



## **Polwar, the politicization of military forces : history, theory and practice.**

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**POLWAR: THE POLITICIZATION OF MILITARY FORCES;  
HISTORY, THEORY AND PRACTICE**

A Thesis Presented

By

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Department of Political Science

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HISTORY, THEORY, AND PRACTICE**

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There are some militarists who say: "We are not interested in politics but only in the profession of arms." It is vital these simple-minded militarists be made to realize the relationship that exists between politics and military affairs. Military action is a method used to attain a political goal. While military affairs and political affairs are not identical, it is impossible to isolate one from the other.

Mao Tse-Tung, On Guerrilla Warfare, 1937

The mode of being the new intellectual can no longer consist in eloquence, . . . but in active participation in practical life, as constructor, organizer, and "permanent persuader."

(Gramsci)

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Special thanks are due also to the colleagues with whom I served at the College in Vietnam--Vietnamese, Nationalist Chinese and those from the Republic of Korea--and to those among whom I wrote, taught and learned while at the Institute, especially those of the "teaching triangle" of the Universities of Duke, North Carolina and North Carolina State.

Finally, my thanks to the members of my MA Thesis Committee, Professors Gerard Braunthal, James Der Derian and Eric Einhorn of the University of Massachusetts at Amherst who have agreed that it may be worthwhile to bring this subject into the light.

Pascal R. Politano

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## GLOSSARY OF TERMS

- ARVN** - Army of the Republic of Vietnam  
**CCP** - Chinese Communist Party  
**CHEKA or Cheka** - Cherezvychainyi komitet; Extraordinary commission (for fighting counterrevolution and sabotage)  
**CHICOM** - Chinese Communist  
**CHINAT** - Chinese Nationalist  
**CIA** - (US) Central Intelligence Agency  
**COMUSMACV** - Commander, US Military Assistance Command, Vietnam  
**CSF** - Central Security Force(s)  
**DAFIE** - Directorate of Armed Forces Information and Education  
**FBI** - (US) Federal Bureau of Investigation  
**GPWD** - General Political Warfare Department  
**GVN** - Government of (South) Vietnam  
**IG** - Inspector General  
**Infitah** - Anwar Sadat's 1974 "open door" policy on foreign investment  
**JCS** - Joint Chiefs of Staff  
**KCT** - Kun chang tang (Share Production Party); Chinese Communist Party  
**KMT** - Kuomintang; National People's Party formed by Sun Yat-sen  
**MACV** - (US) Military Assistance Command, Vietnam  
**MND** - Ministry of National Defense  
**Mossad** - Israeli Security Police  
**MPC** - Military Police Command  
**NSA** - (US) National Security Agency  
**NVA** - North Vietnamese Army  
**PIO** - Public Information Office or Officer  
**PLA** - People's Liberation Army (Chinese Communist)  
**Politcoms** - Political commissars  
**Polwar** - Political warfare; politicization of military forces  
**Psyop or PSYOP** - Psychological operations  
**Psywar or PSYWAR** - Psychological warfare  
**ROC** - Republic of China  
**RVN** - Republic of Vietnam  
**RVNAF** - Republic of Vietnam Armed Forces  
**SAVAK** - Iranian security, or secret, police  
**Shariah** - The "straight path" or canon law of Islam (Islamic law)  
**Shi'ite, Shi'a** - Literally, "followers"--of Ali, the fourth caliph after Mohammed--who reject the first three caliphs and consider Ali and his eleven descendants the only true successors of Mohammed.  
**TGC** - Taiwan General Command  
**Ulama, Ulema** - Religious teachers and scholars of Islam  
**USAIMA** - US Army Institute for Military Assistance  
**USAJFKCMA** - US Army John F. Kennedy Center for Military Assistance (now US Army Center for Special Warfare)  
**USARV** - US Army, Vietnam  
**VC** - Viet Cong; South Vietnamese Communists  
**Voenspets** - Voenyi spetsialist; military specialists; leaders selected from the ranks of the old Czarist Imperial Army to serve in Russia's revolutionary Red Army

## INTRODUCTION

This paper will consist of three major parts: an introduction to the history, concepts and practice of polwar from its inception in the Russian Red Army to its introduction to non-Communist military forces; a rather detailed description of the Republic of Vietnam Armed Forces General Political Warfare system; and finally, conclusions drawn from those two parts as to the applicability of a type of polwar system for the armed forces of a contemporary third world member (Egypt) of the "free" nations of the world.

In my introduction I will discuss briefly the genealogy of the term political warfare or "polwar" as it has come to be used by the US government in an esoteric sense, that is, in the politicization of military forces as an attempt to achieve certain fundamental goals (such as loyalty) within those forces.

The basic concept of polwar originated with the Russian commissar system, giving the political cadre absolute control over the communist revolutionary armed forces, thus making them a decisive tool for the preservation of the Communist Party's power. In 1924, the concept was introduced in China by Russian advisors, and later was revised and has been used to the present time by both the Communist Chinese and the Nationalists in forms modified to conform to their respective ideologies. (See Appendix D.)

The polwar system introduced to the Republic of Vietnam in 1960 was adapted from the Nationalist Chinese system. Although the primary mission of the Vietnamese system was ensuring the loyalty of their own armed forces, two additional tasks were included in the charter: gaining and maintaining

the support of the civilian populace in both friendly and enemy controlled areas and destroying the loyalty of the enemy. These latter missions were the responsibility of the psychological warfare element of the General Political Warfare Department. The Viet Cong and North Vietnamese Army polwar organizations were tailored after the Communist Chinese system.

The South Vietnamese polwar system failed with its armed forces, but this failure does not invalidate the concept. The Nationalist Chinese system, the only formalized system outside the communist orbit (with the possible exception of Israel about whose internal military affairs little is known), still is in place and keeping its military house in order. The question remains therefore: Would such a system have application and benefit today for other countries of the "free world," especially those with large standing military forces? This thesis is based on that inquiry.

We must begin by providing a clear definition of this somewhat confusing term, political warfare, or polwar, the abbreviated form which the acronymically-minded Americans who have had to deal with the phenomenon have given us. Here I should digress briefly to point out that of the Americans who have dealt with the subject most have done so apathetically, many with distaste, a number with outright revulsion. To most Americans, and especially those in the armed forces, polwar is a sort of "alien corn," something, after all, that was a Russian invention, and a communist one at that. The fact that it was adopted by Asians, and first by Asian communists, doesn't make it any more digestible. All this is reinforced by the fact that the members of the armed forces (and general populace as well) of any country such as the United States which presupposes the loyalty, stability and affirmative response of its

armed forces considers resort to such devices as internal propaganda, political supervision of leaders and outright spying on individual soldiers reprehensible.

The distinction between political warfare (traditionally) and the sense used in this paper is one of focus. While we usually think of political warfare as international conflict involving the broad spectrum of assets available to most nations--diplomatic, economic, military, and so on--to pursue their objectives, polwar in its military sense may be defined as:

An organizational attempt to solve deep-rooted non-combat military problems centered on questions of loyalty or allegiance and civil-military relations, as well as the traditional problems of corruption, despotism, nepotism, mutiny, desertion, morale and soldier-dependent social welfare needs.<sup>1</sup>

As I have pointed out, the difference mainly is one of focus; while the "military" is merely one asset in the conduct of political warfare in the broader, more usual sense, the military (the forces of a given country), in the esoteric sense, is the asset of interest, and primarily only with respect to its structure and internal operations. The unfortunate choice of terminology originated with the General Political Warfare Department of the Nationalist Chinese defense ministry,\* and when the Chinese system was introduced in South Vietnam the same name was adopted. When, in the early 1960s, the Americans began "advising" the Vietnamese military they, with their penchant for the "bumper sticker"--"buzz word" language so prevalent today, coined the word, always capitalized, Polwar. I have included this last fact only because on subsequent pages of this paper the term may be seen capitalized on reproductions of US government documents.

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\* Chiang Kai-shek is credited with inventing the term, Political warfare, as it is used in this thesis.

I have selected Egypt as a possible candidate for polwar because the problems within Egypt's Central Security Forces which led to the uprising of February, 1986 consisted mainly of those I have described above. They do not comprise all the problems that exist within that organization; nor have I discussed, or even alluded to, the internal problems of the rest of Egypt's armed forces. I will deal with this subject in Chapter III of this paper which will examine also the possibility, desirability and feasibility of introducing a polwar system into the Egyptian armed forces, one "tailored" to suit Egypt's national interest as well as that of the US and the West.

In Chapter II of this paper the Republic of Vietnam's psychological warfare element, a part of its polwar organization, will be discussed, along with propaganda, one of the primary instruments of "psywar." Psychological operations, a term used by US practitioners, also will be mentioned. All these terms warrant clarification.\*

The terms psychological warfare and psychological operations, though frequently used interchangeably--and what is worse, held by some to be synonymous with propaganda--can be more clearly and specifically defined. Psychological warfare or psywar, in the official US government sense, may be defined as the planned use of propaganda and other psychological actions (such as terrorism) having the primary purpose of influencing the opinions, emotions, attitudes and behavior of foreign hostile groups in such a way as to support the achievement of national objectives. While psychological operations (again, in the US view) or psyop, may include psywar, they are broader

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\* The basis and sources for this explanation of these terms may be found in my essay "Propaganda: The Rhetoric of Power," UMASS, Amherst, 16 December 1986.

in scope in that they encompass also those political, economic and ideological actions planned and conducted to create in neutral or friendly groups the emotions, attitudes and behavior to support the same objectives. United States advisors introduced psywar to the South Vietnamese not long after the French defeat in Indochina; it was all the Americans (or the Western powers for that matter) had to offer in the way of "mind warfare." The Viet Minh, victorious in their long anti-colonial war, owed much of their success to the successful use of their polwar system, which they had had the wisdom to adopt as early as 1938 from the Communist Chinese. The South Vietnamese saw that the US system was inadequate to their needs; the Nationalist Chinese were still in the process of developing their "free world" system, but the Vietnamese, understandably, realized that they could hardly adopt a communist system, much less go to the enemy for advice and assistance. In Taiwan, Chiang Kai-shek, in more peaceful circumstances, could claim his right to polwar as a "latent legacy." After all, was he not the first commandant of the first polwar academy (inspired by the Russian communists in 1924) in China? Quite reasonably, the Vietnamese turned to him when, by the early 1960s, he had perfected his system. At that time the US-inspired psywar of the 1950s became subordinated to the overall polwar organization. The South Vietnamese never adopted the more definitive term, psyop. The South Vietnamese effort targeted all groups and made no distinction between "psywar" and "psyop."

Interestingly, although the US government's official position is that psyop is not used within the US, and although the use of propaganda directed at US citizens anywhere has been outlawed by Congress (PL 102), the course of

events seems to disprove this; the Iran-contra affair, which still rages at this writing, is a classic example among, undoubtedly, many.

While it would appear that there are almost as many definitions of propaganda as there are people who have written about it, and while there are those who even claim that everything is propaganda (such as Jacques Driencourt) and some who, because definition is so difficult, have abandoned the term altogether, the definition adopted by the US Institute for Military Assistance--which has overall responsibility for psywar (US definition) at the national level and partial responsibility (military aspects) for psyop--is adequate for the purpose of this paper: "any information, ideas, doctrines or special appeals in support of national objectives, designed to influence the opinions, emotions, attitudes and behavior of any specified group in order to benefit the sponsor, either directly or indirectly." The phrase "and behavior" obviously is of great importance since, even with an attitudinal change, some sort of action is necessary to achieve the desired objectives.

A word on sources is necessary. The reader will notice that in Chapter II of this paper, the part which describes in some detail the polwar system of the Republic of Vietnam, few citations are made and a number of charts or organizational diagrams are provided to simplify understanding the rather technical descriptions of the text. The written text is based, with the exception of some speculative or philosophical passages taken from memories of my experiences in Vietnam or from journals or diaries I kept there, almost exclusively from official handbooks, reports, narrative lesson manuscripts which I produced while at the JFK Center for Military Assistance at Ft.

Bragg, North Carolina, and briefings, many of which I attended, given by representatives of the Republic of Vietnam, the Republic of China and the United States. To have attempted to cite each source (in some cases literally scraps of yellowed paper) would have produced a plethora of notes (and corresponding numbers) incommensurate with the size and format of this work. Reproductions of the organizational diagrams of the RVNAF units and agencies were taken from the Political Warfare Handbook for Advisors, published by the US Army Institute for Military Assistance at Ft. Bragg, in 1970; those relating to ROC polwar were taken from a briefing report (dated 15 August 1964) entitled "Information Briefing on the General Political Warfare Department, Ministry of Defense, Republic of China." (This applies to the Appendices as well.) The textual information on the organization and functions of both the RVN and ROC systems was obtained in large part from those two sources. None of the information used is classified or, if it was at one time, has been declassified.

Recently, a scholar with humourous inclinations said to me, "today, taking from one source is considered plagiarism, while taking from a dozen or more is called research." This remark, though humourous, may have at least a kernal of truth, depending upon the "one source." A scholarly book by Carmen Haider--Do We Want Fascism?--published in 1934, which describes the Italian Fascism of the period, contained four footnotes among 274 pages.\* The author had spent a year in Italy accumulating her information; her sources, therefore, were of the best (if she is to be believed). Without putting too fine a point on the matter, I think the final word as to my inquiry about the practicability of polwar in the "free world" today must be: I am the primary

\* Carmen Haider, Do We Want Fascism?, New York, John Day, 1934.

source for this work. All I can add to this is that although it has been said also that today academicians and other scholars write only for their peers (I am indifferent to the possible validity of this statement), I hope that what I have written will be understandable and perhaps of use to the "acting laity."

Finally, a cautionary note. Because this thesis concentrates so intensively on polwar as a possible means of strengthening and stabilizing those countries which, while developing economically, socially and politically, maintain large military forces (for various reasons), and are striving genuinely to improve the condition of their people, there may be a tendency on the part of the reader to feel that polwar is suggested as an instant cure for all the ills of the "third world." Obviously, a number of factors must obtain if such a system is to play a successful supporting role--the justice and fairness of US foreign policy toward the country of interest, legitimate constitution of that country's government, and proper planning, organization and supervision of assistance and advisory efforts on the part of the US or its allies are a few. Polwar, in itself, must not be seen as an Yggdrasill, the massive tree of Norse legend whose great roots and branches hold together the universe.

## CHAPTER I--GENESIS

### The Red Army and Birth of Polwar

Following the successful initial stage of the Bolshevik revolution in the Autumn of 1917, the new revolutionary government in Russia, recognizing that absolute loyalty was essential among its soldiers, laid the foundation for a new army. The problem confronting the new leaders was in adapting efficiently the positive aspects of the old imperialist army to what they referred to as the "armed section" of the proletariat. Above all, the new army had to be a political one, "the expression of the proletariat and the creature of the party."<sup>2</sup> Its creation was announced by decree signed on 28 January 1918,<sup>3</sup> just prior to demobilization of what was left of the Russian Imperial Army (10 February). The nucleus of the new organization, officially named "The Red Army of Workers and Peasants," was made up of "worthwhile" sections of the "army of the revolution," that is, "the Red Guards and the politically 'conscious' soldiers" of the old Czarist army.<sup>4</sup> As Michael Garder writes:

Initially it was an egalitarian militia recruited on a voluntary basis and with elected leaders (one could not yet speak of officers). This militia reflected the ideas of Lenin and the majority of the leadership about the form of the armed forces of the proletariat. Experience, and the realism with which this experience was exploited, was soon to change these ideas.<sup>5</sup>

We should keep in mind the last sentence of this quotation.

One thing was certain: the new revolutionary government needed an army urgently; amid the confusion of post-revolutionary events and during the "consolidation" phase of the political reorganization of the huge Russian

land mass, the success or failure of total transition to communism would depend upon the creation of an efficient, highly motivated, and absolutely loyal armed force.

The treaty of Brest-Litovsk, signed on 3 March 1918, which amounted to a German Diktat, speeded up the collapse of the old Czarist empire. The Ukrainians proclaimed their independence and concluded a separate peace with Germany; the Poles, who had experienced unity during the German occupation, stood firm in the hope of achieving national sovereignty, while the Finns and the Baltic provinces broke from Russia. Separate republics emerged in the Caucasus, the people of the Don River basin equivocated, and in Siberia, where the Czechoslovakian Army Corps opposed the Reds, there was even more confusion.<sup>6</sup> Russia was not to "turn red" overnight. Garder notes:

Almost everywhere centres of counter-revolution sprang up: secret associations of all political tendencies (monarchists, liberals, social revolutionaries). The Allies, faced with the fait accompli of the 'betrayal of Brest-Litovsk,' were openly hostile towards the new regime. Anarchy and lawless power everywhere ruled supreme. The trial of strength which the new government had to face was very different from that of November 7, 1917.<sup>7</sup>

He continues, "the implacable will and the cold logic of Lenin, together with the unbounding energy and supple intelligence of the realistic Trotsky, were to make the Red Army--their creation--triumphant in the end."<sup>8</sup> How did they, in the face of obstacles which seemed insurmountable, achieve this triumph?

On 4 March a military-political organization was created with the purpose of organizing the Red Army; on 13 March, Leon Trotsky, then the People's Commissar for War, and a longtime advocate of conscription, strict discipline and professional officership as essentials for a regular army, was appointed chairman of this Supreme War Council. Trotsky argued that "as

industry needs engineers, as farming needs qualified agronomists, so military specialists are indispensable to defence."<sup>9</sup> Trotsky was contemptuous of the amateurism of the month-old revolutionary "militia" which though dynamic in its nucleus was little disciplined in its ranks; he rejected the idea of a proletarian army, an army which in theory was to be led and disciplined through revolutionary zeal. Trotsky argued that the old Czarist officers, many of whom held Kerensky and his short-lived provisional government responsible for the catastrophe that had befallen the army and the country, should be utilized to provide the necessary technical experience for the new army. Though his opponents argued that these officers could not be trusted Trotsky persevered and "recruitment" (in such forms as volunteering, compulsion and threats--in many cases families were held hostage) began. In 1918 alone the former czarist officers "provided more than three-quarters of the commanding and administrative staffs of the Red Army."<sup>10</sup> The elective system, which was a genuinely free system and wherein anyone from the ranks could become a leader of troops, was a thing of the past. Trotsky had established the first of the three elements which were to make the new Red Army successful--professionalism. His action came none too soon, as former officers of the old regime's army were joining the counterrevolutionaries everywhere in Russia.<sup>11</sup> To counter this threat newly formed Red Army units--brigades, divisions, armies--under the new leadership of experts began to appear everywhere.

On 4 April 1918 a corps of political commissars was created, and a few days later military regions were set up with wards and districts subordinate to them. Purposefully, these regions did not coincide with the boundaries of the soviet republics which had been the declared aim of the Bolshevik leaders,

thereby giving the party more centralized political control over the country.<sup>12</sup> Each of the regional offices (and their subheadquarters) was headed by three "functionaries": a professional officer from the old army, and two political commissars for military affairs whose loyalty to the party was considered unquestionable.<sup>13</sup> Although Trotsky acknowledged that the professional officership made a fundamental contribution to winning the civil war against the counterrevolutionaries, he was, at the same time, determined that this should be a "class" army. As Ian Grey tells us:

(Trotsky) depended on the hard core of dedicated members of the communist party, and up to half of the total party membership served in the army. He insisted that the new army must never challenge or undermine the revolution.<sup>14</sup>

Understandably, relations between the military leaders and the commissars often were strained, especially in the earlier stages of this new system; one need have little knowledge of or experience in the military to appreciate the attitude of professional soldiers being supervised by amateurs, no matter how well-meaning they may be. But Trotsky realized this also. According to Fedotoff White, Trotsky dictated that:

in purely military matters, in all operations, work and combat problems, the last word was left . . . to the military specialists. The political commissars were instructed not to interfere with operation orders of the military specialists. Their signatures on military documents merely signified that the given order was not a counter-revolutionary device.<sup>15</sup>

And eventually relationships began to improve, mutual respect evolved and with it greater understanding and the coordination necessary to achieve the overall objective: the preservation of the tenuous, newly-formed government. But Garder probably tells it best, and deserves to be quoted at length.

The commissar was there certainly to supervise the 'chief', but he was there equally to support and aid him. It was he who, in the name of the party, enforced discipline, approved and had executed the orders of an 'aristocrat' and imposed him on the proletariat. Thanks to the commissar, an iron discipline was re-established. The former officers who had suffered so much during the period of anarchy in 1917 began to experience respect for their new masters. As psycho-political officer of the unit, the commissar played a considerable role on the moral plane. The masses, who had so abruptly lost the motive for action when the old motto 'God, Tsar, Fatherland' disappeared, found, in the exhortations of the commissar, a new revolutionary faith.<sup>16</sup>

Thus Trotsky established his second formula for success: the use of political commissars to ensure loyalty to the new government (in actuality, and as the system has worked to the present day, to the party). From this point onward the Soviet Army has had a form of dual leadership. At times (usually during war, civil or otherwise) the military expert has more power than at others; sometimes, the political "amateur" becomes so proficient in military matters that he may discharge strictly military duties in addition to his political ones. In such a case, the system is termed a unified one where, for example, the political officer of, let us say, a battalion, serves in actuality as the unit's executive officer, or second in command. Otherwise the system can be called dual or parallel wherein a separate political system exists alongside the military "chain of command." Whatever the case, some form of political supervision exists to ensure that loyalty or reliability, which is essential to keeping the ruling group in place. With the Russian revolutionaries this security was so important that in some of the major units (army, army group or fronts) members of the Bolshevik leadership itself served as commissars.

But the system of "psycho-political" commissars was considered, in itself, not adequate to the task of providing this vital security. The leaders saw from the outset that a final "fail safe" system or organization was needed, one that would ensure even the loyalty of the commissars. Enter Felix Dzerzhinsky and the "all-Russian extraordinary commission to fight counter-revolution and sabotage," or Cheka, the third and final element of the newly-formed Red Army.

The Cheka had been created, again by decree of the newly established Bolshevik government, on 7 December 1917, with Dzerzhinsky, an idealistic Pole and tried and true revolutionary, at its head. Initially the Cheka was concerned only with the civilian sector, but with the army's increasing operations in the civil war (coupled with the fact that there was no counter-espionage organization worthy of the name in the Red Army) the Cheka, whose civilian responsibilities often overlapped the army's area of interest, soon penetrated the military structure at every level. Today's KGU (internal) and KGB (external) "security" organizations grew out of the Cheka.<sup>17</sup>

And so, as Garder sums it up, "with the commissar, the voenspets (military specialist) and the chekist, three fundamental factors of the Red Army make their appearance: enthusiasm, expert knowledge and terror."<sup>18</sup>

In order to acquire a clearer understanding of all polwar organizations some discussion of basic structural concepts is needed. The fundamental alternatives for polwar organization are a unified (or intergrated) system and a parallel or dual system. In the unified system the political officers serve in two capacities: as political officers and as regular executive officers or deputies, with the traditional duties of those latter assignments under the unit commander. They serve, in other words, a dual role, which is

not to be confused with the dual system. This latter organizational and functional concept is one wherein the entire structure of political officers and cadre as a separate hierarchy is superimposed on the military one, each unit at all levels down to company having a political officer per se attached but distinct from the purely military hierarchy and responsible only for polwar requirements, tasks and supervision. In this case the polwar officer is responsible to the unit commander for providing the necessary polwar support and responsible also to the next echelon's polwar officer for accomplishing his part of the overall polwar mission.

In the unified system the polwar officer is answerable to his commanding officer for accomplishing the duties of second-in-command (common to all executive officers or deputies in all military forces) and providing him with polwar support. Nonetheless he is responsible to the GPWD (at national level), through his counterparts, up through the military hierarchy, for accomplishing the polwar mission, i.e., strictly for polwar matters. As did the South Vietnamese later on, the ROC armed forces adopted a system combining both concepts: down to regimental level the dual system was used (aside from reasons of prestige, at that level and higher the polwar officer's is a full time job); below that, the unified system. Use of the unified system, having the polwar officer integrated into the unit, is the preferred mode; there is no disagreement on this. One may recall the contempt in which Nazi Gestapo officers were held by most German officers who had to tolerate their ferret-like security tactics. The unified system engenders more mutual trust, simplifies mission accomplishment by simplifying coordination, and saves manpower. A more subtle but extremely important benefit lies in the fact that it makes the polwar officer more of a team member;<sup>19</sup> this is good for both

his morale and that of the troops, and it makes him seemingly, if not actually, more accessible to the members of the command as well as more quickly aware of problems which may grow worse without his immediate attention. Finally, it enables him to be in a position where he may be more intimately aware of the actions, opinions, perhaps even the thoughts of the unit commander.

Although less desirable, there are times when the dual system must or should be used, such as when the political officers are unqualified through lack of military experience or training, or both, to serve in a purely military role, or when their polwar duties are so demanding that they have time for little else (as in the case of officers at regimental or higher level). Additionally, if the military leaders do not have the full trust of the government in power it would be inadvisable to place the polwar officers (possibly at any level) in such close subordination to them. As to this latter case the Russians are a good example. Initially, Trotsky used the dual system; later, after the civil war--during which the political commissars acquired some military knowledge, if not expertise, and when many of them began trusting and working well with their military counterparts--the Soviets adopted a unified system. Depending upon the times the Soviet system has been seen to shift. In the later 1930s during the Stalin purges when some eighty percent of the officer corps was under suspicion, the dual system reappeared; during the second World War when, in desperation, all Russians desirous of preserving their homeland had to cooperate and there was little time for discussing political subtleties, they went back to the unified system (which is in place today).

Finally, it must be understood that the scope of polwar activity dictates the extent and complexity of the organization. The Russians invented polwar as a system of ensuring that their new revolutionary army would be loyal and responsive to the politics which brought it into existence, at least until they had consolidated their position. There was no time (and there were precious few assets) to spare on programs for the welfare of the soldiers or their families or on civil-military relations (in a positive sense). The main thrust of the Soviet system was to ensure the loyalty and effectiveness of the new Red Army, especially its leaders, and this was accomplished mainly through harsh and negative measures-- spying, reporting, routing out and "neutralizing" dissidents, harsh, didactic, persistent and unequivocal political indoctrination, and perhaps most effective, a ruthless system of taking hostages and reprisals. These measures were dictated by the rule of necessity. The system which the Russians introduced to China just a few years after their civil strife ended was extremely refined compared with the one they had inaugurated. And gradually the Soviet system evolved into one which was much more comprehensive and sophisticated, employing the totality of assets which became available to the political department of their armed forces.<sup>20</sup>

#### The Chinese Connection

While these cataclysmic events were taking place to the north, the Chinese, following their rebellion against the Manchu Dynasty in 1911, were having problems with "warlordism." This semi-anarchical state of affairs, which we in the West generally regarded as traditional, had its roots in the Taiping Rebellion (1850-1864) when regional "armies" were recruited to put

down the uprising. The Manchus never really regained control over these armies and, when the last emperor abdicated in 1912, control of the new "republican" government was taken over by Yüan Shih-k'ai, former Manchu premier who had the loyalty of the most powerful warlord army. The "heyday" of this warlordism followed Yüan's death in 1916 and lasted until Chiang Kai-shek established some semblance of order in 1928.<sup>21</sup>

Meanwhile, Dr. Sun Yat-sen, who had been trying unsuccessfully to establish a truly republican form of government with many constitutional reforms, was forced to flee into exile in Japan. Following Yüan Shih-k'ai's death Sun moved back to China and settled in Canton where a government of "Southern China" had been set up in opposition to the nominal Peking regime of Yüan and other northern warlords. Sun's efforts to gain support from this "government" failed because his views were thought to be too democratic. From 1918 to 1923 Dr. Sun shuttled four times between Canton and Shanghai; eventually he was forced to flee Canton for Shanghai where, in January 1923, he met Adolph Joffe, the Soviet envoy. This meeting was to change Chinese (and world) history.<sup>22</sup>

Earlier, during its moment of greatest crisis Soviet Russia had made its first friendly overture toward China: the Karakhan Declaration (after Leo Karakhan, Deputy Foreign Commissar). The Declaration, which, though initiated in July 1919 did not reach Peking until March 1920 due to the turmoil in Siberia, was received enthusiastically by the Chinese. This first concrete expression of good will was followed by a second Soviet mission led by Ignatius Yourin, a member of the Central Siberian Soviet.<sup>23</sup> On 16 December 1921, Alexander Paikes, leading another Soviet mission, presented his credentials in Peking. Paikes's mission, not enthusiastically received, was followed by that of Joffe.<sup>24</sup>

Lenin was attracted by events in China. But more than that his hopes for the spread of Communism throughout the masses of western Europe had been frustrated, in large part by the establishment of the Weimar Republic in Germany; and the western allies were actively engaged in the counterrevolutionary effort. At the same time Dr. Sun, who had been attempting, unsuccessfully, to get help from those same western powers, began to negotiate for the employment of German ex-officers. It was then that the Soviets quickly stepped in.

Although the Peking regime still was the official one in the view of foreign powers, Joffe was not impressed and felt that Chinese unification could best be achieved through Russian support of Sun Yat-sen. Though Sun, like the Peking regime, had not been sympathetic to the Russian communists, certain factors impelled him toward a Soviet alliance: he was frustrated with the Chinese revolution, disillusioned with the West, impressed by the success of the Russian revolution, and impressed also by recent Soviet policy toward China. On their part the Russians, apart from wanting to sow the seeds of Communism in China (peasants had now been included as "workers of the world"), were concerned with the rise of Japan in the East and wished to consolidate an alliance with China for geopolitical reasons.

The Kun Chang tang (KCT, Chinese Community Party) came into existence in Shanghai in 192125 and shortly afterward established an uneasy alliance or "united front" with Dr. Sun's Koumintang (KMT, Chinese Nationalist Party) against the Peking Government. Undoubtedly, Sun's acceptance of Soviet cooperation had much to do with his agreement to form such an alliance.

In August 1923, Chiang Kai-shek, Sun's secretary and protege, was sent to Moscow to interview Lenin, Trotsky and Stalin and to study the organization

of Russian Communism, especially the Red Army. In September, Mikhail Grusenberg, later known as Michael Borodin, arrived at Canton with forty Russian advisors to help establish the Whampoa (or Whangpo) Military Academy. As Henry Wei describes it:

Dr. Sun had entertained the notion of establishing an academy for training officers for a revolutionary army. Now that Soviet cooperation was available, the project received prompt attention. The result was the Whangpo Military Academy for Officers. When Chiang Kai-shek returned from Moscow in the spring of 1924, he was appointed principal of the academy. Forty Russian experts were employed as instructors and advisers. Emphasis was laid not merely on military training but also on political indoctrination. The object was to create an army not only skilled in warfare but fully conscious of the social and political significance of the coming revolution.<sup>26</sup>

Whampoa Military Academy was opened on 1 May 1924, with an official inauguration on 16 June by Dr. Sun.<sup>27</sup> Chiang Kai-shek, later to lead the Chinese Nationalists, was the first commander or "principal" of the School. Chou En-lai, who was to become Mao's premier after the victorious communist revolution, ran the political department of the Academy. Thus the seed of polwar (Chiang and Chou are only two examples among many in both hierarchies) were implanted early in both future Nationalist and Communist leaders. Mao Tse-tung at this time effectually ran the Propaganda Department of the Kuomintang Central Executive Committee.<sup>28</sup> Chiang, before leaving the Academy to head the KMT upon Dr. Sun's death in 1925, passed some 3,000 cadets, all politically indoctrinated, through the school.

In 1927, beginning with the "Shanghai Massacre" in April (see below), the KMT launched a campaign of suppression of the CCP which culminated in the rupture of the first United Front. The CCP movement shifted from the urban

areas to the countryside and went "underground." This period marked the beginning of the Chinese Red Army which, "was henceforth to be the bulwark of the CCP in its struggle for survival and power (and) (v)irtually all CCP members acquired military experience, while the Red Army itself was thoroughly penetrated by party organization and controls."<sup>29</sup> We must see what forms this penetration took.

The regular communist forces had political personnel at all levels of organization providing, in addition to political education and indoctrination, for the administration of soldiers' clubs and the issuance of training manuals and newspapers. Rather than playing "watchdog" over non-communist officers (as in Russia) the political officers had an educative mission. Their inspiration was Russian since Borodin and his advisors had provided the initial guidance and impetus at Whampoa. But it was the activities and purposes of the Chinese "polwar" officers which differed from those of the Soviet commissars. Chalmers Johnson notes that "these political workers were not exactly analogous to the familiar political commissars of the Soviet Army; the Chinese Communist political officers had both a different origin and a different function."<sup>30</sup> Johnson cites F. F. Liu on the subject:

These (Chinese) commissars took up the task of organizing the soldiers into party cells, educating them politically, teaching them to read and write, and acting as guardians and spokesmen for the underprivileged soldiers. . . . Their duties were all part of their dual purpose of reforming the army through bettering its morale and of strengthening party loyalty. At the same time they won the reputation of keeping the soldiers' welfare at heart.<sup>31</sup>

Apart from the troop instruction of the political officers--and the work of the propaganda units, under whose officers programs were directed at the

enemy (the Japanese or KMT, or both) and at local Chinese residents--of prime importance was the program of troop welfare, a cornerstone of all subsequent polwar systems patterned after the Chinese Communist model. At the "grass roots" level (company level) was the Soldiers' Club with a range of activities geared to improve the welfare of the common soldier. Within the Club Management Committee were subcommittees such as:

- (a) Hygiene Subcommittee: for carrying out sanitation duties in the company area.
- (b) Economic Subcommittee: for supervising the preparation of food and the company's budgeting.
- (c) Wall Newspaper Subcommittee: for compiling and posting wall newspapers.
- (d) Culture and Recreation Subcommittee: for organizing reading instruction, evening assemblies, self-criticism ("study") meetings, etc.
- (e) Physical Training Subcommittee: for leading off-duty sports.

Johnson, who provides this information, claims that although the Club Management Committee was "guided" by the company political officer, the committee itself was elected by popular vote.<sup>32</sup> Whatever the case, we see here the beginning of the organizational attempt to improve the lot of the rank and file, a systematized attempt which was to grow in sophistication and efficiency in later polwar organizations.

While some system of political control existed in the PLA from the time that Mao Tse-tung and Chu Teh joined to form the Fourth Red Army in April 1928, the cornerstone of its polwar organization was the Kutien Resolution, the published version of a speech given by Mao at Kutien in December 1929.<sup>33</sup> John Gittings calls this "the locus classicus in the Maoist scriptures on this question of party control over the army."<sup>34</sup> The Resolution has been

republished in part or in its entirety on a number of occasions when the CCP felt impelled to revitalize its central themes of "improving army solidarity and discipline, establishing good relations with the civilian population, and winning over the enemy."<sup>35</sup> Gittings writes:

The Kutien conference was held at a time when conditions in the Red Army were still disorganized. Its ranks included ex-warlord soldiers, peasant militiamen, raw recruits, bandits, and fugitives from justice. It was beset by lack of discipline, 'remnants of militarism', with some officers maltreating or even beating their men, and 'vagabondage', defined as 'a disinclination to settle down to the serious tasks of government'--probably a euphemism for banditry. This desperate need to hold the army together and prevent its deterioration into yet another bandit force gave flesh and blood to the abstract principles of political control.<sup>36</sup>

Consequently, Mao's speech dealt with "'erroneous conceptions' in the army, party organization, party education, army propaganda, soldiers' political training, special education of young soldiers, favorable treatment of prisoners, and relations between military and political authorities within the army,"<sup>37</sup> thus providing a fundamental model for modern polwar. He emphasized the need for a political structure extending to the lowest level (squad "cells") and providing political education for soldiers and polwar cadres alike. As Gittings rightly says:

The Kutien Resolution is important not only because it is the first extended treatment of the question of political control and education by Mao or any other Chinese communist leader, but because it sets the pattern for the approach to this question throughout the army's subsequent history. Political work was, and still is, regarded as a totality which embraces all aspects of the army's everyday life, of its cultural, educational, and sparetime activities. It also dictates the way in which relations between the army and the civilian population, and within the army itself between officers and men, are handled.<sup>38</sup>

Not the least of Mao's precepts was that of proper "relations between the army and the civilian population," exemplified by the Three Cardinal Rules of Discipline conceived just prior to the Kutien speech, probably jointly by Mao and the Red Army's first commander, Chu Teh:<sup>39</sup>

1. Obey all orders.
2. Take nothing from the peasants.
3. Pool all confiscated goods.

It was the landlords who were to be made to suffer, not the peasants whom they had been grinding into the dust. Edgar O'Ballance is instructive on Mao's wisdom on this subject:

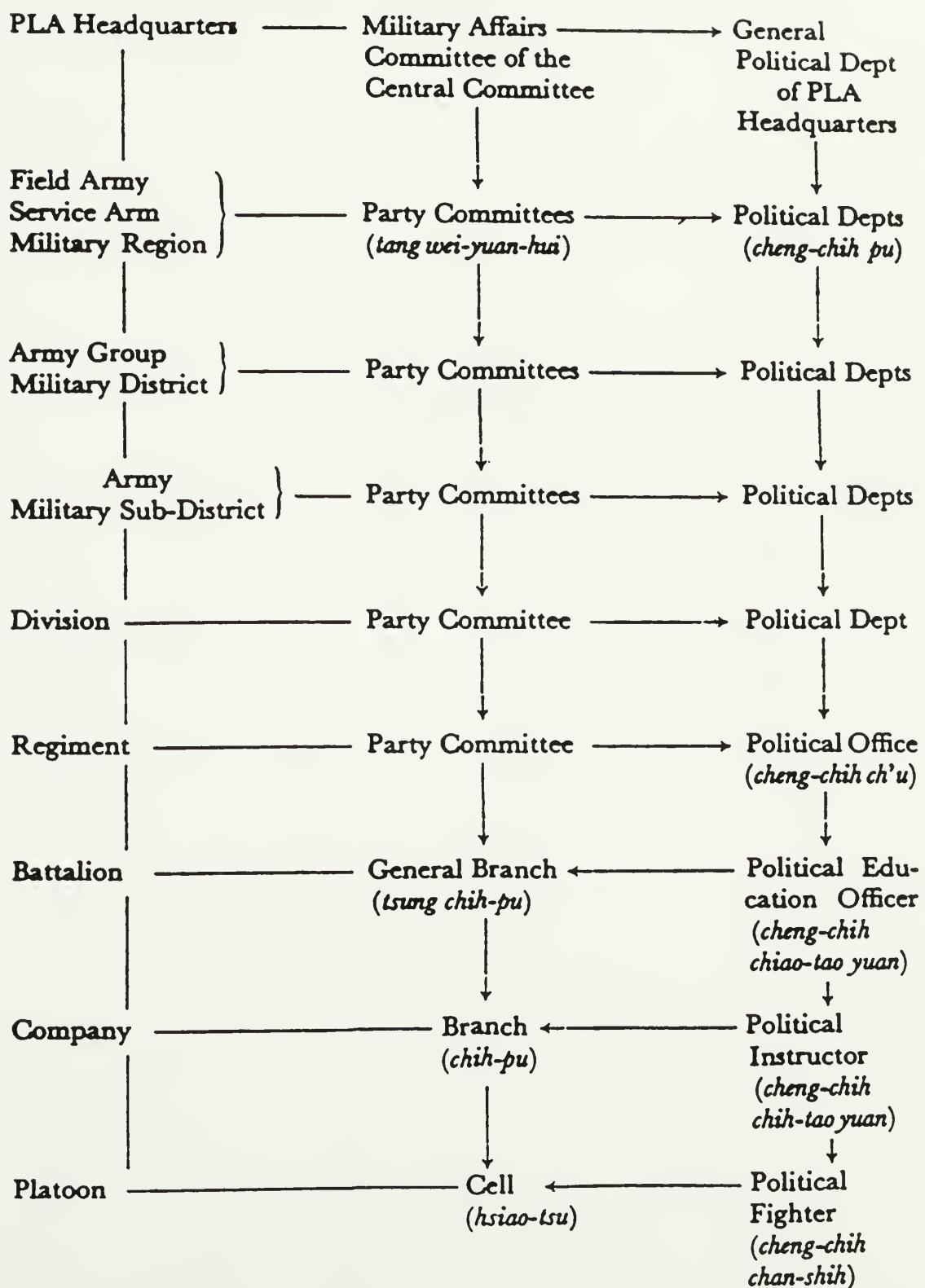
Mao Tse-tung, the far-seeing, peasant-minded politician, evolved certain rules of conduct to be observed toward the peasants. . . . The main rules were that the peasants were to be treated with courtesy, nothing must be taken from them unless it was first paid for, and anything borrowed must be promptly returned. This was a novel and unusual approach for Chinese soldiers to adopt. . . . To the Chinese mercenary soldier the Chinese peasant was the lowest form of life, and this opinion was reciprocated heartily by the peasants themselves. . . . The two were chasms apart, and now Mao Tse-tung was not only trying to bring them together but eventually to integrate them.<sup>40</sup>

Mao's organization for political control of the armed forces was (and remains) a two-tiered hierarchy: a party committee, with no formal links to the military authorities, which co-exists on every level with the military structure but is independent of it; and a political hierarchy integral to the army (with counterparts today in the navy and air force) which is found at all levels from the General Political Department at PLA Headquarters to the regimental Political Office (see Chart 1 on the following page).

But what of Chiang Kai-shek and the Nationalists?

On 9 July 1926, Chiang became the Commander-in-Chief, or Generalissimo (as he liked to be called), of the revolutionary army (KMT forces which still

### Political Control Structure of the PLA



Source: John Gittings, *The Role of the Chinese Army*; London, Oxford University, Oxford University Press, 1967, p. 306.

included the communist elements) and immediately commenced the Northern Campaign, or Expedition, an effort to defeat the northern warlords and unify China. With the nucleus he had developed at the Whampoa Academy, both Nationalist and communist, he had cleared and consolidated the South, beginning with Canton and its environs. Whether Chiang had plans to eliminate the communists from the outset of his northern drive is open to debate; nonetheless, within less than a year he was bashing them wherever he found them.

On 27 March 1927, Chiang's troops sacked Nanking, destroying a great deal of foreign-owned property. It has been alleged that this was done at the instigation of the communist political officers who were at large in the city (and still were integral to the KMT forces) in the hope of widening the breach between Chiang and foreign governments.<sup>41</sup> Understandably, the Western powers already were less than pleased with Chiang's arrangements with the Soviets and their advisers. In any case Chiang knew that as long as he collaborated with the communists, Russian or Chinese, he would get little of the help he so desperately needed from the West.

On 12 April, Chiang's Nationalists, already occupying Shanghai, attacked the communists there, killing some 5,000 in three days.<sup>42</sup> The purge continued with the removal of all persons suspected of communist sympathies from positions of authority. Chiang then made a blunder which would prove to have repercussions of seismic proportions--he ordered the abolition of all political officers in his armed forces. This was a mistake--the rectification of which (as we shall see) a quarter-century later gave the Nationalists internal security but came too late to affect the situation, ever, in mainland China--a mistake which the "Generalissimo" undoubtedly regretted bitterly

until, still unable to return "home" after yet another quarter-century, he died in virtual exile on Taiwan. Not the least of what Chiang lost was the systematized, propagandistic appeal to the Chinese peasants for their support, an appeal which Mao developed to perfection in his later campaigns against the Japanese as well as the Nationalists.

After a bloody and seemingly successful campaign which lasted until the early summer of 1927 and left Mao and his followers, battered and bleeding (but not out), sheltering in the Hankow area, Chiang felt strong enough to break with the Russians and consolidate his anti-communist camp. On 27 July, Borodin and Blucher (Galen)<sup>43</sup> were expelled from China and their fellow Russian advisers either went with them or were arrested. Predictably, as a result of all this, Chiang did begin to receive some help in money and supplies from foreign powers.<sup>44</sup>

Thinking he had delivered a decisive blow against the communists, Chiang continued his campaign against the northern warlords. His optimism was short-lived. By 1930, when he was receiving the first of his German advisers, the Reds, established firmly in various parts of China with a main base in the region bordering Kiangsi and Fukien provinces and operating in small semi-independent units, commenced their guerrilla operations. Under rigid political control and guided by Mao's four "Golden Rules of Warfare,"\* they successfully survived the first four of Chiang's five "extermination"

\* Although Mao, in time, became a master strategist these rules may have originated with Chu Teh, the older strategist. In any case they are: When the enemy advances--we retreat; . . . halts--we harass; . . . avoids battle--we attack; . . . retreats--we follow. It was when the Reds failed to follow this guidance (as during the fifth extermination campaign) in the earlier stages of the civil war that they suffered for it. See Edgar O'Ballance's The Red Army of China, London, Faber & Faber, 1962 pp. 47 & 67.

campaigns; and while doing so prospered by capturing a great deal of equipment and thousands of Nationalist soldiers, turning most of the equipment and a large number of the prisoners to their own purposes.

The fifth extermination campaign, begun in 1933 and orchestrated by the German General Von Seeckt and involving nearly a million of Chiang's men (against about 200,000 Reds in the Kiangsi and Oyuwan Soviets) almost succeeded.<sup>45</sup> After a campaign lasting twelve months, the Reds, hopelessly encircled and forced more and more to fight in position defense (contra Mao's Golden Rules), broke out in September 1934 and, marching some 6,000 - 8,000 miles through twelve provinces over a year's time, escaped to northwest China with the bulk of their forces. Although losses on the march generally were severe, the communists wasted no time in reconstituting their forces. Only six months after his arrival in Szechuan, Hsu Hsian-ch'ien, commanding the Red Fourth Front Army which left the Oyuwan area in 1934 with between 50,000 and 60,000 men, had increased that army's strength to more than 100,000.<sup>46</sup>

This great event, claimed as a victory by both sides, has been written down indelibly under the rubric "The Long Marches" (often mistakenly called "The Long March"; there were three main bodies--the First, Second and Fourth Front Armies--which left at different times and took different routes). Although military historians may claim that this was a partial victory for Von Seeckt and the Nationalists, or a partial defeat for the communists, no one denies that this "great escape" led eventually, but decisively, to Chiang Kai-shek's ultimate defeat. To the value of the sheer numbers who escaped one must add the less tangible and less obvious but extremely important fact that the enterprise provided a tremendous psychological boost to communist

solidarity. It is a fact also that following their victorious civil war most of the top members of party and government in Communist China under Mao had participated, as did he, in The Long Marches.

According to Chalmers Johnson "(t)he role played by the Japanese Army in bringing the Chinese Communists to power has never been fully appreciated by foreign observers (but) resistance to Japan provided the common ground on which cooperation between Communists and peasants was based."<sup>47</sup> Although "foreign observers" may not have agreed at the time of Johnson's writing (around 1960), John Gittings did a few years later. Gittings cites the same passage from Johnson and goes on to say that "Japanese hostilities against the communist areas . . . coupled with the effect of their propaganda which continually identified communism as the main enemy in China, only served to increase the existing support for the Chinese communists."<sup>48</sup> Chalmers Johnson's elaboration is worthy of quotation at length.

Japan's invasion and occupation of China decisively altered the political interests of the peasantry. Prior to 1937, the peasants were a passive element in politics . . . . The prewar peasant was absorbed in local matters and had only the dimmest sense of "China." Japan's invasion changed this condition by heightening the peasant's interest in such concepts as national defense, citizenship, treason, legitimacy of government, and the long-range betterment of the Chinese state. . . . Peasant mobilization in response to the Japanese menace, combined with the Communist readiness to lead the nationalistic upsurge in the countryside, was the essential ingredient in the wartime Communist-peasant alliance.<sup>49</sup>

According to Edgar Snow, Franklin Houn tells us, Chou En-lai told him (Snow) in 1936 that:

(A)lthough the Communists wanted to end the civil war and unite with the Koumintang to resist Japan, they had no intention of abandoning the revolution, but rather hoped to advance it, saying, "The first day of the anti-Japanese war will mean the beginning of the end for Chiang Kai-shek.<sup>50</sup>

Following the Japanese invasion of China in July 1937, Chiang was compelled to agree to form a second united front with the Reds. An agreement was signed for a joint Communist-Nationalist war against Japan and the Red Army was reorganized into the Eighth Route and New Fourth Armies (but with polwar organizations intact) under Chiang's nominal command. The "union" lasted until 1940 when cooperation broke down following Chiang's attack on the New Fourth Army, when he alleged that they had refused to obey his orders.<sup>51</sup> Each side had cherished the hope that through engagement with the Japanese the other side would be weakened. What Chiang finally realized was that with the tremendous peasant support they were receiving in the countryside the communists were growing much stronger, not weaker. As O'Ballance puts it:

The Nationalist attack on the 4th Route Army caused the final break in the thin veneer of the United Front, and from January 1941 until 1945, there was what amounted to an armed truce between the Reds and the Nationalists. Each left the other alone . . . . Chiang Kai-shek had decided upon a policy of containing the Reds, hoping meanwhile that the Japanese would destroy them.<sup>52</sup>

As to the United Front per se, Townsend and Womack present a most up-to-date opinion:

The real significance of the second United Front was not, then, meaningful cooperation with the KMT, which was never realized, but rather its impact on the Communist Revolution . . . . Superficially, the United Front appeared to suggest co-operation between two parties, each representing a different class base; in fact, the CCP used it to establish itself as the leader of a truly national movement.<sup>53</sup>

After Pearl Harbor, Chiang relied on American aid. A state of armed watchfulness existed between the Nationalists and communists until the end of the war by which time the Reds claimed an army of nearly one million.<sup>54</sup> Despite mediation efforts by US representatives such as George Marshall and Ambassador Hurley in 1945 (Marshall effected a shaky cease-fire which lasted from January until July 1946) the civil war re-erupted and despite US aid the Nationalists were defeated, first in Manchuria then throughout China. With the inexorable disintegration of his armies, Chiang resigned as President in January 1949, leaving his Vice President, Li Tsung-jen, in charge as acting President until the absolute and bitter end in the Fall. Chiang fled to Taiwan, but not without some thought for his future. Edgar O'Ballance describes how

Chiang Kai-shek saw defeat in sight and began to prepare a safe refuge and retreat on the island of Formosa, to which he moved the gold reserves, many of his best troops, his air force and the bulk of the modern American equipment that remained to him. The U.S.A. was now distinctly cool towards him and military aid had tailed off. Stripping the mainland to fortify Formosa, he left Li, the acting President, to hold out against the Reds as best he could.<sup>55</sup>

This showed perhaps more discretion than Hitler did a few years earlier under somewhat similar circumstances.

On 1 October 1949 the establishment of the People's Republic of China was announced and "the new year 1950 found the uncouth, unsophisticated (but politically oriented), open-mouthed PLA, nearly 4 1/2 million strong, panting and triumphant, gazing in wonder at its own achievements."<sup>56</sup>

It is interesting to note that from 1945 to 1949, when the KMT was so decisively defeated on the mainland, its polwar system had been completely

abandoned. Military and political defeat were to be the basic reasons for the reinstitution of a rigid political military system on the island of Taiwan. The need for a "carrier vehicle" to develop and sustain an efficient, loyal military force was obvious; the "vehicle" chosen was polwar.

\* \* \* \* \*

#### The Latter Day Chinese Nationalist Polwar System

Faithful to the hoary Three People's Principles (San Min Chu I) of Sun Yat-sen - nationalism, democracy and livelihood - Chiang Kai-shek reintroduced polwar to his armed forces (and ultimately, directly or indirectly, to the entire populace of the Republic of China). The Chinese Nationalist Political Staff College was founded, along the same lines as its ancestor, the Whampoa Academy, on 1 July 1951 and was given the mission

To train and qualify individuals to be political warfare officers, to be faithful to Three-people-principles, obedient to their national leader, and loyal to their country in addition to being rich in the sense of responsibility and honor so that they may undertake the mission of Anti-communist and Resist Russia which leads to national revival.<sup>57</sup>

Even taking into account the difficulty of transliteration to such an alien language as English this Chinese passage is interesting in its use of capitalization. Ironically, and somewhat ignominiously, the location chosen for the college originally was a Japanese-built pre-World War Two racetrack and the first "polwarriors" began with only a ticket office and some ramshackle stables, along with a few hundred cadets. Over the next ten years there was significant improvement as shown by this statement from one of the polwar staff officers at the school:

The capacity of training has (been) raised to more than three-thousand students, ten times the number of trainees at the very inception of the college. As to the construction, there are 183 buildings all over the campus which, in turn, originated from several stables . . . we have converted the former deserted racetrack into the existing splendid Fu Hsing Kang, the cradle of political warfare workers.<sup>58</sup>

Fu Hsing Kang still produces polwar officers (and NCOs) who though probably as well indoctrinated as their early predecessors are perhaps less optimistic about returning to reposses the mainland and ultimately defeating Soviet Russia.

The evolution of the ROC system from these early days into the complex structure of today is a study of conceptual refinement whose basic impulse was necessity; a necessity felt as a direct result of the Nationalist's defeat on the mainland. Clearly cognizant of the fact that the ROC military forces needed motivation, indoctrination and purpose if a cohesive combat (more defensive than offensive in recent times) force was to be formed, the Nationalist leadership developed, by the late 1950s, a comprehensive organization whose mission was, and is, to make the ROC Armed Forces a more effective instrument of national policy and to ensure a stable, reliable and responsive body of troops. From this objective flow many implicit functions which include internal security, discipline, morale, sound civilian relations (one cannot help but recall Mao) and other allied areas.

Interestingly, the Chinese Nationalists insist upon dating their present polwar system from the establishment of Whampoa Academy in 1924 when the combined or "united front" revolutionary army was created under Russian supervision. In addition to crediting the Russian communists, now their mortal foes second only to the mainland Chinese, recognition is given also to

Confucius (attributable perhaps to the latent resentment felt toward the "new cultural movement" of 191559 which rejected "Confucius and Sons" and many of whose members, such as Mao Tse-tung, later espoused communism), the Germans (Von Seeckt and company of the early 1930s), and even the United States (the major provider of military and economic aid). A General Political Warfare Department (GPWD) briefing of 1964 says it thusly:

It (the ROC Polwar System) has deep roots in Confucianism. It was forged as a revolutionary instrument under Russian guidance, was influenced by subsequent German advisors, and has in the past decade been in a state of evolution. This state of evolution has been characterized by a responsiveness to United States philosophy and training out of proportion to the understanding, advice and assistance from the United States.<sup>60</sup>

An interesting statement, especially in view of the fact that the United States, though it supported polwar in both Nationalist China and South Vietnam, never had an official "philosophy" about the subject, gave none of the training, understood little about polwar per se and therefore could provide little advice. Assistance, in the forms of money and equipment, was given in abundance.

The Nationalists go on to claim that it was polwar which enabled them to defeat "numerically superior forces" (the warlords) as well as to "achieve a brilliant record in such campaigns as . . . the Communist Suppression operation and in the war against Japan."<sup>61</sup> They claim also that it was the abolition of the system, caused by the Communists, "after World War II," which led to their downfall. The official position is stated thusly:

After World War II the Chinese Communists, being aware of the influence of the political warfare establishment within the Chinese Armed Forces, did everything possible to undermine and discredit our activities. The Chinese Communist

activities led to the abolition of the political warfare establishment in the Chinese Armed Forces. Communist agents were then able to corrupt the minds of our troops, to incite the masses and to waver the strong fighting will of our troops. Under the circumstances, we were not able to fight the enemy fist with fist and toe to toe. As a result of this bitter lesson, President Chiang determined in 1950 to re-establish the political warfare system in our armed forces.<sup>62</sup>

Not only is this statement reductive, it is ridiculous. The last sentence, if taken out of context, is valid. Of course, to be fair, it can be cited as a seminal example of the practice of polwar. Whatever Chiang may have claimed, it was his abolition of the position of political officers following the "Nanking Incident" in 1927 which caused his system to become, if not morbid, dormant until its revival in 1950.

The stated mission of the ROC polwar organization is: "To make the Armed Forces a more effective instrument for implementation of national policies derived from the democratic principles (nationalism, democracy and livelihood) taught by Dr. Sun Yat-sen."<sup>63</sup> From this mission statement seven principles are derived, which are to:<sup>64</sup>

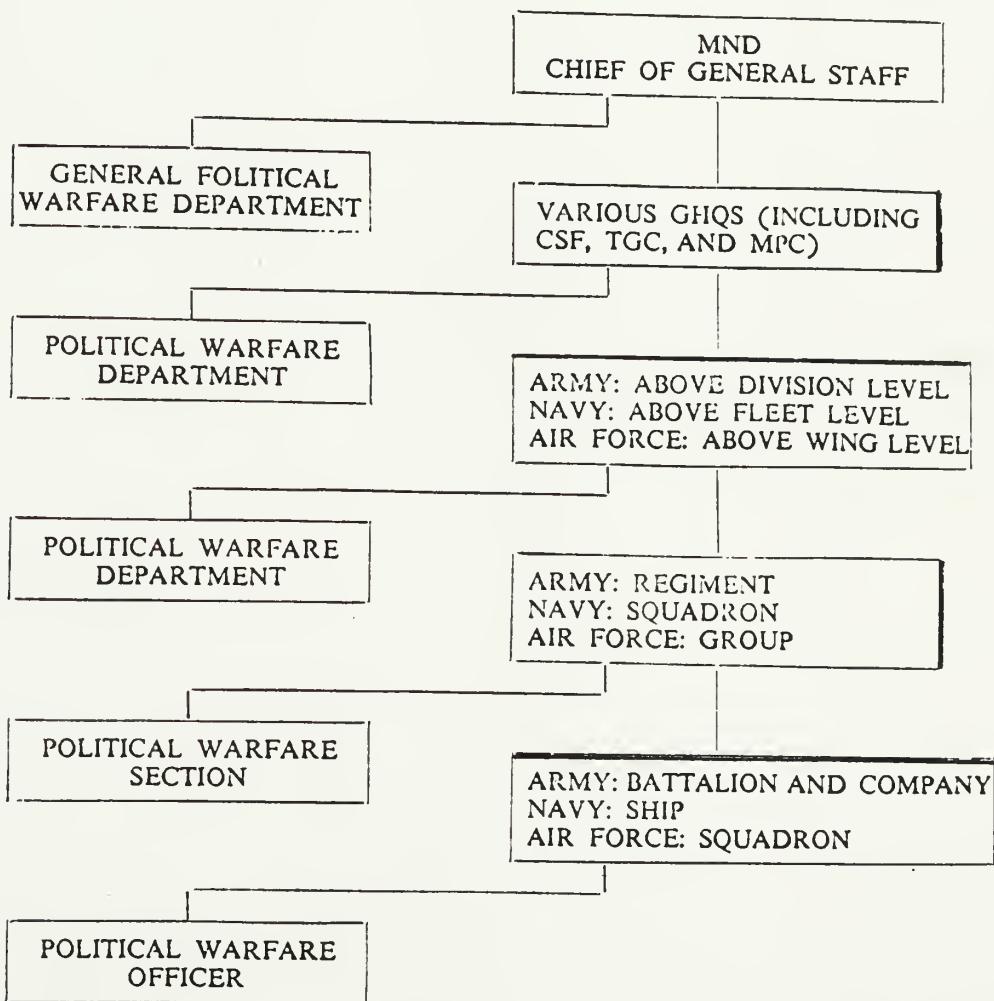
1. Instill in the minds of servicemen the principles for which they fight.
2. Improve teamwork and unity within the armed forces.
3. Provide security against enemy subversion.
4. Improve leadership capabilities of unit commanders.
5. Nurture morale and welfare of the armed forces and their dependents.
6. Supervise enforcement of discipline in the armed forces.
7. Promote understanding and cooperation between the armed forces and civilians.

Taking the mission and objectives together say the Chinese, "a summary statement can perhaps be made that the General Political Warfare Department is primarily charged with providing the commander with a stable and responsive body of troops which in turn provides the national government with a stable and responsive instrument for pursuit of national policy."<sup>65</sup> We will be reminded of this quintessential statement in our discussion of the Egyptian armed forces later in this thesis.

As to organization for polwar, only a brief, general description of the ROC structure will be necessary since the next part of this thesis will deal in detail with its "country cousin," the South Vietnamese system.

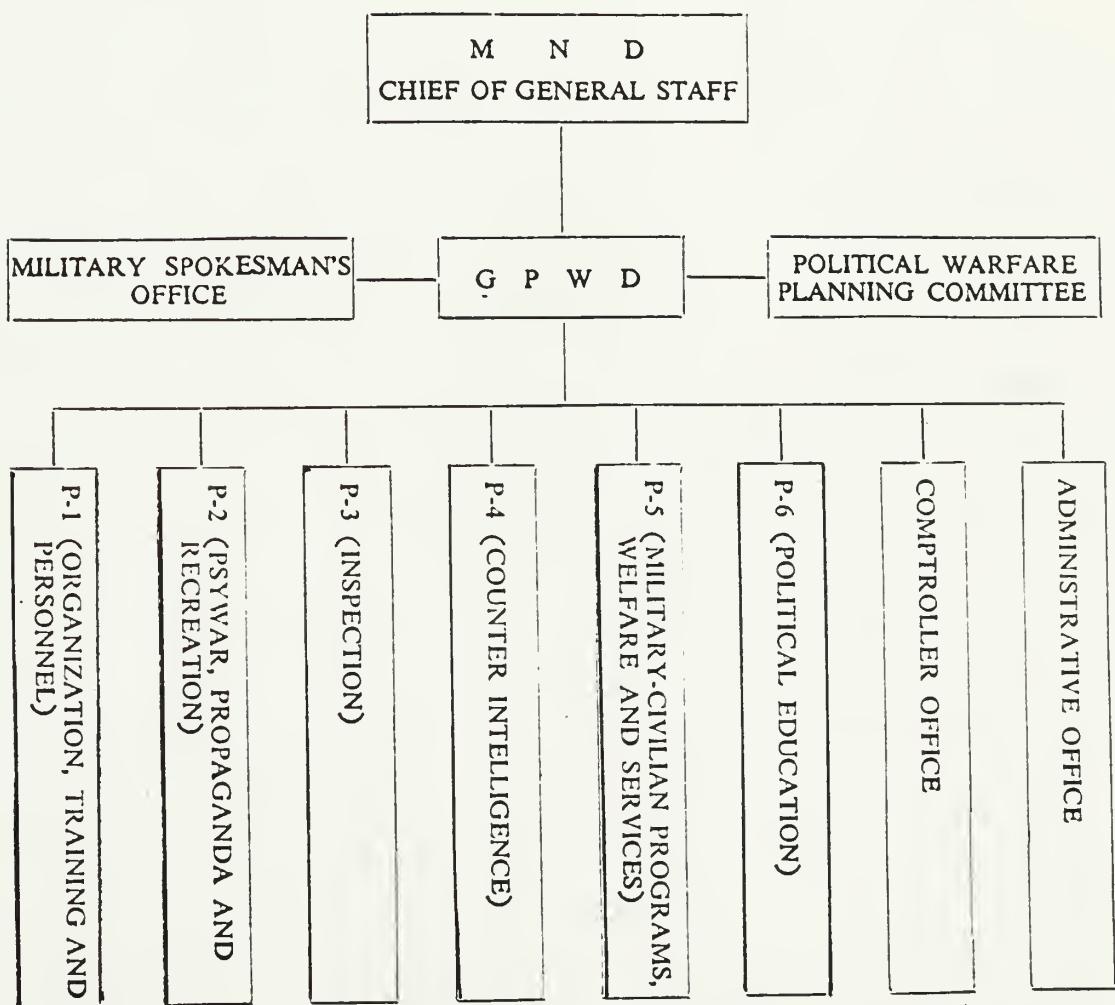
The Republic of China General Political Warfare Department is a staff organization directly under the Ministry of National Defense and is subject to the supervision of the Chief of the General Staff (the equivalent of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in the United States) as shown in Chart 2 on the following page. The staff and the unit organizations which execute the ROC political warfare mission, at all levels of command, are not common to Western military organizations. While the ROC armed forces do have operational staffs which closely parallel those of the US military structure, they have also a staff system designated by the letter "P" (P-1 through P-6) which is responsible for both "external" missions, such as psychological warfare activities and civil affairs matters, as well as with all of the multifaceted environmental factors that affect the attitudes of the individual members of the armed forces (see Chart 3 on page 38 and Appendices 1 and 2). Also, under the direct Command of MND and the supervision of GPWD are sixteen supporting or operational units responsible for polwar assignments (see Appendix 3).

**COMMAND AND ORGANIZATION OF ALL-LEVEL POLITICAL WARFARE UNITS  
IN THE CHINESE ARMED FORCES**



This chart shows how the political warfare establishment fits into the overall organization of the Armed Forces. The General Political Warfare Department, one of the staff organizations directly under the Ministry of National Defense and subject to the Chief of the General Staff, at the MND level is the top level political warfare establishment. GPWD is responsible for overall planning and supervision of political warfare activities at all levels. A political warfare department, section, or officer is assigned to each command within the Armed Forces.

ORGANIZATIONAL CHART OF  
THE GENERAL POLITICAL WARFARE DEPARTMENT, MND



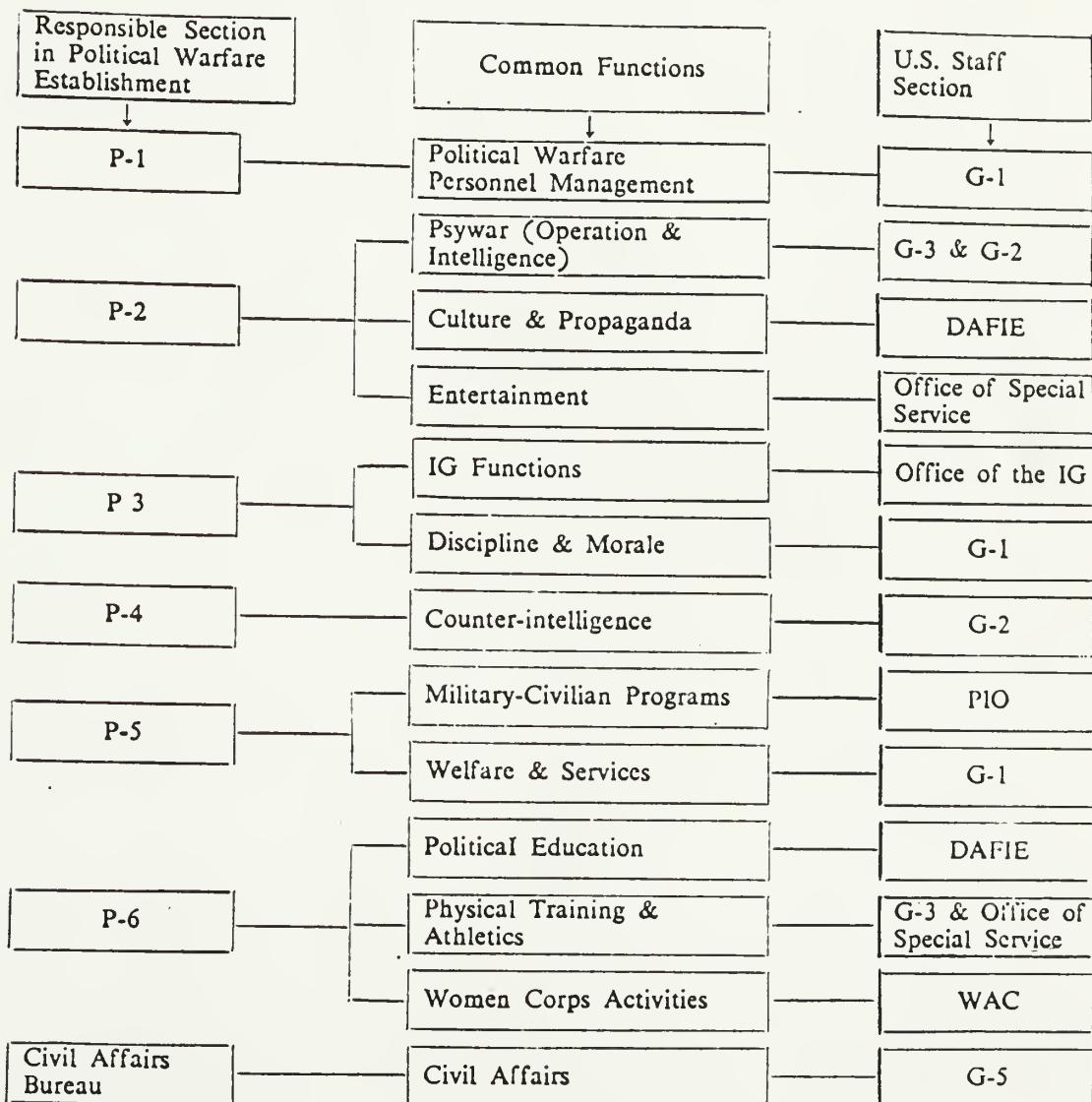
This chart shows the organization of the General Political Warfare Department. As can be seen, the GPWD is composed of six operating elements, the Comptroller Office, and the Administrative Office in addition to the Military Spokesman's Office and the Political Warfare Planning Committee. Political warfare establishments at all levels of the Armed Forces follow this same organizational pattern. \*

\* See Appendix 2.

As noted earlier, the association of the word "political" with the military often creates a mental block (at best) in the Westerner, particularly in the US military adviser (about whom more will be said later). With a strong display of understandable, if not justifiable, ethnocentrism, the common reaction of the Westerner has been, and unfortunately continues to be, to equate ROC and RVNAF (Republic of Vietnam Armed Forces) with the US Army framework. Although this can be done to some extent (see Chart 4) what must be kept in mind is the fact that the entire reason for the establishment of any polwar system is to consolidate all the activities and personnel and even equipment dedicated to the accomplishment of the polwar mission into a homogeneous, possibly elite, if you will, organization of trained and unquestionably loyal experts who are responsive to the direct supervision of a chief who is directly under or perhaps even part of the national government. Not the least benefit of having a direct chain to the very seat of government is the assurance of adequate and proper funding within the fiscal budgeting of the nation's military forces. This is not to say that the system, particularly in "free world" countries, should be autonomous; the dangers of having such a system are obvious; eventually the sponsoring government would find itself "hoist on its own petard."

In addition to approaching what is largely an "Eastern" concept with a "Western" viewpoint the spectre of "political commissar" immediately arises and looms large, especially in the minds of Americans who have been bred in an atmosphere of naive isolationism (although some twisted hope may lie in governmental debacles such as Watergate and the Iran-contra affair). This too is understandable, especially in view of the Chinese Communist adaptation of the concept. But the Chinese Communists developed their polwar system

**Comparison Between Political Warfare Staffs and US General and Special Staffs in Connection with Their Authorities and Responsibilities**



Here on this chart the left column shows the responsible political warfare section, the right column shows the responsible U.S. staff section, and the center column shows the common functions. As can be readily seen the political warfare staff functions in the Chinese Armed Forces and those in the U.S. general and special staffs are similar in nature. The difference lies only in the name of the organization. The former is centralized in one organization while the latter is handled separately by different staff offices.

into a structure which supercedes the formal and traditional military command chain. Neither the ROC nor RVNAF systems placed the polwar officer over or even equal to the commander. In this sense polwar is a supporting arm which the commander, if he is prudent, can use to better accomplish his mission. It is a fact that the Chinese "P" staff maintains a separate communications channel; however, the political officer is, in both theory and fact, subordinated to the commander, at all levels. He is an "operator" in the truest sense of the word, but only "for" the commander.

Unquestionably, Chiang Kai-shek learned a hard lesson. In fact, he is reported to have once said that "the loss of the Mainland (China) is attributable 70% to political factors and 30% to military factors and that it can be regained only by concentration of effort in the same ratio."<sup>66</sup> Although Chiang's percentages may be questionable the fervor with which he established and then developed his General Political Warfare Department reveals virtually an obsessive impulse to consolidate and ensure the future loyalty of not only the members of his armed forces but of the civilian populace living with him in his exile. His legacy continues. In fact, the major objection to the GPWD (among many Westerners as well as a significant number of the Taiwanese), that it is an instrument of the KMT, must be recognized; but it must also be evaluated in the relation to the environment within which the armed forces and the KMT (ROC) exist. Favorable points which may be considered are the steady progress of both the ROC armed forces and the civilian economy, in spite of the country's staggering defense budget. Considering the present status of the ROC armed forces, its relationship with the civilian community and the condition of that community itself, it is difficult not to credit the polwar concept to some extent.

## **CHAPTER II - REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM ARMED FORCES POLWAR**

### Introduction

As necessity promoted the development of the ROC polwar concept, so also was it the prime stimulant for South Vietnamese interest in the system. By 1960, communist pressure had reached a level which the Republic of Vietnam found intolerable. The military forces of the Republic were, during this period, trying to accomplish two difficult missions: fight the communists and train leaders and units. Either of these tasks, particularly for a new military establishment, would have been difficult. To accomplish both simultaneously was infinitely more complex and frustrating. Recognising the potential importance of the armed forces of the Republic as a stabilizing formal institution in national affairs, the Diem government established a political warfare school in Saigon. The philosophical underpinnings of the school were derived from a uniquely Vietnamese brand of humanism which was envisioned as a counter for communist ideology. This was not the "secular humanism" of which one hears more and more today; rather than a "Western" philosophy oriented exclusively toward man, it was, as developed by Diem's brother, Ngo Dinh Nhu, an admixture of Christianity and patriotism, seasoned with a liberal soupcon of Buddhism, Taoism and Confucian ethics.

The Political warfare School trained selected Republic of Vietnam Armed Forces (RVNAF) psychological warfare officers in indoctrination concepts and techniques while inculcating the humanistic concepts of Nhu.<sup>67</sup> Beyond the fact that the school had an adequate advisory staff from the Republic of China there exists no information that indicates the students were really trained for anything beyond conventional psychological warfare activities.

November 1963 marked not only the end of the Diem government but also the end of the first "formal" polwar effort in the Republic of Vietnam. The polwar school continued to operate but without the support of senior governmental officials, a situation which continued until May, 1964, when a recommendation was made through RVNAF channels to develop a system within the armed forces similar to that which existed in the Republic of China. This recommendation was endorsed by both the RVN Minister of Defense and Paul Harkins, Commander, US Military Advisory Command, Vietnam (COMUSMACV), and later, upon his replacing Harkins, by General Westmoreland.

Following a senior level liaison visit by RVN and US officials to the Republic of China specific recommendations were made and later actualized by the establishment of the RVNAF General Political Warfare Department (GPWD) in November, 1964. Interestingly, this was not an isolated action, but rather was a part of a broad reorganization within the RVNAF. Finalization and implementation were realized by General Executive Decree 152-QP on 24 July 1965.<sup>68</sup> This instrument established the General Political Warfare Department as an integral part of the RVNAF at Joint General Staff level.

The mission statement of GPWD was to study, prepare, and implement polwar plans within the RVNAF relating to: strategic, organizational, ideological, psychological, intelligence, and the people's warfare.<sup>69</sup> The fact that these six approaches are almost identical with Chiang Kai-shek's "Six Great Warfares," leads to the prompt conclusion that the ROC method was integrated into the RVNAF in toto. In fact, such was not the case; those elements which were considered to be compatible with South Vietnam's requirements were adopted, those that were not were discarded. The essence of RVN Polwar was uniquely Vietnamese, though, as I mentioned earlier, the organization and staff structure were remarkably similar to the ROC system.

The RVNAF polwar system was an organizational attempt to solve basic problems such as ensuring loyalty to the constituted government and improving civil-military relations. The specific functional areas of responsibility assigned to the GPWD included: troop indoctrination and motivation, troop and dependant welfare, civil affairs, psychological warfare, and security. In priority order, the GPWD was concerned with RVNAF personnel, civilians in hostile and friendly areas, and enemy troops. Simply stated the polwar mission was to create and maintain the loyalty of the RVNAF to its leaders, nation and national ideology, to gain and maintain the support of the civilian population in both friendly and enemy controlled areas, and to destroy the loyalty of enemy troops to their leaders, nation and national ideology. In sum, the long range goal was to achieve a cohesiveness among the various ethnic, linguistic, religious and ideological (political) groups in all of Vietnam in order to bring about national unity. Rather ambitious a task, under the circumstances! One cannot help but think of the crude metaphor about being sent to drain a swamp which is full of very active alligators.

As in psychological operations, and especially its favored instrument, propaganda, the polwar effort concentrates on people's attitudes, on trying to induce certain behavior through influencing individual attitudes. This was the ultimate objective for all polwar efforts in Vietnam. However, this first requires close analysis of the individual and his values, desires and needs (real and perceived) and beliefs; a difficult task under the best of conditions. To achieve an understanding of individuals an assessment and analysis must be made of the groups to which these individuals belong. The research tools to accomplish this were available and to some degree were put to use.

Psychological operations officers in the US and in the RVN--mainly inadequate for the task but the best the US could offer as far as any orientation or understanding of polwar went--in conjunction with US scholars in the fields of politics, psychology, sociology, economics and other related disciplines were put to work. The former were to learn about polwar, the latter to conduct studies in their fields in order to assist the GPWD in their herculean task. But already it was too late. Probably several years would have been required to plan and execute a successful system--several years during peacetime, not war. Instituting the system and fighting the war simultaneously was impossible. The US advisers (combat arms advisers, not polwar) attached to the ARVN (the bulk of the RVNAF was its army) were neither trained nor suited for polwar operations. In any case, when one is faced with continuing combat operations one hardly has time for anything else, especially some esoteric "new" idea for winning the war, an idea which seems to offer no immediate positive effect on the outcome of the fighting.

Added to all this was the fact that the central government itself was corrupt, thanks in no small part to the inattention (or worse) of US representatives at the highest level of the advisory effort. Finally, unlike communism, there was no hard ideological product to "sell" by the South Vietnamese political officers. As mentioned above, among the first priority items in the three-fold polwar mission was the need to create and maintain loyalty to a "national ideology." Unlike their communist counterparts in the Vietcong and the North Vietnamese Army (who had polwar systems taken from the Chinese communist model as early as 1938), the RVNAF "polwarriors" could only say in a negative sense that communism was not good for the Vietnamese. The only alternative, in a positive sense, was some form of democracy, based

probably on the American model which was thousands of li (about one-third of a mile) away from anything the average Vietnamese understood. The Americans, meanwhile, could only say that for their part they wanted to help the Vietnamese establish "some sort of climate of freedom" wherein the Vietnamese people could, through some process of "self-determination," decide how they wanted to be governed. To the communists the answer was pre-packaged and very simple--communism was the answer.

Despite its unfortunate fate the RVNAF polwar system is worth examining. Based upon its previous success historically polwar may have had a chance of succeeding in Vietnam had the circumstances in which it was attempted been otherwise. Before looking at its organization and functions, however, its three-fold mission is worthy of closer examination.

#### The Mission

Within the first part of the RVNAF's three-fold mission--to create and maintain the loyalty of the RVNAF to its leaders, nation and national ideology--there were a series of intermediate objectives. The first of these was to create the conditions under which a soldier can be expected to be loyal. If the soldier is concerned about his food, pay or living conditions, is worried about his family or feels that he is not being treated fairly, indoctrination and motivation programs cannot succeed. Thus, a sincere and apparent concern for the well-being of the soldier must be developed and augmented with programs of troop and dependent welfare, entertainment, and recreation. Programs first must be initiated to develop a reasonably contented, healthy soldier, making every possible aspect of his life better. Once this condition is achieved he should be receptive to the second step--

motivation and indoctrination. If after completing these steps the soldier still was not loyal to the government of the RVN the third step--detection and "neutralizaion" or "removal" of the soldier to prevent him from "contaminating" other soldiers--was to be taken. Detection and neutralization were to be accomplished by the Military Security Police, an integral part of the GPWD.<sup>70</sup>

Within this process two approaches are envisioned: the group or indirect approach, and the individual or direct one. The first involves all "impersonal" means of influencing the attitudes of soldiers, including unit-wide or army-wide information and recreation activities, and materials designed to improve the soldiers' morale. Examples are: dependent welfare programs, lectures, movies, radio and television,<sup>71</sup> magazines and newspapers, and sports and entertainment programs. The second approach involves various means of personal contact with the individual soldier. It is a refined system involving investigation, counselling and persuasion and is implemented by the polwar organization within the units. More will be said about the techniques of this system later. For the moment it is enough to say that this personal approach is one of the characteristics of polwar which set it apart as a unique system.

The second part of the polwar mission--to gain and maintain the support of the civilian populace--had three intermediate objectives which, to be most effective, had to be implemented sequentially. The first was to identify the pro-government elements, usually a small minority, within the targeted civilian group. Once identified, these elements were organized and their loyalty certified. To accomplish the next objective these organized pro-government elements were used to solicit support of the uncommitted or

apathetic segment of the population, usually the majority of the civilian target group. Psychological warfare media and civic action projects were used also to accomplish this objective. When there was enough evidence that the majority of the populace is behind the government (effects analyses are the most difficult part of all polwar, psyop, psywar operations, but the outcome of RVNAF polwar makes this analysis necessarily theoretical), this majority was to be used to identify and expel or "neutralize" the non-loyal or pro-enemy elements which, assuming that the first two steps were successful, would now be a small minority. In Vietnam this final mission phase was carried out primarily through the Revolutionary Development and Phoenix programs;<sup>72</sup> the RVNAF, however, was to devote considerable attention to gaining the support of the civilian populace for the national government.

The third part of the polwar mission was to break down the loyalty of the enemy soldier to his leaders and cause him to desert and perhaps even rally to the RVN cause. This effort which was to have been accomplished mainly through the use of psywar in support of military operations, also had three sequential phases: to identify and neutralize the enemy's cause; to divide and destroy the enemy; and to organize and re indoctrinate enemy returnees or defectors.

### The Organization

The South Vietnamese system, though it failed along with the rest of the country's armed forces was, as we shall see, extremely ambitious and broad in concept and organization, and there are those who feel that it was the fundamental error of trying to superimpose such an advanced and sophisticated system on an armed force that was already fighting for its very life which made

any success impossible and actually may have hastened the communist victory. A "cruder" approach under such dire circumstances may have proven more effective, as in the example of Russia. In defense of the effort itself it must be said that some systematization within the South Vietnamese forces was essential as even the kindest appraisals of corruption, desertion, maltreatment of enlisted personnel and all other soldierly ills reveal.<sup>73</sup> In any case it is my opinion that the Vietnamese system "fell under its own weight" (aided greatly in that fall by the lack of understanding of the Asian mind and lack of interest in anything political manifested by the great majority of American commanders of high rank). This is not to say that given more serene circumstances the Vietnamese could not have worked out a viable system. As I have said (and will say again later in this work), such a system, if emplaced properly at the right time could be the salvation of a legitimately established government trying to survive in a "developing" nation.

The General Political Warfare Department was a major subdivision of the RVNAF Joint General Staff, and was a joint services organization headed by an army major general whose staff, based again upon the preponderance of army forces within the RVNAF, consisted almost entirely of army personnel. As in the Republic of China, there were two main types of polwar cadre: those under the direct command of the GPWD and those located in regular service units (again, mainly army), schools, training centers, or support organizations. These latter were under the command of the officer commanding the unit to which they were assigned. Political warfare was a service branch and as such had equal status with the other branches such as infantry, artillery and so forth, at least theoretically, and its officers manned the GPWD and its subordinate organizations as well as the polwar staffs of the schools,

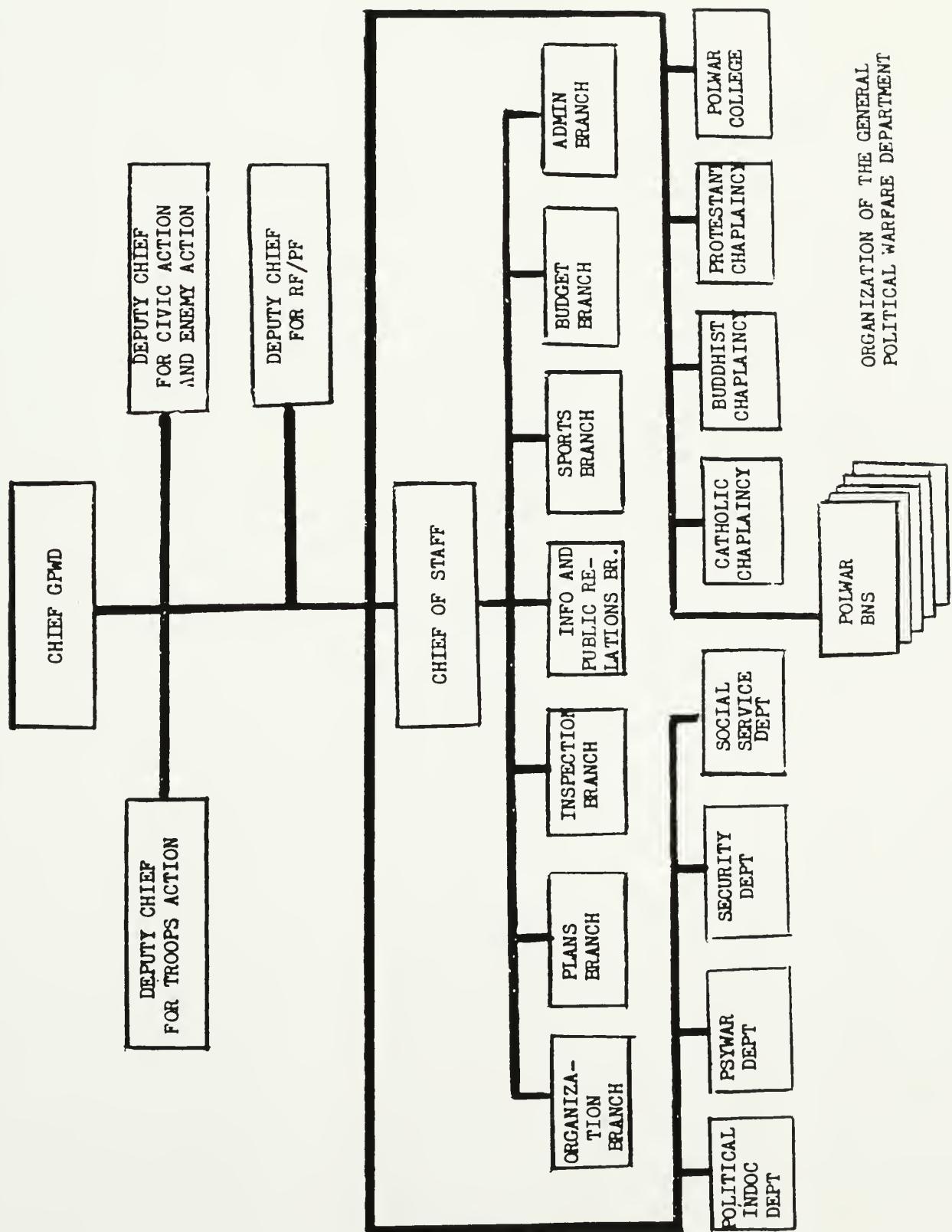
training centers, support organizations and regular military "line" units at regimental level and higher. In strict accordance with the integrated or unified system, the polwar officers at company and battalion level were considered members of the branch of that particular element (infantry, artillery, etc.) to which they were assigned. Their polwar duties were considered secondary to the primary operational military mission.

The main division of the GPWD organization follows the division of its cadre into two parts: the GPWD and its subordinate organizations, and the polwar organization within other military units or agencies. We will consider them in that order.

#### The General Political Warfare Department

The General Political Warfare Department (Chart 5 on the following page) consisted of its chief, three deputies, its staff and departments, a polwar college and several operational units.

While the deputy Chief for Troops Action was responsible for developing long range programs for troop motivation and indoctrination, the Deputy Chief for Civic Action and Enemy Action was responsible for developing long-range civic action and psywar programs; the Deputy Chief for RF/PF was responsible for polwar activities within the regional and popular forces (South Vietnam's militia; the regional forces were equivalent to fairly well trained US National Guard troops, the popular forces were mainly local irregulars). These special staff members reported directly to the Chief, GPWD.



The regular staff included: an Organization Branch, which was responsible for preparing tables of organization and equipment, training and the polwar organization generally; a Plans Branch, responsible for preparing long range polwar and psychological warfare plans; an Inspection Branch which monitored the activities of the entire GPWD organization for indications of misuse of office, corruption, or negligence of duties; an Information and Public Relations Branch mainly responsible for the release of military information to the civilian news media; a Sports and Gymnastic Branch which administered unit sports programs and managed military teams which entered international competitions; a Budget Branch; and an Administration Branch which managed the routine administration of the GPWD.

The GPWD departments were those of Political Indoctrination and Training, Psywar, Military Security, Social Service, and Chaplains (as three separate Directorates: Catholic, Buddhist and Protestant). The Polwar College made up the final "department" or element within the GPWD staff structure.

The operational or field elements of the GPWD included five polwar battalions and attendant mass communications media. The mass communications media, including radio, television, printing, motion picture, and cultural activities, were under the operational control of the Psywar Department.

The Political Indoctrination and Training Department of GPWD had the three-fold mission of: preparing plans which developed political education, promoting high ideals, and building the morale of military personnel; preparing political indoctrination training programs; and

enhancing troop morale through command and leadership activities aimed at fostering enthusiasm, discipline, unity, an optimistic attitude and a will to fight.

The concept of political indoctrination grew out of the need for a standard ideology which would not change with each change of government. The ideology stressed the three principles of country, honor and responsibility (as in the "duty, honor, country" of the US Military Academy at West Point). The soldier was taught that his country had a glorious history with brave heroes who fought against overwhelming odds, and since his country had such a past the soldier had a responsibility to fight for it and protect it from any present danger. He was taught to believe it was an honor for him to be a citizen of his country during its struggle for an independent democracy. He was told for whom and what he was fighting and why he could be confident of final victory. He was taught that he was fighting for his country and not a religion, political party, individual leader or group of leaders. To alleviate his traditional fear of evil rulers, he was taught how the government operates. He was taught also that respect for private citizens will build stronger ties of loyalty between the citizenry and soldiery.

Indoctrination involved the study of printed materials and discussions to ensure a thorough understanding of the subjects. Radio, television, motion pictures, poetry, plays, music, visits to historic sites (unless occupied by hostile forces) and competitive events were used to supplement the program. Political education was concerned with ideological guidance, to include theories of revolution, explanation of national policies, analyses of current events and criticism of hostile ideologies (in the case of the RVN, communism).

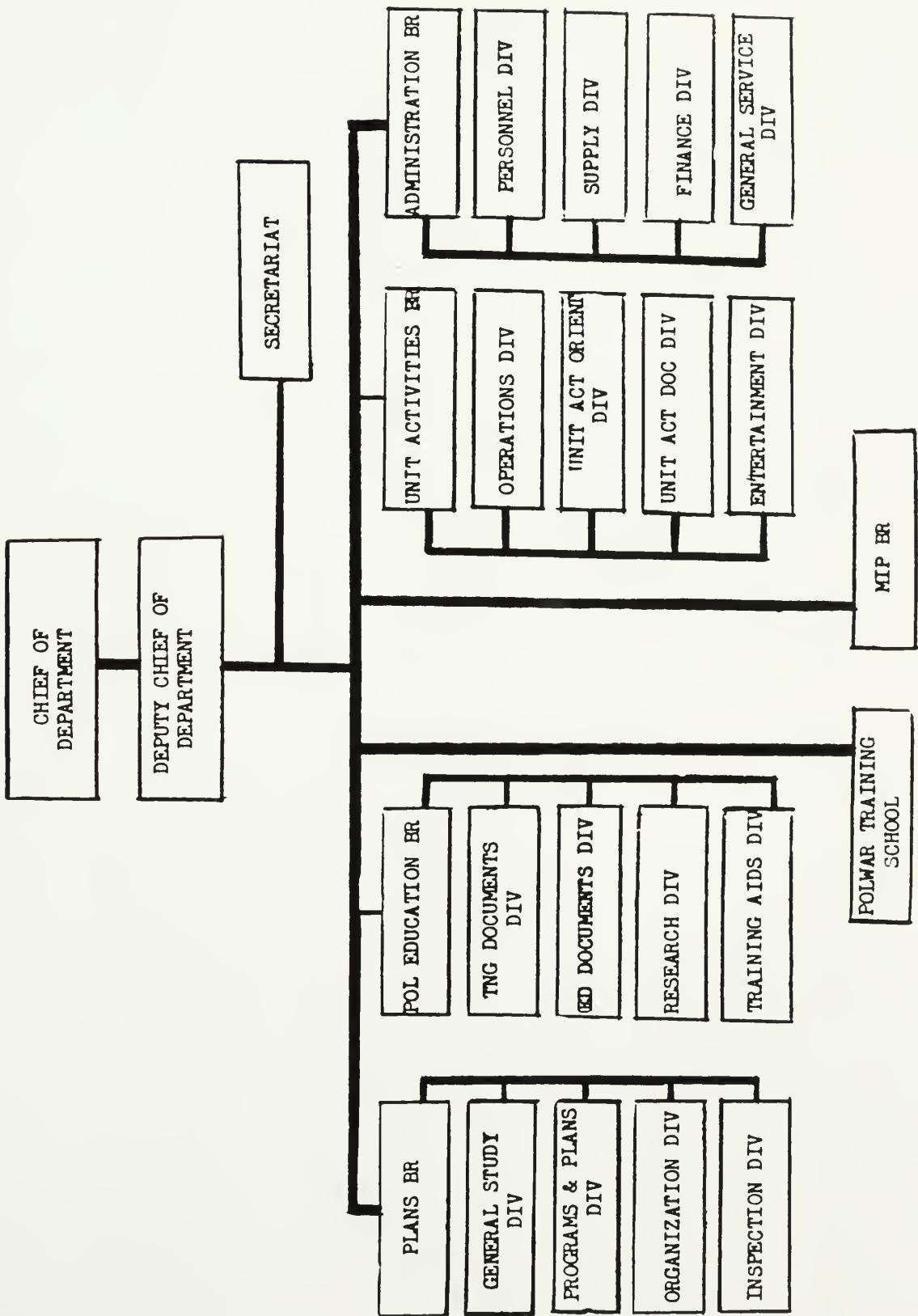
The Political Indoctrination and Training Department was organized into five branches--Plans, Political Education, Unit Activities, Administration, and Motivation Indoctrination Program--and also had operational control of the Polwar Training Center in Saigon (see Chart 6 on the following page). The Training Center in Saigon trained those officers already on active duty whose duties required polwar knowledge. Established in May, 1967, the center offered two courses of instruction: The Polwar Staff Officer Course and the Deputy Company Commander-Polwar Officer Course (to fill requirements for the unified system at lower echelons). Each course was of five weeks duration but effectually equivalent to eight weeks of training due to the hours allotted each week. In March, 1969, the times (hours) allotted for each course were doubled. The polwar cadets at the College at Dalat would enter active service after their studies were completed, having chosen polwar as their career field. Upon graduation these newly commissioned officers had co-equal status ad rank with graduates of the RVNAF Military Academy which was co-located at Dalat. Although they were given some instruction in polwar and were politically indoctrinated and educated to a degree, these latter officers entered the traditional military branches of service.

The Psychological Warfare Department engaged in activities contributing to the accomplishment of all three GPWD missions. Most of the Department's effort was, however, directed toward the first target audience, the RVNAF, to include the regional and popular forces. Secondary targets were the civilian populace and the enemy. The primary objectives of this department were to develop broad thematic approaches, plans and doctrine for

POLITICAL INDOCTRINATION AND TRAINING DEPARTMENT

Chart 6

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national psywar and civic action programs, to supervise the implementation of these programs, and to provide the communications media support for the accomplishment of developed programs.

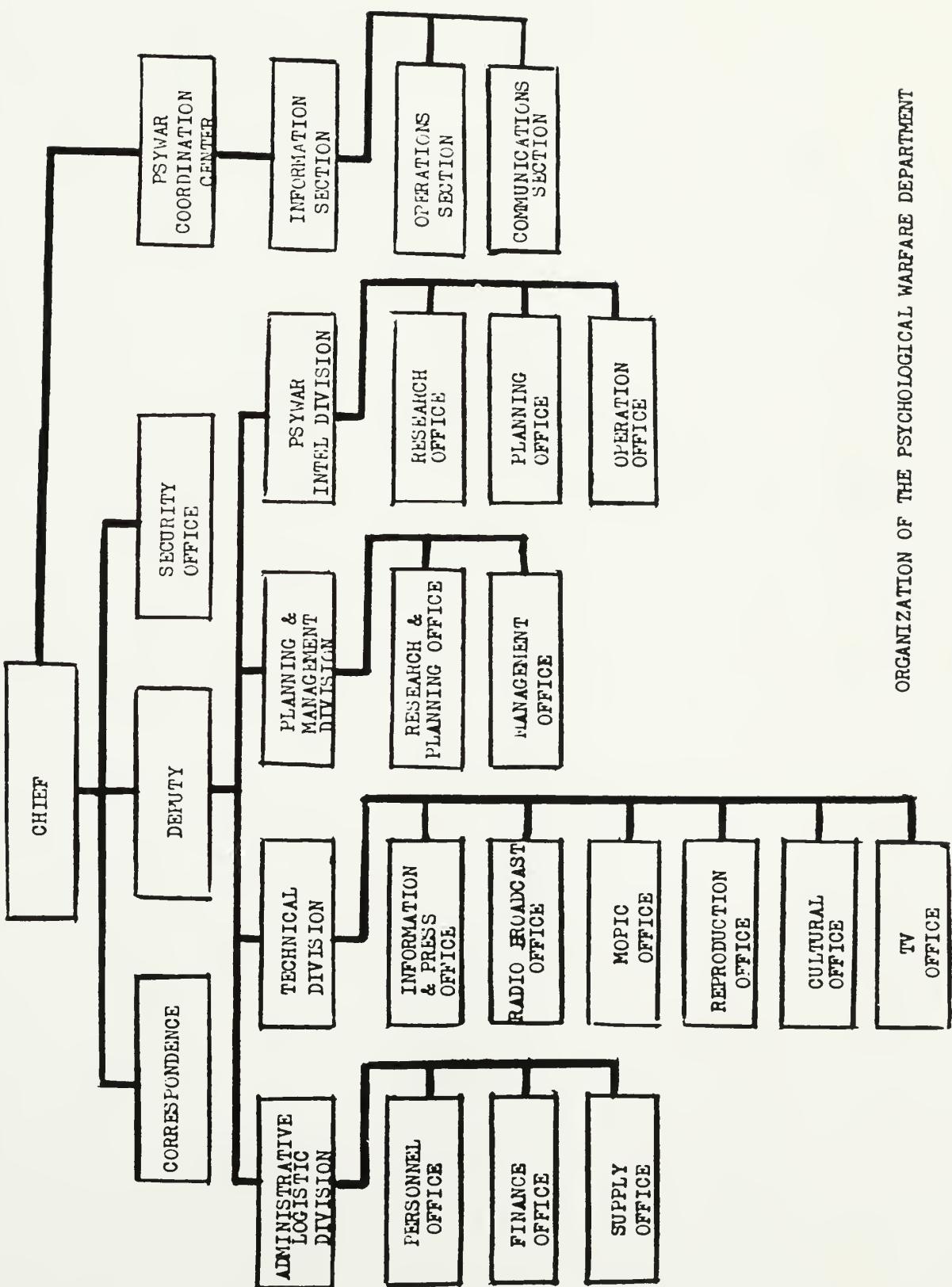
The thematic approaches used in the late 1960s in Vietnam were based upon the national objectives enumerated by President Thieu in his inaugural address of January, 1967.<sup>74</sup> At that time he announced broad objectives for the next four years and the basic themes which he hoped would contribute to their accomplishment--peace, democracy and social reform. The Psywar Department adapted these themes to different approaches to each target audience and these basic thematic approaches provided the broad guidance within which all psywar messages were developed, with the possible exception of some tactical psywar activities which called for the immediate exploitation of local situations.

The Psywar Department, an integral part of GPWD, includes four divisions and a coordination center, as shown in Chart 7 on the following page.

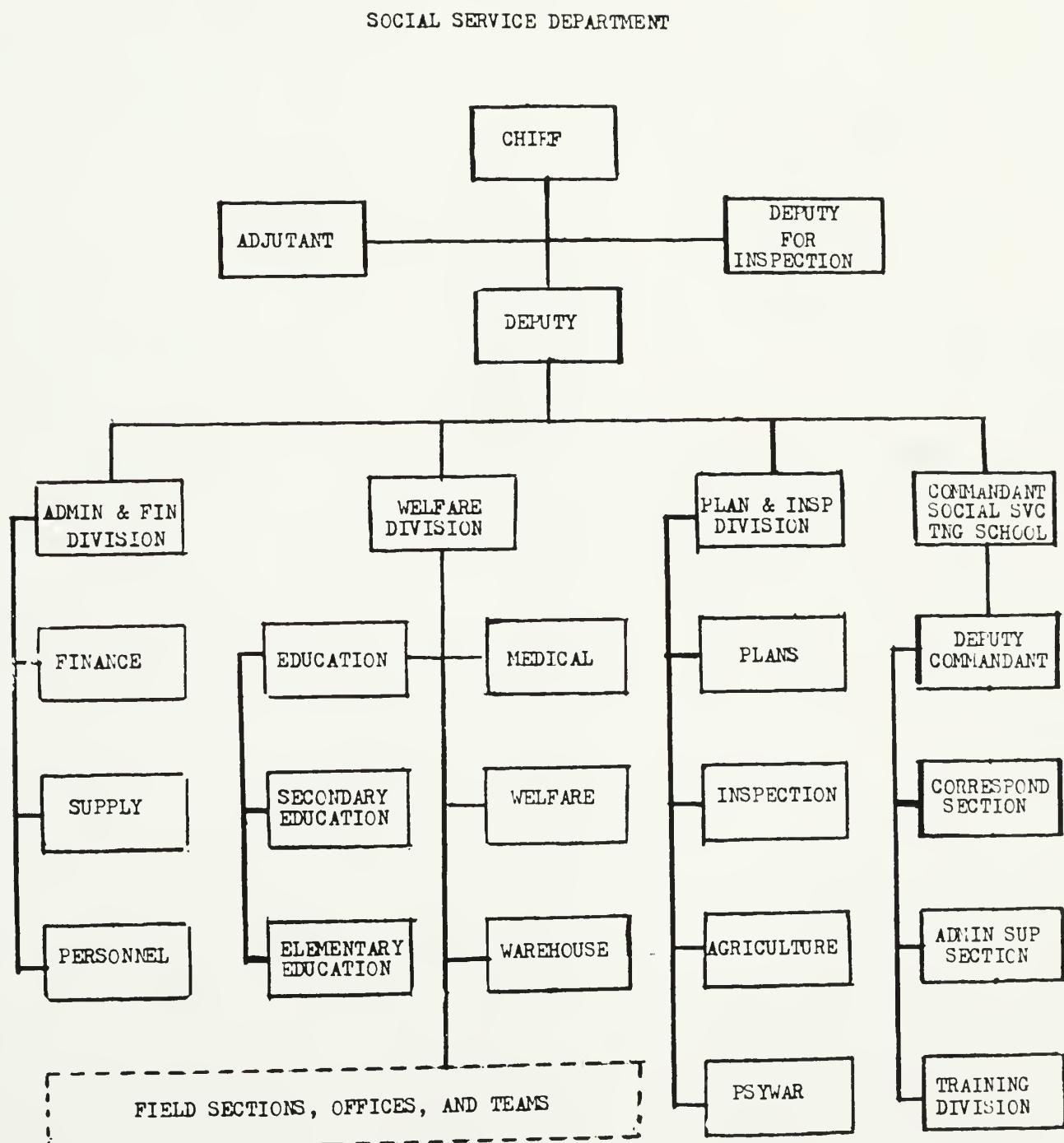
The Social Service Department was created for and charged with the mission of providing social welfare support to all military and civilian personnel within the Ministry of Defense and their dependents. In this role the Department was responsible for the staff supervision and support of the Social Sections in all military units, organizations, hospitals, schools and training centers in the RVNAF. The key element in the Department was the Welfare Division; this division conducted social operations while the others--Administration and Finance, Plans and Inspection, and the Social Service Training School--played supporting roles (see Chart 8). The entire headquarters existed solely to support the field units, staffed by women trained at the Social Service Training School. There were ten types of

Chart 7

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ORGANIZATION OF THE PSYCHOLOGICAL WARFARE DEPARTMENT



Social Service Sections ranging from a social service office of twenty-five to a team of two. Social Service Assistants were stationed in each dependent housing area and in each headquarters down to regimental and provincial level.

Social Service Assistants cared for the soldier's family while he was away from home. If he was killed, or hospitalized, his family could look to the Social Service Assistant for help. Obviously, a soldier will fight more effectively knowing that his government cares what happens to his family.

The welfare support mission was carried out through six main programs: assistance in kind, assistance in cash, education, medical and maternity care, youth activities, and self-help programs.

The distribution of "morale and welfare packets" was the most common activity associated with the assistance in kind program (see Chart 9 for the packets' composition and intended beneficiaries). Of interest was the fact that while some provision was made for the families of killed or hospitalized servicemen none was made for those of captured personnel. The desertion statistics for the ARVN were staggering during the war, especially toward its end, and while it was true that many soldiers deserted out of fear, frustration or plain "homesickness" and many others went home to help with harvests or when a family crisis arose (such as childbirth, spousal infidelity or death in the immediate family), many RVN soldiers simply went over to the other side. Also knowing that there was no compensation for prisoner of war status probably was seen by RVN leaders as an incentive to ARVN soldiers to resist capture.

Of the two types of cash assistance the first covered hardships in the family such as birth of a child, death of a family member, natural disasters and cases of special hardship not covered by the categories above; the second

## SOCIAL SERVICE DEPARTMENT

## "MORALE AND WELFARE PACKETS"

1. Packet for KIA's. Each family of a KIA is entitled to 5 meters of white cloth. This is used in the traditional funeral ceremony.
2. Packets for hospitalized servicemen. Each serviceman, hospitalized because of wounds or injuries, is entitled to:

2 cans of milk  
2 pkg of cigarettes  
1 towel  
1 pr of shower sandals  
1 pkg of toothpaste  
1 tooth brush  
1 bar of soap

3. Packets for new born babies. Each new born baby will receive:

5 cans of milk  
5 meters of cloth  
1 towel  
1 bar of soap  
1 bottle of Tiger Balm

4. Packets for servicemen in isolated posts. One packet is provide each month:

1 towel  
1 bar of soap  
1 pkg of toothpaste  
1 tooth brush  
1 pr of shower sandals  
4 pkg of cigarettes

5. Packets for families that are victims of natural disasters (families that are victims of war damage will be taken care of on an individual basis). Each family will receive:

5 meters of cloth  
1 mosquito net  
1 blanket  
1 sauce pan

type of payment was an indemnification payment for survivors of servicemen killed in action or those wounded and in hospital.<sup>75</sup>

As of August, 1969, the Social Service Department supported 121 kindergartens, 169 elementary schools and seven secondary schools in South Vietnam, supplying, equipping and maintaining the schools and paying the teachers' salaries. Local commanders were responsible for the construction of the schools. The students of the schools operated by the Department had higher average scores in national testing than did the students of the public schools.<sup>76</sup>

The Department sponsored fifty-eight dispensaries, twenty medical stations and thirty-eight maternity clinics throughout the country. During the first half of 1969 over 30,000 dependents were treated or cared for in these facilities.<sup>77</sup>

The realization of its responsibility to provide activities for the young dependents of the servicemen came late to the Social Services Department, too late for any serious implementation of plans to provide all dependent housing areas with such activities as Boy and Girl Scout organizations and other youth activities. In any case the benefits of such programs is doubtful in view of the desperate situation both militarily and socially and the almost inescapable probability that such plans were inspired by a well-meaning but woefully misinformed American official.

The Chaplain Directorates provided for the spiritual welfare of the service members and their dependents, widows and orphans. They also provided educational facilities (in addition to those of the Social Services Department) by organizing, building and operating schools for the dependents of military personnel and providing social welfare services for military personnel and their dependents, widows and orphans.

The Directorates were three separate, autonomous entities responsible directly to the Chief, GPWD. Each Directorate had its own organic logistical and administrative support. They included chaplains down through regimental level in tactical units and through provincial level on an area basis. The Protestant Directorate, with a limited constituency, had chaplains only at corps and division level.

The chaplains performed the rites, ceremonies and religious instructional duties required by each particular faith. In support of these activities each directorate published a magazine (in coordination with the Psywar Department) financed from appropriated (governmental) funds.

In the field of education, the directorates were dependent entirely upon their own resources to organize, build and operate schools. The government provided only the land. In the area of welfare services all the directorates were greatly dependent upon gifts of money and assistance in kind from American and other "free world" sources. The care of refugees, widows and orphans had the highest priority in their welfare activities. The inadequate resources of the Social Service Department could not prevent extreme hardship in virtually every case of a soldier's death; the role of the chaplains thus became a crucial one.

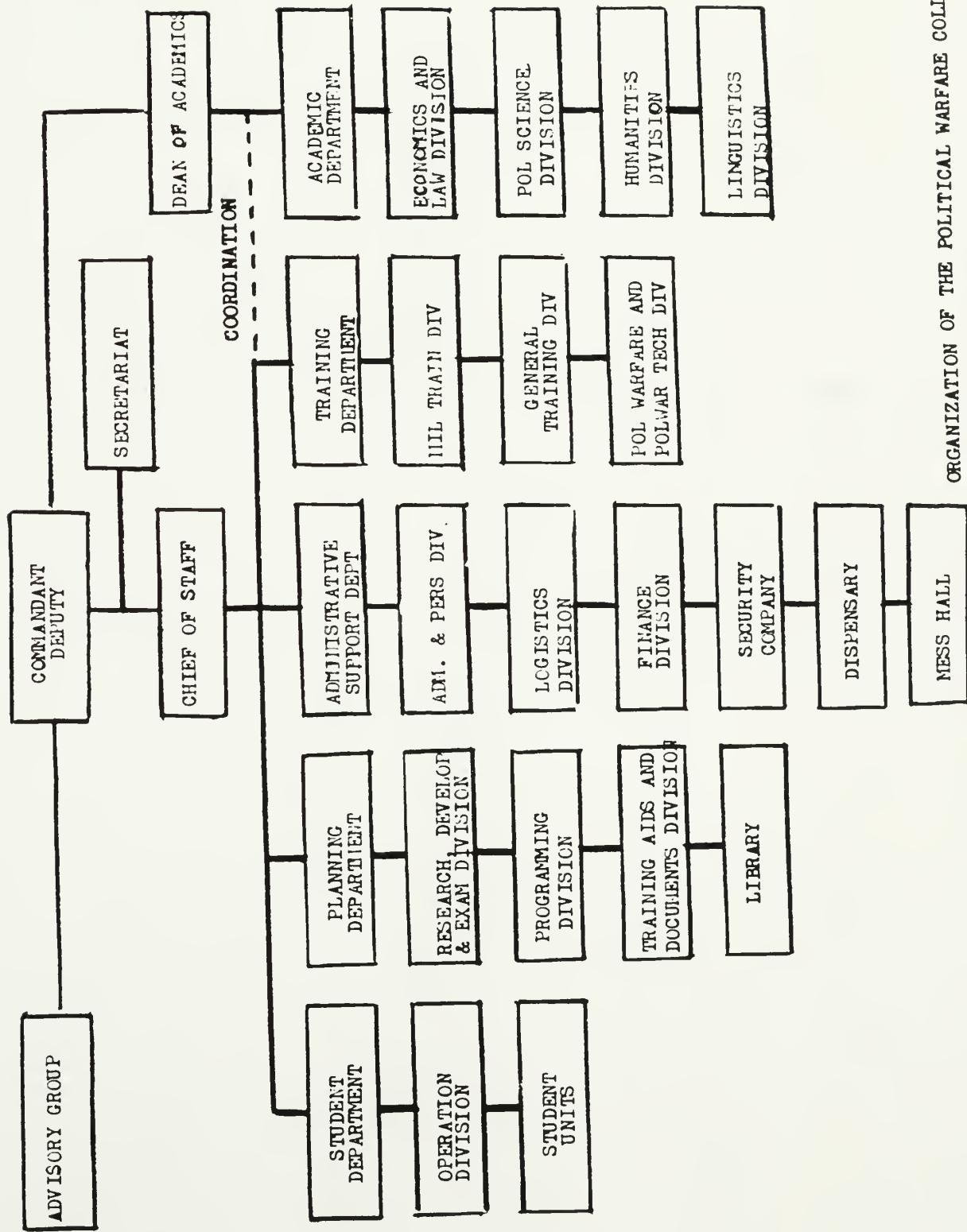
The Political Warfare College, located in the mountain resort area of Dalat, about 130 miles northeast of Saigon, was the successor to a psywar school in Saigon (when the only aspect of polwar in which the US advisors had any expertise was psychological operations, which includes psywar). In 1965, it was renamed the Political Warfare School (Nationalist Chinese advisors were already on the scene) and in 1966 was moved to Dalat. Later, its name was again changed, this time to the Political Warfare College.

Eventually this "college" was to become the center of all political warfare training, but by the end of the war it still was concentrating on producing company level polwar officers. Nonetheless, the mission statement called for providing a college level educational program to produce active duty (regular) RVNAF political officers, political warfare branch training for existing RVNAF officers, and for organizing and directing political warfare specialist training as required. Although its organizational chart is extremely impressive (see Chart 10 on the following page) it was not self-sufficient in either the number of instructors or development of its program(s) of instruction. Routinely, civilian professors and other advisors were flown from Saigon to Dalat to present lectures or chair conferences. The Polwar College, considered the key to the future success of the entire polwar effort in South Vietnam,\* expanded rapidly, and RVN officials in the late 1960s projected that by 1975 the college would be an accredited educational institution on par with many civilian universities. Ironically, the year projected for this accomplishment was that in which the communists became unconditionally victorious. A polwar system operates successfully in Vietnam today, but it is the descendant of the Communist Chinese system which was adopted by the Viet Minh in 1938.

The mission of each of the Political Warfare Battalions was to provide support to the RVNAF for troop education, motivation and indoctrination, civic action, and psywar support of tactical operations. Of the five battalions in Vietnam one was assigned to each of the four Corps Tactical

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\* Probably, this was an enemy consideration as well; on 1 April 1970, the college was attacked by a force of Viet Cong and North Vietnamese Army troops, who inflicted heavy damage and casualties.

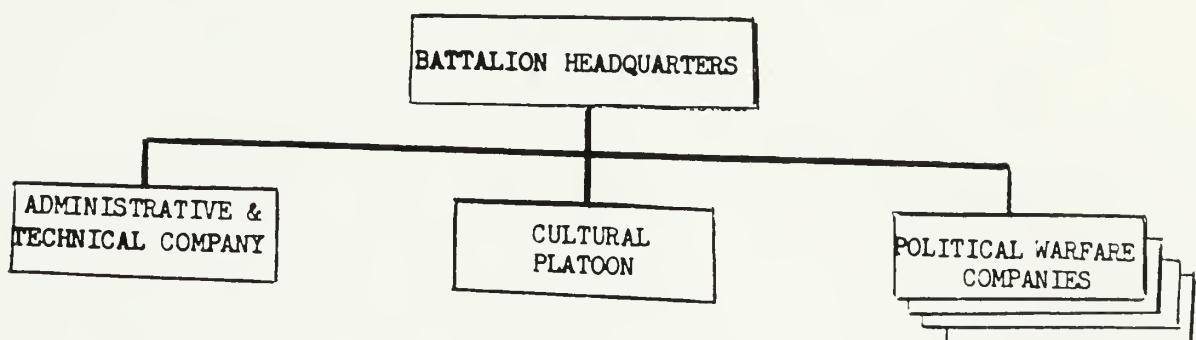
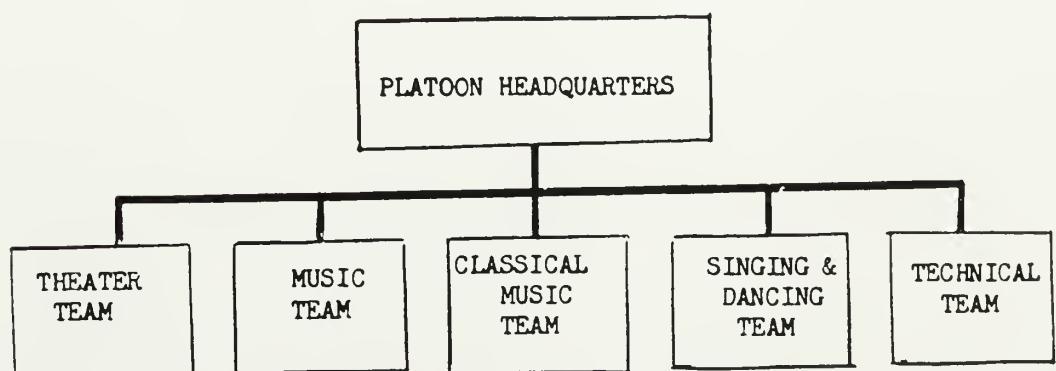


Zones and under the operational control of the zone commander while the fifth polwar battalion was in general reserve in the Capital Military District (Saigon). The GPWD exercised close staff supervision over all the battalions. In addition to their other responsibilities the battalions were responsible for the collection of polwar intelligence in their respective areas of operation. The polwar battalions were composed of a battalion headquarters, an administration and technical company, a cultural platoon, and four political warfare companies (see Chart 11). Their activities were oriented toward three familiar target audiences: the RVNAF itself, the civilian populace, and the enemy.

Activity aimed at the ARVN soldier and his dependents was primarily in the form of information and entertainment. Skits and plays were presented by the cultural platoon, and movies were shown regularly. In addition, polwar units distributed magazines, newspapers, stamps and envelopes to the soldiers and provided medical treatment to their dependents (in coordination with the Social Services Department and other medical units). In recruiting centers battalion personnel conducted question and answer sessions with trainees.

Polwar directed at the civilian populace in contested areas received great emphasis. The delivery of the "government message" to civilians was conducted by small, semi-autonomous psywar-civic action teams which distributed magazines, newspapers and leaflets, printed and pictorial posters and banners, showed movies and broadcasted with mobile loudspeakers. Medical aid was popular with the people as was cultural group entertainment in the form of singing and dancing, plays, etc. The most effective means of

## POLITICAL WARFARE BATTALION ORGANIZATION

CULTURAL PLATOON  
(POLWAR BATTALION)

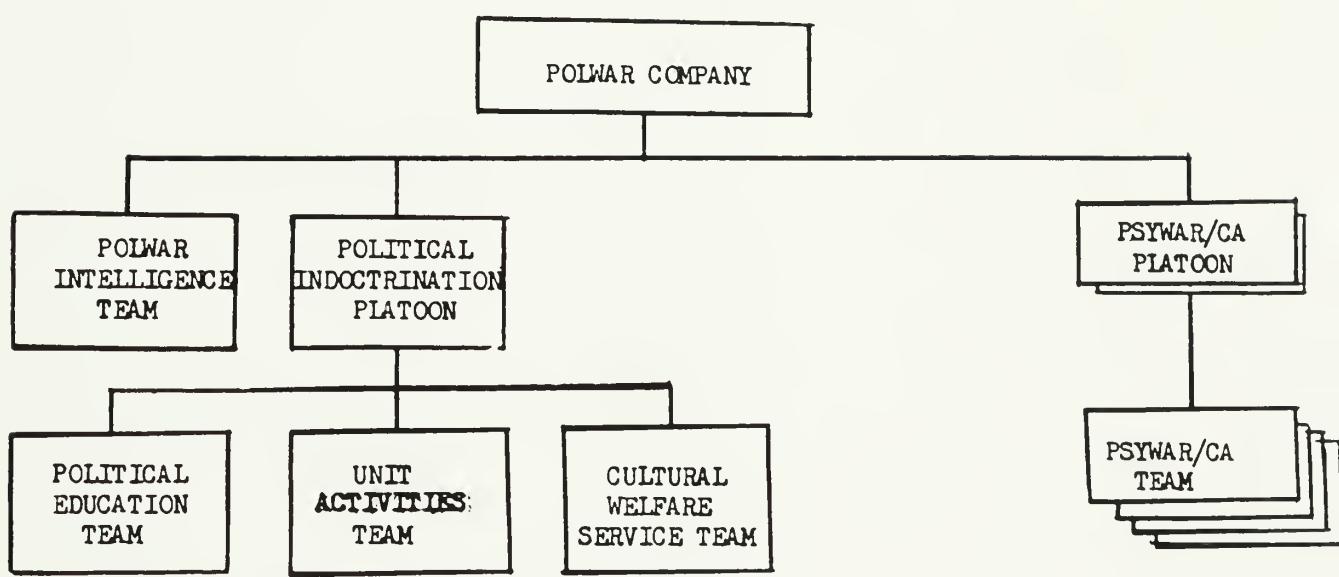
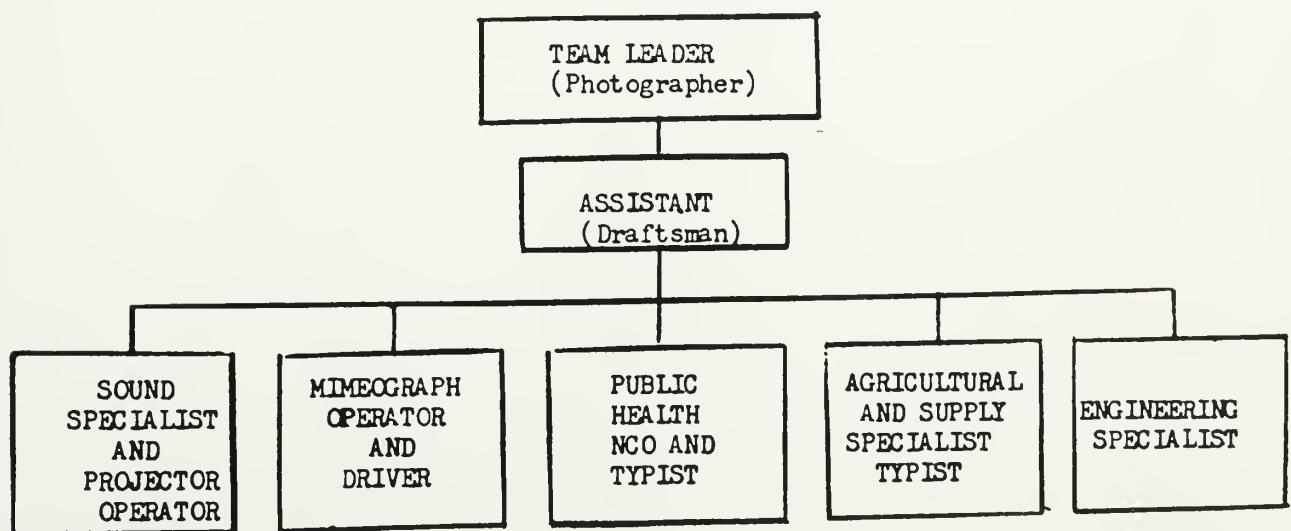
reaching the civilian populace, however, was face-to-face communication. Personal visits and conversations were held as much as possible, down to the village and hamlet level.

Polwar activities aimed at the enemy were implemented by leaflet dissemination, loudspeaker messages, and the production and distribution of government posters, banners and slogans. Visits to and entertainment of "returnees" (enemy defectors), their families, or both, were provided also, to a lesser extent, whenever possible. Enemy oriented operations usually took place in a situation where an ARVN unit was in direct contact with the enemy, especially in cases where the enemy was surrounded. The psywar-civil affairs teams had the capability for the limited production of quick reaction leaflets which could be used to exploit surrender appeal situations during psywar support of infantry operations.

The administration and technical company operated the battalion finance section, the motor pool, a printing and drafting section and a signal and photo section. The cultural platoon, as shown in Chart 11, was composed of five teams: while the theater team performed skits and plays, the music team provided supporting and background music; the classical music team provided its specialty, and the singing and dancing team performed to traditional and modern music. The smallest element is the technical team which provided sound and lighting specialists who ensured the proper acoustical and background settings for all performances.

The four polwar Companies were identically organized with a company headquarters, a polwar intelligence team, a political indoctrination platoon, and two psywar-civil affairs teams (see Chart 12). The intelligence team provided polwar intelligence for company and battalion use. The

## ORGANIZATION OF POLWAR COMPANY

PSYWAR/CA TEAM  
(POLWAR COMPANY)

political indoctrination platoon contained a political education team, a unit activities team, and a cultural welfare service team. The political education team presented routine troop education programs. The unit activities team was responsible for improving morale, strengthening loyalty to the central government and improving the troops' solidarity by organizing various unit activities such as collective birthday parties, debate competitions and songfests. The cultural welfare service team provided each company with the basic troop entertainment tools, specializing in cultural propaganda, sport contests and teaching hobbies. Soldier musicians and dancers and civilian females organized group singing and dancing and performed small dramas and skits.

The eight psywar-civil affairs teams of each company were composed of eight men each (see Chart 12). The team leader, an officer, was a qualified photographer; his NCO assistant was a draughtsman for posters and banners. Two enlisted men were sound specialists and projector operators. An enlisted mimeograph operator, public health NCO, agriculture-supply specialist (NCO), and an NCO who specialized in engineering completed the team.

Finally, the Military Security Department--which was provided US advisors not from the US Polwar Advisory Group but directly from the office of the Assistance Chief of Staff, J-2, US Military Assistance Command, Vietnam, and about whose specific activities little or nothing has ever been published--was assigned the following missions: ensuring the security of classified information and military activities; conducting counterespionage operations; performing counterintelligence missions; conducting security investigations of RVNAF personnel; and researching and studying documents relating to enemy plans, operations, organization, intelligence and base

areas. It is enough to say that while the other elements are all fundamental to the success of any polwar organization, without an effective security department there could be no hope of even initiating such an organization.

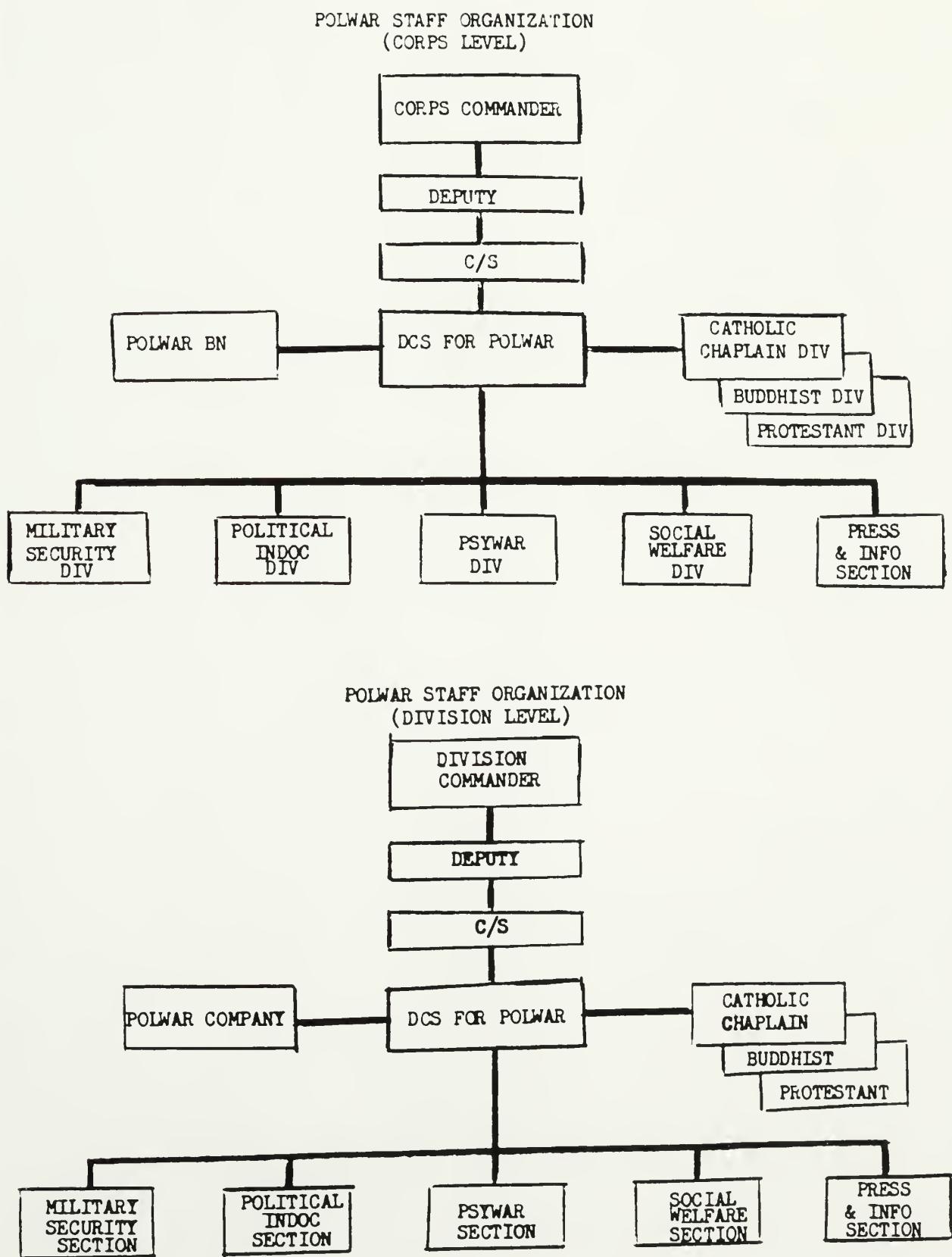
#### Political Warfare in Military Units and Organizations

The overall mission of polwar staffs "outside" the GPWD, in military units and organizations, was the same as that of GPWD, with responsibility for achieving the same intermediate objectives. The general scope of activity was the same; however, the activities were adapted to the level of the unit or organization. Every military unit or organization in the RVN had a polwar element. The highest level operating military organization was the Corps (Tactical Zone) and each corps contained a complete polwar staff. Each division, regiment and battalion also had a polwar staff (see Charts 13, 14 and 15 for examples of staffs at various levels).

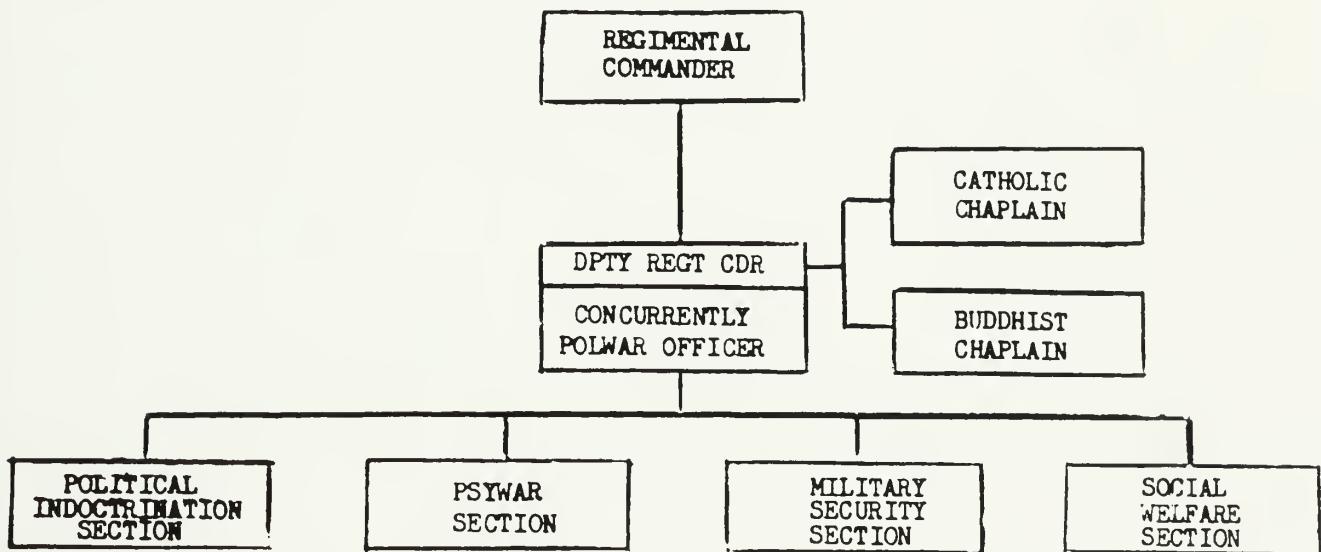
The polwar staff at all levels supported the commander by keeping him informed of the state of morale and discipline within his unit as well as on the state of civil-military relations in his area of operations. The staff prepared the polwar annex to all unit operations plans; this annex included plans for psywar and civic action activities as well as the information mentioned above relating to the troops and civilians in the area. Additionally, the polwar officers prepared and implemented plans (subject to the commander's approval) for the improvement of the unit's troop and dependent welfare, for motivation-indoctrination-education programs and other moral and esprit de corps-building activities, and for counterintelligence

Chart 13

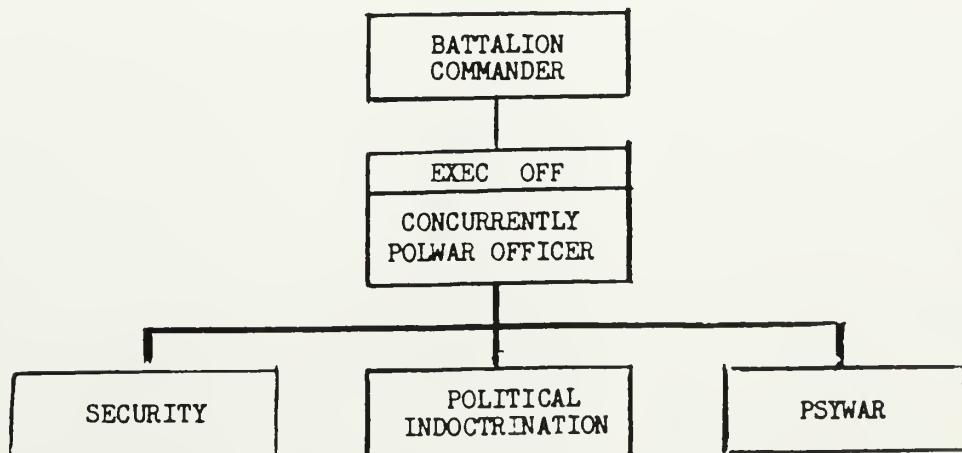
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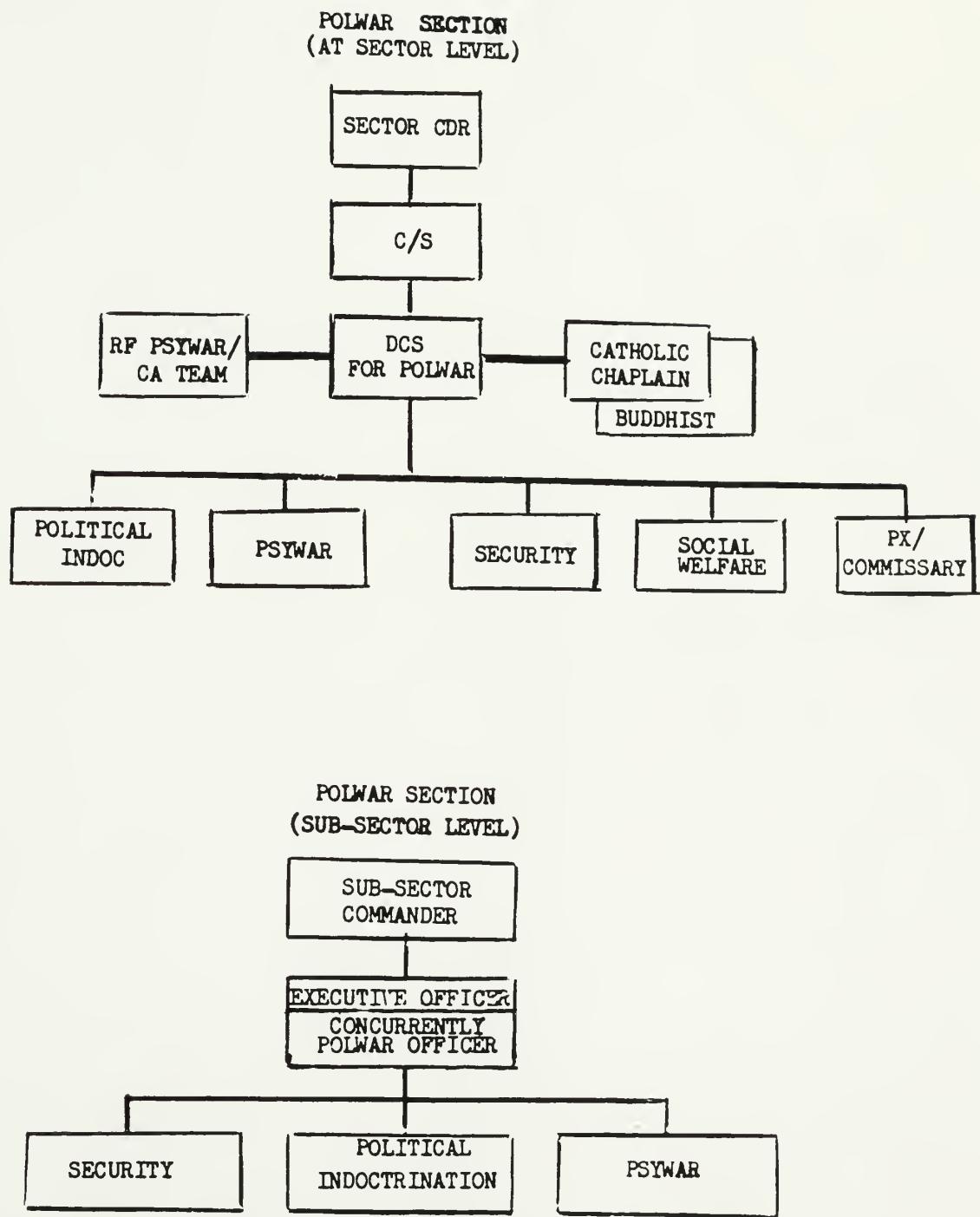


POLWAR STAFF ORGANIZATION  
(REGIMENTAL LEVEL)



POLWAR STAFF ORGANIZATION  
(BATTALION LEVEL)





activities. Finally, the staff planned and implemented psywar and counter-propaganda operations and activities in support of national campaigns and in consonance with the immediate tactical situation.

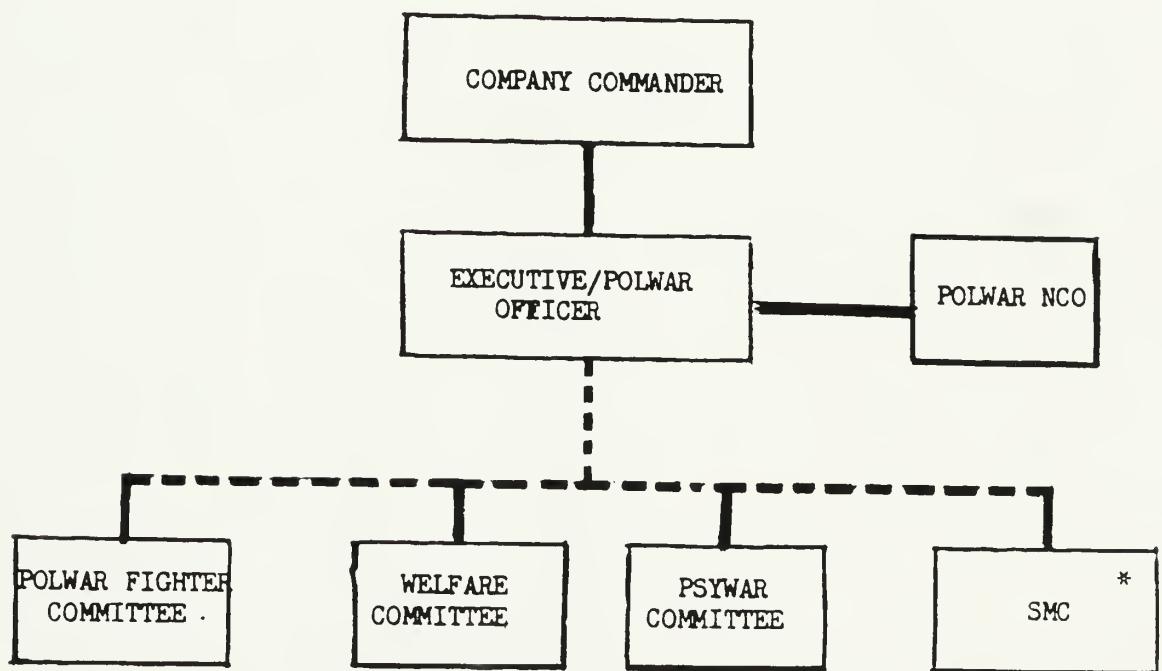
The polwar staffs in support units and other non-combat organizations were responsible for planning and implementing polwar activities within their organizations. In the case of training centers or schools they were responsible for integrating appropriate political education programs into the normal curricula.

The Company Polwar Organization was (and is in all polwar systems) the most important element in the entire political warfare system (this is consonant with there being no polwar without a security system). The basic reason for this fact is fairly evident: it is at the company level (or battery in artillery units, perhaps troops in armored or mechanized units) that one finds the soldiers; battalions are comprised of companies and, taking a quantum leap upward, so are entire armies. To argue that in line with this reasoning the squad or fire team is more basic is too reductive since efficient and effective control at that level would be impractical to the point of self defeat. The company polwar officer is singularly important then because it is at this level that the polwar system comes into direct contact with the vast majority of soldiers. At company level, in most armies, soldiers usually are conscripts rather than professional regulars, so problems such as discipline, morale and desertation are more acute. The polwar officer at this level is the only person in the entire system who must implement all the functions of the polwar organization. He is a combination political motivation and indoctrination officer, as well as a chaplain and a psywar, social welfare, sports and recreation, press and information, civil affairs and counterintelligence officer.

The primary mission of the RVNAF company polwar officer was to support the company commander by trying to eliminate the conditions which caused low morale and desertions. He had to create a unit spirit among the troops by providing them with political and ideological direction through motivation and indoctrination programs; and he had to detect and neutralize those individuals whose activities or even attitudes were prejudicial to the best interests (according to national policy) of his unit. Meanwhile, he had the additional psywar duty of assuring a proper relationship between his unit and the civilian populace in the area of operations, and he also was responsible for psywar operations against the enemy. Some of his rather mundane but difficult and important duties in attempting to accomplish his primary mission included: troop and dependent welfare activities, entertainment of troops (this can mean literally leading them in song!), ensuring that proper sanitary conditions and personal hygiene attitudes existed, and ensuring that the unit's food and living conditions were adequate. Some of these duties would be familiar to one who may have had experience as an executive officer in the lower echelons of the US Army or perhaps another Western army. This is not surprising since in the RVNAF system the company polwar officer served also as the unit's executive officer (again, the unified system).

The company level organization was a masterpiece of low level organization consisting of the Polwar Officer, Polwar NCO, Polwar Fighter Committee, Welfare Committee, Psywar Team, and several Security Maintenance Cells (see Chart 16). the Polwar NCO assisted the Polwar Officer in all polwar activities. The polwar officer and NCO positions were the only ones prescribed by the TOE (table of organization and equipment); the committees and psywar team were informal, similar to unit fund committees in the US Army. Polar tasks had to be performed in addition to regular duties.

## COMPANY LEVEL POLWAR ORGANIZATION



\* Security Maintenance Cell

The Polwar Fighter Committee was made up of one soldier from each squad in the unit. The Polwar Officer selected those whom he considered to be the natural leaders (key communicators would be the American psychological operator's term). These were formed into teams, one team to a platoon. The mission of the Polwar Fighter was to detect and report the general grievances of the soldiers to the Polwar Officer. The Officer then attempted to correct the causes of these grievances, failing which, he would instruct the Fighters to go back to their squads and explain why the problems could not be resolved and why the soldiers should work hard to bear, if they could not overcome, these adversities. Individuals with personal problems were singled out and the problems dealt with in a personal way and on an individual basis. The Fighter also was used by the Polwar Officer to motivate and indoctrinate the other members of his squad. He did this by "setting the example" and by explaining to the men why they had to continue to do what they were doing, to "carry on with the mission or cause." He became the "big brother" to the men in his squad.

The Welfare Committee was composed of one elected soldier from each squad and was responsible for organizing sports and educational and cultural activities within the unit. The Committee also organized songfests, parties and other recreational activities, and was responsible for monitoring and helping to improve the unit's food and general living conditions. All their activities were aimed at making the soldier's life more tolerable, developing his esprit, and making him feel like he was a member of a "big family."

The Psywar Team was responsible for all psywar activities within the unit and was made up of one man per squad or less, appointed by the Polwar Officer. Psywar Team personnel were trained in loudspeaker use, poster and

banner lettering, intelligence collection for polwar use, and the furtherance of the unit's good relationships with the civilian populace.

Finally, the Security Maintenance Cells consisted of individual soldiers within the unit who were appointed by the Polwar Officer to serve as his special informants. They were "compartmentalized" and made their reports in secret. They were taught to detect "variations" in the behavior of their fellow soldiers and to report anything which might indicate a soldier was preparing to desert or was engaged in espionage activity. These "cells" were located throughout the company at all levels. The number of cells per squad or platoon was at the discretion of the Polwar Officer. Although theoretically these security personnel were anonymous and operated clandestinely, it would be an unusual company commander who would not wish to know their identities. Whether the Polwar Officer would agree to this would depend upon a number of factors, not the least of which would be his personal rapport with the commander and perhaps his opinion of that commander's trustworthiness or even loyalty to the existing government.

#### Conclusion

As mentioned earlier, the essence of political warfare was found in its application in company level units. The observer who can understand the activities, organization and techniques at this level would have a solid foundation for understanding the entire concept of political warfare. It was helpful also to understand why political warfare took the form which existed in South Vietnam. Throughout its existence there was a constant struggle between military and political forces within and without the military to alter the concept, organization and techniques of the system. American advisors also were actively engaged in this debate as were, to a

lesser extent, the Nationalist Chinese advisors. The first question which came to every military man's mind was: "Does this system disrupt the concept of unity of command?" Ideally it did not, or should not; the system, however, never was completely tested, so there was no way of assessing its effectiveness. The explanation of why the system evolved as it did and most especially why it was organized as it was at company level is interesting and may be instructive and helpful in determining whether such an approach to the political organization of military forces in other countries may be feasible.

The traditional authoritarian way of command in oriental armies did not permit a commander to listen to or even consider the grievances of his troops who usually were considered just one step above animals. Further there was little cultural experience of individual human rights or dignity. Even though in "emerging" countries, such as Vietnam, the people are carefully courted from time to time, the term "people" refers to the people as a whole and not as individuals. As a result, passive submission to authority has long existed among people of such countries, especially in the armed forces, where the commander exercised virtually unlimited authority. In such a situation there is no dialogue between the soldier and the commander. And without such agencies as an "Inspector General," chaplain, or Red Cross representative, as we have in the US armed forces (or counterpart organizations in other Western forces), or even recourse to such less formal procedures as the "commander's hour" favored by some officers commanding at the company level,<sup>78</sup> the soldier has no recourse for his grievances. His choices are few and rather bleak: he can take the commander's abuse (or other hardship inflicted upon him), he can desert, or in extreme cases--such as that

of the rebellion of Egypt's Central Security Forces in February 1986, which I will discuss in the concluding part of this thesis--he may rebel or mutiny.

To some extent the "orientalism" of "losing face" can be applied, in varying degrees, to contemporary Moslem countries.<sup>79</sup> Obviously, Asian Moslems are more prone to exhibit this "Eastern" trait. In the Middle East it is "Islamicity" which plays a major role. The point is that if the practice of Islam (the Shariah\*) were strictly adhered to there would be no problem of confrontation between officer, or commander, and subordinate since according to the teaching of Mohammed all men are equal. Of course, it follows that under the strictest observance of this instruction conceivably there could be no organization such as a modern army. The Soviets discovered, to their dismay, that trying to organize an army with selected leaders and no hierarchy of rank (especially while fighting a war) was impracticable, if not impossible. The fact remains that most nations today whose basic faith is Islam have hierarchical armed forces (including Shilite Iran) which, as with their Far Eastern counterparts, inhibits confrontation and presentation of grievances from the ranks. Social stratification plays a major role. Also, traditional problems of nepotism, desertion, general corruption, ignorance and poor civilian-military relations exist. In addition to the world of Islam, parallels exist in the poorer Christian (mainly Catholic) countries of South and Central America, southern Asian countries such as India, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh, and among those countries of Africa whose inhabitants are products of "missionary Christianity" or atavistic animism, or both.

A second sociological phenomenon which exists in Asia and in other parts of the world (such as Africa) is the extreme difficulty in solving conflict

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\* The "straight path"; Canon law of Islam (Islamic law)

between two individuals by direct confrontation. This difficulty is increased when there is a disparity in rank, class, station or authority between the two individuals. If a soldier makes even a mild complaint to an officer, especially a commander, the officer, but most especially one in command, "loses face." When a real conflict exists, the commander cannot admit his fault and rectify the situation. The superior is always "correct" and the subordinate always a "troublemaker" who doesn't understand "his place."

The oriental solution to this situation has always been to insert a "go between" to mediate conflicts. Thus the political warfare officer and his organization, in all the Asian examples that have been discussed, came into existence to serve as "go between" (in addition to all their other polwar duties) to fill the vacuum between the troops and the commander. Grievances can be brought to the polwar organization (or, in another sense, through it) without attacking the dignity of the commander. The polwar officer personalizes the relationships within the unit in order to provide the soldier with a feeling of familial security in the military after he has been uprooted from his own family. Ideally, he is made to feel that he can take his personal problems, those he would normally take to his parents, to his polwar officer. To enhance this feeling of familial reassurance the polwar organization engages in such homely activities as listening to general grievances, discussing personal problems, and even teaching songs to the troops, activities which the commander could not engage in without detracting from his image.

The primary objective of the polwar officer then is to support the commander by eliminating the conditions which cause lowmorale and desertion

(or worse), by creating a unified spirit among the troops and providing them political or ideological direction through motivation and indoctrination programs, and by detecting and neutralizing individuals whose activities are prejudicial to the interests of the unit. His additional duties of ensuring good civilian-military relations and of conducting psywar against the enemy are secondary to this primary mission. Let us turn now, in the conclusion of this thesis, to the possible application of polwar elsewhere in the world today.

## PART III - THE RELEVANCE OF POLWAR TODAY

### Introduction

The fundamental inquiry of this thesis, as stated in the introduction, is: Would a polwar system such as that of South Vietnam in the 1960s have application to countries of the "free world" today, especially those with large standing military forces? A corollary to this question might be: What role, if any, can the United States play in introducing such a system to such countries?

In order to test the applicability of RVNAF-type polwar today it may be helpful to look at Egypt, whose favor the US has courted since the British presence there dematerialized following the Suez Crisis of 1956. The US has, except during interruptions such as the Egyptian-Soviet rapprochement, provided much military and economic assistance to Egypt. But while money and material poured in, conditions among the Egyptian masses, including those in the armed forces, saw little improvement. Following the equivocal conclusion of the 1973 War, economic and social conditions were exacerbated by a feeling of isolation from much of the Arab world caused by the late President Sadat's peace initiative with Israel. Added to this was the rise of Islamism which, after inspiring the assassination of his predecessor, continues to plague the regime of Hosni Mubarak. One manifestation of Egypt's many discontents was the mutiny of her Central Security Forces in late February 1986.

### Egypt's Central Security Forces Rampage

On 25 February 1986 some 10,000 members of Egypt's Central Security Forces, or CSF, joined later by an unknown number of civilians, went on a

rampage. They burned and vandalized luxury hotels and night clubs near the Pyramids in Giza, adjacent to Cairo, inflicting some \$165 million worth of damage. The young conscripts--whose tasks normally include curbing riots, guarding embassies and public buildings and installations, and controlling traffic--fought battles with military units, helicopter gunships, tanks and armored personnel carriers which were sent in to quell the uprising. Meanwhile, the unrest spread to other quarters and suburbs of Cairo. The inmates of a large prison in Tura, near Cairo, including many Muslim religionists, were set free. Government troops also clashed with CSF members in Asyut and Sohag in upper Egypt and in Ismailia and Tenth of Ramadan City, northeast of Cairo.<sup>80</sup>

An around-the-clock curfew was ordered for Cairo and some governorates; after four days, as peace was restored, the curfew gradually was lifted. Casualties amounted to 107 dead and 719 wounded or injured.<sup>81</sup> More than 2,500 members of the CSF and some 700 civilians were arrested, and within a few days the Minister of the Interior as well as 21,000 of his CSF conscripts were dismissed; four police commanders were reduced in rank.<sup>82</sup> President Mubarak blamed the rampage on "a small group of deviationists," and added that parliamentary investigations had shown that no foreign, religious or ideological plots were behind the uprising.<sup>83</sup>

The mutiny, which had been brewing for some time, underscores the deeply rooted economic and social problems and continuing social crises facing a country with an exploding population, a crushing foreign debt and a history of three costly wars, following a revolutionary change in government, over a period of only twenty years. Egypt's current forty-eight million people are increasing at the rate of about one million every nine months.<sup>84</sup> Aside from

the usual reasons for high population growth in an underdeveloped society, Egypt's religionists maintain that western interest in population control in their country is part of an imperialist plot to limit the number of Muslims in the world. The intensive American involvement in family planning programs widens; therefore, their resistance to birth control. After all, prestige in rural Egypt (for both males and females), where material assets are few, is tied closely to the number of children a couple have. Also, there is an entrenched belief that the answer to a growing population lies in increased development rather than limited family size.

During the last two years a steep decline in world oil prices has "robbed" the country of foreign currency. The related loss of remittances from Egyptian workers who had lost their jobs in the Persian Gulf's slowing oil economy with its attendant drop in Suez Canal revenue, together with stagnating tourism in the aftermath of the Achille Lauro affair serve to emphasize the economy's underlying weakness. Many Egyptians, however, trace their economic problems to the open door policy infitah, adopted in 1974 by the late President Anwar Sadat. Rather than long-term investment in productive industries leading to a stronger and more stable economy, infitah merely produced a very wealthy mercantile class. As a result it widened the gap between the wealthy few and the poor majority.

On 7 October 1985, Palestinian gunmen hijacked the Achille Lauro, an Italian cruise liner, off the Egyptian coast. With Egypt's promise of safe passage the hijackers surrendered: but when US warplanes forced down the Egyptian airliner carrying these hijackers the Egyptians felt humiliated. For ordinary Egyptians, this confirmed what they had long suspected: That their country was little more than a colony of the United States. University

students in different cities demonstrated against the US; but it takes little in Egypt to turn any complaint into one against the Egyptian government. For centuries the Egyptians were ruled by occupiers, no matter under what guises, and most Egyptians, even those who are too young to have lived under colonial or other foreign rule, still carry their old feelings of resentment. Religionists and leftists, opposed to Egypt's ties with the US and Israel, became even more vocal, raising government concern.

The dust had barely settled when, in November, an Egypt-Air liner, enroute to Malta, was hijacked. In an attempt to free the passengers, Egyptian troops who stormed the plane started a fire which killed sixty of those on board. Again, Egyptians sharply criticized their government for the clumsy handling of the rescue operation. A few weeks later the CSF were used to suppress other disturbances in Cairo and the Delta which followed rumours that the alleged suicide of an Egyptian border policeman, jailed for killing seven Israelis in the Sinai, was actually a murder committed by members of Israeli intelligence who had visited the prisoner in the guise of reporters; the rumours alleged further that the Egyptian government was involved in a cover-up of the incident. Soon after that the CSF were used to suppress cotton workers striking for pay increases at Mahala al-Kubra in the Delta. The next blow came in February, the month of the CSF uprising, when Jordan's King Hussein ended his Egyptian-backed cooperation with the Palestine Liberation Organization, an event which left Egypt at loose ends, with the ghost of the "separate peace" with Israel wound around the government's neck.

The CSF rampage of February, 1986 is, undoubtedly, the most serious internal problem which President Mubarak has faced since he took office in October, 1981 following the assassination of President Sadat. As Mubarak said at the time:

This is a treacherous blow to the march of this people struggling for its livelihood and its future. This happened at a time when Egypt was making every effort to develop and build on every field and to confront difficult economic conditions.<sup>85</sup>

It was at this time that Mubarak appointed the Governor of Asyut to the post of Minister of the Interior. The new minister, in his former post as leader in Asyut--a stronghold of Muslim and Christian fundamentalists--had acquired wide experience in quelling the 1981 revolt, which cost Sadat his life, and the subsequent religious turbulence.<sup>86</sup>

Understandably, one may question whether the CSF insurrection was as spontaneous as it may have seemed. Some have suggested that, considering the simultaneous uprising in different and separated governates in the country, the action may have been an organized attempt to topple the government. To support this, the Egyptian Minister of Information at that time reportedly revealed that fifteen of the militants who were arrested each were carrying exactly fifty Egyptian pounds (currency), raising the possibility that they may have been paid saboteurs. There was other speculation about the organized involvement of religious zealots and **agents provocateurs**.<sup>87</sup> The majority, however, saw the rampage as genuinely spontaneous, feeding off a deep-rooted discontent caused, among other things, by price increases, sporadic shortages of food and other goods, a trend toward religious reconstitution, and more importantly, intolerable frustration in the ranks of the Central Security Forces.

The government, on its part, declared that the conscripts were outraged when rumours spread that their tour of service was to be extended from three to four years. The government denied the truth of these rumours. Newspaper reports that a salary increase was being denied by the government while at the same time the number of free train tickets for CSF members was being reduced also were suggested as factors adding to the anger within the CSF. Whatever the validity of those reports may have been the fact remains that those CSF draftees, drawn from Egypt's poorest rural backwaters, are notoriously ill-treated by their middle-class officers and subjected to the perhaps less tangible but equally humiliating fate of suffering the jibes and contempt of their more sophisticated counterparts, the Cairene (and other) university students. Though conditions for these young conscripts may have improved somewhat (most probably, mainly in a cosmetic way) their lot is a miserable one. Quartered in wretched barracks facing the luxury tourist hotels of Cairo, they are paid the equivalent of three dollars per month, enough to buy two soft drinks in those same hotels which, not surprisingly became their first targets when their tolerance reached its limit.

Though they come from humble backgrounds these "dirt poor" young men have a quiet pride and dignity, based largely on their religion which they practice with more seriousness than the more sophisticated city dwellers. These dissatisfied (but armed) members of traditional Muslim peasant families were effectively given the responsibility of Cairo's security. Torn by the sharp contrast between their own lifestyle and that of the people they were protecting, whether the "half-naked" Western tourist (an abomination by Muslim standards) or the snobbish and extravagant Cairene, the downtrodden youngsters simply vented their anger on the most conspicuous and hedonistic

symbols of the wealth they were denied: the luxurious hotels that were handy just outside the gates of their camps. After all, it was just a cut in bread subsidies which led to the huge food riots that almost overthrew President Sadat in 1977.

The CSF incident, therefore, is not just a case of the CSF versus the upper classes or the Egyptian government; it is symptomatic and representative of the discontent of the whole sprawling mass of have-nots against symbols of inequity and humiliation--it is the violent cry of deepseated frustration emanating from all but the uppermost layers of Egyptian society. For the poorest, among whom the rioting conscripts can be numbered, it is the realization that they never will be able to improve their living standards, let alone attain the riches (to a Westerner, especially to an American, this must be seen as a relative term) they can see around them. For the less poor, such as (for example) noncommissioned officers and commissioned officers in the lower grades in all the armed services, it is the knowledge that any improvement they may have experienced in the past quite probably will not be repeated. Nevertheless, the President's senior political advisor insisted that the street battles did not constitute a mass uprising.<sup>88</sup> This statement totally ignores the fact that the social fabric of the "Arab" world's largest, poorest, and most influential country can now only be held together by the one pivotal force that ensures internal security: the Egyptian army. It is small wonder then that Egyptians are talking increasingly of Field Marshal Abu-Ghazala, the current Minister of Defense, as a strong possible candidate as the future fifth military president.<sup>89</sup>

Contrary to the centuries-old experience the Egyptians have endured, threats to their country now seem to come more from within. If the underlying

causes of the "February Rampage" are more profound and complex than the sudden and relatively localized mutiny of the CSF would suggest, so too are the implications, both for the future of Egypt and for the Middle east generally, For Egypt, continuing instability will only help to strengthen the appeal of groups hostile to President Mubarak's policies. Both left-wing radicals, and more importantly, Muslim religionists would benefit, and the ascendancy of either would threaten Egypt's existing measure of democracy and secularism, and its pro-Western stance. But any change of this order would have effects reaching far beyond Egypt's borders, especially if the change were induced by the religionists' wing.

The CSF rebellion was put down by army forces; but what would have happened if the soldiers had decided to join the rebels? Perhaps the Mubarak regime has been fortunate thus far, but how long can the loyalty of the armed forces be assumed with any certainty? If the role of the armed forces is seen by the people (including the members of the armed forces themselves) as one of suppression, as one of a praetorian guard, Egypt could once more experience a revolution, probably inspired in large part by Islamists, not as limited or easily contained as the February Rampage, but of seismic proportions; and the US and its Western allies could be faced with another "Iran." Speaking about the army's role under King Farouk, Anwar Al Sadat once said:

(T)he nice people imagined that the army was a simple instrument of domination, a kind of whip in the king's hands with which he could keep the poor at his mercy . . . Faruk's praetorian guard and not the nation's safeguard. . . .<sup>90</sup>

The institution of a polwar organization now to fit the needs of Egypt's armed forces and the country as a whole could be instrumental in the pursuit of

stability and development for the Egyptian people. Such an institution could also provide an excellent example for any number of developing nations throughout the world.

#### The U.S. Role: Civil-Military Models and Control

Any role which the US might play in helping to make the armed forces of a given country a more effective instrument of the national policy of that country has a great deal to do with American foreign policy per se. There are certain countries which the US government favors, others which it attempts to "cultivate," and still others whose governments are held to be inimical to US interests. It is not the intent of this thesis to argue the validity of US foreign policy; to ask whether Jeanne Kirkpatrick and Norman Podhoretz are right in preferring to support "traditional" authoritarian governments (dictatorships) which are less repressive than revolutionary autocracies (some form of Marxism),<sup>91</sup> or if Noam Chomsky is right when he calls White House insistence on increased military spending and the need to continue containment of "communist takeovers" with "low intensity conflict" a "dirty little lie."<sup>92</sup> But it is almost certain that whatever its policy the United States will continue to support some countries and many of those countries will be of the same general type as was the Republic of Vietnam: industrially and economically poor, mainly agricultural, educationally below an acceptable standard, with disproportionately large military-paramilitary forces (by 1970 the RVN had about three million under arms within a population of some eighteen million), and with a government threatened by a strong and potentially violent opposition. In such a country, control of the armed forces is crucial to maintenance of governmental status quo. The factionalism which developed in Marcos's forces in the Philippines in 1986 led to his downfall.

Today, in 1987, it seems the US was correct in supporting the Aquino government which replaced the dictatorial Marcos regime. Now that the government of Corazon Aquino has been in power for over a year and appears to be genuinely interested in the welfare of the Filipino people, the US could consider urging that government to implement a polwar system in the Philippines' armed forces to assist in that country's development. As Janowitz says, "The act of national liberation (in this case not from a colonial or imperial power but from an internal dictatorial regime)--with or without force--establishes a pragmatic basis for a legitimate government. The military, with its symbols of authority and force, is part of the apparatus of a legitimate government."<sup>93</sup> But given that this were to happen, that the armed forces of a country such as the Philippines, through an efficient polwar system instituted with the help of the US, became a more effective instrument of legitimate civilian control, how then could that civilian government ensure continued control of those armed forces? The answer lies essentially in the very legitimacy of that government and in its relationship with the military forces. Claude Welch and Arthur Smith correctly state:

Although in a civic polity the coercive power of the armed forces may be great, the military political power is minimized by a complex of factors that inhibits the military's employment of coercion independent of civilian direction. The principal limiting factor, of course, is the very effectiveness and legitimacy of the civilian political institutions.<sup>94</sup>

It is important also that the new government realize that despite any "politicization" which might be imposed on the military structure, it must accept the fact that the military, to a large extent, must exist in an

independent sphere of activity and therefore military values and interests must not be subordinated within those of the larger society (as was the case with Mao's forces following the Great Cultural Revolution).

In all polities with which polwar may be concerned there are political (one can say civilian for our purposes since I am not speaking of praetorian government by the military itself) and military elites. Let us define quickly the political-military models as: aristocratic, democratic, totalitarian, and garrison state. The socially and functionally integrated aristocratic model of pre-industrial Europe is archaic; the three remaining have currency.<sup>95</sup>

The democratic model, more an objective than a reality of political policy, is found only in some industrialized Western states, and operates under the assumption that military leaders can be controlled and motivated by their strong professional ethics. The totalitarian model, according to some sources,<sup>96</sup> replaced the aristocratic model when, in the process of historical change, there was no fundamental and lasting development toward the democratic model. Fascist Italy, Nazi Germany, and the USSR are examples. Morris Janowitz contends that the garrison state evolves with the weakening of an effective democratic structure:

The garrison state is not a throwback to military dictatorships (but) is the end result of the ascent to power of the military elite under conditions of prolonged international tension. Internal freedom is hampered, and the preparation for war becomes overriding (and) military groups directly or indirectly wield unprecedented amounts of political and administrative power.<sup>97</sup>

Examples of this last model could include Egypt, Syria, Israel, Nicaragua and, in the opinion of some, the United States.

These political-military elite models may be clarified further by Samuel Huntington's paradigm of subjective-objective control. "The one prime essential for any system of civilian control is the minimizing of military power," Huntington writes, and by "military power" he means the political power of the military.<sup>98</sup> Subjective civilian control, says Huntington, consists of minimizing military power by maximizing civilian power, and this always means concentrating that power in some particular civilian group or groups. This can be seen in the totalitarian models, with Mao's CCP control over the PLA as a prime example. Objective civilian control, on the other hand, achieves the reduction of political power potential in the military by professionalizing the military since this renders them "politically sterile and neutral (and) produces the lowest possible level of military political power with respect to all civilian groups."<sup>99</sup> Also,

it preserves that essential element of power which is necessary for the existence of a military profession. A highly trained professional officer corps stands ready to carry out the wishes of any civilian group which secures legitimate authority within the state.<sup>100</sup>

If it is argued that such decrease in the military's power may lead to increased power among more bellicose civilian groups, then it can be gainsaid that the very reduction of the military's potential interventionary threat makes the same military forces a stronger instrument in carrying out the policies of the legitimate government, perhaps by controlling those same bellicose groups.

The weakening of civilian supremacy which occurs in the garrison state is unavoidable. Therefore, with military groups wielding significant political and administrative power the importance of a viable coalition

between civilian and military authorities cannot be overstressed; the military can retain its organizational independence so long as proper alliances can be maintained with civilian political groups. One such alliance could be that of the nation's polwar officers with civilian leaders at the ministerial or cabinet level (in most countries the Ministry of Defense).

The countries with which we are concerned (for any possible polwar application) probably would best be described as democratic garrison states. What must be understood is that politicizing the armed forces (i.e., instituting polwar) of such countries does not automatically imply making those armed forces a more dangerous potential interventionary political force. On the contrary, it is the very professionalism and stability which the polwar process provides which would make the armed forces less a threat to legitimate civil central governments and more of an effective instrument of power for those governments, leading away from the need for subjective control and toward more democratization as the state achieves more internal stability.

In cases such as the Philippines it is the army which must help to achieve this stability, despite the view that military forces become less reliable when used in police or counterinsurgency roles.<sup>101</sup> The armed forces of such "new nations" must be employed in any role conceivable to assist in the stabilization and internal security of that nation. So it is with the Philippines in countering the NPA (National People's Army) threat, in the newly democratized Argentina in countering latent despotism and tyrannical injustices in and by its armed forces, and in Egypt where, as I have discussed, the armed forces were needed to put down the CSF rebellion in 1986.

In sum, polwar, or "politicizing" military forces, does not imply making those forces more politically active in opposing a legitimate government; it implies rather, the promotion of high professionalism and the use of indoctrination, soldier welfare programs and surveillance means adequate to ensure the loyalty, cooperation and support of those forces in developing a state system which will further the real interests of the people of that state. And those forces should not be seen merely as a "praetorian guard" garrisoned and standing by (in time of peace) ready to defend their government from any opposition, internal or external. They can, as Janowitz points out, contribute to "developing public works, roads, and engineering projects . . . relief and economic rehabilitation after major national disasters."<sup>102</sup>

In countries which the US chooses to assist, the goal should be objective civilian control, making the military a tool, not an opponent or competitor, of the state. Subjective control, in the case of totalitarian states, especially during critical stages in their development, "civilianizes" the military, making it "the mirror of the state," or as Huntington puts it:

The antithesis of objective civilian control is military participation in politics; civilian control decreases as the military become progressively involved in institutional, class, and constitutional politics. Subjective civilian control, on the other hand, presupposes this involvement.<sup>103</sup>

Although polwar may survive for a time under subjective control, as in Trotsky's Red Army and Mao's PLA of the late 1960s, military professionalism eventually will try to reject it; the military elite will always seek that control which maximizes professionalism and ensures "that distribution of political power between military and civilian groups which is most conducive to the emergence of professional attitudes and behavior among the members of

the officer corps."<sup>104</sup> Basically, military specialists abhor politics; but if they are permitted to execute their military duties without interference from "outsiders" they will tolerate polwar officers who prove that they can provide tangible assistance in the execution of those duties. In any case, as Janowitz writes:

Those organizational and professional qualities which make it possible for the military of a new nation to accumulate political power, are the same as those which limit its ability to rule properly . . . while it is relatively easy for the military to seize power in a new nation, it is much more difficult for it to govern. Thus once political power has been achieved, the military must develop mass political organizations of a civilian type, or it must work out viable relationships with civilian political groups.<sup>105</sup>

In short, politicians are needed to govern a country; whether they are civilians or former military leaders is immaterial.

Since Argentina has been mentioned, a note on South American totalitarian systems is needed. The conservative, almost "feudal-like" system of military dictatorship for which South American countries have been notorious is different than that developed in Western Europe in the first part of this century. The military dictatorship of one man or junta directly dominates both military and civilian life. Admittedly, the Peron regime was a combination of this older "hereditary" dictatorship and some of the newer elements found in Europe. Unfortunately today Argentina still is suffering from the latent effects of the dictatorial military elitism of its past. Fortunately however, public opinion in that country seems to be on the side of the newly emergent democracy of President Alfonsin. Here then is another example (such as the Philippines) where the US, with a properly organized polwar assistance and advisory effort, could assist the Argentinian govern-

ment in stabilizing their armed forces and, fostering a system of democratic objective civilian control, make them helpful and not interventionary in the government's efforts in development and internal solidarity. But before such a polwar effort were initiated a cooperative coalition of civil and military power would have to be established. The US should institute no polwar programs in countries whose armed forces are not reasonably stable or in countries with governments that repress the aspirations of the people for more democracy.

If the US military, in a polwar assistance and advisory role, is to be an effective instrument of national policy, then the civil-military relationship within the US must be stable and work in the genuine interest of the US public, the new nations who would be the beneficiaries of polwar systems, and the rest of the world. With the prior approval of the government of the "country of interest," the civilian policymakers--Congress, the Department of State, the President, with the advice and consent of his National Security Council--and in close coordination with the military elite (including the ostensibly civilian but quasi-military Secretary of Defense) should be the final arbiters of whether a polwar assistance-advisory effort will be undertaken.

Once an affirmative decision has been made the military experts would then be responsible for the professional execution of the program. Under the present system in the US the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Army Chief of Staff (since polwar efforts would be concerned mainly with the ground forces in the host countries) would be the key figures in keeping the government's top civilians informed of progress, forecasts, budgetary matters and all the other details necessary for the efficient conduct of the

program. The US CIA probably would play a role (a passive one, one hopes) in keeping the government informed of the political situation both inside and outside the armed forces of the country being aided. If it begins to appear that the host country is "going sour" in its stance toward the US, the polwar effort should be withdrawn. If the wrong choice was made to begin with the responsibility must (and should) lie with the US civilian leaders. In all countries, great or small, the military should be merely an instrument of policy, not a formulator. The counterproductivity which would result from supporting a nation that is or becomes an enemy hardly warrants mentioning. On the other hand, polwar assistance to a country which is undecided in its attitude to the US could be fruitful.

According to V. G. Kiernan, Americans should feel comfortable working with the large military forces of other countries since the US itself is highly militarized and a compatibility exists between militarism and capitalism.

Itself increasingly militarized, America found the men of the sword attractive. In countries as raw and ramshackle as many of this era (post 1945), an army can be the nearest thing to the great industrial-financial organizations which dominate American life. A modern army is an embodiment of technology, closely geared to industry by its equipment, rational like big business in its structure and routine . . . and with an analogous chain of command. Militarism blends with capitalism as smoothly as it did with feudalism.<sup>106</sup>

Given that the United States will support the military forces of certain countries whose governments may not be totally stable, we may now ask ourselves what form that support should take.

In the Spring of 1971, following his return from Ethiopia, then US Army Chief of Staff Westmoreland instructed his Assistant Chief of Staff for Civil Affairs/Military Government to contact the US Army Institute for Military Assistance (USAIMA) at Ft. Bragg to "discuss advisory requirements for Ethiopia." When asked about what "kind of problems" and "concepts USAIMA should concentrate on" in training men for advisory duty in Ethiopia Westmoreland's representative replied that the Ethiopians needed training in "internal defense" and "internal development" in about equal parts since General Westmoreland was "very much concerned about the lack of appreciation on the part of the Ethiopians for the Civil Affairs approach needed to win the hearts and minds of the people." (This last trite phrase was used--with fervor by dedicated but ignorant staff and psyop officers, but with sarcasm among combat troops--persistently when Westmoreland was Commander, US Military Assistance Command, Vietnam [COMUSMACV]). Westmoreland's assistant went on to elaborate the problem and requirement:

'They' (the Ethiopians) have the ability to sweep through an area but do not have an appreciation for developing a government in the areas. They have got to know how to set up hamlet security forces so the local governments can survive, plus they have to know how to get the people to help them. Also, they need to know those things which will develop an area such as roads, medical facilities, schools, etc. Presently, vast areas of the country are not in the hands of the government except where the military forces are.

The memorandum which contains this information<sup>107</sup> is dated 19 May 1971, a time when intensive instruction was being conducted at USAIMA in the history, theory and practice of polwar. Whether "free world" polwar based upon the South Vietnamese model may have helped the Ethiopians to organize their armed forces is open to question. But nothing could have been easier,

during this period of US support for polwar in Vietnam, than to organize a team of polwar advisors (perhaps with technical assistance from the Republic of China) for deployment to Ethiopia. With proper organization and planning, adequate funding and dedicated execution such a venture might have played a major role in the political stabilization of Ethiopia and perhaps, to some extent, even helped to avert or alleviate the terrible famine of the 1980s (which took ten years to develop), while serving US foreign policy interests in western central Africa.

For any polwar effort such as the hypothetical case just described the importance of proper advisors cannot be overstressed. Advisors for political warfare duty must themselves be not merely schooled in its theory and practice and trained in its techniques; they must themselves be motivated and indoctrinated in polwar as a virtual ideology in itself. Moreover, the advisory group in the "host" country cannot "feed that country a square democratic meal," as the US tried to do in Vietnam. In his report to the American people after he and his colleagues returned from a "fact finding mission" to Vietnam in 1974, former US ambassador John M. Allison admitted, with obvious reluctance, that "politically, South Vietnam is not yet a model of American-style democracy," adding that "in this, Vietnam does not differ from . . . the Philippines where the US spent fifty years trying to instill the fundamentals of American-type democracy."<sup>108</sup> The reasons for this in both countries, says Allison, are ethnic and social, not political. This report, which staunchly defends every mistake the United States made in Vietnam, does not even mention the polwar effort (about which I apprised Allison after he expressed his ignorance of the whole enterprise). Although polwar concepts, organization, planning and operations must be monitored closely (at least in

the early stages) and some supervision is required throughout its operations as long as the US is funding part or all of the effort, the country of interest must be free to establish and maintain its own polity and objectives in both domestic and foreign policy. Should its governance become inimical to US policy or interests (such as appears to have happened with the Sandinistas in Nicaragua) and diplomacy and negotiation fail, the US representatives should leave. However, I do not think it is overly sanguine to believe that if the US effort is more altruistic than egoistic the chances would be better than even that the governmental system finally selected by the host country and kept in place at least partly by a US inspired and assisted polwar program would be compatible with US interests.

The American advisors for the sensitive polwar mission must be carefully selected. Race and ethnicity should fit the country to which the advisor is assigned, if possible. In fact, the entire covert policy of assigning only a limited number of officers of a certain extraction to countries of their ancestral origin because they are not considered representative of the US Army should be eliminated.<sup>109</sup> Probably, there are numbers of Asian (the University of Hawaii ROTC program graduates hundreds annually), black, Hispanic and "Arabic" officers who, with proper training would be adequate for the task. The claim, held mainly by US career officers of Anglo-Saxon, middle-class background, that such representatives may permit racial or ethnic sympathies to interfere with "the proper performances of their duties" is sheer nonsense. America should utilize its multiracial, multiethnic resources. The appalling fact is that in too many cases American military advisors in general are totally unsuited for their assignments. Often racially prejudiced, contemptuous of their foreign counterparts, unquali-

fied in any foreign languages and often totally bored with their duties, they muddle through their tours of overseas' duties and, much like Evelyn Waugh's "odious American tourists," do nothing to improve the US image abroad.<sup>110</sup>

V. G. Kiernan, in discussing the inefficiency and misappropriation of much of US foreign aid tells of a Vietnamese who allegedly once said to Martha Gellhorn, "US aid is a long pipe with many holes in it. Only a few drops reach the peasants."<sup>111</sup> A recent press report alleges that as much as thirty percent of US aid to the rebels in Afghanistan is being "syphoned off," probably by the Pakistanis. It is a fact that much US military foreign aid, whether in funds or materiel, is either misappropriated, wasted or simply stolen by government officials or their agents. The universal system of payroll procedure in the RVNAF (beginning at division level) consisted roughly in the divisional commanding general taking half the division payroll for himself and sending the remainder to his three regimental commanders in equal amounts; there the process was repeated, with the three battalion commanders of each regiment receiving the residue from their respective regiments and so on until the troops received what was left, if anything was left.<sup>112</sup> The funds for payment of the South Vietnamese Armed Forces were provided, as was the funding for the entire war, by the United States.

Problems with material aid exist also, arising mainly from lack of efficient management and supervision. Many items are sold on the "black market" or appropriated for personal use. Also, since US advisors rarely speak the host country's language and US technical manuals are published only in English more problems arise, especially where equipment is sophisticated and counterpart soldiers lack technical skills.

Aid in the form of polwar specialists who are language qualified, culturally attuned to the host country, thoroughly schooled in polwar techniques, and dedicated to close supervision of polwar operations and assets (equipment and funds) might be much more productive than many other forms of military aid, especially the practice of merely conveying materiel and money to the country of interest. One of the purposes of polwar is the elimination, or at least the significant reduction, of corruption in the armed forces. Ideally, the polwar system will require less and less supervision of all its aspects, including aid money and equipment, as it becomes "institutionalized."

#### Conclusion

Successful polwar systems have been and should continue to be tailored to fit certain needs, so all systems should be studied before the RVNAF model is adapted to suit the requirements of any future polwar user; social, ethnic, political, religious and even historical factors must be considered. And, having decided upon an approach, the positive aspects of polwar must be stressed, not the negative ones (such as company level security cells), although unfortunately these latter cannot be avoided. In Iran in the early 1950s, the CIA, with the help of Israel's security section, the Mossad, instituted the infamous SAVAK in their successful effort to return the Shah to power. As in the case of Nasser's nationalization of the Suez Canal, US authorities, while speaking mainly of the threat of a communist takeover, were outraged when a noncommunist nationalist government began controlling economic and strategic resources (their own) which were important to the West.<sup>113</sup> The point I am making, aside from calling attention to a grave error in US policy, is that polwar, to enjoy continued success in the achievement of

its objectives, must be a balanced, coordinated effort. Its three main pillars--good leadership, political supervision and security--must blend in concert (although during certain phases one may be stressed, as with Trotsky's Cheka during the early history of the Red Army). In other words, if the Shah of Iran had been a "good" leader at the head of a worthy government, use of the SAVAK (security) as the only control system would probably have led to his eventual downfall anyway. If one argues that a leader whose interests are those of his people does not need polwar or some control system, I can only say that while this may be true in certain Western countries, it is not true in countries such as Iran. And I should add that all Western countries, though they may have no highly structured control organizations such as I described in the earlier parts of this thesis, have nonetheless some system of control, usually a combination of propaganda (mainly through use of the communications media) and security forces (in the US, the FBI, CIA and NSA). As Jacques Ellul points out:

Power is regarded as legitimate when it derives from the sovereignty of the people, rests on the popular will, expresses and follows that popular will . . . . The masses are there; they are interested in politics. The government cannot act without them. So, what can it do?

Only one solution is possible: as the government cannot follow opinion, opinion must follow the government. One must convince this present, ponderous, impassioned mass that the government's decisions are legitimate and that its foreign policy is correct. The democratic State, precisely because it believes in the expression of public opinion and does not gag it, must channel and shape that opinion if it wants to be realistic and not follow an ideological dream.<sup>114</sup>

To translate Ellul's view into reality, the US should reinstitute a program for the selective use of polwar in countries which may need such a

system. The documents necessary for this--studies, lesson plans, programs of instruction for advisors, foreign officers and US commanders and staff officers, "after action" reports, and others--may still repose in their vault files at Ft. Bragg. But information recently received by the author from the Psychological Operations Department of the Special Warfare Center at Ft. Bragg made it plain that no US polwar training programs, advisory efforts or studies are underway. In short, the US government appears to have no more interest in the subject, and, as was the case with Vietnam in the mid 1950s, now has nothing to offer except psywar or, to use the broader term, psyop. Obviously, the United States abandoned polwar when it abandoned Vietnam.

If the United States were to reintroduce polwar as an aid to friendly developing nations, all polwar systems--Russian or Chinese Communist (and their satellites), Chinese Nationalist and Vietnamese--should be examined in order to determine which part(s) of any or all should be applied in a specific country. The record of successful polwar practice thus far favors the communist military forces, both during major upheavals (such as the Russian and Chinese revolutions) and "low intensity conflicts," and particularly in their aftermaths when stability among the victorious military forces was (and is) essential. Nonetheless, the obviously "good" or effective aspects of those communist structures and operations should be considered as well as those practiced or attempted by "free world" countries, such as the Republics of China or Vietnam, for possible future use, and adapted to the needs of countries whose governmental forms are non-communist. A totally pragmatic approach should be taken; certain "labels" which may be offensive to some Westerners, especially Americans--political commissar, political indoctrination, clandestine security--can be changed to make their acceptance

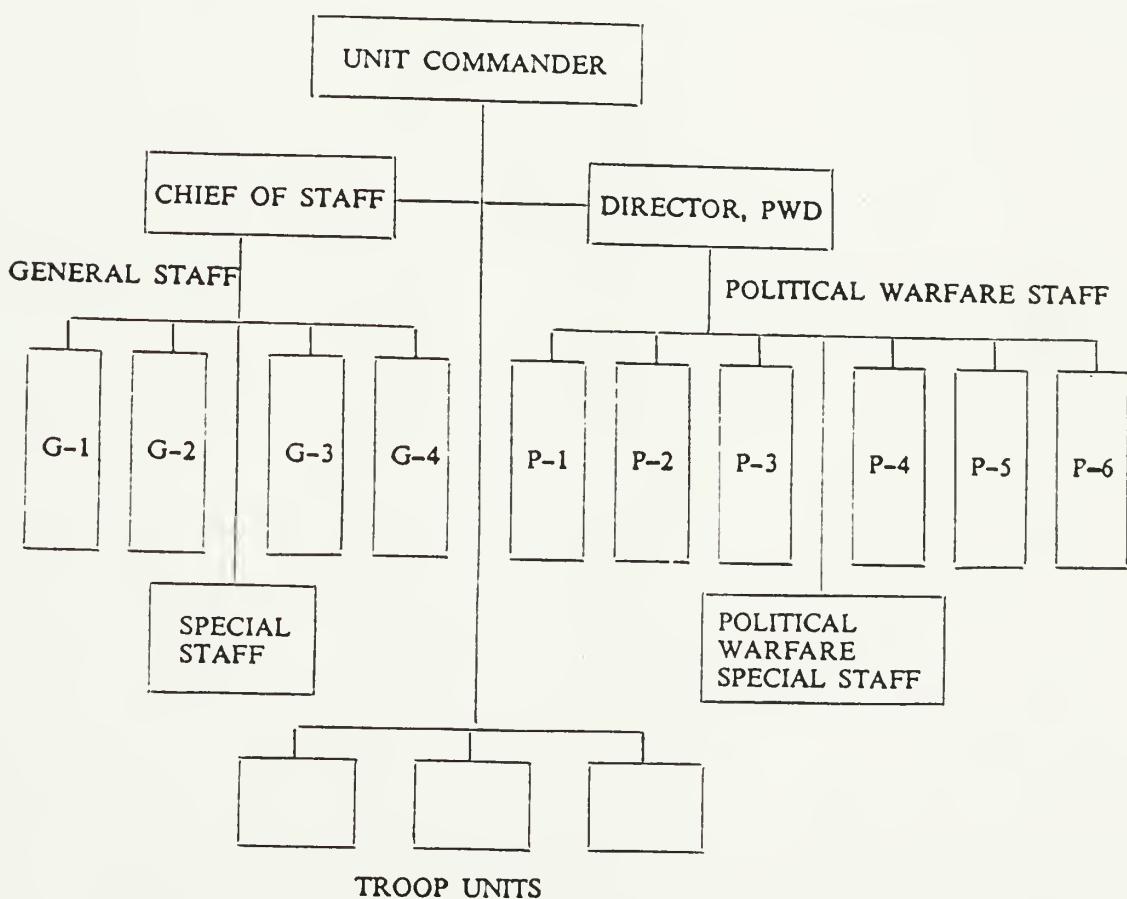
more palatable (the fact is all nations, "democracies" included, foster these same activities or entities in some less coordinated form or other anyway). The West does not have to accept the politics or ideology of communist states along with their concepts and practices of polwar. The objectives of the enterprise are, after all, what must be kept in mind.

What must be kept in mind also is that, as stated earlier, polwar must not be seen as a cure for all the world's political, social or developmental ills. Without legitimacy of goals, both on the part of the "host country" and the "sponsor" who provides the necessary aid (the US), and without a genuine belief in the system itself and high motivation in its implementation, polwar will remain, at least in the "free world," merely a "gadget" of more or less interest. Polwar is not just a system of better feeding, housing, paying and entertaining soldiers--it is an organized effort through which the soldiers themselves can play a role in assisting a legitimate government to better provide the military (and their civilian counterparts) with those and other less tangible but perhaps even more important benefits--such as human rights.

In conclusion, if US foreign policy continues as it has--promoting "containment," "low intensity wars," and support of dictatorial governments--nothing can be accomplished through the use of polwar. The US must realize that it cannot "sell" democracy on the American model everywhere it chooses to do so; also, it must begin to accept and support alternative forms of government, even those which are based on a socialist approach. However, such a change is unlikely in view of the fact that the public opinion which could cause such a sensible redirection of US foreign policy seems pre-programmed to provide the government with the support it needs to continue its present policies. Propaganda, like a gun, is merely an instrument, to be

used for good or ill. Its current use by the US government is working to the detriment of the country's real interests as well as those of the rest of the world.

## Command Relations

COORDINATION RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN POLITICAL WARFARE STAFF  
AND GENERAL STAFF IN THE CHINESE ARMED FORCES

This chart shows command relationships in a type headquarters. The Chief of Staff in a type headquarters is responsible for coordination in the general and special staff while the director of the political warfare establishment is responsible for coordination of political warfare functions. Both of them report to the commander and deputy commander. On the regimental and lower level where there is no chief of staff, the chief of the political warfare establishment or political warfare officer of the unit is on the deputy commander level.

The functions of the Political Warfare Planning Committee are to study, plan and review:

- a. Political warfare policies.
- b. Civil affairs policies.
- c. Political warfare operations behind the enemy's lines.

The Military Spokesman's Office is responsible for:

- a. News release concerning joint operations.
- b. Speaking to the public on behalf of the Ministry of National Defense.
- c. Arranging both Chinese and foreign reporters to visit military units.

P-1 is responsible for:

- a. Formulating plans of political warfare operations.
- b. Management of political warfare personnel.
- c. Organization and training.
- d. Political warfare personnel service and evaluation of their efficiencies.
- e. Political warfare operations in the enemy's rear area.

P-2 is responsible for:

- a. Psychological warfare activities.
- b. Culture and propaganda activities within Armed Forces.
- c. Recreational activities.

P-3 is responsible for conducting administrative, tactical and technical inspections and the supervision of discipline within the Armed Forces.

P-4 is responsible for:

- a. Providing political warfare intelligence.
- b. Safeguarding military security.
- c. Providing counter-espionage measures.
- d. Providing security clearances.

P-5 is responsible for:

- a. Handling military-civilian programs.
- b. Planning welfare programs and providing welfare services for officers and EM.
- c. Providing services to military dependents.

P-6 is responsible for:

- a. Providing political education for both active duty and reserve personnel.
- b. Conducting political training activities.
- c. Planning physical training programs.

The Comptroller Office prepares and reviews budgets and distributes GPWD operational funds. This office also prepares statistical analysis of political warfare activities and procures, manages and adjusts equipment utilized in political warfare activities.

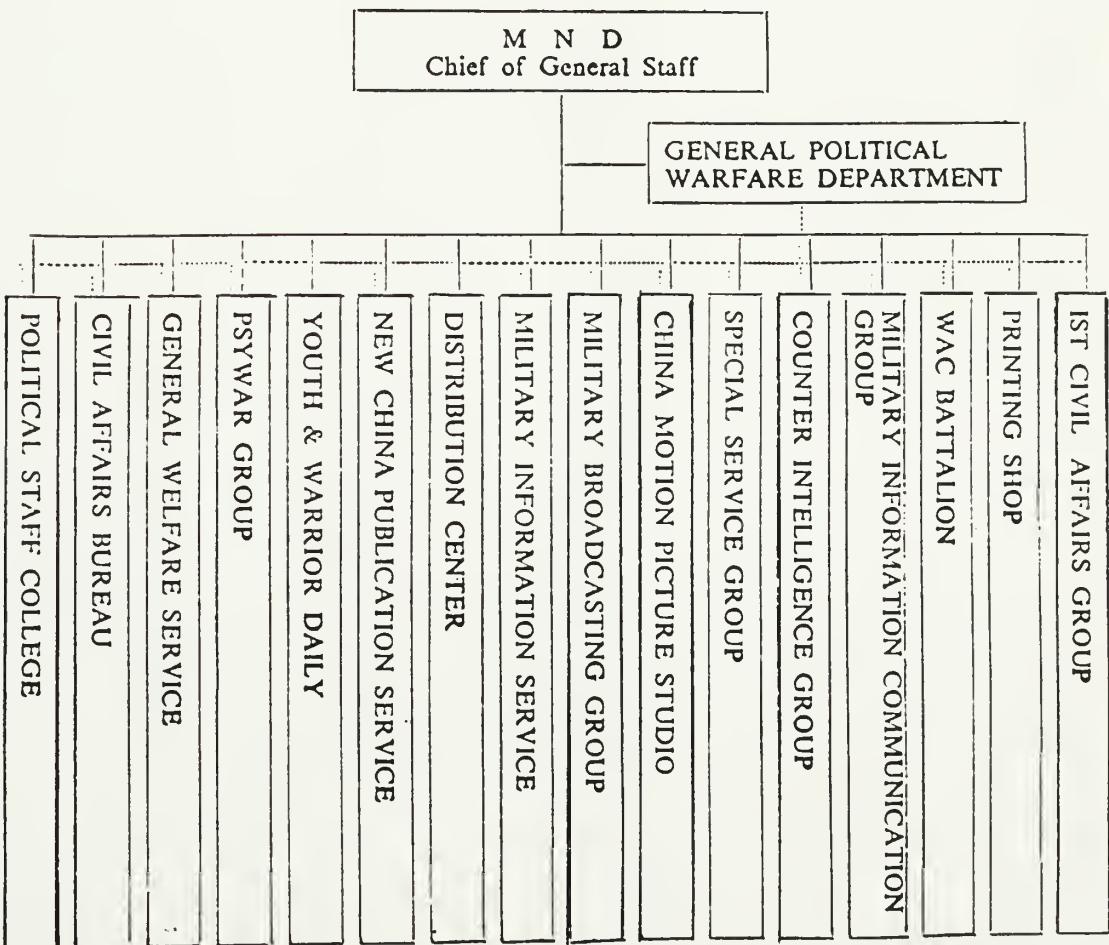
The Administrative Office handles social relations, screens and controls overall clerical work, and renders administrative support to the various staff sections.

As can be seen most of the functions in the political establishment of the Chinese Armed Forces also exist in U.S. military units. The difference lies wherein several functions regarded as separate or additional duties and assigned to separate U.S. general and special staff sections are combined and discharged as a whole in the Chinese Armed Forces by the political establishment.

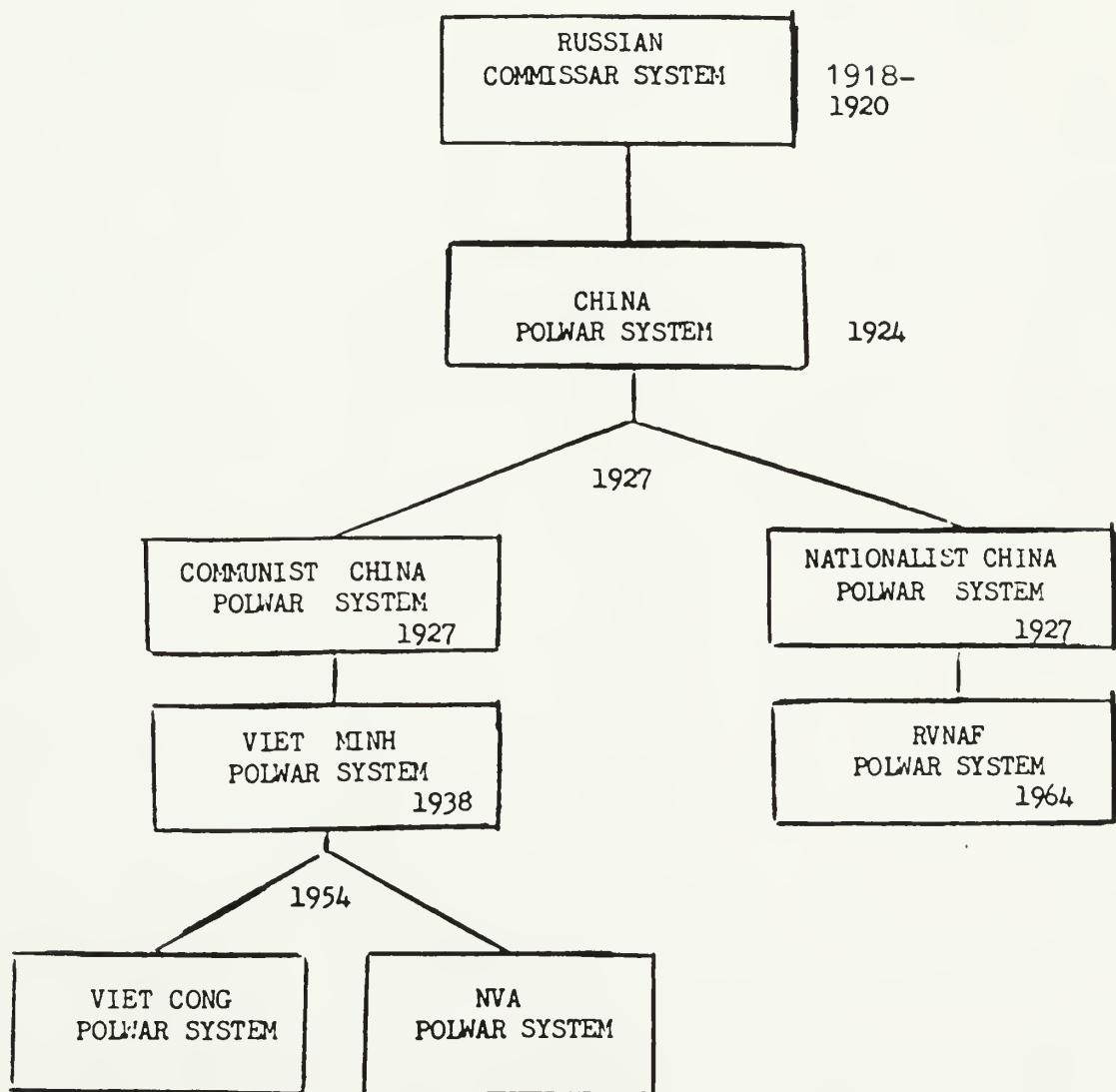
## Supporting Units

There are sixteen supporting or operational units which are under the direct command of MND and supervised by GPWD to carry out the political warfare activities. These sixteen units are shown on the following chart:

### POLITICAL WARFARE OPERATIONAL UNITS AND SERVICES SUBORDINATE TO MND



## DEVELOPMENT OF POLITICAL WARFARE



## POLITICAL WARFARE INSIGNIA



The Political Warfare insignia is a badge, worn above the right breast pocket, which consists of a silver star symbolizing leadership, surrounded by a hexagonal design symbolizing Chiang Kai-shek's "Six Great Warfares"\*\* superimposed on a sword, anchor, and wings which symbolize the role of the Army, Navy, and Air Force in the carrying out of the six warfare missions.

\* Six Great Warfares: Ideological Warfare, Stratagem Warfare, Mass Warfare, Intelligence Warfare, Organizational Warfare, and Psychological Warfare.

NOTES

1. Political Warfare Handbook for Advisors, Ft. Bragg, N.C., 1970, p. 1.
2. Michael Garder, A History of the Soviet Army, New York, Frederick A. Praeger, 1966, p. 33.
3. Ibid., p. 32. Dates reflect the Gregorian, not Julian, system.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid.
6. Ian Grey, The First Fifty Years; Soviet Russia, 1917-1967, London, Hodder and Stoughton Ltd., 1967, pp. 132-33; and Garder, op. cit., p.34.
7. Garder, op. cit., p. 33.
8. Ibid.
9. Grey, op. cit., pp. 142-43.
10. Ibid., p. 143.
11. Garder, op. cit., pp. 34.
12. Fedotoff White, The Growth of the Red Army, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1944, p. 33; Grey, op. cit., pp. 143-44; and Garder, op. cit., pp. 33-35, *passim*.
13. White, op. cit., p. 33.
14. Grey, op. cit., p. 143.
15. White, op. cit., pp. 33-34.
16. Garder, op. cit., p. 35.
17. Grey, op. cit., pp. 120-21; White, op. cit., p. 82; and Garder, op. cit., pp. 35-36.
18. Garder, op. cit., p. 36.
19. There are many cases of polwar officers (at the lower echelons of command) taking over their units when unit commanders had been killed or disabled, and performing bravely and competently. In the Soviet Army political officers who demonstrated a high degree of competency and leadership achieved high levels of command.

20. As the Soviet Army became more professional and politically dependable the severity of the political supervision diminished. The character of officer cadre changed from mainly political to mainly national. Garder says, "in 1937 the Red Army was superior to any of the western armies at that time in almost all fields . . . the political apparatus was no more than an auxiliary of the command." (See Garder, op. cit., pp. 54 and 92). Stalin's fears soon changed this.
21. James R. Townsend and Brantly Womack, Politics in China, Boston, Little Brown and Company, 1986, 1986, p. 49.
22. Henry Wei, China and Soviet Russia, Princeton, D. Van Nostrand, 1956, p. 40.
23. Ibid., pp. 15-26 passim.
24. Ibid., pp. 26-28.
25. Franklin W. Houn, A Short History of Chinese Communism, Englewood Cliffs, NJ, Prentice-Hall, 1973, p. 17.
26. Wei, op. cit., p. 43.
27. Stuart Schram, Mao Tse-tung, Baltimore, Penguin Books, 1970, p. 85.
28. Ibid.
29. Townsend and Womack, op. cit., p. 72.
30. Chalmers A. Johnson, Peasant Nationalism and Communist Power: The Emergence of Revolutionary China 1937-1945, Stanford, CA, Stanford University Press, 1962, p. 79.
31. Ibid., p. 80.
32. Ibid., pp. 102-103.
33. John Gittings, The Role of The Chinese Army, New York, Oxford University Press, 1967, p. 103.
34. Ibid., p. 102.
35. Ibid., p. 103.
36. Ibid., pp. 102-103.
37. Ibid., p. 103.
38. Ibid., p. 105.

39. At the time of the Kutien Resolution Mao probably had little military knowledge or experience. One may assume with reasonable certainty that many of the rules of warfare and strategy, including those dealing with relations with the civilian populace, were learned from his friend Chu Teh, an experienced and professional soldier. Interestingly, Chu Teh was notorious for his insistence on good field sanitation, unusual among the Chinese of the time, but extremely important in any army. For a discussion of this and the Three Cardinal Rules of Discipline see Edgar O'Ballance, The Red Army of China, London, Faber & Faber, 1962, pp. 47-48.
40. O'Ballance, op. cit., pp. 46-47.
41. Ibid., p. 34.
42. Ibid., p. 35, and James C. F. Wang, Contemporary Chinese Politics: An Introduction, Second Edition, Englewood Cliffs, Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1985, p. 7. For good fictional dramatization of events during the massacre see Andre Malraux's Man's Fate, New York Vintage Books, 1968, pp. 269-77.
43. Although Michael Borodin, as senior Soviet advisor to the Whampoa Military Academy, can be said to have been the driving force behind Chinese polwar, it was General Vassily Blucher, a Russian revolutionary hero, who commanded the overall Soviet military mission to China and whose mission it was to organize an army for the KMT. Galen, or "Ga-lin" was the nom de guerre assumed by Blucher in China.
44. O'Ballance, op. cit., p. 37.
45. Edgar Snow, Red Star Over China, New York, Grove Press, Inc., 1961, p. 186.
46. Ibid., p. 432.
47. Johnson, op. cit., p. 31.
48. Gittings, op. cit., p. 49.
49. Johnson, op. cit., 69.
50. Houn, op. cit., p. 54.
51. O'Ballance, op. cit., p. 135.
52. Ibid., p. 136.
53. Townsend and Womack, op. cit., p. 75.
54. Lois Wheeler Snow, Edgar Snow's China, New York, Random House, 1981, p. xx.

55. O'Ballance, op. cit., p. 181.
56. Ibid., p. 186.
57. "Introductory Briefing on the Political Staff College," Taiwan, General Political Warfare Department, Ministry of National Defense, Republic of China, undated (circa 1965), p. 1.
58. Ibid., pp. 1-2.
59. Houn, op. cit., p. 13.
60. "Information Briefing on the General Political Warfare Department, Ministry of National Defense, Republic of China," Ft. Bragg, North Carolina, US Army Institute for Military Assistance, 15 August 1964, p. 1.
61. "General Briefing on Political Warfare System of the Chinese (Nationalist) Armed Forces," Taiwan, General Political Warfare Department, Ministry of National Defense, undated (circa 1965), pp. 1-2.
62. Ibid., p. 2.
63. "Information Briefing on the General Political Warfare Department, etc.," USAIMA, p. 2.
64. Ibid.
65. Ibid., p. 12.
66. US Army Special Warfare School, Psychological Operations Department Study "Polwar in the Republic of Vietnam," Ft. Bragg, 1968, p. 7.
67. Ibid.
68. Ibid.
69. Chiang listed his "Six Great Warfares"--strategic, organizational, ideological, psychological, intelligence and mass in a speech he gave in Taiwan (soon after he began reorganizing in Taiwan), entitled "The Theory of Political Warfare. See Wang Sheng, Political Warfare, Taiwan, MND, 1959, pp. 187-88; and Appendix 5.
70. In addition to the GPWD's military police, by the early 1970s a national police force of over 120,000 existed in the RVN whose mission officially was to enforce the law within the civilian populace and provide greater security against kidnapping, assassination and sabotage. In fact, these civil police were used to protect the government and suppress political opposition.

71. Unfortunately, though the US government provided hundreds of television sets to the Vietnamese, many were either never used because of lack of electric power or were sold on the black market to the wealthier Vietnamese or other "third country nationals."
72. Revolutionary Development programs were carried out under supervision of the US staffed CORDS (Coordinating Office for Revolutionary Development Support) organization which conducted (among other activities) "pacification" campaigns intended to promote defection from the Viet Cong and North Vietnamese troops. The Phoenix program was a joint CIA, MACV-J2 (US military intelligence), GPWD effort to "neutralize" enemy officers. Bounties were paid in cash to anyone who provided information leading to the capture or killing of an enemy officer. Bounties were paid also for the bodies (or heads, if positive identification was possible) of those "wanted."
73. Desertion rates within the ARVN were extremely high. Many soldiers deserted from the regular forces to join the Regional or Popular Forces (near their homes), or to voluntarily join another division under an assumed name, and thereby qualify for a new enlistment bonus; some joined the Viet Cong, others simply went home.
74. Political Warfare Handbook for Advisors, Ft. Bragg, 1970, p. 17.
75. Interestingly, no indemnification was paid for captured or missing personnel. Perhaps this was seen by the GVN (government of South Vietnam) as a way of discouraging defection to the enemy side.
76. Handbook for Advisors, p. 28.
77. Ibid.
78. Some commanders at the company level observe the practice of setting aside time each week to hear complaints or suggestions from "the ranks." Problems brought to the commander's attention in this way are those which, in the judgement of the unit first sergeant or executive officer, warrant his attention since they can not be resolved routinely. Commanders who practice this procedure feel that it is a good way of "keeping in touch" with the men.
79. This was affirmed by an officer of the Egyptian armed forces who retired recently after more than twenty years of service.
80. The Times of London, 4 March 1986, p. 7.
81. Al-Ahram (Cairo), 7 March 1986, p. 1.
82. The New York Times, 9 March 1986, p. 18.
83. Newsweek, 10 March 1986, p. 50.

84. Christian Science Monitor, 7 July 1986, p. 1.
85. Al-Ahram, 27 February 1986, p. 1.
86. During the week following Sadat's death, while I was in Cairo, there were first-hand reports of dozens of incidents in Asyut, including a number of attacks on "Westerners."
87. Al-Ahram, 28 February 1986, p. 3.
88. The Times, 28 February 1986, p. 1.
89. After Mubarak, Sadat, Nasir and Nagieb.
90. Anouar Abdel-Malek, Egypt: Military Society, New York, Vintage Books, 1968, pp. 178-79.
91. Newsweek, 10 March 1986, pp. 35-36.
92. Chomsky's point, in a speech at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst on 11 March 1987, was that the US uses its insistence on "security" and consequent arms spending as a guise for carrying out its global schemes of interference and aggression and subsidizing US industry.
93. Morris Janowitz, The Military in the Political Development of New Nations, Chicago, Phoenix Books, 1964, p. vii.
94. Claude E. Welch, Jr., and Arthur K. Smith, Military Role and Rule: Perspectives on Civil-Military Relations, North Scituate, Duxbury Press, 1974, p. 44.
95. Janowitz, op. cit., p. 111.
96. Ibid., p. 112.
97. Ibid., p. 113.
98. Samuel P. Huntington, The Soldier and the State: The Theory and Politics of Civil-Military Relations, New York, Vintage Books, 1964, p. 84.
99. Ibid.
100. Ibid.
101. Welch and Smith, op. cit., p. 10.
102. Janowitz, op. cit., p. 77.
103. Huntington, op. cit., p. 83.

104. Ibid.
105. Janowitz, op. cit., p. 1.
106. V. G. Kiernan, America: The New Imperialism, London, Zed Press, 1980, p. 224.
107. USAIMA Memorandum, 19 May 1971, p. 1.
108. Washington Report (published by the American Security Council), March, 1974, p. 6.
109. Edward L. King, The Death of the Army: A Pre-Mortem, New York, Saturday Review Press, 1972, p. 204.
110. Typifying this image was an American Lieutenant Colonel with whom I was assigned in Bangkok, Thailand in the late 1960s. A tall, heavy-set, red-faced, and very awkward Southerner with almost stereotypical prejudices, this officer not only was openly contemptuous of our Oriental counterparts (all of whom were of higher rank than we, including two general officers), but always managed, consciously or unconsciously, to embarrass or humiliate them, especially by calling attention to their relatively short stature, small hands and feet, etc., and by making lascivious remarks and jokes about Thai women. When asked once, at a reception attended by officers of both countries, whether he spoke any Asian languages, he replied gruffly, and in perfect hearing range of several Thai officers, "I don't speak no gook languages, except maybe a little 'whorehouse' Thai."
111. Kiernan, op. cit., p. 223.
112. Corruption on the part of company grade officers also was rampant. Some other malpractices which destroyed troop loyalty and hindered the accomplishment of the first polwar mission were: combat rations and rice were kept by the unit commander rather than distributed to the men; troops were used to build quarters for the unit commander; troops were overcharged for haircuts and other services; supply personnel adjusted books in order to keep food and clothing for sale on the black market rather issue them to the troops. I followed an ARVN cargo truck for ten kilometers one day as it made regular stops to sell military food and equipment.
113. Nikki R. Keddie, Roots of Revolution: An Interpretive History of Modern Iran, New Haven, Yale University Press, 1981, p. 143. The arrogance with which the US speaks of "losing" sovereign countries admittedly must be very difficult for many foreigners to understand.
114. Jacques Ellul, Propaganda: The Formation of Men's Attitudes, New York, Vintage Books, 1973, pp. 126 & 128.

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