

French and American Intelligence Relations During the First Indochina War, 1950–54

Jean-Marc LePage, PhD, and Elie Tenenbaum

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French-American intelligence relations were famously presented in literature through the prism of Graham Greene’s brilliant novel, *The Quiet American*. The book portrays Alden Pyle, a soft-spoken, intellectual, serious, and idealistic CIA officer meddling in badly corrupt French colonial affairs. This embroidered vision, though not completely disconnected from reality, has concealed the true nature of French-US intelligence relations in the region, which were part of a necessary, though unwelcome by the French, alliance.^a

For war-torn France of the late 1940s, an alliance with the United States was a matter of necessity. For Washington, deeply distressed by the “loss” of China in 1949, containment

of communist expansion into Southeast Asia had increasingly become a major objective. As early as 1950, the United States was financing the main part of the French war effort, supplying money and material. But even as the French gladly accepted military aid, they refused to return the favor with information or influence. And so began, within the greater conflict between the French and the revolutionary Viet Minh, a covert small war between the two allies for intelligence and influence.

With this kind of a backdrop, the relationship of French and US intelligence during the first Indochina war was anything but placid, but it could neither be characterized as perpetually antagonistic nor as consistently harmonious. They were

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often both at the same time, whether the subject was foreign intelligence collection or covert action.

Institutional Cooperation and Personal Vendettas Color Foreign Intelligence Exchange

After the end of WW II, French and US intelligence cooperation in Indochina did not resume in a significant way until the early 1950s. The relationship was naturally defined by the Cold War and the communist takeover of China in 1949, but quality of the relationship was also a product of political and personal tensions between Cold War-minded US intelligence operatives and the colonial mindset of French personnel.¹

National agencies: the gentlemen's agreement

The French intelligence structure in Indochina was complex and dispersed. In addition to the military's Deuxième Bureau (G2) and agencies like the Service de Renseignement Opérationnel (SRO),² present in Indochina were representatives of the Service de Documentation Extérieure et de Contre-Espionnage (SDECE), which was under the direct control of the prime minister, though it was mostly staffed by

military men. The SDECE was divided into four main sub-services: HUMINT, COMINT, Counterintelligence, and the Action Branch. During 1951–54, the SDECE director was Pierre Boursicot. Under his command, Colonel Maurice Belieux was SDECE's station chief in Indochina.

In the United States, after the issuance on 27 February 1950 of the "Report by the National Security Council on the Position of the United States with Respect to Indochina," (NSC 64) the CIA set up a station in Indochina, first in the American legation, then in the US embassy when that was officially established in 1952. From the start, relations between the French and US services had to be formalized by a specific agreement. This national-level agreement was all the more necessary because French *local* authorities—the high commissioner as well as the high command in Saigon—were suspicious of American activities in Vietnam.

Precedents did exist for a relationship, however. Since 1949, the SDECE had maintained a relatively close relationship with British intelligence.³ An MI6 liaison officer was working with the SDECE in Saigon, while a French counterpart stayed in Singapore. The French idea was to develop

links with the CIA along similar lines.

In May and June 1951, Pierre Boursicot met Director of Central Intelligence (DCI) Walter Bedell Smith, his deputy Allen Dulles, and Frank Wisner, who was head of the CIA's newly created equivalent to SDECE's Action Branch, the Office of Policy Coordination (OPC). A general protocol agreement was reached, which allowed the CIA to operate in Indochina through the US embassy in Saigon.⁴ Two officers were appointed as liaison officers to the SDECE. By 1952, there were three. Their mission was to exchange intelligence on diplomatic and military matters in the region on a weekly basis.⁵

Not surprisingly, in the minds of SDECE representatives this cooperation extended only to military matters: domestic affairs in Indochina (i.e., local Vietnamese politics) were not to be discussed. This separation did not exist in American thinking, a factor that contributed to many misunderstandings between the allies and made cooperation difficult, especially with the Action Branch.

Nevertheless, a CIA liaison officer was attached to the Action Branch, while at the same time, two French officers were assigned to the corresponding CIA service in Korea.⁶ Thanks to this "exchange program," if one can call it that,

the French officer Roger Trinquier, who was later to be known in the Battle of Algiers, wrote that he was able to participate in Operation Ratkiller with the Americans against Korean communist guerrillas.⁷

In July 1954, as the Geneva Peace Agreement was reached, the CIA offered a new collaboration proposal, which the French government accepted. Although the details of this new arrangement are not clear, French documentation indicates that Colonel Belleux and Edward Lansdale's Saigon Military Mission (SMM) were to establish this future collaboration.⁸ But the end of the war led to further reexamination of the relationship and a resumption of conflicts with French officers who struggled against US agencies during the tremendously complex political game in Saigon during 1954–55.⁹

On the technical intelligence collection level, a close collaboration was crafted before the Geneva Agreement between the SDECE's COMINT component, the STR, and the young National Security Agency, which had been established late in 1952. Paris and Washington had agreed to exchange COMINT data, pushing the Service Technique de Recherche (STR) and the NSA to work together in a kind of intelligence "pool" against a relatively new Cold War target, China.

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On 31 August 1953, Boursicot and Allen Dulles—by then the DCI—again strengthened this collaboration. The end of the Korean War and the perceived expansion of the Chinese threat had expanded American collection needs, and Indochina came to be seen as a solution. American operators took positions in the Seno Base in Laos because the Okinawa stations were too far away to intercept Chinese radio broadcasts coming from South China.¹⁰

The Korean War and the armistice that stopped the fighting had demonstrated the importance of obtaining intelligence about China. Indochina, as a Cold War battleground, provided a window onto Chinese possibilities and intentions. In these more international aspects of intelligence collaboration, French-American intelligence relations operated relatively smoothly. It would be a different picture at the local level in Vietnam.

Relations with French Indochina authorities

The CIA analyst of Vietnamese affairs George W. Allen recalled in his book *None So Blind* that day-to-day relationships between French G2 officers and their foreign counterparts were good,¹¹ but he seemed to have missed how different feelings were at the

higher levels, between various commanders in chief and their respective general staff officers.

With US diplomatic recognition of Vietnam in February 1950, US intelligence services functioned through military attachés and officers of the Pacific Command (PACOM) in Hawaii. Some officers of the CIA appeared to have been posted to the embassy, but others occupied positions in organizations like the Special Technical and Economic Mission (STEM). The STEM was managed in 1951 by Robert Blum, a man close to the CIA who that year also became president of the Committee for a Free Asia.¹² The committee was dedicated to sustaining the struggle of independent states against communism *as well as* colonialism. From a French perspective, Blum's views were easily seen to be verging on Francophobia and to be undermining French influence in the region. General de Lattre de Tassigny, who held the ranks of high commissioner as well as commander in chief, expressly obtained Blum's reposting. As de Lattre's intervention shows, French authorities had a hard time accepting the US presence as soon as it began to challenge French influence.

By January 1951 a foreign affairs section had been created within the Secrétariat Per-

Salan denounced the state of relations between French officers and foreign representatives. The “rumors” they collected, he said, were sent back and could be used against French interests.

manent de la Défense Nationale (SPDN)—a joint civilian-military council de Lattre initiated to coordinate top-level national security issues in Indochina—to smooth out collaboration between military attachés. It was supposed to facilitate the exchange of intelligence data as well as to control it. This unit organized daily meetings in which the French G2 took bearings of the military situation and answered questions from the US side.¹³ Nevertheless, all sensitive issues were scrupulously kept secret and away from American ears.

Theoretically, this unit was supposed to be the exclusive intelligence channel between French forces and their allies in

Indochina. But some were not satisfied by the quality or the quantity of the data and searched for more by round-about means.¹⁴ According to a US consulate member, the State Department in particular was discontented with reports of the military attachés and put pressure on them to improve.¹⁵ For instance, a Sûreté (the French political police in Indochina) report from 1952 attests that US representatives at the Hanoi Consulate bitterly complained about the French, who were overtly reluctant to help them solve the problem.¹⁶

This lack of cooperation was quite typical for the period and was the result of the perspectives, if not policy, of the French

Expeditionary Force Commander, General Raoul Salan (1952–53), which can be traced in his personal notes. During his tenure, Salan denounced the state of relations between French officers and foreign representatives. The “rumors” they collected, he said, were sent back and could be used against French interests.¹⁷ Expeditionary Force policy required French officers to make contact with military security whenever they met foreigners, even allies. As a result, 1952 was the worst year in relations between the two countries. It resulted in an extreme poverty of American reports—probably worsened by the relatively weak understanding of French among US intelligence operatives and a lack of other, non-French-speaking sources, at least according to French archives.¹⁸



Left, General de Lattre de Tassigny, French high commissioner and commander in chief in Indochina with Emperor Bao Dai on 1 January 1951. (image © Raymond Reuter/Sygma/Corbis). Right, Generals Raoul Salan and Rene Cogny reviewing troops on Salan's final departure from Vietnam, October 1954. (image © Bettmann/Corbis).

In the minds of many French, these incidents were proof that the United States was playing both sides.

A second problem for the French authorities was the US practice of making contact with Vietnamese personalities. This activity brought suspicion upon the CIA and triggered closer surveillance of US representatives. The agreement theoretically excluded political affairs, but as the United States started to look for intelligence in a broader context, its officers started to get in touch with some murky Chinese and Vietnamese personalities, including Trinh Minh The—a Cao Dai defector in South Vietnam¹⁹—or Ngo Dinh Nhu—Diem's brother.²⁰ The French political police thus reported the constitution of a cell composed of a dozen Chinese and Vietnamese close to the US consul in northern Vietnam.²¹ It also appeared that the Chinese had been given a radio transmitter. Some Vietnamese and Chinese people met the US representative directly and provided information, although their reports were usually seen as biased.²² General Salan, as well as many officers and civil servants in the country, could not stand the maneuvers, and the intelligence relationship under Salan came close to breaking down.

With General Henri Navarre, who took over from Salan in 1953, relations were simpler because he recognized the degree to which his forces were dependent on the United States. But he was still reluctant to provide intelligence

from his technical services. For example, in the middle of 1953, Navarre wanted US help to increase airborne collection. In compensation, the Americans wanted the results of surveillance conducted in South China. Navarre at first refused, in order to protect his COMINT organization, then his most important intelligence service.²³ But when he became privy to the secret SDECE-NSA agreement mentioned above, he finally agreed to the terms—he was probably also under pressure from Paris. At the same time, according to Vietnam historian John Prados, the French proposed an agreement with CIA over the control of South Vietnamese confessional sects in exchange for financial aid.²⁴

In sum, two main factors explain the mediocrity of the US-French collaboration. First, French local authorities in Indochina continuously tried to retain control of the conduct of the war. The French could accept material and financial aid, but it rejected interference in its Indochina policy.

Second is the behavior of General Salan, which in turn may have grown out of lingering anger over the killing in 1945 by the Viet Minh of a French officer in the presence of an OSS officer, who allegedly declared himself a neutral and refused to intervene. In addi-

tion, it had become obvious that the United States, through OSS Major Archimedes Patti's mission in Hanoi, had given weapons to the fledgling Viet Minh—Patti was present at the declaration of Vietnam's independence. In the minds of many French, these incidents were proof that the United States was playing both sides.²⁵

The Bottom Line in Foreign Intelligence Collection.

Differing French visions of the purpose of intelligence collaboration virtually assured tension. For SDECE headquarters in Paris, the Indochina War was another front of the Cold War—like Germany or Korea—and the collaboration with US intelligence services was natural and necessary. In Vietnam, the French high command had a “local vision” and protected its own interests, which led to treatment of US intelligence as a rival. Ultimately, despite the problems of 1952, local opposition to cooperation was overcome at the insistence of Paris. If de Lattre or Salan were both wary of US intentions in Indochina, they nonetheless accepted and initiated Western intelligence exchanges agreed upon in Singapore in 1951. And, in this game, France was the main beneficiary because what the British and Americans offered filled out their intelligence analysis.

One of the officers dropped into Southeast Asia late in the war, Col. Jean Sassi, and others started to apply the counter-guerrilla skills acquired in Europe and briefly applied against the Japanese to fight the fledgling Viet Minh.

Action Branches: From French-operated to CIA-funded Counter-maquis in Indochina

On the operational level, the French and American covert action branches cooperated a great deal in the then relatively young field of counter-guerrilla operations. In Indochina, the Action Branch of the SDECE was probably one of the most advanced and innovative services in the French military. But it is generally unknown that its main innovation, the use of what were essentially guerrilla forces to counter guerrillas opposing established rule—which proved to be seminal in the future of counterinsurgency strategy across the world—was closely linked to US intelligence in Indochina.

The French-American Birth of the GCMA

The roots of French-American collaboration in irregular warfare operations can, of course, be found in WW II, as many French, US, and British intelligence operatives had fought in the French Resistance, with Americans often parachuting into France from England to activate guerrilla networks of resisters known as maquis. In France, these joint British-American-French guerrilla

teams were known as Jedburghs.²⁶

In the jungle war against the Japanese in the Pacific, the Allies had tried to use similar techniques. Two examples are Orde Wingate's *Chindits* in Burma and the British-led Force 136 in Southeast Asia.²⁷ French units were used in the same way in Indochina, although not until the Japanese were in retreat.²⁸

With the defeat of the Japanese and the rise of the Viet Minh, one of the officers dropped into Southeast Asia late in the war, Col. Jean Sassi, and others started to apply the counter-guerrilla skills acquired in Europe and briefly applied against the Japanese to fight the fledgling Viet Minh, which was itself organizing into maquis. In effect, the French aimed to use guerrilla warfare techniques to mount counter-guerrilla operations in the rear of the Viet Minh-controlled areas.

However, material (planes and weapons) and money (to pay local countermaquisards) were required, and the French did not have much. It was in this environment that the United States arrived with a proposal to activate countermaquis in Tonkin, the part of Indochina

most heavily infiltrated by Viet Minh maquis.

Signs of this French-American collaboration on counter-guerrilla issues can be traced back to 1950. Secretary of State Dean Acheson outlined its features in a memorandum to the National Security Council entitled "Collaboration with friendly governments on operations against guerrillas."²⁹

While there has been a certain amount of exchanges of views between military representatives, as in the case of...the French in Southeast Asia, it does appear that an organized effort has been made to pool information, skills and techniques among the friendly nations who have a common interest in defeating this kind of [communist] activity.

On the ground, those "exchanges," as Acheson put it, were performed by intelligence service officers on both sides. Indeed, it appears that CIA may have introduced a "counter-maquis" plan as early as May 1950, when the French were setting up their SDECE station in Indochina.

Mystery surrounds the actual identity of the person who made the proposal. Memoirs of Frenchmen in the SDECE (Trinquier, Aussaresses or Puy-Montbrun)³⁰ assert that

Edward G. Lansdale made the proposal floated in May 1950. This seems unlikely, as Lansdale, who was still a captain in the Air Force at the time and just beginning to achieve some success in the Philippines with Magsaysay,³¹ would not have had the stature to propose a program of this scope. Furthermore, a search of French archives shows that Lansdale did not visit Vietnam until 1953 with Maj. Gen. John O'Daniel and returned with the Saigon military mission in 1954. It seems likely that the French memoirists may have confused the early period of 1950–1951 and the later one of 1954–1955, when Lansdale was indeed the “omnipotent American” who traumatized the French military at the end of the war. This confusion may tell us a lot about the climate of suspicion and continuous fantasy that weighed on the two relationship of the two allies.

If it was not Lansdale, then who? In a memoir published in 2003, Thibaut de Saint Phalle claims to have carried the proposal.³² Saint Phalle—with an ancient French heritage but a US citizen and WWII OSS operative in China—negotiated on behalf of CIA in 1950 with the French high commissioner to Vietnam Léon Pignon and Maurice Belleux, the head of the SDECE in Indochina.

According to Saint Phalle's account,³³ which is corrobo-

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rated by documents in French archives,³⁴ he was sent to Saigon to establish a Franco-American collaboration on counter guerrilla issues. The plan, supposedly decided upon by Allen Dulles himself, was to have

Vietnamese “irregulars” trained by the Americans.... The Americans selected would have had guerrilla warfare experience during the [Second World] war. They would train the Vietnamese, particularly the so-called Montagnards.... The Vietnamese troops led by Americans would then be turned over to the French high command that would fit these irregular units into their military strategy.³⁵

Saint Phalle was well aware that his “Far Eastern military experience” behind Japanese lines played a great deal in his appointment for this mission and his selection further establishes the role of World War II experience in the framing of counter guerrilla ideas.

The CIA plan was elaborated jointly by Saint Phalle and a very pro-American French intelligence officer, Col. Jean Carbonel, who would play a later role in this story. Lt. Col.

Richard G. Stilwell, a future commander of UN forces in Korea, had been temporarily attached to the CIA and would supervise the American-led training.

Though the French were initially cautious about Saint Phalle because he would not tell them he came on CIA's behalf—French archives talk of some “obscure American organizations” that appointed him—they finally reached an agreement in principle when they understood on whose behalf Saint Phalle was preaching.³⁶

But the plan quickly fizzled out when General de Lattre took over in December 1950. Characteristically, de Lattre feared the Americans would meddle too much in French business and oppose the plan. He first obtained Saint Phalle's expulsion from the country.³⁷ Then, at the 1951 Singapore conference de Lattre managed to oust the CIA from the countermaquis project entirely.³⁸ Letters and telegrams from his personal archives reveal that he violently opposed the project and stated that his priority was to “avoid the Americans' sticking their nose in his business” and that “the secret goal of the Americans was the realization of a *guerrilla system* that they controlled.”³⁹

But the most impressive instance of SMM use of French methods was the very idea of countermaquis.

Although this US effort to establish a bilateral countermaquis effort appears to have failed, the French nevertheless went ahead on their own, internalizing it into the French military as what would later be called the GCMA (Groupes Commandos Mixtes Aéroportés),⁴⁰ an impressive countermaquis network—in the Tonkin and Laos Highlands—some of which the Americans took over after the French-Indochina War.

The French counterguerrilla legacy and its American heirs

As the French were retreating from Indochina in mid-1954, US intelligence returned to counterguerrilla issues as it realized it would have to carry the burden of preventing a communist takeover of Southeast Asia after the French departure.

During this period, there is no doubt about Col. Edward G. Lansdale's involvement in French-American collaboration as head of the so-called Saigon Military Mission (SMM),⁴¹ "a covert group...entirely separate from the regular CIA station."⁴² The SMM fit in the framework of the Military Assistance Advisory Group. For a time the SMM was under the cover of the Training Relations and Instruction Mission

(TRIM). According to Lansdale, who seemed very enthusiastic about it in the beginning, the TRIM⁴³ was a French-American institution that aimed "to push French and Americans to work together to help the Vietnamese to take the control of their own affairs."⁴⁴ The official US Army history of the period describes it as a joint training institution intended to improve the ability of the Vietnamese military to stand up to communist attacks.⁴⁵ The reality was somehow gloomier, as the French and the Americans waged a silent war over who would have the most influence over the fledgling state. The mission only lasted until April 1956, when the French withdrew the remainder of their expeditionary force from the country.

Within the TRIM was the National Security Division, which was in fact another name for pacification and counterinsurgency operations. The suspicions caused by political conditions and power struggles made for an uneasy collaboration between the French and the Americans.⁴⁶ Nevertheless, the mission allowed Lansdale to learn French know-how in counterinsurgency, in the form of the Mobile Administrative Groups (GAMOs—Groupements Administratifs Mobiles Opérationnels),⁴⁷ from which he derived a new kind of unit: the

Civic Action Teams, which were, like the GAMOs, supposed "to go out in the countryside and work in the villages to foster self-rule, self-development and self-defense."⁴⁸ This kind of activity, resembling the usual practice of the Viet Minh peasant-soldiers, will be found again in the *Revolutionary Development* set up by Tom Donohue in 1964, then in the Civil Operations and Revolutionary Development Support (CORDS) after 1967.⁴⁹

In the words of CIA historian Thomas Ahern in his study of CIA pacification programs:

[They] incorporated suggestions into a plan based on French pacification practice. The idea, borrowed from the so-called French Mobile Administrative Group and modified to reflect American experience in the Philippines, called for a small coordinating group in Saigon to send "trained government employees into the provinces to set up a government at the level and connect it to the national government."⁵⁰

But the most impressive instance of SMM use of French methods was the very idea of countermaquis. The appropriation of this operational strategy is owed less to Lansdale than to his controversial sec-

Endnotes

1. US intelligence thinking about the implications of communist victory in Southeast Asia is documented in *Estimative Products on Vietnam, 1948–1975*, published by the National Intelligence Council in 2005. It is available at www.foia.cia.gov/nic_collection.asp (see NIC Vietnam Collection).
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5. SHD/DAT, 10 H 266, « Note sur les Américains en Indochine », n°1025/RD/LP/1000 du SDECE, 10 May 1952.
6. SHD/DAT, 10 H 266, « Lettre de Belleux au général Cogny », 25 September 1951.
7. Roger Trinquier, *La guerre moderne*, Paris, Economica, 2008 (1961), 109.
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12. Laurent Césari, *La France, les Etats-Unis et l'Indochine (1945-1957)*. PhD, Paris X, 1991, 501; Andrew Defty, *Britain, America, and anti-communist propaganda, 1945-53: the Information Research Department*, (Routledge, 2004), 207; André Kaspi, « La mission du général de Lattre aux Etats-Unis (13-25 Septembre 1951) », *Revue française d'histoire d'Outre-mer*. Tome LXXIX, 1992, n°295, 213–26.
13. CAOM, HCI, Dossier 797, Instruction n°46/SPDN concernant l'organisation et le fonctionnement du Secrétariat permanent de la Défense nationale, 6 January 1951 ; SHD/DAT, 10 H 234, SPDN activities syntesis 1952 to 1953.
14. SHD/DAT, 10 H 611, Fiche n°23 and 24/S de « Afrique », 19 February 1952. B/1 quotation.

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15. SHD/DAT, 10 H 611, Fiche "opinion d'un membre du consulat des USA au sujet des relations du personnel consulaire avec les autorités françaises, 15 Février 1952.

16. SHD/DAT, 10 H 5337, Note d'orientation n°101/EMOTCC/2/C, 23 January 1953.

17. A US staff Mémo, n°124 in September 1951, said, "There have been several reports, almost all of doubtful reliability, that the French, failing to get greater Western support and in an effort to salvage what they can in Indochina, will attempt to reach a modus vivendi with the Viet-Minh.... it appears most unlikely that the French would make such a deal." This information was absolutely wrong. It had never been General De Lattre's intention to negotiate with Uncle Ho. NIE, Staff Memo 124 French Problems in Indochina 4 September 1951.

18. SHD/DAT, 10 H 611, Fiche n°23/S de "Afrique," 19 February 1952. B/1 quotation

19. SHD/DAT, 10 H 4223, Fiche n°2196/2F, 10 December 1952.

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21. SHD/DAT, 10 91, BR du SSHC n°7355 C-SG/BCST, 29 November 1951.

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24. John Prados, *Les guerres secrètes de la CIA*, Paris: Les éditions du Toucan, 2008, 194.

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27. Fabienne Mercier-Bernadet, "La force 136 et L'Indochine," in *Les forces spéciales : concept et histoire, actes du colloque des 11 et 12 Juin 2001 au Centre d'Etudes et d'Histoire de la Défense, Cahier E2 (32)* (Paris, 2007).

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28. For an insider account of these late anti-Japanese operations, read Colonel Jean Sassi, *Opération spéciales : vingt ans de guerres secrètes* (Paris: Nimrod, 2009). Sassi was a Jedburgh who joined Force 136 in 1945 and was parachuted by the British into Laos. He was the very first officer to use Hmong fighters as irregulars against the Japanese but also against the Viet Minh.

29. Report to the National Security Council by Executive Secretary on Office of Special Projects, Secret, NSC 90, October 1950, 5, in Intelligence Community Collection, Digital National Security Archives (DNSA).

30. Roger Trinquier, *Les Maquis d'Indochine. Les missions spéciales du service action en Indochine. 1952–1954* (Paris: Albatros, 1976), 38; Paul Aussarresses, *Services spéciaux. Algérie. 1955–1957* (Paris: Perrin, 2001), 354; Déodat Puy-Montbrun, *L'Honneur de la Guerre* (Paris: Albin Michel, 2002), 134.

31. Jonathan Nashel, *Edward Lansdale's Cold War* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2005), 278.

32. Thibaut de Saint Phalle, *Saints, Sinners and Scalawags. A lifetime in Stories* (Hobblebush: Brookline: NH, 2003), 301.

33. *Ibid*, 292.

34. SHD/DAT, 10 H 608, "Extrait d'une lettre de M. du Gardier à M. Baeyens, Directeur d'Asie-Océanie," R.M.G./R.G., 17 November 1950.

35. Thibaut de Saint Phalle, 292.

36. SHD/DAT, 10 H 266, "Fiche I – Liaisons avec le CIA", Saigon, 5 September 1951.

37. Edouard Axelrad (former SDECE agent in charge for cooperating with Saint Phalle in 1951) interview by Pierre Journoud.

38. Note de travail, 10/05/1951 "Série Papiers d'Agent-Archives Privées / Code 271 (Henri Bonnet)" Volume 1, Archives from the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs. See also "Note de service – Mai 1951" in Carton H84/Dossier 308/Série B/Amérique/États-Unis, Archives from the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

39. Télégramme du Gal de Lattre à Jean Letourneau [ministre des États associés] », Jean Lattre De Tassigny's personal archives published as *Indochine 1951. Archives personnelles du Maréchal de Lattre de Tassigny* (Paris: Plon, 1987), 228.

40. SHD/DAT, 10 H 608, "Annexe à la lettre de M. du Gardier à M. Baeyens, Directeur d'Asie-Océanie", R.M.G./R.G., 17 November 1950.

41. For a long time, the only source on the SMM was the report published in the Pentagon Papers, Senator Gravel Edition (5 vol), Boston, 1971, Vol. I, 575. Senator Gravel Edition, Volume I (Boston: Beacon Press, 1971), 575. This version of the papers was published in five volumes and includes documents that were not a part of the official government version. The Gravel Edition is available online beginning at www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/pentagon/pent1.htm. Links to subsequent chapters and volumes are provided at the end of the first chapter. But we recently benefited from an eyewitness account by an SMM staff member, Rufus Phillips in *Why Vietnam Matters* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2008).

Endnotes (cont.)

42. Phillips, 12. The mission is also discussed in Thomas Ahern's series of histories on CIA engagement in Vietnam in www.foia.cia.gov/vietnam.asp.

43. Edward G. Lansdale, interview by Ted Gittinger, 5 June 1981 (Lyndon Baines Johnson Library, Austin, TX), 6. Available at www2.millercenter.org/lbj/oralhistory/landsdale_edward_1981_0605.pdf

44. E.G. Lansdale, *In the Midst of Wars* (New York: Harper & Row, 1972), 216.

45. Brig. Gen. James Lawton Collins, Jr., *The Development and Training of the South Vietnamese Army, 1950-1972* (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 1991). This publication, first printed in 1975, is available online from the US Army Center for Military History at <http://www.history.army.mil/books/Vietnam/devtrainrvn/ch1.htm>.

46. For one example, see Ahern, *CIA and Rural Pacification in South Vietnam* (Washington, DC: Center for the Study of Intelligence, CIA, 2001), 9, fn. 23. The declassified version is available on www.cia.gov/vietnam.asp. Ahern writes, "...the SMM officer working with Operation Brotherhood, shared Lansdale's conviction of French perfidy. He recalled how...one of the few Frenchmen in the National Security Division not affiliated with French intelligence...tried to shake the SMM commitment to Diem with fabrications.

47. Jean-Marc Le Page, "Le Tonkin, laboratoire de la pacification » en Indochine ?" in *Revue historique des armées*, n° 248, 2007: 116–25.

48. Lansdale, *In the Midst of Wars*, 213.

49. Robert Komer, *Organization and Management of the "New Model" Pacification Program, 1966–1969* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, D(X)-2014-ARPA, 1970), 139.

50. Ahern, *CIA and Rural Pacification in South Vietnam*, 8.

51. Jean Kohn, *A Civilian in Uniform*, manuscript, 1995. Kohn was an OSS operative in a three-man team with Conein. In these unpublished memoirs, he tells of operations in 1945 in Indochina south of China. Available at the Office of Strategic Services, Operational Group's website (www.ossog.org).

52. Department of Defense, *The Pentagon Papers: the Defense Department History of United States Decisionmaking on Vietnam*, Senator Gravel Edition (5 vol) (Boston, 1971), Vol. I, 575.

53. *Ibid.*

54. For an extensive account of those countermaquis, read Michel David's published PhD thesis, *Guerre secrète en Indochine* (Panazol: Lavauzelle, 2002), 426.

55. Raymond Muelle (former GCMA operative), interview by the author, 5 May 2009.

56. Douglas Blaufarb, "Organizing and Managing Unconventional War in Laos, 1962–1970" (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 1972), 102. This report, numbered R 919 ARPA and classified SECRET, was prepared for the Advanced Research Projects Agency. ARPA approved the report for public release in August 1997.

Endnotes (cont.)

57. Then chief of Saigon Station. It should be noted that Colby was himself a former Jedburgh and thus very well aware of the potential of such counter-maquis operations.

58. Stuart Methven, interview with the author, 8 May 2009. Methven published a memoir, *Laughter in the Shadows: A CIA Memoir* (Annapolis, MD: Naval Institute Press, 2008). It is reviewed in the Intelligence Officer's Bookshelf in this issue.



