

only when it is in each other's distinctively derived interest in doing so is more compelling than the "narcoterrorist" thesis advanced by the author. The key question not addressed by the monograph is what Sendero does with the massive resources it is believed to have gained from the "protection money" paid by the mostly Colombian intermediaries to continue to do business in the UHV (estimated at \$10-\$30 million a year).

As one window into the complex reality of Sendero Luminoso and Peru in the 1980s, Dr. Tarazona-Sevillano has illuminated a significant portion of that totally unexpected phenomenon. This alone makes her work successful. A definitive analysis, however, has yet to be written, and may not even be possible for some time to come.

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Kimball, Jeffrey P. *To Reason Why: The Debate about the Causes of U.S. Involvement in the Vietnam War*. New York: McGraw Hill, 1990.

Berman, Larry. *Lyndon Johnson's War*. New York: W.W. Norton, 1989.

To Reason Why is very misleadingly named: it is not a debate but a lynching. A few numbers will swiftly illustrate what we have here.

In this collection of excerpts, Senator Fulbright (after, of course, his eyes had been opened and he saw "All Things Clearly") gets fifteen pages, Daniel Ellsberg (also "after") thirteen pages, Frances Fitzgerald twelve, assorted official North Vietnamese eleven, and so on. And the other sides in this "debate"? Norman Podhoretz is allowed four pages. There is not one single inclusion from Dean Rusk, not one from Guenter Lewy, nor from any South Vietnamese. And — in a 350-page volume — we have from Presidents Truman and Kennedy combined exactly 6 pages. But why should we waste any time on *them* after Professor Kimball has revealed to us that "most academics would probably maintain that the official argument is on the whole false and not worthy of serious consideration"? The need for a decent reader on the origins of American involvement in Vietnam remains.

The volume by Larry Berman is of course a sequel to his *Planning a Tragedy: the Americanization of the War in Viet Nam* (1982). Several recent studies of the Viet Nam conflict have sought to encompass the international scene and the historical precedents for US involvement from Roosevelt to Kennedy. These include R.B. Smith, *An International History of the Vietnam War*, A.J. Rotter, *The Path to Vietnam*, L.C. Gardner, *Approaching Vietnam*, and Charles Parker, *Vietnam: Strategy for a Stalemate*.¹ In contrast, Berman's well-researched and nicely written book focuses very intensely on the little

group in and around the Oval Office, with President Johnson not the victim but the villain of the story.

Professor Berman correctly identifies the American military problem: the US was on the tactical offensive in Viet Nam, but the enemy could control his own casualty rates by choosing not to fight (as well as where and when). Also, given the nature of guerrilla war, any increase in the number of American troops in South Viet Nam could be neutralized by the enemy increasing his own forces by one tenth that number. Under Johnson's guns-and-butter policy, the United States never approached having enough troops in South Viet Nam, and of course ignored the needs of ARVN and the territorial forces until it was very late. In Berman's view, Johnson deliberately created a stalemate, and this was what undermined and destroyed his administration. (Of course, US forces could have held populous Cochinchina, and perhaps a redoubt at Hue or Da Nang to take the enemy in the flank, but few Americans at the time seem to have understood the possibilities of such a strategy, and fewer do today.)

Berman shows that "Westmoreland did not try to deceive his Commander in Chief" (p. 113), and makes clear what a really disastrous military adviser Robert McNamara was. (Johnson should have sacked McNamara on 23 November 1963, a fact he came to appreciate too late.) Berman also understands that Tet was a military disaster for the Communists, but he does not pursue the very important question of how it then became a political victory for them. What was wrong with the American system then? Has it been fixed, or has it gotten worse?

Berman's depressing picture of the Johnson White House brings home to us only too clearly the truth of Clausewitz's observation about political leaders directing war: it is a bad thing not per se but only when the political directors don't know what they are about. The briefest reflection on Abraham Lincoln or Franklin Roosevelt indicates Johnson's grotesque inadequacy as a war leader.

But the true scene of tragedy would be Saigon. North Viet Nam's leaders demanded unification on their own terms, immediately. They could not wait for the alleged superiority of their social model to attract the southerners. They could not wait for the Saigon government to collapse, and collapse it must if it was as oppressive, corrupt and ineffective as its detractors in North Viet Nam and the United States always maintained. Hence unification had to come by conquest, a conclusion resisted by millions of South Vietnamese who did not wish to have the blessings of Stalinism imposed on them. The South Vietnamese were not well organized, not brilliant military campaigners, and not above financial speculation. All this hardly proves them deserving of their grim fate, nor explains why their enormous blood sacrifice continues to be ignored by almost all who write about this conflict.

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Endnotes

1. R.B. Smith, *An International History of the Vietnam War* (New York: St. Martin's, 1983 -); Andrew J. Rotter, *The Path to Vietnam: Origins of the American Commitment to Southeast Asia* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1987); Lloyd C. Gardner, *Approaching Vietnam: From World War II Through Dienbienphu, 1941-1954* (New York: Norton, 1988); and F. Charles Parker, *Strategy for a Stalemate: Vietnam* (New York: Paragon, 1989).

Deacon, Richard. *The Chinese Secret Service*, rev. ed. London: Grafton, 1989.

Faligot, Roger, and Rémi Kauffer. *The Chinese Secret Service* (trans. by Christine Donougher). London: Headline, 1989.

Although the development of Asian intelligence traditions can easily be traced back over two millennia, very little has been published in Western languages about how this inheritance, combined with more recent influences, has helped mould the characteristics of modern Asian security organizations. Both Richard Deacon and Roger Faligot and Rémi Kauffer's volumes are popular histories of the Chinese intelligence services clearly aimed at filling this gap as Western involvement with China and the Asia-Pacific region as a whole becomes increasingly intimate.

Building on his earlier work on the Japanese, Deacon begins his examination of the Chinese intelligence community by looking at the classical influences of Sunzi's *Art of War* (*Sunzi Bingfa*). Well-informed by his Chinese collaborators, Deacon goes beyond the *Bingfa* to include a discussion of the *Romance of the Three Kingdoms* (*Sanguo Yanyi*), one of Mao Zedong's favorite classical novels. Based on a thirteenth century literary adaptation of an historical work, the *Sanguo Zhi* or *Chronicles of the Three Kingdoms*, the *Romance* is a handbook of interstate political behavior according to the Chinese world view. While it may seem overly literary for modern intelligence professionals, any examination of the classical allusions to Chinese politics can only help improve our perception of non-European intelligence organizations, regardless of their ideological veneers.

The weakness of Deacon's historical overview, however, is its lack of solid examples of how Sunzi's theories were translated into practice. Chapter 2, for instance, includes a brief description of the "spy-system" supposedly established by the eleventh century statesman Wang Anshi. (pp. 42-43) The *baojia* system which Deacon refers to, went far beyond being simply a means of maintaining social control by imposing shared responsibility for illegal activities. The system actually was one of several measures aimed at raising a popular militia to supplement imperial forces in aggressive campaigns against the steppe empires as well as in frontier defence. Imperial China's perennial struggles with these kingdoms produced some of the finest contem-