

the Lansdale doctrine," says Kraft, "is that a nationalist army can be trained to filch, on behalf of the free world, a revolution that is being used by the Communists for their purposes." General Lansdale calls the instrument for this "civic action," through which, "besides fighting the enemy, the army also helps the underlying population through such projects as building roads and schools, etc." In this way, according to the General, "the national government, the army and the general population become welded together in an anti-Communist, pro-people fight."

Lansdale's reputation among liberals rests upon the idea that some years ago a similar program helped President Magsaysay of the Philippines subdue and wipe out the pro-Communist Hukbalahups. But Kraft makes the devastating comment that "the pro-people fight faded as soon as President Magsaysay died. Now the Philippines are a prime candidate for the role of the next Vietnam." Moreover, Lansdale previously operated also in South Vietnam, of all places, in collaboration with Diem! And, as Kraft points out, there "the pro-people fight lost momentum and became a family fight as soon as President Diem was established in office."

Kraft further points out that the central factor in Vietnam now is the American military force and "with Americans running the show the prospect that a revolutionary current of idealism will somehow transform the South Vietnam government and army is obviously diminished.... The history of the past four years alone teaches that the more Americans are on the spot, the more the Vietnamese are corrupted." Other observers have pointed out how American aid tends to enrich what Reston calls the anti-Communist "Saigon group" and the middle class, and not to reach the peasants. Kraft concludes with the startling but, on reflection, sound observation that "if the

American military somehow convince themselves that they have a crusading mission in Vietnam," that will be a misfortune since it will serve to postpone rather than hasten peace.

I have not introduced into this discussion any specific details about the role of the Central Intelligence Agency. Americans will have to take into account the notorious role this secret agency plays in all such situations if they are to understand, for example, how the Chinese and many other people can regard America's role in the world as they do, and above all understand the nature of the job Americans must perform, if they are to play the progressive and peace-making role which the Administration professes, and which most Americans probably believe in and want.

When it comes to the question of "what to do" in Vietnam and in the larger international context, we are faced with the fact that a grave and often heated controversy is going on over that question within the peace and pacifist movements. This controversy is strikingly illustrated in my mind by the document called an *Open Letter to Faculty Participants in the Vietnam Day Committee*¹ (at the University of California, Berkeley). I trust that what I have to say here may be taken for what it is meant to be, a comment on what seems to me typical of the prevailing American approach to Vietnam and related problems, and what is at the same time wrong and dangerous in the *Open Letter*. I am aware that there is more than one point to the controversy. I trust readers will keep in mind that I am not dealing with all of them here.

¹The Vietnam Day Committee was organized to sponsor the 36-hour "teach-in" on May 21-22, 1965. It was attended by some thirty-five thousand people, including faculty members of the University of California at Berkeley, who represented every shade of opposition to the war in Vietnam. The participation of the Berkeley faculty members came under criticism by another group of the Berkeley faculty in the so-called "Open Letter," which A.J. Muste analyzes and discusses in this essay.