 130-131. ASI
- 132-136. ASI  
(HAF)
- 137-141. ASI  
(HA)
- 142-200. AFCHO  
(Stock)

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- 79. ADC
- 80-81. AFCS
- 82. AFLC
- 83-87. AFSC
- 88-89. ATC
- 90-91. AU
- 92. AFAFC
- 93. AAC
- 94. USAFSO
- 95-96. CONAC
- 97. HEDCOM
- 98-102. MATS
- 103. OAR
- 104-108. PACAF
- 109-115. SAC
- 116-120. TAC
- 121. USAFA
- 122-126. USAFE
- 127-129. USAFSS