

**A Reflection of the Army:
West Point and Counterinsurgency, 1962-1968**

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American military planners had no reason to believe that Vietnam would be the place of its first defeat. A motley assortment of black-clad Viet Cong guerillas in South Vietnam did not seem like a threat to the military might of the United States. How did the leadership and war planners allow this to happen? Did they fail to understand the political nature of this conflict and were they unwilling to modify their conventional strategy to deal with an insurgency? The Army disregarded counterinsurgency, preferring to prepare for what it saw as the more serious threat--a major war in Europe involving the Soviets.¹ President John F. Kennedy's aide Roger Hilsman suggested in 1962 that the U.S. Military and "West Pointers" felt there could only be a military solution to Vietnam and that 'winning the hearts and minds was somebody else's job'.² West Point's reluctance to teach counterinsurgency to its cadets during this period reflected the Army's conventional perspective on strategy and tactics prior to and during the Vietnam War.

In the days before Kennedy's inauguration, Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev had made a tough speech in support of "wars of liberation."³ From the start of their presidencies, South East Asia would come to dominate John F. Kennedy's and Lyndon B. Johnson's time in office. Up until at least the beginning of the Nixon administration, the prior administrations never clearly determined their national objective in Vietnam. From the late fifties until early 1964, there was a vague understanding that the purpose of the United States advisory effort was to help the Republic of Vietnam (RVN) defend itself against the Viet Cong insurgency and possible invasion.⁴ Kennedy's advisors disagreed on the strategy needed to accomplish this objective, ranging from the

¹Colonel Dennis M. Drew. Insurgency and Counterinsurgency, American Military Dilemmas and Doctrinal Proposals. (Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama: Air University Press, 1988), 2.

²Michael Maclear. The Ten Thousand Day War Vietnam: 1945-1975. (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1981), 62.

³Michael Maclear, The Ten Thousand Day War Vietnam: 1945-1975. (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1981), 58

⁴George C. Herring, "American Strategy in Vietnam: The Postwar Debate.", Military Affairs, vol XLVI No2, April 1982, 58.

massive retaliation advocates to Henry Kissinger's vision of limited war that proposed accepting defeat if it appeared impossible to stop the aggressors with conventional means.⁵

Despite all this strategic ambiguity, Kennedy ordered Special Forces advisors to deploy to Vietnam, starting a long and arduous involvement for U.S. Forces in the Republic of Vietnam. These military "advisors", 4,000 by early 1962, deployed to Vietnam to carry out tactics and a national strategy that primarily consisted of preparing the South Vietnamese Army for a conventional invasion from the north. Be the threat conventional invasion or guerilla conflict, U.S. doctrine held that a conventional military, using conventional American methods, could successfully cope with either.⁶

American military policy makers did not realize that in the 1960's the United States was a rank amateur in the arena of unconventional, low-intensity conflict.⁷ The American Army had experience in only three "guerilla" campaigns: the Philippine Insurrection, the Greek Civil War of 1946-1949 and certain peripheral portions of the Korean War of 1950-1953. The Huk Insurrection in the Philippines, 1946-1954, had only slightly involved uniformed Army personnel.⁸

According to Larry Cable, author Conflict of Myths: The Development of American Counterinsurgency Doctrine and the Vietnam War, there are only two basic types of guerrilla war: partisan and insurgent. Each was unique and required a different approach:

"...the partisan war required an emphasis upon the more strictly military aspects and that the insurgent model required a greater emphasis upon the nonmilitary programs of nation building and preemptive redress of social and economic grievances. Additionally it was not seen clearly that the insurgent conflict required that the military employ low-lethality weapons

⁵Henry Paolucci, Kissinger's War, 1957-1975: A Step-by-Step, Blow by Blow Analysis of the Strategy of Defeatist Interventionism. (Whitestone, NY: Griffon House; published for the Walter Bagehot Research Council, 1980), 10.

⁶Larry E. Cable. Conflict of Myths: The Development of American Counterinsurgency Doctrine and the Vietnam War. (New York and London: New York University Press, 1986), 186.

⁷Larry E. Cable. Conflict of Myths: The Development of American Counterinsurgency Doctrine and the Vietnam War. (New York and London: New York University Press, 1986), 4.

⁸Ibid., 5.

and tactics, give the highest priority to intelligence and police-type activities, as well as effectively use psychological operations and civil affairs programs."⁹

This lack of direct, recent and relevant experience with guerrilla war led in the late 1950's to an American view that all guerilla wars were partisan in nature; all had support from an external sponsoring power. The threat of the spread of Communism, coupled with lessons learned during the Korean War, had convinced all observers that guerillas were the early warning of cross-border conventional attack.¹⁰

However, fundamental differences exist between conventional warfare and insurgencies. Perhaps the most important difference is differing "centers of gravity" inherent in these conflicts. An insurgency's center of gravity, or survival, depends on the covert political infrastructure deeply embedded in the general population. Conventional warfare's center of gravity concentrates on the destruction of the enemy's army in the field.¹¹

Trying to correct this problem, Kennedy directed the Army to be the proponent of counterinsurgency operations. This placed counterinsurgency in a similar category with non-nuclear and nuclear warfare. General Maxwell Taylor chaired the new Counterinsurgency Council.¹² The Army Special Warfare school started teaching counterinsurgency (COIN) related classes in 1961 to the senior ranking members of the Army. In April of 1963, General Westmoreland, the Superintendent of the Military Academy, hosted a conference at West Point where Dr. Walt Rostow addressed a respected body of military and civilian national policy-makers to discuss and understand counterinsurgency.¹³ The Marine Corps Gazette, January 1962,

⁹Ibid., 6.

¹⁰Ibid., 177.

¹¹Colonel Dennis M. Drew. Insurgency and Counterinsurgency, American Military Dilemmas and Doctrinal Proposals. (Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama: Air University Press, 1988), 18.

¹²Michael Maclear. The Ten Thousand Day War Vietnam: 1945-1975. (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1981), 58.

¹³Dr Walt Rostow. Minutes from speech with question and answer period at the West Point conference on the New Nations and Their Internal Defense. April 1963. (USMA Archives, West Point, NY.)

devoted a large number of its pages to a rather full discussion of unconventional warfare.¹⁴ The President was "most favorably pleased"¹⁵ with this article and directed the other services to publish similar articles with their view on counterinsurgency operations. Furthermore, on 18 January 1962 President John F. Kennedy directed the Secretary of Defense, Robert S. McNamara, to review the counterinsurgency training conducted at the service academies.¹⁶

The President expressed concern while addressing the West Point Class of 1962 of "a new kind of war-...-ancient in its origins-...-modern in its intensity." He also noted that "It [military assistance] cannot be extended without regard to the social, political, and military reforms essential to internal respect and stability."¹⁷ Yet, that same year, Gen Douglas MacArthur reemphasized the importance and tradition of conventional warfare when he addressed the cadets in his famous Thayer Award speech:

And through all this welter of change and development, your mission remains fixed, determined, inviolable -- it is to win our wars. Everything else in your professional career is but corollary to this vital dedication. ...you are the ones who are trained to fight: yours is the profession of arms -- the will to win, the sure knowledge that in war there is no substitute for victory.¹⁸

BG Richard G. Stilwell, the Commandant of West Point, responded to Kennedy's memorandum on counterinsurgency training in a manner that reflected the prevailing attitude of the military: "There is no specific course or subcourse which focuses on counter-insurgency or internal defense as such-

¹⁴The Marine Corps Association. "Marine Corps Gazette", vol 46, number 1. January 1962. Quantico, VA.

¹⁵C.V. Clifton, to the Secretary of Defense, 18 January 1962. Subject: Service Publications Concerning Unconventional Warfare. (USMA Archives. West Point, NY.), 1.

¹⁶Ibid., 3.

¹⁷John F Kennedy, Graduation Speech to the Class of 62. USMA Archives. (West Point, NY)

¹⁸Douglas MacArthur, Speech upon receipt of the Thayer Award, April 62. USMA Archives. (West Point, NY), 5

...nor is it contemplated to establish such a course."¹⁹ West Point, like the Army, felt it knew how to win its country's wars.

BG Stilwell certainly did not ignore the formal directive to furnish the Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Military Operations (DCSOPS), Col W. W. Stromberg, with "the specific scope and number of instruction hours devoted to counterinsurgency training and those subjects related to, but not necessarily a part of this training."²⁰ Gen Richard Stilwell's response, dated 7 March 1962, stated that while there is no specific course on counterinsurgency, "it is infeasible to begin one as it could only be effected at the expense of some portion of the solid foundation it is our mission to provide the graduates."²¹ Stilwell also asserted that the cadets' close contact with the officers stationed at West Point who had COIN experience was a great part of the cadets' education. "The antennae of the graduates are highly sensitized to the realities of the world scene and to the comprehensive, integrated nature of the Communist threat."²²

After Stilwell's response that the Academy really did not need be too concerned about counterinsurgency, the Superintendent, LTG William Westmoreland, by Letter Order No. 25, dated 13 April 1962, established the Counterinsurgency Training Committee and directed it to present an interim report by 7 May 1962 on the "broad field of counterinsurgency or internal war as defined by the Executive Branch of the Government" to include recommendations on instruction for the Corps of Cadets in this field.²³ This committee, chaired by BG Stilwell and internal to

¹⁹Richard G. Stilwell, to Office of Deputy chief of Staff for Military Operations, 7 March 1962. Subject: Counter-Insurgency Instruction at USMA. (USMA Archives. West Point, NY.)

²⁰ W.W. Stromberg, to Superintendent, USMA, 9 February 1962. Subject: Counterinsurgency training at USMA. (USMA Archives. West Point, NY.)

²¹Richard G. Stilwell, to Office of Deputy chief of Staff for Military Operations, 7 March 1962. Subject: Counter-Insurgency Instruction at USMA. (USMA Archives. West Point, NY.)

²²Ibid.

²³Richard G. Stilwell, to Superintendent, USMA, 10 May 1962. Subject: Interim Report of the Counterinsurgency Training Committee. (USMA Archives. West Point, NY.)

West Point, determined that West Point was already accomplishing to a considerable degree the multiple objectives that form COIN.²⁴

Since counterinsurgency is such a broad topic, the Counterinsurgency committee determined that just about everything taught at West Point could be related to COIN and thus, the Academy currently met Army guidance. There was some recommended areas for improvement. These recommendations included developing a climate of increased emphasis of COIN, highlighting the counterinsurgency aspect of existent instruction, and covering new material during the First Class year.²⁵ The Counterinsurgency committee continued to publish annual reports recommending no increase in COIN training; in fact, in 1963 the senior Infantry instructor, LTC Eleazar Parmley IV, recommended the dissolution of the committee.²⁶

West Point showcased Recondo training as the COIN summer training received by the Yearlings. On a unauthorized copy of Kennedy's directive to the Secretary of Defense to have the academies review their COIN training, someone scrawled "RECONDO" in the margins.²⁷ Conducted at Camp Buckner for the yearlings, Recondo training first started in 1961. The deputy commandant of West Point, Col O. W. Connors, observed a Ranger department three day field training exercise for Virginia Military Institute ROTC cadets and determined that West Point would incorporate a one week POI from the Ranger department into Camp Buckner.

After the Kennedy directive, with no apparent change to the original program of instruction, Ranger oriented training became COIN training. However, in the after action review of the 1964 Camp Buckner, COL William J. Ray, Director of Military Instruction, recommended de-emphasizing Recondo training and replacing the platoon ambush with a more conventional

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Ibid.

²⁶ Eleazar Parmly, IV, Disposition form to the Chairman, Counterinsurgency Committee from the Senior Infantry Instructor, 10 Oct 1963. (USMA Archives, West Point, NY.)

²⁷ C.V. Clifton, to the Secretary of Defense, 18 January 1962. Subject: Service Publications Concerning Unconventional Warfare. (USMA Archives. West Point, NY.) 1

platoon night attack.²⁸ This serves to highlight the Army's, and West Point's, desire to solely train on conventional tactics. COL Ray failed to recognize that direct action type operations are inherent to COIN operations, but that they are only a portion of the tactics needed to successfully combat an insurgency. By only concentrating on conventional, ranger-type, patrolling, West Point, like the Army, showed a basic misunderstanding of the differences between conventional wars and insurgencies. Specifically, they failed to account for the differences in the centers of gravity and how that effects company level operations. West Point missed an outstanding opportunity to conduct leader situational exercises for the cadets that may arise in a COIN environment.

Initially, during the 1962-1963 academic year, seventy-nine hours of Recondo patrols against guerilla camps and three hours of platoon ambush training given during Infantry week at Camp Buckner provided the vast majority of COIN related summer training.²⁹ The First classmen, during their summer trip to Ft. Benning, recieved a one hour block on COIN. Other recommended attempts to broaden counterinsurgency summer training included a proposal to send cadets on counterinsurgency observation trips. Two or three cadets could deploy to Vietnam to observe, and then bring word back to the Corps on what they witnessed. BG Michael S. Davison, Commandant of Cadets, disapproved this controversial idea in 1963.³⁰

West Point felt their counterinsurgency instruction and training was adequate for Army needs. The Department of the Army felt that: "...such a program will insure appropriate emphasis on this timely and important subject and will give the cadet a sound background in counterinsurgency upon his graduation."³¹ Academically, this included a two hour COIN class to

²⁸William J. Ray, to the Commandant of Cadets, 28 Oct 1964. Subject: After Action Report, Camp Buckner, 1964. (USMA Archives, West Point, NY.), 2

²⁹Department of Tactics, "Program of Military Instruction. 1962-63". West Point, New York. 1962. (USMA Special Collections, USMA Library)

³⁰Boyd T. Bashore, to the Pofessor and Head of MA&E, 3 Feb 1963. Subject: Counterinsurgency. (USMA Archives. West Point, NY.)

³¹Michael S. Davison, to the Superintendent, USMA, 8 July 1963. Subject: Report of Counterinsurgency Committee. (USMA Archives. West Point, NY.)

the fourth class, a one hour Special Forces class to the third class, and a two hour combined arms team in COIN class to the second class. The academic instruction finished with a twelve hour program of instruction to the first class, including a four hour class on revolutionary warfare.³²

On 18 March 1963, the Counterinsurgency committee briefed Major General Rosson, Special Assistant to Chief of Staff for Special Warfare on the USMA Counterinsurgency instruction; in his judgment, the USMA coverage was excellent.³³

On 28 July 1965 President Johnson announced that he would commit 125,000 troops and he foresaw the possibility of further deployments.³⁴ This marked the point where a protective mission became full-scale combat. American military strategy for ground operations became Gen. Westmoreland's strategy of attrition. His search and destroy strategy represented the traditional attack mission of the infantry, but in a counterinsurgency environment, this strategy posed anything but traditional problems.³⁵ Incorrect understanding of the insurgent and a different center of gravity resulted in a

doctrine which emphasized the necessity of destroying the guerrilla in the field or his means and ability to wage war, to the exclusion of other means of countering the insurgent threat such as making the physical and social environment in which he operated a hostile place without refuge.³⁶

³²Department of Tactics, "Program of Military Instruction. 1962-63". West Point, New York. 1962. (USMA Special Collections, USMA Library)

³³Michael S. Davison, to the Superintendent, USMA, 8 July 1963. Subject: Report of Counterinsurgency Committee. (USMA Archives. West Point, NY.)

³⁴Michael Maclear, The Ten Thousand Day War Vietnam: 1945-1975. (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1981), 136

³⁵George C. Herring, "American Strategy in Vietnam: The Postwar Debate.", Military Affairs, vol XLVI No2, April 1982, pp59

³⁶Larry E. Cabel, Conflict of Myths: The Development of American Counterinsurgency Doctrine and the Vietnam War. New York: New York University Press, 1986. 225

Units deployed to Vietnam in the summer of 1965 were not the Special Warfare task forces that the Army purportedly formed for counterinsurgency contingencies but they were regular infantry units trained and equipped for conventional warfare.³⁷

BG R. P. Scott, Commandant of Cadets and head of the Counterinsurgency committee, responded to these 'new' developments in Vietnam by recommending no changes to the current academic and summer training conducted at West Point in the committee's report dated 7 April 1966.³⁸ On reviewing the Program of Instruction for cadets for 1967-68, this was a decrease in the amount of COIN related academic instruction, from eighteen hours to eleven, since the initial 1962 reports in response to President Kennedy's directive to review COIN instruction at the Academy.³⁹

The summer training remained basically the same with the seventy-nine hour Recondo the bulk of COIN direct action training. Also included in the COIN summer training total was a two hour demonstration given by a Special Forces team at Camp Buckner.⁴⁰ Ironically, COL William J. Ray had eliminated the counterambush portion of platoon tactics and replaced with a more conventional platoon night attack in 1964.⁴¹ The emphasis on training for a conflict in Vietnam changed as the first conventional ground troops deployed to Vietnam. Like the rest of the Army, West Point reacted to this real potential for combat for the graduating cadets by placing a specific Vietnam slant on the training and instruction at the Academy. The most visible change in training involved Recondo training during the summer of 1966. Changes occurred to the patrol

³⁷ Andre F. Krepinevich Jr., The Army and Vietnam. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986. 164

³⁸ R.P. Scott, to the Superintendent, USMA, 7 April 1966. Subject: Counterinsurgency Committee Report, 1966. (USMA Archives. West Point, NY.), 3

³⁹ Department of Tactics, "Program of Military Instruction. 1965-66". West Point, New York. 1965. (USMA Special Collections, USMA Library)

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ William J. Ray, to the Commandant of Cadets, 28 Oct 1964. Subject: After Action Report, Camp Buckner, 1964. (USMA Archives, West Point, NY.), 2

objectives in order to replicate VC villages and the aggressors were renamed "VC" and dressed in black pajamas for role playing purposes. The result of an internal review, the Vietnam Oriented Training Report (5 August 1966) conducted by Vietnam veterans assigned to West Point, suggested improvements to military training for the cadets. The review concluded that the Vietnam-oriented training at Camp Buckner that summer had sufficiently focused the Class of 1969 to keep them aware of the situation of the U.S. Army Forces there, to make them begin to appreciate the complexities of combat in Vietnam, and to motivate the Third Classmen to absorb the training they had received.⁴²

Recommended changes for the summer of 1967 dealt strictly with the direct action portion of COIN training. Included was the addition of ambush and counterambush training during squad tactics week, increased squad patrols in a Vietnam-type situation, map reading, night compass, and land navigation. More recommendations were river crossing techniques, marches and fieldcraft, more code of conduct classes, and increased communications training.⁴³ The report concluded that the training as oriented towards Vietnam was excellent. However, the whole memorandum seemed aware of the political environment of West Point, in that it classified training as excellent, yet it also made a whole host of recommendations to make it more excellent. The Interim Report of the Vietnam Oriented Training was much more direct. Needed training in ambush and counterambush, patrolling, and land navigation were areas of particular concern necessary to counter the threat in Vietnam.⁴⁴

The Superintendent, LTG Donald V. Bennett, visited Camp Buckner on 10 August 1966. He also observed shortcomings in the training relating to ambush and counterambush as well as

⁴²Ward M. Le Hardy, for the Record, 1 September 1966. Subject: Vietnam Oriented Training Report on Third Class Training (6 July - 27 August 1966). (USMA Archives, West Point, NY.), 1

⁴³Ibid.

⁴⁴Ward M. Le Hardy, for the Record, 5 August 1966. Subject: Vietnam Oriented Training Report (Interim Report 6 Jul - 4 Aug). (USMA Archives. West Point, NY.), 2

communications training. He felt that more infantry related training should occur under more realistic conditions. LTG Bennett felt that only Recondo offered this type of training.⁴⁵ The Department of Tactics reinstated the counterambush training deleted in 1964.⁴⁶

West Point still did not have an adequate understanding of what the definition of counterinsurgency training was. For example, the Counterinsurgency Committee Report, 1966, noted that "the committee spent some time attempting to discover just what was meant by counterinsurgency instruction."⁴⁷ The committee had been meeting for three years and there still was no clear cut definition of counterinsurgency instruction due to the various definitions the Army used to define COIN. Each year the committee had to come to some conclusion on this definition, yet the lack of continuity from year to year suggests the relative unimportance the Academy placed on this requirement.

By broadening the definition of counterinsurgency, the committee was able to show an increase in the instructional hours each cadet received in COIN training. The committee also noted that the Army had assigned more instructors with Vietnam experience to West Point, and "while their impact is difficult to measure, there is no doubt that it has improved cadet understanding of counterinsurgency operations, particularly as conducted in Vietnam."⁴⁸ Again, the committee judged the Military Academy's coverage of counterinsurgency training as adequate and that the Dean and Academic Board did not need to increase the amount of counterinsurgency instruction. On reviewing the Program of Instruction for 1967-68, the only real increase in academic instruction was for the First class. This included an expansion from eleven to sixteen hours of

⁴⁵Henry J. Schroeder, Jr., for the Record, 11 August 1966. Subject: Visit of Superintendent to Camp Buckner--10 August 1966. (USMA Archives. West Point, NY.), 1

⁴⁶Department of Tactics, "Program of Military Instruction. 1967-68". West Point, New York. 1967. (USMA Special Collections, USMA Library)

⁴⁷R.P. Scott, to the Superintendent, USMA, 7 April 1966. Subject: Counterinsurgency Committee Report, 1966. (USMA Archives. West Point, NY.), 3

⁴⁸Ibid.

academic instruction that included: one hour of personal experiences of Vietnam veterans, one hour of lessons learned in Vietnam, and one hour on the role of military advisors and Special Forces in Vietnam. First Class COIN summer training increased due to the introduction of sixteen and a half hours of training received at Ft. Benning during the First Class trip.⁴⁹ This is another example of the Army's failure to recognize the nature of conflict in Vietnam and the importance of training future leaders in its characteristics.

During the academic year the Academy made additional attempts to increase the cadets' awareness of Vietnam. The Department of Military Art and Engineering continued its June Week display of pajama-dressed mannequins of the enemy with counterinsurgency quotations on the blackboards and display cases of Vietnam memorabilia.⁵⁰ An Adventure Board displayed in Thayer Hall posted letters from recent graduates stationed in Vietnam. These first-person accounts attempted to make real the possibility of combat shortly after graduation. One letter extolled "It's a platoon leaders war - better cue in to the classes at the Point!"⁵¹ According to a member of the class of 1969, the Administration placed brass nameplates along the wall in South Auditorium of the graduates killed in action as a grim reminder to the cadets of what awaited them.⁵²

West Point merely reflected the current military thinking of the 1960s. The Army did not perceive their role to include civil-military operations. West Point does not set policy for the Army, it simply trains future officers within the guidelines established by the Army. Thus, West Point de-emphasized Kennedy's concerns with counterinsurgency training by broadly labeling it thus making it germane to a large part of the current curriculum and training. The Academy had

⁴⁹Department of Tactics, "Program of Military Instruction, 1967-68". West Point, New York, 1967. (USMA Special Collections, USMA Library)

⁵⁰Photograph, "Dept. of MA&E June Week Display", 16 Aug 1968. West Point Special Collections, USMA Library, West Point NY.

⁵¹Jim Hackett, "Combat Tips", letter posted on the Adventure Board, 21 Mar 1968.

⁵²Colonel James Johnson, conversation with author, West Point, New York, 12 October 1995

Department of the Army approval of its counterinsurgency program to include the Special Warfare School.

Upon the commitment of conventional ground forces, however, West Point, like the rest of the Army, reacted by trying to provide Vietnam-oriented training to the cadets. This did not translate to COIN training, however. Like Gen Westmoreland, West Point stayed with a conventional approach to Vietnam-oriented training. Remaining consistent with BG Richard Stilwell's response to President Kennedy in 1962, the Academy stayed with their policy of providing a broadly based education. West Point provided the basis for a broad intellectual grasp of counterinsurgency principles, with some insights into the practical, field application of the principles. An effort was made to bring Vietnam to the cadets, but not the specific nature of COIN in Vietnam.

As an institution, West Point reflected the Army's resistance to changing proven conventional doctrine, so the Academy continued to instruct conventional doctrine. The Academy relied on service schools for specific training and only tailored its military training towards Vietnam once large conventional forces deployed into that environment. Otherwise, as BG Stilwell said, establishing a counterinsurgency course could only happen "at the expense of some portion of the solid foundation it is our mission to provide the graduates."⁵³ The Academy saw no need to tamper with a successful commissioning source. If West Point did not adequately prepare the cadets for the counterinsurgency aspect of the Vietnam Conflict, then the Army was accountable, as West Point simply carried out its mission of developing officers well within the guidelines set forth by the Army.

Implications for West Point in the post cold war era are numerous. The downsizing Army and unspecified threat have strategy makers relooking current doctrine to incorporate Military Operations Other Than War (MOOTW). This is very similar to the nuclear versus limited war

⁵³Richard G. Stilwell, to Office of Deputy chief of Staff for Military Operations, 7 March 1962. Subject: Counter-Insurgency Instruction at USMA. (USMA Archives. West Point, NY.)

dilemma of the early 1960s. Should West Point continue with a broad fundamental approach to cadet education and training? The answer in all practicality is yes. West Point training will change only as Army doctrine changes. The current curriculum and summer training appear to produce officers capable of thinking on their feet with limited guidance. By providing a broad liberal education, and a wide exposure to the Army seems to produce the desired product. It will be up to the individual service schools to specifically prepare the graduates for their role within their branch. As the Army wrestles with Force XXI and the future, so will West Point, as West Point has always, and continues to be a reflection of the Army.

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