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SAIGON--The American escalation of the Vietnam war two years ago this week signalled an implicit admission of past strategic failures in countering the Communist revolutionary war--commonly called the "ar" war of the future."

"You lost the revolutionary war, but you had to bring in conventional ground combat battalions and bomber squadrons to prevent the Communists from winning it," one Western official admonished an American observer. "You have to fight a war with the conventional power you have; you can not fight it the un-conventional troops you don't have."

Discussing the arrival of American combat units two years ago, one senior Western diplomat explained, "This means the only subversive-guerrilla war America can win in the future is the one it never has to fight militarily."

American officials--from civilian technicians to military tacticians--are pushing and imploring here--mostly without vain success--for a full-scale reappraisal of the American defense approach in countering the Communist revolutionary war, or insurgency as it is often called.

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As one American civilian who left Vietnam after serving four years here explained, "Even if we lose the war and South Vietnam, yet learn something from our mistakes to prevent other Vietnams, we will have gained a little. But, I don't even see that we are doing that."

American ~~off~~ officials here, who maintain South Vietnam would have been lost without American bombing of North Vietnam and the introduction of American ground troops in South Vietnam, say there are three reasons for the escalation. First, to stop aggression. Though this is the official administration position, they agree it is the vaguest and least convincing. Second, to stop Communist China. This view is widely expressed not only in private conversations with American officials, but also with educated South Vietnamese, who view the Chinese as a propelling influence between the North Vietnamese infiltration. Third, and most significant, to counter the ~~Comm'n~~ Communist ~~revoluta~~ revolutionary warfare, which has been described as "that unholy trinity of subversion, terrorism and guerrilla warfare." Communist radio broadcasts claim to have guerrilla movements in Venezuela, ~~Colbia~~, Columbia, Guatemala and Thailand.

There are some of the ~~strategic~~ ^{will be} reappraisals that American officials, speaking privately, hope ~~are~~ made in an attempt to prevent future Vietnams:

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1. A "new look" at the U. S. foreign aid economic aid program.

Economists here note American foreign aid program has been unchanged in approach and concept since its foundings days ^{as} of the Marshall Plan to ^{designed} ~~rebuild~~ ^{then} ~~a~~ ^{possessed} ~~war-devastated~~ ^{a later} Europe. But, Europe was a technologically sophisticated, middle-class economy with a machine capable of utilizing well the American aid; in under-developed countries, these sources note, there is no such economic machinery to absorb and utilize well American aid. These sources note that more emphasis must be ~~play~~ placed on the rural agricultural sectors of the under-developed economies where Communist-inspired subversion and guerrilla warfare generally begins. (In the first five years of American economic aid to Vietnam, when the Communist guerrillas were gaining momentum in the countryside, only four per cent of the American economic aid was spent on agriculture although 85 per cent of the population lived in the countryside).

These sources note that these under-developed countries need more technical assistance and advice and suggest that future "U. S. strings" should require American technicians to be coupled with the giving of American goods and aid. These sources say that even with ~~the~~ efficiency and emphasis on agriculture, the underdeveloped countries are "running on a treadmill" to keep pace with the population explosion—and that a major ~~breakthrough~~ breakthrough must be found to solve the food crisis. Other sources also believe the American economic aid program should attempt in a broader, more systematic way to train honest, efficient government functionaires and administrators, economists and policemen—a shortcoming American officials admit they made in Vietnam. (More)

2. A systematic review of American military aid to under-developed countries. This military aid, under the Military Assistance Program (MAP), was in the case of Vietnam—geared ^Wtowards building a conventional army organized into divisions and supported by planes and tanks to fight a Communist-inspired guerrilla war, rather than local militia and efficient rural police, who would cull out ~~some~~ Communist political subversives before a guerrilla war could erupt.

The military assistance Program includes American advisors who are responsible for the training of troops to use the American equipment. In 1955, in Vietnam the American advisory effort began to train a ~~convention~~ conventional army mirroring the American armed forces; the arrival of American combat forces ten years later substantiated that they should have been training local militiamen as the Vietnamese government initially requested in 1955 when the Communist insurgency was ^{COVERT}latent. The final paradox is, however, that in 1967, when the Communist forces had mushroomed into sub-conventional forces, the ~~Amer~~ American and Vietnamese military commands assigned the Vietnamese armed forces to assume the role of village militiamen, or "to play Boy Scout," as one American advisor explained.

As a result
"America lost the Vietnamese guerrilla war because of the conventional Korean conflict," one high-placed official explained. "America assumed that Hanoi would invade the South with a conventional army as the Communists did in Korea; she ignored the fact that Hanoi ~~even~~ was going to attempt to seize South Vietnam via a more subtle military-political route."

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By late 1964, the American establishment here ~~reali~~² realized the ~~American~~
U. S. military advisory effort to support the Vietnamese armed forces was
grossly inadequate to stop the Communist ~~attempt~~^{PUS A} to seize military and political
control of the country. By March, 1965, the first American ground combat
troops arrived--yet, even the military build-up revealed a lack of
over-all, integrated political-economic-military leadership, which possessed
the vision to anticipate and prevent the critical problems which later
erupted. The first American troops ~~sent~~^{sent} spent American nickels and dimes in
the villages, which signalled to the Vietnamese peasants a ~~lack of~~²
loss of sovereignty. In some ~~villages~~^{CASES}, village chiefs rivalled each other
and vowed to pitch their respective local militia units against each other
in order to get the American currency at favorable black market rates. The
inflationary pressure, which nearly wrecked the Vietnamese economy, could have
~~been contained~~^{PARTIALLY} by limiting the amount of ~~currer~~^{currer} currency available, as had been
the case during the U. S. advisory effort, political sources report.

More than that, with the countryside in Communist hands, ~~and~~ the
anti-Communist political and military base of support rested in the cities. But,
the arrival of American troops tossed the cities into a crisis--bars and
prostitutes openly flourished, which caused political eyesores and social
frictions; squabbles erupted with Vietnamese drives⁶ and street vendors. Housing
rents reached exorbitant rates as both American GI's and ~~and~~ Vietnamese
refugees ~~from the countryside~~ flocked to the cities. The result was waves of
anti-Americanism, which the Communists could and did exploit, specifically
during the Buddhist crisis last spring which almost toppled the pro-American
government. More urban disorder is predicted in 1967.

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While major adjustments are being made to solve these problems, ~~it~~ political sources believe it may be too late to dampen the anti-Americanism ^{INJECTED} as, two years after the initial American escalation which ~~has brought~~ nearly 400,000 combat troops, the countryside is still largely in the hands of the Communists and the cities are in a state of ~~top~~ potentially disastrous insurrection.

"This ~~will~~ war will be won by the side which makes the fewest mistakes," ^{SENIOR} one ~~senior~~ Western official explained. "So far, the Communists are making fewer than the Americans."