Gamelan

(Music for a Shadow Play)

By
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To the good people who have been led astray by madmen, and especially to those who have suffered as a result.
Chucha de tu madre! Que bestia!"

Louis grumbled under his breath as he listened to the men on red scooters visiting all the small shopkeepers. ‘Chulqueros!’ He spat into the gutter. ‘Todo el pueblo anda chiro;’ - meaning of course that everyone’s pockets held lint, or dust, or assorted garbage, but none of them held any money.

They can’t get credit cards, and banks won’t lend them the small amounts that they needed to keep their business running, so they look for one of the countless street shysters that sit drinking coffee at beachfront restaurants in the afternoons when the sun has mellowed. These merchant bankers are the survivors who fled the brutality of their own countries; and although they now wear fine leather shoes and silk shits, the scent of decadence still clings to their pores.

Last year they were charging twenty per cent of the principle on the first of the month. Nervous shopkeepers were easily confused into believing that they were paying the same rates as banks. Now it was even easier; a few dollars every day. But all the borrower ever pays is interest. One day the victim wakes up and realizes their mistake; and then they fold and disappear into the nighttime air. Or perhaps the back page of the morning paper.
Sunday, the saddest day. The dawning of cold church bells echoes the raw, sober, urban poverty. The tempo and aimless acts of the work week, suspended in contemplation. Louis bowed his head, inhaled the crisp morning air and continued sweeping the daily dust from the sidewalk in front of a small family owned restaurant. The grey sky had been getting cooler and smelled of the possibility of rain. There were scarcely a few weeks throughout the year for a chance to grow some quick crops before the endless heat returned and burned the land back to yellow and brown.

He leaned on his broom handle as a funeral procession passed. It was led by a station wagon marbled with flowers. The wooden casket was carried through the streets on the shoulders of six large men. Close friends and family shared the honor. They took turns as they brought the dead on his last journey through the town. Behind the coffin were the women, veiled and dressed in black, crying arm in arm, holding rosary beads, suffering those final steps. They will mourn the year with novenas and masses as tradition calls for.

The slow procession was accompanied by a man on guitar and another with an accordion. Passersby bent their heads and sometimes sang along. The men dressed in white shirts and black pants shared a “chata” in a paper bag as they circled once more around the square before lying to rest their friend, their brother, their father, and ultimately themselves. Wiping off the bottle with their shirtsleeves, they drank quickly and silently as they passed it around. A new blue heart painted in the street and an iron cross cemented at the curb mark where the deceased had been run over by an unidentified driver in a car that never stopped.
Louis arranged the white plastic tables and covered them with red cloths that imparted an air of respectability. He wiped off the dark green chairs, and with his numb sciatic leg kicked a few plants into place. It was a poor man’s feng shui. In truth, it didn’t make sense to him whatsoever. He was just a near-blind street musician who played in front of the restaurant all night. The owner didn’t care as long as he straightened up afterwards.

A man walked by with a stack of newspapers on his head. Louis called out to him as he did every morning. The man reached up and pulled a copy off the top of the pile without looking. Louis paid for it from the spare change that he had earned, and left it on the table for the owner to read. He then packed up his hand crafted instruments and got ready to head for home.

Felix, the owner, came out with a grunt and calmly disconnected the two alligator clips that he used to rob electricity during the night. He was grouchy and grumbling because he knew something was wrong. He blamed it on a lot of things: the political immaturity of the people, the mental darkness of the majority, and the indolence of the upper classes, which kept everyone else in poverty and subjugation. Kept them like dogs; to serve, to fight, and to amuse them. He wondered why it was that they were so affable, generous, and courteous, to anyone that they consider their equals, but miserable to anyone that they could look down on. Is it that the worse a man treats his subordinates, the nearer he can bring them to slaves, the more he feels that he is a man? Perhaps it was just the fear of slipping back into the ghetto that they left behind. Así es la vida: such is life.

Felix had worked in a private club serving bank executives, foreigners, military officers, and agringados: people who wished that they were from the United States. Like everybody else, he
was overworked and underpaid. He decided that he could do better if he opened his own business. After emptying their bank account and hocking what they could, he and his wife found a place that had been a Christian bookstore with a small café. People were not concerned with saving their souls while they ate, so it had quickly gone out of business. They resurrected it with the name: Tres platos.

At first, he tried to recreate the club’s atmosphere by hiring waiters with white shirts, vests and bow ties, a boy who grated pepper on the salad; and a separate dessert menu. But after a few months all of that disappeared. He still tried to maintain an appearance by wearing his chef jacket; but you could see that his cuffs and collar had been turned around to hide the frayed ends. And now the house specialty was arroz con gafas; which is rice with two fried eggs on top.

His overweight wife flashed him a motherly smile as the greasy smoke drifted out of the kitchen. She was neither ugly nor pretty. Her beauty was in the ways that she put a woman’s touch on everything she did. She seemed to work without sleep. During the week she got the kids off to school in the mornings, and then went to clean a young man’s apartment and do his laundry. Sometimes she would sneak her own clothes and the restaurant tablecloths into the machine. At five o’clock her two boys would be sitting at the table in the back of the restaurant while she helped with their homework, or did the dishes, or waited on tables, or all of the above. Today she was making breakfast for her family.

Felix took a deep breath, and for a moment enjoyed watching a group of children play. In a town where video games and television still hadn’t completely hypnotized them into mindless
consumers, a few seven or eight year old girls were jumping rope: “Monja, soltera, casada, divorciada, viuda. ¿Con cuántos hijos va a quedar?” It was a game older than his own childhood. And their laughter was contagious. It helped him forget that half of them would not grow up, and the other half would become beggars, or thieves, or worse.

He waved a friendly good morning to Carolina. She was a shapely twenty-something year old blond that brought him a daily smile. Her father had earned good money. He had probably worked in the refinery, but Felix didn’t know for sure. She went to private schools and led a pampered life until he had a heart attack and lost his job. He left to live with his brother while his wife and three kids stayed behind to fend for themselves. The phone and the electric were disconnected; and in due course they were evicted. She dropped out of college and started a business that she ran from their two bedroom apartment. Carolina was adept, and charmed her numerous male friends into giving her work. Eventually she supported her mother, grandmother, brother, his pregnant wife, and her younger sister. They were forever dodging landlords and changing apartments. Finally she decided that the best way was to become a married man’s mistress. It appeared to Felix that she had no regrets.

Like most nearby houses, the paint on the restaurant’s overhanging sign was peeling from the heat. Felix squinted as he observed the depressed economy that he called his neighborhood. It seemed to stink of fear and despair. A despair that lead its inhabitants to spend their last quarters on beer and stay drunk enough so that everything became a blur. Drunk enough to keep from thinking; from remembering that they were starving, and neglected. Drunk enough so that they were no longer conscious of their helplessness, or of committing the acts for which
they knelt, hands folded, fingers interlocked, and head bowed, on mornings like this. Praying together for their survival amidst social injustice, corruption, and economic collapse.

Felix had watched the progression of concrete and asphalt paving over the tree lined streets. Life sped up, and the sense of community died. It had been a town where you went to high school, grew up, got married, had kids, and settled down. There was little need for introductions. People recognized each other, face to face. They knew you all your life, they knew your father, your mother, and perhaps even remembered your grandparents.

Years ago you could amble on the beach in the early morning and watch the fishermen wading into the water. Unhurriedly casting their nets out over the shoreline and drawing them in with strong forearms. Browned from the daily work they had been doing since they were old enough to remember. The sun’s heat signaled them when to pack up their gear. Then you could haggle prices. Some were more ambitious and went out before dawn in rowboats and canoes and sold their catch in the early evenings.

Now, the boats arrived almost empty even after eight days at sea. A fair amount of captains negotiated shady deals with men in small dinghies before coming to port so that they could avoid sharing any profits with the boat’s owners. But a good number have left fishing altogether. Smuggling drugs or illegals is more lucrative. Those huddled masses that submit to the shameless, ruthless abuse of coyotes charging them in excess of ten thousand dollars for a chance to be squeezed days or weeks, with little or no food or water, in vessels that sometimes capsize off the coast. All for a chance to work in kitchens, factories, and brothels. They are holding on to the lifeline of the Valdez, the Lusitania, and the Titanic.
Yet, at times, staying home is worse. Families sit together around meager tables waiting for the next payday, or government check, sharing futile dreams and desperate schemes. They eventually become frustrated and take to quarreling. Men grow alienated from their families and more intimate with alcohol. They spend their last pennies alone at bar counters listening to sad love songs until they stagger home: drunk (Pluto) every Sunday at four AM, and hung over (Chuchaque) in the pew.

An old woman shuffled past. Dirty bare feet, her ripped day dress hung loosely on her body like her wrinkled flesh. She threw up her arms as if receiving a benediction at mass while she exclaimed ‘Coño me mate’. Then still mumbling, dragged her feet along the curb like a chicken with its legs bound for market.

Felix finally sat down to his cup of coffee and the morning paper. He invariably started at the back, which was called the cronica roja. He liked to keep score and see who was killed the night before.

His town, Guano, was always filled with surprises; even in such a tortured region of the world. It was held together by a complex chain of godfathers and co-padres who kept strict account of the favors they bestowed. Some of them had been messengers or petty clerks who had found ways to embezzle fortunes. Some had become immoral business men and politicians entangled in loans schemes and infrastructure projects that served the upper classes and further burdened their country with a debt they could never pay. In return, cash left in briefcases under the table found its way into foreign investments and bank accounts.
that insulated them from the local economic crisis and allowed them to maintain their
standard of living.

They all pressed against each other in private enclaves that they didn’t like to leave;
convincing themselves that they were safe behind their walled communities. With their tinted
glass SUVs, and body guards, the world outside didn’t exist. Nearly all had bought apartments
in Florida. A few, along with a small group of foreigners, controlled the local prime real estate
and opened expensive stores where nobody else could afford to shop.

As economic indicators tumbled, inflation skyrocketed. Abysmal salaries stayed the same,
driving once middle class families into poverty and desperate living. Disgusted, Felix threw his
paper down on the table. “Todo es un tongo aquí!”, he growled at no one in particular.

He then surveyed his own dilapidated block. Businesses had closed one by one because they
couldn’t pay the rent, or the electric, or bring in enough just to cover expenses. In the past two
years the building next door had been a bakery, cabinet maker, novelty store, an office with a
dental technician who illicitly pulled teeth out at two dollars apiece with or without anesthesia,
and now recently a bakery again. It was illuminated by one light bulb connected to an
extension cord from a kindly neighbor.

A small hotel sat on the corner painted lime green and orange. Owned by a physician, it was
originally a mid-priced, mid-sized clinic. There were two stories for patients: one for men, one
for women. Twenty beds on each floor with cold water showers that smelled of the green
mildew on the tiled walls. Uncomfortable beds with starched white sheets. The fourth floor
had an operating room. The first, a laboratory for blood and urine tests and a pharmacy that was a concession owned by the doctors who worked there. When such arrangements were deemed a conflict of interest by a new law, the business was put in their spouses´ names.

The pharmacy was managed by a young couple that had two kids, and one on the way. Neither of them knew anything about drugs or medicine; but they bought white coats and a PDR and they were in business. They lived in the back. At lunchtime you could see them sitting behind the iron gates eating, or watching TV, or doing homework. They closed at ten, but if you rang their bell they would pass your prescription through a slot in the door.

The clinic´s grand opening was toasted with a no-year champagne whose label read: Duvall. It sold for three dollars a bottle and was thought to be distilled from potatoes. Hors d´oeuvres were tuna fish or some gelatinous spread made from shrimp served on salted crackers. There were also cubes of some local white cheese and green olives on toothpicks. All were offered on glass trays with an exchanged smile. A benediction from a priest, some music and dancing, and the ritual was complete. One´s societal obligations were fulfilled. A nice picture on the societal page, and the clinic was official. In all fairness, it was the same as any other party at that level of society at that time.

After a few months the doctors began waiting outside for patients. They would pass their time drinking and gambling; sitting on mismatched chairs around a broken wooden table. The clinic closed within a year. It briefly re-opened as a maternity hospital; but that soon closed too, and it became the hotel it is now.
The adjacent building belongs to a military officer. He’s an absentee landlord living in a better neighborhood. It’s divided unevenly into three stores. The garage was converted into a pizza stop: A slice and a coke for a dollar. Although the dough was half cooked and scarcely edible, the price was right. At first the sauce was prepared with ketchup, but given time, and after reading some recipe books, it became passable. It was thriving in a town that had heard about pizza, but still wasn’t sure what it was. In time they added hamburgers and hot dogs to the menu and bought a motorcycle for home delivery. The locals became jealous. But when they tried to copy him, each ended up making a pizza that was worse than the next. Felix stopped eating there after the owner bought two parrots whose white droppings seemed too close to the oven to ignore.

Next door, the internet café had four machines with a slow dial-up system. It was used more for its telephone cabins. Family members who had legally or illegally emigrated to work in the US, Italy, or Spain were desperate to keep in contact with the wives, parents, and children left behind struggling to make ends meet. Those who slaved overseas sent money-grams that helped provide a roof, food, clothes, school, and daily needs for the relatives at home.

The third division was a liquor store. Men listened to the radio and sat out front on the steps drinking beer, or sharing cheap scotch, or ninety cent bottles of sugar cane. Anyone passing by was harassed for five or ten cents by the half drunk, unintelligible bums. The neighbors complained about the noise that went on until the early morning and the men urinating in their doorways. But the police did nothing. The sale of alcoholic beverages was probably the most profitable business in town. And since the rent was paid on time, the landlord and tenant agreed to just put up their hands, say it’s was a commercial street, and stay out of each other’s
hair. Felix had often wondered where they both lived so that he could leave a gift at their doors.

When he retired, Don opened a store where he sold milk, bread, soda, and whatever small items local residents seemed to need on a daily basis. At that time there were no supermarkets or malls, and each neighborhood had its own Mom and Pop shops like his. He had a habit of locking the door in the middle of the day while he bartered with women customers. Over the course of time his family became so upset with the situation that they told him to close it or pack his bags.

He rented it to college students who converted it into a restaurant that shut down after three months because the food was so bad. Then the pizzeria moved from two doors away and stayed until it needed more space. Finally, he leased it to a karaoke bar that the neighbors hated him for. On weekends, drunks slobbered into a microphone until 4AM and nobody got any sleep.

The bartender found a way to increase his profits. He performed a sleight of hand when pouring drinks. Holding the jigger over the glass, he emptied it before it was full. Because he continued pouring for a second, the customers thought that they were getting more than a shot; when actually if he timed it right, they were getting less. With practice, he was able squeeze an extra shot out of each bottle, and over the weeks that translated into money.

Directly next door to Felix was a hair salon run by a homosexual couple. Women seemed to prefer their soft touch; so business was good. The stylist was an ugly man with beautiful legs that he showed off in heels and a skirt. He was proud of his budding breasts and was already
determined to inject them with silicone when they got big enough. Or perhaps if he saved enough money, he’d go to a surgeon. Right now though, he needed electrolysis to hide his five o’clock shadow.

A vacant lot stood on the opposite corner. It had been the local botadero; that being a garbage dump. Now it was Felix’s main competition. The neighbors christened it ¨Comidas Chatarra¨, although it had a sign that said ¨Dollarazo¨. Families set up tarps and wheeled out their barbecues every night selling food at a dollar a plate. The dishes were piled with rice and beans and somewhere a trace of meat was hidden. There were fish fillets, pork chops, and steak. All were sliced about the thickness of three pennies held back to back. One couple grilled platanos and pork fat that they sold in small plastic bags. A young girl prepared fruit juices in a blender; but most drank the twenty five cent sodas that were still in glass bottles. Wires attached to street lamps provided the electric for illumination. There were no bathrooms, and people washed their hands in a basin of cold water, and then used the communal towel. Some dreamed of saving enough money to open a grocery store in a better neighborhood. At eleven p.m. everybody went home, and it was empty again until the next night.

Felix observed the misery in silence. He finished his coffee and decided to relax in his hammock. Below a photo of Il Duce was a small radio that had become yellowed by the cooking grease that hung in the air. He tuned it to a popular station; and the music changed his mood: “…la escribiré con sangre, con tinta sangre, del corazón.”
It was in 1937 when the Rockefeller Foundation discovered that the radio, like all mass media, can organize people’s thoughts and shape their attitudes and beliefs. People listen automatically, dissociating what they hear, making it easier to fragment their thought process and condition their mind. When editorial policies define the boundaries of what can and cannot be said, mass media becomes a puppeteer working the strings of public opinion from the shadows.

Edward Bernays argued that such manipulation was not only ethical, but crucial our society. He contended that even democracies needed propaganda to guide their uninformed citizenry to agree with policies that were in their own best interest. He referred to the process of control and regiment of the masses as "engineering of consent." His clients included President Calvin Coolidge, Procter & Gamble, CBS, the American Tobacco Company, General Electric, and the United Fruit Company. A generation later, Solomon Asch would call it “group think”, and maintained that it was responsible for the rise to power of fascists in Germany, Stalin in Russia, and every other cult faction known to man.

Felix awoke hours later when the windows, floor, and shiny blue walls decorated with unframed travel posters, began shaking to a pounding reggaeton beat. “¡No me jodas!”, he mumbled to nobody in particular. Outside, two young girls in spandex hot pants were handing out flyers to passing cars. It was someone’s notion of a marketing strategy. It may have worked for carnivals, circuses, liquor stores, and karaoke; but it lacked the subtlety needed to entice quality customers. Instead it served as an announcement of another grand opening, and soon to be liquidation sale.
The clock clicked in military time, and he knew that his workday had already begun. A few customers already sat waiting. Sunday afternoons were spaghetti in marinara sauce. Soon, a local soccer team would come in after their match still wearing their sweaty black shirts and white shorts. And like every other week, they would congregate around the one long table against the left wall and drink wine until it got dark. They always began with the soup of the day, which was never minestrone.

A man sauntered into the restaurant and sat at the table farthest from the door. He tried to be inconspicuous as he faced the entrance. He watched Felix’s seventeen year old Lolita daughter flirt with another customer as she bent over to wipe the counter. Like countless other young girls that had left the country to work cleaning hotels or sewing in factories, she returned with her belly full, an empty suitcase, and nowhere else to go. Somehow she still smiled, although her eyes had lost their sparkle of innocence.

The man hunched over the table as he heard a motorcycle stop. A guy jumped off the back and ran inside. It seemed as if he had anticipated his death. Receiving it head on, he awaited the charge without moving. His right forearm crossed his chest pointing at his assailant. He was shot square in the head. His blood added decoration to the spot on the wall where the picture of Jesus was before it was stolen. The other patron’s mouths hung open with forks in hand as the executioner passed them with his bloodied shirt.

The police were there within minutes. Nobody saw anything.
The ordinary individual lives in an atmosphere of lies and fear. “It was too quick.” “It was dark”. “I didn’t get a good look at him”. Only one person thought of the words “the only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing”. They took his brief statement and his name. Then they thanked him, and left.
An ivy canopy covered the archway leading to the temple. They had just arrived. After parking their cars, they stopped under the lights.

‘Hermano, do play volleyball?’

Jorge played twice a week, other nights he lifted weights. He didn’t drink or smoke, and his extramarital affairs were moderate. Enough to be acceptable in the macho culture in which he lived, but discrete enough not to get the women talking at the beauty parlor. Enough to be respectable to his friends, yet not be insulting to his wife. He was a forty year old who maintained his body the same meticulous way he maintained his car, his house, and everything else in his life.

Felix, on the other hand, was a new member desperate to fit in. For just this once he wanted to be one of the guys. He had never played the game. In fact he seldom played much of any team sports. He didn’t know the locker room lingo, nor had towel fights, or did whatever it was that guys do when they were on the same team and wanted to beat those other buggers. All he could think about was a pair of shorts that were too tight and a pair of sneakers that were still in the box; and that maybe he could bungle his way through.

‘Sure, what time? ’, he heard himself say. It surprised him. It seemed that another voice was accepting the offer.
‘Tuesday night at eight, my house.’

‘OK’

He was there at 7:45 with three other fat middle-aged men. One was bald like himself; the other had a knee brace. The third was standing off to the side smoking a cigarette. Felix relaxed. Maybe it was just a bunch of old guys trying to get some exercise.

Jorge and his nineteen year old son chose him; three against three. Two half-hour periods with a fifteen minute break in between. At first it went OK. He got his hands on the ball once in a while and managed a few saves. It was a friendly patty-cake game.

But the second half got serious. And Felix didn’t really know what he was doing. Not even for a moment. Although Jorge was patient, and spoke gently, he endured a smile that let you know that he wanted to win. Jorge and his son beat the pants off the other team while he just tried to follow the ball and not let it drop too often.

After the game they had a juice and he was invited to come again on Thursday. But he knew it was more a kindly gesture than a heartfelt invitation. It was the look of disappointment and the tone of voice. He was out. He didn’t make the team; and he knew it. So they found other ways to become friends. And Jorge never hesitated to extend him a warm smile and firm handshake that said welcome.
During a routine medical exam Jorge complained that he sometimes felt a burning in his stomach. The doctor, thinking it was a case of gastritis, performed an endoscopic exam. He squinted as he mumbled that he wanted to take a sample. “Just to be sure.” It was a shock to all when the test results revealed cancer.

But Jorge took it in stride, in his soft tranquil manner. They operated and excised two thirds of his stomach. He lost weight, and felt fine. Then he went to Cuba, which is rumored to have the highest quality medical system in Latin America. He came back cheery and invited his friends to a small dinner (which he didn’t eat) where he announced that he would be undergoing radiation and chemotherapy treatments. It was all was matter-of-factly under control. He passed out cigars and they toasted with rum (his glass held an herbal tea). “To health, strength, and fraternity.”

Jorge lost his hair, and got weak, but friends still found him upbeat when they visited. Then something happened. The scar tissue was closing off the valve in his stomach. He couldn’t get anything down, and began to lose weight rapidly. People paid visits, left, shook their heads, and whispered to each other in the street.

Felix dropped in one afternoon when he was alone in the garden. His hand revealed a slight tremble as he raised a glass of juice to his whitened lips. He got half way through, but couldn’t finish. He covered his eyes for a second, and confessed that he didn’t know what he was going to do. He was completely frustrated. And in that instant things got uncomfortably close and real. Neither of them knew what to say. They both spoke in quiet, patient voices about life.
Two weeks later Jorge had lost another fifty pounds. He was a living skeleton that still tried to be a proper host when anyone came by. It became an effort to stand and greet his guests. Instead, he offered a smile and a nod as he lifted a boney hand from the sofa where he lay. Friends and family sat in a circle as conversation went on around him. His voice was reduced to a forced breath that squeezed out a word from time to time.

The next week found him in bed, no longer conscious of who was there. His wife sat beside him holding his hand and spoon feeding him a broth mixed with his pain medication. Nobody cried in front of him, but downstairs it seemed as if everyone’s eyes were red. His mother stoically asked “How is he?” “There’s no remedy.” was the lone reply. She just stared and said nothing. Her youngest would be the first to die.

At the funeral parlor, his spouse in black, sat silently with shaking hands in the first row, staring vacantly at the coffin. Outside, family members stood smoking cigarettes and quietly arguing. Felix uttered his goodbye when he placed an apron on Jorge’s lifeless body.

That was just last week, and now this. Felix shuddered as he stirred the soup. It was lunchtime again. Fresh paint covered the wall where the blood and hastily scrawled words had been. Someone had cryptically written: “either everyone dances, or nobody does”.

All conversation ceased when he entered the restaurant. Then it gradually returned to a whisper that was too low for anyone to make out the words. He tried to order a lunch special, but was ignored. Felix’s daughter passed the table and said a bit louder than expected, ”It’s too damn hot!” She wiped a napkin across her forehead, then left it on the side of his table.
He became annoyed and disgusted, until he noticed that there was something written on it. Like a fortune cookie, there was one word: LEAVE!

In 1963, United States Chief Justice Earl Warren ruled that the tactics known as the "third degree" were coercive and rendered Ernesto Miranda’s confession of kidnap and rape inadmissible. The Fifth Amendment obliged law enforcement officials to advise suspects of their right to remain silent and to an attorney. Even though it has since been pruned by a more conservative Supreme Court, the law still stands.

But here, the suspect was already guilty. There was just "El proceso", the black cloud, the caravan of death. Without warning, or warrants authorizing them to make arrests or conduct searches, heavily armed members of the secret state police, a Geheime Staatspolizei, that was called the Batallón de Inteligencia, took dissidents, trade unionists, social reformers, human rights activists, nuns, priests, pacifists, psychologists, journalists, students, pupils, teachers, lawyers, actors, workers, housewives, spouses, parents, friends, neighbors, and anyone perceived as threatening or interfering with national stability or thought to be conspiring to undermine the "Western Christian way of life" from their homes, from their places of work, from hospitals, or off the street. They simply disappeared.

A green Ford Falcon pulled up alongside the curb and two men got out. Holes for their eyes and mouth had been cut out of the black cotton masks that covered their heads. They grabbed him, cuffed his hands behind his back, beat him with rubber batons, and then pushed him into the rear seat. He was being "taken for a ride". His captors were the instruments of government policy, members of the Cobra squadron. A verdict had been passed and they carried out the
sentence. A burlap sack was shoved over his head, and he immediately felt suffocated and disoriented. He panicked; and began to thrash about, until he felt a cold thud in the back of his head. And then it all went black.

At times it was necessary to kill their suspect while in the car. That posed certain technical difficulties. Imagine the car’s interior: the windows rolled up to prevent an escape route or any shouts from being heard. Firing a .38 would deafen the assassination team. Ricochets are common, and a half spent bullet flying around inside of a car is extremely dangerous. For those reasons, a silent .22 caliber weapon is used. The victim is sandwiched between two men in the back seat and killed by the co-pilot in the front, who shoots him in the heart and neck. The body is then bent forward with the head placed on his knees and then shot through the brain.

After speeding along back roads for hours, they arrived at an abandoned brick factory. The dimly lit compound consisted of a patchwork of small, windowless cells and a Prisoner Assessment Area. It had various names: Dachau, Esmeralda, La Perla, Camp 7, Camp Delta, Abu Ghraib, and the Salt Pit. Inmates simply knew it as the dark prison. To be hauled to a black site, a secret detention center, meant to vanish. The government consistently denied the existence of such clandestine centers, and repeatedly disclaimed any knowledge of the men and women imprisoned there. The victims were physically and mentally isolated from the rest of the world. As unregistered detainees, they had no official status. They no longer existed.

With the hood still on, and his hands still cuffed behind his back, his clothes were cut off and he was subjected to a cavity search. Then he was dumped into a trench; and shivering, was
buried with dirt up to his neck. He was kept alive in that tomb for four days, without food or water, and with the sun beating down on him. When he was finally dug out, his entire body was infested with sores. They showered him with cold water from a fire hose and some liquid soap used on dogs. The cuffs were removed and he was thrown naked on the floor of his cell.

When he finally removed his hood, he found a one piece oversized orange jumpsuit folded on the top of a cot. Painted in black letters across the back was a number: D23. He would have to remember his number, as he would always be called by it, whether walked to the toilet, transferred to another cell, or tortured. It described what he was: reduced to insignificance.

He was now behind a thousand locked gates in a prison-within-a-prison: solitary confinement in a maximum security unit.  His cell was three meters long and two meters wide with a three meter high ceiling. The only place to sit was on the cot, which had a blanket, but no mattress. The grey walls were illuminated by two overhead weak fluorescent bulbs covered by unbreakable plastic. They went on and off at random. There was no clock to know for sure, but they seemed to be on longer than they were off. It was virtually soundproof except for the white noise that hissed like the sound of escaping steam.

There was a heavy steel door with a Judas port for viewing and a separate slot at the bottom to pass a food tray that contained greasy, unpalatable food served on battered dishes. At first he refused to eat, but finally hunger got the better of him and he found himself using his hands to scoop up the rice and beans. With no water to wash, he wiped himself off on his clothes and the streaked grey walls. And within twenty minutes he felt his stomach rumbling and was squatting over the hole in the floor.
All outside communication was banned; no mail, no radio or television, nothing to read, no social contact. He was completely isolated, and his complaints fell on deaf ears. When he heard the impersonal muted footsteps of a roving guard patrol and their dogs, he went to the middle of his cell, and waited with his chin pushed forward towards the door. The marching steps came to a halt. A low command was heard; the keys jangled. He held his breath. Then, there was silence. Nothing. And the footsteps moved on. He felt forgotten; helpless, enmeshed in the inhuman indifference of the incarcerative system.

Surrounded only by the vast emptiness he became unable to distinguish internal perceptions from external reality. Certainty receded as the silence clamored in his ears. The isolation brought sensory confusion, despair, and dementia. He was a damned soul in an endless time-space loop. He heard voices. Voices that echoed inside of his hollow head. Echoes, of echoes, of echoes. Lost in the infinity of mirrors. Nothing seemed left of him, not even a shadow. After four weeks he found the stress unbearable and broke down. Now he was ready.

In 1971, Philip Zimbardo performed an experiment at Stanford University. Normal students were randomly assigned to two groups: guards or prisoners. The experiment lasted six days. It was aborted because of the guards’ progressively cruel behaviors; inflicting humiliation, pain, and suffering on their fellow students. Zimbardo concluded that even ordinary people become sadistic when their victims are portrayed as inferior or criminal, and authorities condone such behaviors.
Everyone that came into contact with the prisoners in the detention center was called Pedro. They were all young, low-ranking armed forces and security personnel. To them, the world was black and white. They were fighting a war against subversion, against communism, against terrorism. The detainees were considered dangerous, and a threat. The Pedros were part of the dehumanizing process. They never communicated with the inmates except to give orders or insult them. They brought them their food. They walked them, in handcuffs and hoods, to the interrogations and torture. They transferred them from one center to another. And, on numerous occasions, they physically abused them. For the sake of order, a level of brutality had to be maintained.

According to International law, interrogation subjects must first be informed of the charges against them and their rights. But rules were meant to be ignored. Five men entered his cell. One to shackle each of his arms and legs, and one to stand guard. He was blindfolded and hauled up. Carried past the sign in the corridor that read: “Avenue of Happiness." Shoved into a small room, he was forced to sit. His chains were attached to an eyebolt in the floor, and his blindfold was removed.

The questioning area was three by four meters, with no windows and a solitary way in and out. Its austere off white walls were soundproofed and the floor carpeted. He noticed that there was no telephone on the desk. A soft repetitive music played in the background. He didn’t know that it had been psycho-acoustically modified. It contained a continuous 45 to 72 beats that produced a subtle hypnotic effect. Suggestions for cooperation were embedded in the same chord and frequency as the music so that they were undetected by the ear but heard by the unconscious mind.
A man from the re-education committee entered the room; saying “good morning” as he sat down at the desk. It would be a steady and continuous indoctrination intended to strip away his defenses, eradicate his existing loyalties, and subtly force him to willingly submit to any and all of their demands. The first step was to get to know the subject. Was he devoted to a cause to the point of being a martyr, or did he simply need a little persuasion? The interrogator appeared reasonable. He began quite innocently:

“How are we doing today?”

He didn’t expect to be shown any friendliness. Since he had been on a controlled starvation program with little food or water he was irritable and not thinking clearly; and began to complain about his inhumane treatment.

“I want to be your friend. … You’re worth saving. … I want to help you to correct and rehabilitate yourself. … Just cooperate with me. … You seem to be intelligent. … You don’t want to destroy your life over this, do you? … Why do you suspect you are being held here? … What are you guilty of? … Your situation will get worse if we don’t get this cleared up. … The only thing that will help you now is to be completely truthful.”

The examiner had been trained well. At this point, the purpose of the questioning was not to gain information. The real purpose was to test sincerity and initiate the process of conditioning.
He felt uncertain, in doubt. He emphatically denied any wrongdoing. "I don’t know what this is about! I didn’t do anything!"

The examiner persisted calmly: "If you don't tell the truth, then I know that you aren't sorry. If you aren't sorry, then you haven’t learned your lesson. You don’t seem the type to be in trouble. Don’t throw your life away."

His head down, he continued to mumble: "This is a mistake."

Wearing a gloomy countenance, the interrogator sighed, “Look, you have a serious problem. If we talk about it, maybe I can understand your reasons. Do you want to talk to me, or do you want to talk to someone else?"

Silence.

"OK, I’m going to give you a pen and pad of paper and then I'm going to leave the room for a while. I want you to think about your situation. I want to write down your side, why and how you got mixed up in this. In fact it’s really an insult to my intelligence for you to tell me that you’re being completely truthful."

When the interrogator came back, the paper was blank. He held up his hand because he didn’t want to hear anymore. "You know why you are here! Don’t play with me!" Taking one last drag on his cigarette, he snuffed it out on the prisoner’s forehead and left without another word.
Chained to the chair all night and throughout the following day, he was forced to listen to a cassette recording of a Mexican song played at full volume over and over again. The door was opened loudly a number of times, but nobody said anything to him.

The interrogator finally returned and began talking to him while blowing cigar smoke in his face. He wanted to vomit, but he had nothing in his stomach so he sat there nauseous with the dry heaves.

“You disrespect me. I can’t have that. My dog listens to me better than you. When I tell him to stay, he stays, come and he comes, bark and he barks. Can you bark when you’re told? Let’s see if you can bark!”

The Pedros brought him a clean jump suit and some warm tea. He was forced to sign various forms. When the examiner read them he began to shout that they were incorrectly filled out. The guards were ordered to “take him away.”

Again hooded, terror laden, he was walked step by step, handcuffed and chained, through a metal door that was marked ‘intensive therapy’. It was where they used enhanced interrogation techniques. Someone whispered in his ear that he would meet the ‘Priest’, who would be in charge of “taking his confession.”

Inside the room was an iron bed with springs and no mattress, a table, a tub with water, and a military field telephone hooked up to a small manual generator that produced higher voltages as you turned the handle faster. The electric prods had two intensities: 125 volts (that felt like a
biting sting and produced involuntary muscle movements) and 220 volts (electric jolts that caused violent painful contractions which felt as though your limbs were being torn off your body, and sometimes caused you to vomit). There was also an Argentinean invention called a picana which was used on animals in the slaughter houses. The Department of Information and Intelligence had provided the better part of the equipment through diplomatic pouches.

The guards had been trained through a program which officially didn’t exist called "Copper Green". They were taught techniques that did not conform to international law, the Geneva Conventions, the War Crimes Act, or the Uniform Code of Military Justice.

He was undressed and tied, still hooded, with his arms and legs spread open, to the bed frame which they referred to as the ‘grill’. Wires were inserted under his fingernails, between his teeth, and into ears, anus, testicles, and penis. For over an hour he was tormented by invisible hands as anonymous drunk voices questioned him while laughing and shouting insults.

You could tell how much he was being tortured by the tone and rhythm of his screams. One guard with a hard on played guitar to the sound of his wailing. Toward the end, his yelling became weaker, changing more into whining and choking sounds. Stanley Milgram was right: people were willing to give harmful electric shocks to a pitiful protesting victim simply because an authority commanded them to do it.

Afterwards they unchained him and one of the torturers who they called `Gringo' put a stethoscope to his chest. He couldn't walk, so they fixed a rope to his legs and penis and dragged him twenty or thirty meters to a mattress lying on the floor that was filthy with blood,
vomit, sweat, and urine. He laid there motionless until the following day. Military dogs woke him, snarling as he cowered, curled tightly in a fetal position.

He underwent long, fatiguing interrogations lasting eight to twelve hours while staring into a bright light. Sometimes he stood, legs spread, on tip toe, facing a wall that he touched with just his fingertips. At other times his arms were handcuffed behind his back, and a hook was slipped through so he could be lifted up by a pulley, and left suspended writhing for hours.

At times they wouldn´t stop to let him use the toilet so he soiled himself; and then he was not permitted to bathe for days. When he began to reek he was hosed down with ice water. When he became infected with lice, they sprayed him with insecticide.

He was fed sometimes once or twice a day, sometimes once every few days. His meals consisted of a boiled drink (no milk or sugar), some half cooked corn flour, some soup (no meat or vegetables), or a piece of dry bread. His sleeping hours were just as irregular. The acute randomness was intentional; it produced a state of “learned helplessness” and was used to completely break what was left of his will.

He was berated, called names, chastised, screamed at, and humiliated. His sense of self-worth was eroded and broken down at every opportunity; making it clear that he was useless and cut off from outside support. They said: “Nobody remembers you. You don't exist. We are everything for you. We will make you wish to die, but we won’t allow it. Here, we are God.”
Sometimes they gave him a “wet submarine” submerging his head into a pail of dirty water until he vomited. And other times a “dry submarine” where a plastic bag filled with insecticide was put around his head until he almost suffocated. Occasionally he was strapped with his head at the base of a bench that was inclined 15 degrees. Then, with a cloth placed over his nose and mouth, pint after pint of water was poured down his throat making him feel as if he were drowning.

It was an abyss of darkness and horror without limits. A chaos punctuated by punishments that varied in their severity and capriciousness. He was urinated on, hung up by his thumbs, choked, slammed into walls, the nails of his hands and feet were pulled out with pliers. He was burned with cigarettes, lighters, and soldering irons; beat on bottom of feet until they formed scars, forced to masturbate, sodomized with a baton, his legs were spread apart and they pounded his testicles with a rubber hose until one burst and he passed out. Repeatedly a gun was put to his head or in his mouth and the trigger pulled. He would close his eyes and once more hear a click as he pleaded for death. Then he was forced to get on his knees and say the “Our Father” aloud, giving thanks to God because he had lived one more day.

Two shadowy uniforms held him under his arms and dragged him back to his mattress. He hung slack between them, stretched out at length, face turned to the ground, belly arched downwards with his legs flopping and his shoes skating along on the toes. Strands of hair hung over his face, covered in sweat, with his mouth wide open. Spittle ran thinly down his chin as he mutely whimpered.
The sound of stomping boots rotated around and around in his mind; creating grooves in his memory. The changes of guards, the hours of torment, the number of steps he staggered passing from torture to torture, all these marked the boundaries of his existence.

The simple monotonous terror stressed him beyond his capacity. Time had run out… the present was done… The only way to end it was by withdrawal; by believing: “This is a dream; this is not happening to me.” His mind retreated beyond the barbed wire. This world became unreal, inaccessible. He felt as if he were merely his own shadow, a ghost, a living corpse in the machine. He became one more object among the other objects in the world.

People can be convinced to believe anything when sufficient brutality is applied. Their will power is gradually broken and they lose their ability for critical judgment. The personality itself can be rearranged by duress, surgery, and, in particular, with the technologies of neo-hypnotism.

Though the skillful use of various chemical substances, one’s moral and psychological nature can be modified. Alternating stimulants and depressants hasten fatigue and sharpen depression. He was given insulin shots, sodium amytal, triazolam and an infamous sleep cocktail which consisted of 100 mg Thorazine, 100 mg Nembutal, 100 mg Seconal, 150mg Veronal, and 10 mg Phenergan.

He was woken up from his drug induced sleep at regular intervals for electroshock. In the 1950’s a CIA research program called “Operation Knockout” discovered that such treatments could cause amnesia. Memories could be erased, and subjects reprogrammed.
Rupturing existing patterns of behavior is called de-patterning; it´s a technique that wipes the mind clean. Allen Dulles once remarked that the brain becomes a phonograph playing a disc put on its spindle by an outside genius over which it has no control. In reality, it was more like reformatting a computer.

A portable machine was wheeled in, and he was given a local anesthetic and a muscle relaxant. The machine, much the same as those used in psychiatric facilities, has almost exactly the same parameters as a hog stunner. A slight misplacement of the leads and he would be zapped like a pig.

He was strapped down and the saline soaked electrodes were attached to his shaved head. A rubber plug was shoved into his mouth, and the current was turned on. The normal single dose is approximately 110 volts lasting a second or less. The guards followed Page Russell´s procedure where an initial one second shock of 150 volts was followed by five to nine additional shocks during his convulsions. He experienced a momentary loss of breathing and was unconscious for about five minutes. This was repeated two or three times a day for thirty days; and left him in a state of a pronounced twilight-like confusion. There was now an emotionless, inhuman quality about him.

A low pitched, low volume tape was played on a continuous loop in his cell. It contained a hypnotic script recorded at 250 words per minute that was speeded up to 1400 w.p.m. The speech sounded like a high pitched whine but the subconscious mind heard and understood the repeated messages that were played while he was lying in a stupor sixteen hours a day. The tapes drove the following into his brain:
He turned to stone, into a dead thing, a cenotaph; existing solely in the folded spaces of time. And then he was dragged back to the examination room; and once again chained to a chair.

This time it was more direct. He was accused of being a subversive radical and charged with treason. Confused and helpless, fearing that he would be shot if he denied it, he pled guilty. Drumming his outstretched fingers on his polished desk, the interrogator prodded him on: ‘’Now that you have had time to consider it, I’d like to hear about your reasons.’’ The nameless face that sat in front of him, who had been the source of all his punishment, at last offered him a solution. He felt an overwhelming relief, almost gratefulness.

Once again, he was given a pen, a pad of paper, and told to write his confession. No matter what he wrote, it was never good enough. Every sentence was questioned and edited. The interrogator was a creature of whim; at times he seemed easily pleased and at other times couldn’t be satisfied. He would interrupt, jump to conclusions, lose his temper, fidget, change the subject, deny events that occurred, or things that he said, then cruelly smile and say nothing.

The process was repeated. He wrote a declaration which he thought was self-incriminating, and signed it. Again and again the entire statement was attacked and discredited. Eventually he accepted the statements the interrogator has persuaded him to write as true, and defended them
using the interrogators own arguments. He needed to channel so much energy into trying to predict the examiner’s behavior that he lost all track of what was happening. There was a myriad of contrasting thoughts inside of him; innumerable separate selves. Today he was one person, tomorrow another. It was totally schizoid. He needed it to end.

And it did.

The Pedros snickered when fifteen or twenty shots rang out in the darkness of midnight. One guard stood among the open-mouthed bodies like a blind dog in a meat market working industriously with a pair of pliers removing the gold teeth. Fingerprints were burnt off with a blowtorch. The watches and rings were removed. It was the year of the slaughter; when naked bodies with yellow numbers painted on their chests were dumped into a landfill. They were simply bundles, things; waste.

An old fashioned black phone would ring on Wednesday afternoons. The response was a ritualistic litany: "Para servir a la Patria". Prisoner records stamped with the code word ‘Moneda’ meant that their mutilated, deformed bodies would be found deposited along the sandy rivers in the Land of the Shadows.

Lively music was played, and the victims danced for joy; celebrating the freedom that they were told awaited them. A nurse in came hours before with a box full of flasks and syringes to vaccinate them before they left. Shortly later, they became drowsy, and were loaded onto the trucks that took them to the airfield. They marched half-conscious aboard the Electra plane.
The Chaplain remarked that it was a Christian death because they didn’t suffer. It was a vital excommunication. Se va para arriba.

He woke up to the sound of a plane’s motors humming. His hands tied behind his back with his shoe laces…surrounded by others, some unconscious but breathing, some moaning and gasping their last breaths…he heard the door slide, then click open, and then he smelt the salt of the ocean air. He just stared at the two men who began to throw the bodies out…and fainted again.
Moondog woke as he always did: screaming; haunted by his dreams.

It had taken him a while to adapt to his upside down routine that forced him to sleep through the greater part of the day. Now he preferred it. Gently rolling over, he got up from his cardboard mattress. He brewed his coffee in cowboy fashion: pouring it straight from the can into a metal pot, and then adding a lump of brown sugar and water. He boiled it on an electric hot plate that was connected to a nearby street lamp. It turns out just the way he likes it: black and tar like. Breaking off a piece of day old bread that a nearby bakery gave him on his early morning walk home, he dipped it in his cup until it was soggy. His daily banquet ended with a ceremonial cigar smoked in honor of the Norse god Odin whose stone monument sat aside his makeshift kitchen.

He lived by himself. It was a quiet, crazed, suicidal existence bathed in suffering and loneliness. He thought that he was like everybody else; but he wasn’t. Some called him a madman, but he was probably more of an iconic American hobo: a divine clown. A mystic: unique, complex, deep, and obscure; a riddle to all, including himself. His eyes bore the expression of neither pleasure nor pain. It was a look that went far below the faults, defects, and hopelessness of our times and culture. It went right to humanity’s heart.

Anonymous, living incognito, he was a safe nobody. He was like transparent glass that you forgot existed. Inside, he was a mirror splintered into fragments so small that they reflected
everything, yet nothing. Inside was a plethora of persona longing for recognition, for some confirmation that he was alive.

He was a battered, tattered, shattered, veteran of the last war. A war that had been swept under the rug. A war that was no longer in the news because people were tired of it, because nobody wanted to hear about it anymore. Because they were focused on something else; something more exciting to watch as they ate their TV dinners.

He couldn’t find a job because he didn’t have an apartment; and he couldn’t get an apartment because he didn’t have a job. He started out living in a motel, and when that got too expensive he moved to a hotel for single men, customarily called a flop house, or flea bag. He stayed there until his money ran out; and then tried to get into a shelter. But there were no beds available, so he became a statistic.

In a trillion dollar economy, one third of the homeless are military veterans. They subsist in despair contemplating not so much their destitution, but the vast nothingness of their future. Once every 80 minutes one of them decides it’s no longer worth it, and bang it’s over. He was lucky enough to make friends with the manager of the storage unit where he kept his stuff. His buddy pretended to be asleep when he climbed inside the shed in the early morning hours. It was without water, sanitation, or phone. But he was accustomed to that kind of living in the villages he visited while he served.

Moondog grew up in the fifties; when he was still called Louis. He was a typical American boy, from a typical American town. A town where you didn’t lock your doors; and where you
could leave your toys out in the front yard and they would still be there in the morning. Where there were quiet semi-paved streets, and the neighbors smiled, said hello, and stopped to talk instead of passing by with a beep and a wave, or with their blacked out windows moving at sixty miles an hour and their ears glued to a cell phone.

It was a society where people still lived with hope and weren’t dazed or out of breath from incessantly hustling to stay ahead of the clock. A time when each day began with the pledge of allegiance and the Lord’s Prayer. When the ping, ping, ping of radiator pipes announced the smell of the stale steam that entered classrooms on the first cold rainy November days. Where crossing guards watched over you as you filed home for lunch: Peanut butter and jelly sandwiches, grilled cheese, chunk white meat tuna fish from a can with finely chopped celery and onions on white toast, and iced tea with freshly picked mint from the garden outside the kitchen window.

A time when the good guys fought the bad guys and the good guys always won. When Roy Rogers taught you to be courteous and polite, and say "please" and "thank you". To be truthful, obedient, and clean. To study hard and always obey your parents. When we still embraced the dream that we were free and the world was honest and fair. It was a world of truth, justice, and the American way.

When the most popular drink in New York Bars was a Cuba libre, and Dezi Arnez came on television smoking a cigarette while assuring America that he wasn’t a communist. Because there were Communists everywhere: in factories, offices, butcher shops, on street corners, and in private business. And we cheered Captain America, as he warned: "Beware commies, spies,
traitors, and foreign agents! Captain America, with all loyal, free men behind him, is looking for you...." And Mike Hammer who boasted: "I killed more people tonight than I have fingers on my hands. I shot them in cold blood and enjoyed every minute of it.... They were Commies . . . red sons-of-bitches who should have died long ago. ...

It was when even though we had the equivalent of 1,500 Hiroshima-size atomic bombs, which was far more than enough to destroy every major city in the world; we were still terrified by the "missile gap". When we believed in the safety of air-raid shelters; because Herman Kahn’s book, On Thermonuclear War explained that it was possible to have a nuclear war without total world destruction; and Henry Kissinger wrote: "With proper tactics, nuclear war need not be as destructive as it appears. . . ."

When schoolchildren practiced air raid drills, crouching under their desks until it was "all clear." But it was only a test; had it been an actual emergency we would have panicked and all hell would have broken loose.

It was a time of whitewashed smiles and innocent ignorance. A time before Kerouac, Lenny Bruce, Ken Kesey, or other intellectuals began to write about the cracks in the post-World War Two white American society. When being a rebel meant wearing your skirt above your knees or sporting a pack of cigarettes in your rolled up shirt sleeve. When blue collar boys raced their grease monkey cars on Saturday night city streets, then played spin the bottle with girls wearing pink angora sweaters in apartment building basement hideaway civil defense shelters.
An era of marching bands and unquestioned obedience to authority. When the only form of protest was sending small bags of rice to the white house. And we were invariably reminded of the self-evident truth that all men are created equal, endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, among which are Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness.

When women were taught to kowtow to the superficial comforts found in dehumanized consumerism. Leaving their jobs because Housekeeping Monthly advertisements assured them that their happiness was found in Hoover vacuum cleaners, washing machines, Frigidaire, and being chained to their new self-cleaning ovens.

Louis’s mother was having an affair with Colonel Haney. Although he had completely bungled his assignment as station chief in South Korea, he had managed to save the life of Allen Dulles's son. A grateful father buried Haney’s catastrophic mistakes under a top secret shroud. Now, wearing a starch crisp army uniform, he was the newly appointed field commander for Operation Success: the CIA's plot for a coup against The Guatemalan President, Jacobo Arbenz.

Before he left, driving away in his new Cadillac to a decrepit airbase in Opa-Locka, the Colonel had found her a job as a housekeeper on Jupiter Island. It was a small private community with an ordinance requiring the registration and fingerprinting of all non-residents working there. It was an environment that harbored a culture of secrecy. A quiet neighborhood where in 1931, following the merger of Harriman and Co. and Brown Brothers, clandestine fraternities began deliberating their version of a new world order.
Once he got settled in, Louis found a job delivering newspapers. In the afternoons he filled his pockets with Good and Plenty, Goobers, Ju Ju Bs, and his favorite cough drops that left him feeling mildly dizzy. The wheels of his new blue Pierce Arrow sounded out a Rat-a-tat-tat as he rode across the bridge, then down Devonshire Lane distributing his tabloids to the pink and yellow ticky-tacky boxes that Victor Jara sang about in “Las casitas del barrio Alto”. Sensors along the two principal roads tracked his every move. The police monitored him as he carefully placed each paper on the front stoops. He never met his clients. At the end of each month a check that included an appropriate tip was deposited in his mailbox.

Those who read the evening paper that Louis delivered included:

**Jock Whitney**, former OSS, who was the titleholder of Freeport Sulphur. Through subsidiaries he owned Cuban-American Manganese Corporation and all of its manganese reserves in Cuba as well as the Cuban-American Nickel Company. After the Cuban revolution, the company shareholders, including a New Orleans Mob boss, lost millions.

**Averell Harriman**, who from 1948 to 1950 administered the multi-billion-dollar Marshall Plan. The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development was ostensibly formed to help reconstruct war-destroyed areas, but economic aid was often metered out in exchange for political cooperation. As ambassador to Russia, Harriman was quoted as saying: "Economic assistance is one of the most effective weapons at our disposal to influence European political events in the direction we desire..."

When he returned to Washington (1950-53) his central focus became the organization of covert operations, "psychological warfare", and paramilitary campaigns abroad.

Harriman, together with his lawyers and business partners, Allen and John Foster Dulles, wanted the government's secret services to conduct extensive propaganda campaigns and mass-psychology experiments within the U.S.A. Their intention was to ensure a stable world-wide environment favorable to Anglo-American financial and political concerns.

When Eisenhower became president in 1952, John Foster Dulles became Secretary of State, and his brother Allen became head of the CIA. Decisions on covert
operations typically began with Allen proposing a venture to Foster, and then Foster speaking with the president over a cocktail in the Oval Office. Foster would return with the president's approval and an admonition not to get caught.

Paul Mellon, heir to the family fortune. His father, Andrew Mellon acting as U.S. treasury secretary from 1921-32, approved the transactions of Harriman, Pryor, and Bush with the Warburgs and the Nazis. Mellon family money was also implicated in several of the CIA’s domestic projects.

Carll Tucker, who manufactured electronic guidance equipment for the Navy; and who, along with the Mellons, was an owner of a vast quantity of South American oil properties.

George W. Merck, whose family companies in Germany and the United States were famous for their manufacture of both morphine and mescaline. He was the director of the War Research Service which directed the US biological warfare program from 1942 until 1944.

Walter S. Carpenter, Jr., who as president of the Du Pont Corporation was behind its partnership with the Nazi company I.G. Farben. The directors of Farben financially and materially enabled Hitler and the Nazis come to power in 1933.

The cartel was responsible for the invention, production, and distribution of Zyklon B. It contained cyanide salts that when mixed with acid produced a gas that combines with the blood's hemoglobin. The victims die rapidly from lack of oxygen. Their lips tinged blue. Their bodies faintly scented with an almond perfume.

Walter Carpenter and his close friend Prescott Bush were both activists in the Mental Hygiene Society. The Society was part of the worldwide eugenics movement that believed that the educated and intelligent population was decreasing, and as a result, the poor and dimwitted would eventually inundate the world with their numerous offspring. They argued for a selection process that would prohibit marriage for those deemed defective as well as forced castration and sterilization. Woodrow Wilson and Teddy Roosevelt both supported laws which permitted sterilization for those considered excessively sexual, who had mental disease, or low IQs. A North Carolina program that began after World War II was accountable for sterilizing impoverished black women for the 35 years of its existence.

International programs sterilized:

- 50,000 indigenous women in Vietnam
- 26,000 indigenous women in India
- 20,000 indigenous women in Peru
15,000 indigenous women in Pakistan

5,000 indigenous women in Chile

4,700 indigenous women in Bangladesh

And unknown numbers in other countries regarded as third world.

Robert A. Lovett, who was partners with Prescott Bush at Brown Brothers Harriman. In January 1943, while Assistant Secretary of War, he met with the Allies at Casablanca and agreed on large-scale air attacks to achieve "the destruction and dislocation of the German military, industrial, and economic system and the undermining of the morale of the German people to the point where their capacity for armed resistance is fatally weakened." The saturation bombing of German cities began with air raids on Cologne, Essen, Frankfurt, and Hamburg. The climax was the bombing of Dresden in early 1945 in which the tremendous heat generated by the bombs created a firestorm throughout the city in which more than 100,000 died.

Afterwards, at the request of the American and British governments, Lovett organized a Strategic Bombing Survey to assess the results of the campaign. The survey was done by the staff of Prudential Insurance Company, under the guidance of the Tavistock Psychiatric Clinic. It failed to demonstrate any military advantage of the fire-bombing. Despite the lack of supporting evidence, and in spite of the opposition of military traditionalists, he continued to advocate the policy as a "psychological warfare" tactic.

It was on his personal counsel that President Lyndon Johnson began the large scale bombing of Vietnam.

In October 1945, Lovett recommended the formation of a separate Central Intelligence Agency. The agency would "consult" with the armed forces, but conduct its own independent foreign espionage and counterespionage. Its budget would be granted directly by Congress without any public hearings. Gen. Douglas MacArthur opposed the proposal saying that it would constitute an American Gestapo. Lovett responded by calling for his resignation, and MacArthur just faded away.

Louis was still a paperboy when he heard Eisenhower's farewell address broadcast on the radio. It was then that he learned that America's leadership and prestige depended on material growth and military strength. He learned that America’s progress was persistently threatened by an ideological battle engulfing the world. Eisenhower described it as hostile, global in scope, atheistic in character, ruthless in purpose, and insidious in method. At that time it was
called Communism, now it is called Terrorism, in his father’s time it was called Bolshevism, tomorrow it will be demonized by another name.

Eisenhower emphasised that the military was a vital element in keeping the peace. He also warned of a permanent armaments industry and the potential of misplaced power. He advised us to avoid the impulse to live only for today, plundering the precious resources of tomorrow.

The president prayed that peoples of all faiths, all races, and all nations, would have their needs satisfied; that all who yearned for freedom would experience its spiritual blessing; that all who are insensitive to the needs of others will learn charity; that the scourges of poverty, disease, and ignorance would disappear from the earth; and that in the goodness of time, all peoples would come to live together in a peace guaranteed by the binding force of mutual respect and love.

Moondog thought about those words again while reading the works of C. Wright Mills. Mills wrote about a self-perpetuating and unelected power elite composed of corporate executives, politicians, and military officers. Together they formed an integrated social hierarchy in which each knew his place and remained within it. Their political and economic decisions were founded on military definitions of reality and prosperity linked to a hysterical war economy.

And those select few were not bureaucrats. They were not following orders, or merely doing their duty. They were selfish people motivated by profit. They were privileged leaders who believed that the civilian community is confused, uneducated, lazy, and apathetic. Who believed that they must become the administrators and negotiators of domestic and foreign
policies. They are the elite who sit on the boards of international corporations, investment firms, and the Federal Reserve. They have exercised a virtual monopoly over the direction of the economy; and by periodically restricting the money supply have engineered crashes within the stock exchanges of the world.

Some of Mills’ ideas can be traced to Abbé Barruel’s Memoirs in which he implicated that the Freemasons and the Illuminati were responsible for the French Revolution. In the 1840s, the French author Eugène Sue rewrote the exact same conspiracy story making the Jesuits the villains. In 1864 Maurice Joly published a pamphlet entitled The Dialogue in Hell Between Machiavelli and Montesquieu. The story was repeated as a satirical attack against the French Emperor Napoleon III (as Machiavelli) alleging how he intended to become ruler of the world.

Mathieu Golovinsky, a Russian living in France, wrote what became the modern version of The Protocols of the Elders of Zion in 1890. His family was aristocratic members of Russian society but lost their fortune. Golovinsky purportedly blamed the Jews for his family’s fate, and expanded his version by detailing how they controlled banking, wars, and the world. The Czar’s secret police, the Russian Okhrana, circulated the Protocols as propaganda, even ordering it to be read from the pulpit during Orthodox Church services. Their adaptation alleges a Jewish and Masonic conspiracy to achieve world domination. The Russians used the fictional Protocols as justification for slaughtering Jews after the Russian Revolution in 1917.
In 1922, American industrialist Henry Ford published the Protocols in his newspaper the Detroit Independent. The series, called “The International Jew”, was widely reprinted around the world, and some say it’s how Adolph Hitler became acquainted with them. The Protocols became compulsory reading for German students, and was used to explain all of the disasters that had befallen the country: the defeat in the war, the hunger, and the destructive inflation. Hitler referred to The Protocols in Mein Kampf and endorsed it in his speeches. Some claim that it served as the Nazis’ "warrant for genocide".

In her book, Tragedy and Hope, Professor Carroll Quigley wrote:

"... the powers of financial capitalism had another far reaching aim, nothing less than to create a world system of financial control in private hands able to dominate the political system of each country and the economy of the world as a whole."

This New World Order will consist of a single global marketplace, controlled by a world government, policed by a world army, financially regulated by a world bank via a single global currency, and a population connected to a global computer that both monitors and updates each person’s location and financial status. The diverse range of human cultures found on our planet will be progressively molded into a single, homogenized, standardized, mass consumer society.

If you go searching for plots, you’ll find hidden codes in the Bible, the Kennedy assassination, Waco, secret fleets of black helicopters, massive underground bases, and programs using high frequency to control the weather, and people’s thoughts. All engineered either by Moscow, Rome, the Black Hand, the Wobblies, the Trilateral Commission, the Bilderberg Group, or the
World Bank. Moondog’s head ached when he tried to understand it all. Besides, he didn’t need conspiracy theories to explain blind greed and corruption.

It was Jack D. Forbes who asserted that when the foundations of society are sustained by a network of fraud and schemes, and where personal relationships rest on utility and convenience, money assumes the unambiguous measure of success. In this society, the person with money, no matter how it was obtained, is respected. Such a society must, inevitably, be a violent society, and will destroy itself because its insatiability will cause it to consume its own resources and even its own people.

He finished his cigar and prepared for nightfall; that’s when he took to the streets and earned his living. He’s a “hustler”: a panhandler who spends his "working hours" in front of one store or another. By midnight he’s usually entrenched in his “regular” doorway on 52nd St. between Broadway and 7th Ave. He has the restaurant owner’s permission to set up there as long as he leaves the place cleaner than when he arrived, and the morning paper on the table.

The shapes, shadows, sounds, and smells guided him through the city to his corner known as the Esquina de los siete puñaladas en el barrio de los sapos. He shared it with assorted riff raff and a few regulars like himself.

There was Heavy, who slept in a cardboard box under the theater’s fire escape. He was a quiet man who sat on a makeshift chair near his black and red suitcase, wearing a red knit cap and smoking a cigarette. He smiled when passers-by sometimes gave him loose change without his
having to ask. Moondog stopped to say hello, opened his thermos and poured a hot cup of coffee for him into a Styrofoam cup.

Emperor Norton I inspected the streets dressed in an elaborate blue uniform with gold-plated epaulets. His beaver hat was adorned with a peacock feather. When not issuing proclamations or decrees he gave lengthy philosophical expositions on a variety of topics to anyone within earshot.

George Plunkitt was a smooth talking, laid back politician with the kind of a smile that let you know that you were being conned, but you went along for the ride. He conducted his business from an old wooden shoe shine stand; and dared to say publicly what others whispered among themselves. He believed in honest graft: "I seen my opportunities and I took 'em." In addition to insider deals such as buying land where he knew the city would be constructing, his companies leased bulldozers, cranes, trucks, and other heavy equipment. Sometimes he subcontracted to companies owned by his friends at inflated prices that allowed for kickbacks; and sometimes he held contracts for food, housing, cars, or other necessities relating to the projects.

"A good politician looks after his own interests, his party's interests, and the city's interests all at the same time."

Together they formed a vanguard; guardian angles who kept a watchful eye over the tourists and out- of- towners that wandered through their jungle.
Hard times had brought various local mafias that fought over distribution territories. While family capos and politicians shared lunches at social clubs, the blood of pistoleros flowed in the daily street wars. Each of them contributed copy for the back pages of tomorrow’s tabloids. It was a rolling mess of drug dealing, prostitution, and crime.

Swindlers with quick-money scams roamed the streets working in pairs. While one befriends an unsuspecting victim, the other approaches with valuables he claims to have just found. After some rehearsed conversation, the con artists agree to split the money three ways, and arrange to meet later, usually at a lawyer's office. To get his share the mark needs to provide some "good faith" money which he is assured will be returned after the goods are sold. When he goes to meet them later, he realizes the pair is long gone; and so is his money.

A game is being hustled at the corner. The dealer places the Jack of Clubs, Jack of Spades, and Ace of Spades face up on top of a cardboard box. Turning them face down, he takes two cards at a time in one hand, and quickly shuffles them with a sideways motion. With sleight of hand and misdirection even his accomplices aren’t sure which the money card is. Covert signals help his partner identify the Ace of Spades and win the bet. It looks easy. And another accomplice convinces the mark to take a chance. After he loses enough money, the “lookout” says that the police are coming, and they quickly pack up and disappear.

In the back of an alley men hunch over a pile of cash lying on the ground. If you stand aside and watch, you may learn the game and its basic rules:

1. A seven or eleven on the first roll wins you the pot.
2. Shoot two, three, or twelve on the first roll and you lose. Any other number becomes your "point."

3. You must then match your point before rolling a seven, or you lose the pot, all bets, and your turn at tossin' the dice.

To be really good you have to learn to disrupt your opponent's rhythm. You must pick the ideal time to make him "drop" the dice -- the rocks literally drop out of their hands before they can throw again. "Get in their head, get 'em mad, and they can't concentrate. That's how you cool off a hot pair of dice."

In time you will find yourself chanting the inner city mantras: "It takes money to make money", and "Scared money don't make no money."

Freeway Rick drove by in his lowrider. He was a high school dropout making millions peddling his cheap rock. His boombox blasted:

    Don't be slippin',
    think I'm trippin'.
    'cause I'm hoo glidin'
    slidin'
    rollin', C-K ridin'
    And there ain't no way out
    when the casket is closed.

The city at night shrieks jagged, incessant sounds. The noise assaults your thoughts, driving you out of your body and mind. Broken neon signs flashed in violent counterpoint to Moondog's indigenous street music. It has a peculiar slithering 5/4 rhythm that's difficult to describe and impossible to write down. It's composed of long, spontaneous-sounding melodic
lines in 5 or 7-tone scales, worked out in subtle but simple ways. It’s a style called isen-isen, which means improvisation that pleasantly fills a vacuum. Those who listen to it are mesmerized into the twilight state between awake and asleep, feeling frozen in space and time. It is a music of decline…but so was all art, all thought, and the makeshift culture in which it flowed.

Standing wrapped in a broad cape, with his long white beard and a double-horned helmet, he beat his drum and recited poetry to anyone walking by for whatever they would cast into his empty cup. Sometimes he sold copies of his stories that were bound together with old shoelaces. At 7 A.M. Moondog packed his bags. His instruments were not plastic, nor tin, but hand constructed of wood and metal in the shape of gongs and slabs.

And as he strolled home, his mind began to wander.
In 1911, Nguyễn Sinh Cung was working on a French steamer helping the ship’s cook. After peeling potatoes, chopping carrots and onions, and washing endless amounts of plates, he finally arrived in the United States. There he lived in Harlem (New York) and Boston where he found menial jobs as a gardener, sweeper, waiter, photo retoucher, and ovenstoker in a bakery. Korean nationalists that he met helped him develop his political views.

He lived in London from 1915 to 1917, and then moved to France. While in Paris he became a socialist, and organized a group of Vietnamese living there to protest against French colonial policy. He went to Moscow in 1924 and took part in the fifth International Communist Congress. After that, much of his time was spent in China, where he organized the Indochina Communist Party on Feb. 3, 1930.

Annam was a protectorate within French Indochina. The emperor, Bao Dai ascended the throne in 1932 and renamed his country: Vietnam. France profited from Vietnamese supplies of coal, tin, zinc, and rubber as well as the importation of French manufactured goods. By 1938, 57% of all Vietnamese imports were from French companies.

When the Japanese invaded Indochina in 1940, the French found that their forces were poorly equipped and the majority of their weapons were obsolete. They attempted to purchase modern fighter planes from the US, but were turned down because the United States didn’t want to become embroiled in a dispute with Japan. The French fought until they ran out of ammunition, and were then forced to sign an agreement with the Japanese. While they did not
eject the French colonial administration, they directed its policies; and by 1945, the Japanese convinced Bao Dai to declare independence from France.

After the French collapsed, the one viable pro-Allied movement left in the country was a coalition of resistance forces called the Viet Minh. They were led by Nguyễn Sinh Cung, who by that time had begun using the name "Ho Chí Minh", which meant "bringer of light". The Vietminh fought against the Japanese forces that occupied the northern part of Viet Nam. They had battalions with heavy mortars, pack howitzers, and American recoilless rifles that were provided by the OSS. The American military men who had served in Hanoi were unanimous in labeling Ho ‘... an old revolutionist ... a product of Moscow, and a communist’.

When the Japanese surrendered to the Allies in August 1945, the Vietminh were resolved to end colonial control and attain a new life for the Indochina peasants. In September there was a celebration with a million people in the streets of Hanoi. A band played "The Star Spangled Banner" while Ho Chí Minh issued his Proclamation of Independence of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam. His speech borrowed from the French Revolution’s Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen, and from the American Declaration of Independence. It began: "All men are created equal." He continued by listing his complaints against French rule:

They have enforced inhuman laws.... built more prisons than schools…mercilessly slain our patriots; they have drowned uprisings in rivers of blood. They have fettered public opinion.... robbed us of our rice fields, our mines, our forests, and our raw materials.... They have invented numerous unjustifiable taxes and reduced our people, especially our peasantry, to a state of extreme poverty… from the end of last year to the beginning of this year . . . more than two million of our fellow-citizens died of starvation. ... The whole Vietnamese people, animated by a common purpose, are determined to fight to the bitter end against any attempt by the French colonialists to re-conquer their country.
The Allies responded by re-arming 90,000 Japanese soldiers who had been waiting repatriation, re-enforcing them with 180,000 of Chiang Kai-shek’s troops during the winter of 1945-46. Ho Chi Minh wrote eight letters to President Truman between October 1945 and February 1946, reminding him of the self-determination promises of the Atlantic Charter. One of the letters was in turn sent to the United Nations:

I wish to invite attention of your Excellency for strictly humanitarian reasons to following matter:

Two million Vietnamese perished from starvation during winter of 1944 and spring 1945 in consequence of the French policy of seizing and storing all available rice. ... Three-fourths of cultivated land was flooded in summer 1945, which was followed by a harsh drought; of normal harvest five-sixths was lost. ... Many people are starving. ... Unless great world powers and international relief organizations bring us immediate assistance we face imminent catastrophe. ...

Truman never responded.

Unknown to Ho, Truman had already assured the French of their "sovereignty over Indochina." Truman, Winston Churchill, and Joseph Stalin had agreed at a summit-meeting at Potsdam that Indochina would be divided into two parts: the northern half under Chinese control, and the southern half under the British. In January 1946, Britain agreed to dispatch its troops. Later that year, at the urging of the United States, China left in exchange for a promise from France to cede rights to territories inside its borders.

In October 1946, France attempted to re-establish control over its Napoleonic colony. The eight-year war between the Vietminh and the French began with the bombing of Haiphong, a northern Vietnamese port. Starting in 1947, vast amounts of Marshall Plan aid went to France. It was feared in Washington that if Ho were to win, Viet Nam would come under
Soviet Union control. In June, the first U.S. supplies were delivered; in September, Truman sent a Military Assistance Advisory Group.

“You can kill ten of my men for ever one I kill of yours, but even at those odds, you will lose and I will win. – Ho Chi Minh, late 1940s

After the Communist victory in China in 1949 and the Korean War which began the following year, the United States became further committed to the French effort and began supplying larger amounts of military aid. When Bao Dai signed an agreement in March 1949 to bring Vietnam into the French Union, the State Department welcomed the new arrangement as ‘... the basis for the progressive realization of the legitimate aspirations of the Vietnamese people’.

In February 1950, Ho met with Stalin and Mao's emissary in Moscow. The Soviet Union recognized his government, and it was agreed that China would back the Vietminh. Ho returned and immediately escalated the resistance fighting; stating “Those who wish to seize Vietnam must kill us to the last man, woman, and child”.

Shortly after some serious military losses in mid-October 1950, French Minister of National Defense Jules Moch arrived in Washington soliciting an increase in U.S. military aid. The French had come to realize that the key to their colonial war was in Washington. By January 1951 the French had lost all control north of the Red river. A wave of exasperation and hopelessness enveloped the French senior command.

Donning their pith helmets and impeccably clean, pressed shirts, they traveled by rickshaw to the fashionable Hotel Metropole in Hanoi for afternoon tea at a street side table opposite the Governor’s residence. They were intellectuals, men of broad views
who were able to look at themselves and at the whole Indochina war from a distance; ‘in profile’ as they said.

“This isn’t a military war in the old sense. What we are facing here is a social war, a class war. And as long as we don’t destroy the mandarin class, abolish excessive tenancy rates and give every farmer his own plot of land, this country will go Communist as soon as we turn our backs. As long as we don’t give the Vietnamese something real to fight for, we’re doomed to die here like mercenaries.”

“Merde! I hope you haven’t been talking that rubbish to the junior officers!”

“Oh well, they believe they’re doing the right thing and that’s the way it’s got to be. If they knew they were dying here uselessly it would be like shooting them in the belly and kicking them in the behind at the same time… I mean, they need to believe that it’s for the good of the Country.”

“Bon”

In June 1952, President Eisenhower explained the Domino theory to the American public:

“You have a row of dominoes set up; you knock over the first one, and what will happen to the last one is that it will go over very quickly.”

According to the National Security Council, Communist control of Southeast Asia would jeopardize the chain of U.S. military bases along the coast of China, the Philippines, Taiwan, Japan, and South Korea. Fundamental U.S. security in the Far East would be seriously compromised.

Vice President Nixon declared that: “if the French withdrew, Indochina would become Communist dominated within a month... It is hoped that the United States will not have to send troops there but if this government cannot avoid it, the Administration must face up to the situation and dispatch forces.”
The United States began pouring military aid into Vietnam. Between 1950 and 1953 the U.S. contributed $2,956 million to the French effort. By 1954, the U.S. was paying almost 80 per cent of the war costs. U.S. involvement still did not officially include the armed forces. However, CIA pilots were supplying the French garrisons by airlifting paratroopers, medics, ammunition, artillery pieces, tons of barbed wire, and other military gear. Thirty-seven CIA pilots completed six hundred and eighty two airdrops under fire between March 13 and May 6th, 1954. Because operations generally were at night and the Vietminh were proficient with their anti-aircraft artillery, an untold number of the "packets" fell into enemy hands.

The French commander in Vietnam, General Navarre, realized that time was running out and that he needed a quick victory. He was convinced that if he could maneuver the Vietminh General Giap into a large scale battle, France could win. General Navarre had setup a defensive complex at Dien Bien Phu in order to prevent the Vietminh forces from returning to their camps in Laos. Navarre assumed that General Giap would be forced to organize a mass-attack there in order to reestablish the routes.

General Giap took up the challenge. However, rather than making a massive frontal assault, he ordered his men to dig a trench encircling the French troops. From the outer trench, other trenches and tunnels were dug inwards towards the center. While these preparations were going on, Giap brought in soldiers from all over Vietnam. By the time the battle was ready to start, he had five times the number of French troops. Using anti-aircraft guns and howitzers, Giap severely restricted the French´s ability to re-supply their forces. When Navarre realized that he was trapped, he appealed for help. Some United States advisers suggested the use of tactical nuclear weapons; but in the end nothing was done.
As night fell over the valley of tears, waves of Vietminh infantry surged toward the French troops. They fought until their ammunition was exhausted, and then methodically went about their business, destroying all their surplus weapons and caring for their wounded. In the ghostly light of the early dawn, of May 7, 1954, the 3rd battalion of the 13th Foreign Legion fixed bayonets and 600 marched to their death. The Indochina war ended, and France was forced to give up its empire.

"Dien Bien Phu was a blessing in disguise" John Forster Dulles

On July 20th, 1954 the French and Vietnamese signed an ‘Agreement of Cessation of Hostilities’ at the Geneva Peace Accord. Vietnam was partitioned at the 17th parallel, above which the Vietminh created a Communist state with Hanoi as the capitol. The French withdrew to the south; and Saigon became its capitol. Bao Dai abdicated his throne; but remained head of state. He then moved to France, and appointed the Roman Catholic nationalist Ngo Dinh Diem as his prime minister. A US military presence was installed in South Vietnam without a formal treaty between the countries.

The division of Vietnam was meant to be temporary pending free elections for national leadership in July 1956. Eisenhower commented in his memoirs: “I have never talked or corresponded with a person knowledgeable in Indochinese affairs who did not agree that had elections been held at the time… possibly 80 per cent of the population would have voted for the Communist Ho Chi Minh as their leader…”
In April 1955, Diem announced a national referendum. The South Vietnamese people were asked to choose between the Emperor, and Diem. U.S. advisers suggested to Diem that two ballot papers be used: red for Diem and green for Bao Dai. It was hoped that the Vietnamese conviction that red signified good luck and green bad fortune, would sway the results.

There was a large voter turnout. Contrary to U.S. claims, the N.L.F did not try to prevent people from voting in the elections. They didn’t want the people to lose their food-rationing coupons, which were voided if not stamped at the polls. What’s more, people came because they needed a voter card for identification. Anyone who couldn’t present one when stopped by the police was suspected of being a Viet Cong and was held for questioning.

Voters were met by Diem's supporters when they arrived at the polling stations. Some later complained: "They told us to put the red ballot into envelopes and to throw the green ones into the wastebasket." A few people faithful to the emperor, disobeyed. As soon as they left, agents went after them, and roughed them up.

The United States sent impartial observers. However, their presence was more for public relations and had little real significance because they didn’t speak the language, knew nothing about the culture, just met people whose views were approved by the embassy staff, and left immediately following the announcement of the election results. Diem claimed to have won 98.2 per cent of the vote. Nobody really believed the results.

On June 1, 1956, Walter S. Robertson, Assistant Secretary of State, attacked the Geneva Accords, which ‘... partitioned [Vietnam] by fiat of the great powers against the will of the Vietnamese people’. He lauded Diem’s ‘free election’ and stated the American determination
‘to support a friendly non-Communist government in Vietnam and to help it diminish and eventually eradicate Communist subversion and influence’. On June 28, Dulles stated that neither the United States nor the regime in the south had signed the Agreement at Geneva or was bound to it (a point that Washington often repeated and which was, in the case of the south, false). On July 16, Diem rejected national elections under the terms of the Geneva agreement until ‘... proof is ... given that they put the superior interests of the national community above those of Communism’.

The United States economic commitment to the Diem regime between 1955 and 1959 totaled $2.92 billion; $1.71 billion was solely for military programs. The regime especially persecuted former Viet Minh, but all opposition came under attack. On May 6th, 1959, Diem passed Law 10-59 which sentenced anyone to death for a list of offences that included murder or destruction of houses, farms, buildings, or means of transport. By the end of 1961 the number of political prisoners quadrupled.

President Kennedy was suspicious of the intelligence community´s continuing failure and of its proposals for military escalation in South Vietnam. While a senator he had advised Eisenhower "to face the stark reality" that America would not be able to stop Communism in Indochina.

"I am frankly of the belief that no amount of American military assistance in Indochina can conquer an enemy which is everywhere and at the same time nowhere..."
- The Truth About Indochina
April 6, 1954
General Douglas MacArthur counseled him against committing American foot soldiers on the Asian mainland. He was critical of the Pentagon’s advice and warned Kennedy about factions inside the U.S. government and in the Wall Street financial community who were seeking to destroy his administration. Many of the hawks who proposed increased military presence in Vietnam had Brown Brothers Harriman as well as Skull and Bones connections. In particular, there was Averell Harriman, McGeorge Bundy, William Bundy, Henry Cabot Lodge, and George Bush. Under the Geneva Accords, the United States was permitted 685 military advisers in southern Vietnam. Eisenhower secretly sent several thousand. Under Kennedy, the figure rose to sixteen thousand, some of whom began enlist in combat operations.

“The corner has been definitely turned toward victory” (Secretary of Defense Robert McNamara, May 1962)

On May 5 1963, two days before celebrating the 2,527th birthday of the Gautama Buddha (Vesak), Diem’s government sent a nationwide circular banning the public exhibition of the International Buddhist flag. It was explained that although seldom enforced, government regulations prohibited religious flag displays. On May 7, the members of the General Association of Vietnamese Buddhists went to meet with the local authority and sent a message to Saigon objecting to the order. At 2 pm the authorities confiscated all the Buddhist flags.

Buddhists gathered on the morning of May 8th to welcome the statue of Buddha and carry it to the celebration. When the crowd arrived at Tu Dam Pagoda the monks gave a sermon and spoke out against religious discrimination. They attacked Diem's regime for family despotism and accused Catholic Bishop Ngo Dinh Thuc of abusing his power and interfering
in politics. The celebration was recorded and scheduled to be broadcast on the radio at 8h15 that night.

When the celebration was not broadcast, a crowd of at least 10,000 people assembled in front of the Hue Radio Station to find out what had happened. The director, Mr. Ngo Ganh, panicked and phoned the vice-head in charge of internal security requesting men to protect the station. Major Dang Sy arrived at 10h30 with soldiers, police, armored cars and fire-engines.

A general chaos ensued. The forces encircled the crowd and the fire engines were ordered to use the water hoses on the protesters. Some of them reacted by throwing stones. Major Sy spoke though a bullhorn and attempted to put the mob at ease. As his car approached the station there were two large explosions. Alarmed by possible VC attacks, Dang fired 3 bullets in the air and ordered the soldiers to use "concussion grenades" to disperse the crowd. Fifteen grenades were fired and people ran hysteric. The clash resulted in 20 injured and 9 dead.

The next morning the Buddhists began a protest rally in Hue campaigning for religious equality, compensation for the victims, punishment for those responsible, and the right to fly the Buddhist flag. The army was mobilized and armored cars blocked the streets. The people brought their family altars out into the streets to support the demonstrations. The protests continued to escalate nationwide over the course of the next few weeks.
On the Fourth of July, the acting chief of the joint staff of the army of South Vietnam, General Tran Van Don, sent a message to his CIA contact, Lucien Conein: Meet me at the Caravelle Hotel. That night, General Don confided that the military was preparing to move against Diem.

On August 21, Nhu's secret police and the Special Forces ransacked the Xa Loi pagoda and attacked other temples in Saigon, Hue, and Danang. They fired on civilians and beat monks and nuns. In Hue, thirty people died as they attempted to protect the pagodas from Nhu's men with sticks and stones. President Diem announced a nationwide curfew; public assembly was banned and the press was censored. The military was assigned to check households and arrest people accused of disturbing national security. Any offenders were tried by a military court.

Frederick Nolting was Ambassador to South Vietnam from 1961 – 1963. Appointed by President Kennedy, he became closely associated with Ngo Dinh Diem. Before resigning, the Ambassador rejected the coup d'état stating straightforwardly, "I feel there is a movement to topple Mr. Diem coming from Undersecretary of State Averell Harriman, Roger Hilsman and others. It is against the advice of the CIA."

Shortly after 9 p.m., On August 23, John F. Kennedy approved an eyes-only cable for the newly arrived Ambassador Lodge urging him to “make detailed plans as to how we might bring about Diem’s replacement.” Lodge held a meeting of high-ranked officials asking the State Department for permission to contact the Vietnamese coup generals. He advised them that President Diem, his brother Nhu, and his wife were power hungry, inept, corrupt, and out of touch with reality. He suggested that South Vietnam was headed for disaster unless
the administration was reformed or replaced. Averell Harriman, on behalf of the US State Department, supported a coup against Diem.

Six days later, Lodge cabled Washington: "We come to a point of no return to overthrow Diem's government..." At the White House, Helms listened as the president received the message, approved it, and ordered Lodge to make sure that the American role in the coup would be concealed.

Kennedy sent an investigative delegation to Vietnam in September. The (Defense Minister) McNamara- (General) Taylor report shared the Pentagon's optimism about the war's progress and pessimism of the State Department about the political situation (President Diem). CIA director McCone personally told the president that the CIA's study could not find a replacement for Diem and that a coup d'état would lead to future destabilization of the country.

_The major part of the U.S. military task can be completed by the end of 1965”_  
(McNamara, October 1963)

George McGovern responded on the Senate floor:

"The current dilemma in Vietnam is a clear demonstration of the limitations of military power ... [Current U.S. involvement] is a policy of moral debacle and political defeat ... The trap we have fallen into there will haunt us in every corner of this revolutionary world if we do not properly appraise its lessons."
On October 21 the U.S. Embassy in Saigon announced that it would no longer pay for Diem’s private army unless they went out into the field. On October 26 General Don met Lodge at Tan Son Nhat airport. Don told him: "... What we need is the U.S. support if we are successful..." The ambassador sent the CIA’s Rufus Phillips to see Diem. Diem looked at him and asked, ‘Is there going to be a coup against me?’ Phillips said, ‘I am afraid so, Mr. President.’ Diem called Ambassador Lodge: "Please tell President Kennedy that I am a good and frank ally... that I take all the suggestions very seriously and wish to carry them out..."

On October 30th Diem’s private guard was sent on patrol outside of Saigon.

On November 1, Tran Thien Khiem invited all the high-ranking military to a lunch at the General Staff Headquarters. When they were all in place, General Duong Van Minh stood up and yelled "Coup d’état". The military police entered with submachine guns and encircled them. The officers loyal to Mr. Diem’s government were arrested. Colonel Le Quang Tung, head of the Special Forces, and his younger brother, lieutenant-colonel Khoi were forced at gunpoint to inform Diem what had happened and that he should surrender. Then they were escorted to the backyard, shot, and buried in two previously dug holes.

By 2 p.m., the streets were filled with gunfire. The coup leaders had closed the airport, cut the city’s telephone lines, stormed central police headquarters, seized the Government radio station, and attacked the centers of political power.

General Don and his allies called President Diem shortly before 4 p.m. and asked him to surrender. They offered him and Ngo Dinh Nhu sanctuary and a safe passage from the country. President Diem hung up the phone.
Mr. Diem phoned the American ambassador wanting to know Washington's attitude towards the coup d'état. Lodge told him, “I have a report that those in charge of the current activity offered you and your brother safe conduct out of the country. Have you heard this?” “No,” Diem lied, and the conversation came to an end.

Three hours later Messrs. Diem and Nhu fled the palace and went to a safe house owned by a Chinese merchant who had financed Diem’s private spy network in Saigon. The villa was equipped with a phone line hooked to the presidential palace. The battle went on all night. A little before 10 p.m. Nguyễn Văn Thiệu led his 5th Division towards the grounds of the Presidential palace. The assault was covered by tank and artillery fire which flattened the Guard barracks. Demolition units set charges, and flamethrowers sprayed the buildings. Just after 4 a.m., Thiệu ordered the final stage of the siege. By 6:37, the palace fell. At about 6 a.m., Diem telephoned General Big Minh. The president indicated that he was ready to resign, and the general guaranteed his safety. Diem indicated he would be waiting at the Saint Francis Xavier church in Cholon, the Chinese quarter in Saigon. The general sent an armored personnel carrier to fetch Diem and his brother Nhu, ordered his personal bodyguard to lead the convoy, and then raised two fingers on his right hand. It was a signal: kill them both.

Diem and Nhu sat with their hands tied behind their backs. Minh’s bodyguard, Major Nguyễn Văn Nhung accompanied the prisoners. He had a grudge against Nhu for having ordered the execution of one of his close friends. While Diem remained silent, the major lunged at Nhu with his bayonet and stabbed him 15 or 20 times in the chest. Then he took
out his revolver and shot Diem in the back of his head. With Nhu's body still twitching on the floor, the major then put a bullet through his head as well.

General Don ordered his troops to clean up his headquarters, and bring in a large green felt-covered table. The generals held a news conference and announced the accidental suicides of Diem and Nhu. Lyndon Johnson was later quoted as saying that Dallas was divine retribution for Diem.

Following Diem’s demise, coup after coup wracked Saigon. None of the succession of leaders was able to rally and unify the people, none could contain the National Liberation Front; and each in turn was overthrown. As the situation deteriorated, Lodge suggested to the State Department that South Vietnam become a protectorate of the United States. The alternatives, he warned, were either an increased military commitment, or total abandonment.

In July 1964, the Pentagon and the CIA decided to increase surveillance on North Vietnam and began commando raids: OPLAN 34A. The Navy’s SIGINT (signals intelligence program for eavesdropping on encoded enemy communications) was code named Desoto. The Desoto missions were carried out inside a black box the size of a cargo container on the decks of destroyers. Inside each one were antennas and monitors operated by at least a dozen officers of the Naval Security Group. They listened in on North Vietnamese military chatter, and the data they assembled was decrypted and translated by the National Security Agency.

The Joint Chiefs of Staff sent the USS Maddox, under the command of Captain John Herrick, on a Desoto mission to record North Vietnam's reactions to the commando raids. The United
States did not recognize the international twelve-mile limit, and so the Maddox had orders to stay eight nautical miles off the mainland in the Gulf of Tonkin.

On the last night of July and the first night of August 1964, the Maddox monitored an OPLAN 34A attack on Hon Me Island. It tracked the North’s counterattack, watching Soviet-manufactured patrol boats armed with torpedoes and machine guns mobilizing near the island. On the afternoon of August 2, the Maddox detected three of the boats approaching. Captain Herrick sent a flash message to fellow commanders of the Seventh Fleet: he would fire on them if required. He requested help from the destroyer Turner Joy and the fighter jets of the carrier Ticonderoga.

Shortly after 3 p.m., the Maddox fired at the North Vietnamese patrol boats. The shots were never reported or acknowledged by the Pentagon or the White House; they maintained that the communists shot first. The Maddox was still firing when four navy F-8E jets blasted the patrol boats, killing four sailors, heavily damaging two of the ships, and winging the third. Their communist captains fled and hid in coastal inlets, awaiting orders from Haiphong. The Maddox had sustained one bullet hole from a machine gun.

On August 3, President Johnson announced that American patrols would continue in the Gulf of Tonkin. The State Department sent its first diplomatic note to Hanoi, warning of the "grave consequences" of "further unprovoked military action." Another OPLAN 34A mission was dispatched to sabotage a radar station on the island of Hon Matt.
On the night of August 4, the American captains of the destroyers, the commanders of the Seventh Fleet, and their leaders in the Pentagon, all received an urgent alert from SIGINT operators: the three North Vietnamese patrol boats encountered off Hon Me Island on August 2 were returning. In Washington, Robert McNamara called the president. At 10 p.m. in the Gulf of Tonkin, (10 a.m. in Washington), the American destroyers sent a message that they were under attack. The radar and sonar operators aboard the Maddox and the Turner Joy reported seeing ghostly blotches in the night. Their captains opened fire.

The NSA told the secretary of defense and the president of the United States that it had intercepted a North Vietnamese naval communiqué reading: "SACRIFICED TWO SHIPS AND ALL THE REST ARE OKAY." The president immediately ordered an air strike against North Vietnamese naval bases to commence that night.

Within an hour, Captain Herrick reported: "ENTIRE ACTION LEAVES MANY DOUBTS." But the American air strikes against North Vietnam had already begun. The NSA reviewed the day's communications intercepts. There was nothing. Every SIGINT eavesdropper in South Vietnam and the Philippines scanned it again. Nothing. The NSA re-examined the intercept it had handed to the president, double-checking the translation and the time stamp on the original message. Upon review, the message actually read: "WE SACRIFICED TWO COMRADES BUT ALL ARE BRAVE." The message was not about what had happened that night. It was about the first clash, two nights earlier. Everyone, every-one, even the doubters, elected to stay silent. The NSA buried the facts.
The NSA's leadership put together five separate after-action reports and summaries between August 5 and August 7. It then composed a formal chronology, the official version, the last word on what happened out in the Gulf of Tonkin. In the process, someone at the NSA destroyed the smoking gun: the intercept that McNamara had shown to the president. On August 7, Congress authorized the war in Vietnam. The House voted 416-0. The Senate voted 88-2.

An NSA report declassified forty years later described how "the two destroyers gyrated wildly in the dark waters of the Gulf of Tonkin, the Turner Joy firing over 300 rounds, both ships taking furious evasive maneuvers. It was this high-speed circling by the American warships through the waters that created all the additional sonar reports of more torpedoes." They had been firing at their own shadows. It was a "Greek tragedy," someone said, "an act of political theater repeated four decades later when false intelligence on the Iraqi arsenal upheld another president's rationale for war."

Mac Bundy was the United States National Security Advisor to both Presidents Kennedy and Johnson. He played a crucial role in all major foreign policy and defense decisions during their administrations. In 1964 he was Chairman of the 303 Committee, in charge of coordinating government covert operations that included the Bay of Pigs Invasion, the Cuban Missile Crisis, and the Vietnam War. Mac's job was to evaluate, compress, and clarify foreign affairs information for the White House.

On December 20 1964, there was another coup in Saigon. The desertion rate in the South Vietnamese army had reached thirty per cent among draftees within six weeks after
induction; and a large proportion of the remainder would not fight. It was apparent that if the
war was to continue, the United States would have to supply not only money, arms, and the
23,000 currently supporting troops, but fight the entire war itself. LBJ called Mac into his
office to read the interagency options for dealing with Vietnam. The first being, roughly,
turn tail and run, the second, drop an atomic bomb, and the third, a gradual and sustained
bombing of North Vietnam.

Lyndon Johnson did not want to lose South Vietnam to communism. But he was uneasy about
intensifying the war. So he delayed. Finally, he sent Mac to Camp Holloway in Pleiku. It was
the U.S. center of defense for the entire highland region. Mac arrived in Saigon in early 1965.
It was during his stay when the Vietcong attacked and blew up the American barracks. The
visual horror of the dead and wounded inspired him enough to urge the President to escalate
bombing. LBJ effectively ordered the total destruction of North Vietnam.

The combined forces of the U.S. 2nd Air Division, U.S. Navy, and Republic of Vietnam Air
Force (VNAF) began a campaign against the Democratic Republic of Vietnam. The majority
of strikes were launched from four Air Bases in Thailand: Korat, Takhli, Udon Thani, and
Ubon. Operation Rolling Thunder gradually became the most intense air/ground battle waged
during the Cold War period, and the most difficult campaign fought by the U.S. Air Force
since the aerial bombardment of Nazi Germany during World War II.

From the onset, hubristic American commanders believed that the North Vietnamese and
jungle-based Vietcong were too unsophisticated to be able to make sense of U.S.
communications networks. Senior officers also reasoned that U.S. superiority in training,
firepower, and mobility rendered Comsec of little importance. Because the B-52s carried no encryption equipment apart from the Triton codes for nuclear authorization, all of their communications were in clear voice. Captured enemy documents later revealed detailed discussions of planned B-52 raids, with the exact times of the attacks and the coordinates of the targets.

The stated objective was to demolish North Vietnam’s industrial bases, air defenses, and transportation system. The bombing was concentrated on schools, hospitals, churches, dams, and the civilian population. Typically they were dropping cluster bombs (C.BU.s) which are strictly antipersonnel weapons. The bombs scatter a deadly broad side of tiny steel pellets. Sometimes flechettes or barbed steel splinters the thicknesses of a needle were substituted for the rounded, pea-sized pellets. Cluster bombs are useless against military targets, because they cannot penetrate wood, metal, sandbags, etc. They are meant to penetrate flesh. Many also contained a baseball-sized secondary bomb (guavas), each of which held approximately three hundred pellets and were equipped with timing devices and other mechanisms for delaying firing until set off by activity in the region. Vast areas became death traps for rescue workers, people emerging from their shelters, peasants returning to the fields, and children going to school.

In February 1965 the communist leadership declared a "people's war". Each citizen became a soldier, each village a fortress on the anti-American battlefront. Fired by nationalist zeal, the North Vietnamese people volunteered to work repairing the damage inflicted by U.S. bombs. Citizens used sampans, carts, wheelbarrows, or carried supplies on their backs to keep the war effort going. They were motivated by slogans like "Each kilogram of goods...is a bullet shot
into the head of the American pirates." Ho Chi Minh's deeply motivated revolutionaries knew that the Americans would eventually go home.

On March 8, 1965, 3,500 U.S. Marines became the first US combat troops to land in Da Nang, South Vietnam. They were an addition to the 25,000 military advisers already in place. The mission of the ground forces was to expand combat operations and to defend the southern airfields committed to Rolling Thunder. In July, the first 4,000 101st Airborne Division paratroopers arrived at Cam Ranh Bay. By the end of the year, the number of American forces in Vietnam had swelled to nearly 200,000.

From that point on, the aerial campaign became a secondary operation overshadowed by troop deployments and ground operations. Between March 1965 and November 1968, the U.S. flew 306,183 attack sorties against North Vietnam. The Department of Defense announced that 864,000 tons (the equivalent of 640 Hiroshima sized atomic bombs) had been dropped on North Vietnam. Rolling Thunder was terminated as a strategic failure.

The military junta promoted Nguyễn Văn Thiệu after Diem’s execution. He gradually moved up the ranks eventually presiding over the Managing National Council. On June 14th 1965 he won a fraudulent election and became head of state. The political storm in South Vietnam calmed down as Thiệu maintained control through authoritarianism, cronyism, and corruption.

“We have stopped losing the war” (McNamara, October 1965).
Senator Young disclosed that the C.I.A. hired Vietnamese to pose as members of the Vietcong and to commit both murder and rape. (The New York Times, October, 1965.)

That same year, the CIA's Saigon station created the Intelligence Coordination and Exploitation Program (ICEX). It was later renamed the Phoenix Program. The South Vietnamese called it Phung Hoang, after a mythical bird that appeared as a sign of prosperity and luck. It began as an internal security program aimed the identification and arrest of subversives. The Vietnamese government’s stated purpose of the program was to protect the people against terrorism by reducing the influence and effectiveness of the Viet Cong infrastructure in South Vietnam.

Senior CIA officer Evan J. Parker and CIA station Chief Lou Lapham, supervised the forty-four CIA contract officers. Parker was a veteran of OSS Detachment 101, and served his first tour in Vietnam in 1950. Phoenix centers with secret policemen and counter-terror teams conducting operations were present in almost every village and hamlet. By 1970 there were seven hundred and four U.S. Phoenix advisers throughout South Vietnam.

Ideally, Special Branch Police, local troops, and Provincial Reconnaissance Units would conduct the arrest operations. The PRUs were chosen, paid, and operated by the CIA. They were highly trained mercenaries, often selected from Vietnam’s minority groups, such as Chinese Nungs and Cambodians, or from Vietcong agents who had defected. Their operations were often led by elite U.S. Navy “Seal” commandos assigned to the CIA.

According to Lieutenant Vincent Okamoto, an intelligence-liaison officer for the Phoenix Program:
‘The problem was, how do you find the people on the blacklist? It’s not like you had their address and telephone number. The normal procedure would be to go into a village and just grab someone and say, ‘Where’s Nguyen so-and-so?’ Half the time the people were so afraid they would say anything. Then a Phoenix team would seize the informant, put a sandbag over his head, poke out two holes so he could see, put commo wire around his neck like a long leash, and walk him through the village and say: ‘when we go by Nguyen's house scratch your head’. That night they would come back, knock on the door, and say, ‘April fool, motherfucker!’ Whoever answered the door would get wasted. As far as we were concerned, whoever answered was a Communist.”

Those individuals who were arrested, were interrogated. Some were subjected to torture. Some took the long step, and were thrown out of airborne helicopters. Some had a six inch dowel inserted into their ear, and then tapped it until it punctured their brain and they died. Many times these things were done in order to persuade other suspects to talk. The Phoenix Program reportedly captured 81,740 National Liberation Front of South Vietnam (NLF or Viet Cong) members, of whom 26,369 were killed.

“When you’re on to a good thing you stay with it,” an Army spokesman said. -A.P. dispatch from Saigon, January 13, 1966.

“A Communist military takeover in South Vietnam is no longer just improbable…it is impossible.” Lyndon Johnson, August 14, 1966

Mao Zedong had said that the people were like the water and the army like the fish. In 1967 General Westmorland decided that he had to dry up the water so that the fish (the VC) could not survive. War refugees continued to be forcibly resettled. Landless, many headed for the cities like Saigon where they joined colonies of mendicants. Others were shipped to holding camps. By August the ‘pacification’ camps became so full that Army units were ordered not to ‘generate’ any more refugees. The Army complied. The search-and-destroy operations persisted; but the obligatory warnings by helicopter loudspeaker, or air-dropped leaflets, were stopped. All civilians were now assumed to be the enemy.
On January 31, 1968, 400,000 communist troops laid siege to Saigon and the major American bases in South Vietnam. The attack came on the first night of Tet, the lunar New Year. Its goal was to ignite an uprising among the Vietnamese people to overthrow the South Vietnamese government and force the withdrawal of U.S. forces. The shock of the surprise attack was a devastating psychological loss for the United States.

On February 11, CIA Director Richard Helms mustered all of his Vietnam experts together at headquarters. American soldiers were incapable of defending the nation's cities; American spies were panicked and demoralized. They agreed that it was futile to send more troops if the government and the shattered army of South Vietnam failed to pull together and fight the enemy. On February 19 Hanoi mounted a second wave of Tet attacks.

It was clear that enemy strength was far greater than the military commanders in Vietnam and the Pentagon were letting on, either publicly or in secret. Helms invited analysts from the CIA, NSA, and the Defense Intelligence Agency to meet with General Westmoreland's staff to resolve the differences. The summit took place in Saigon in September 1968 at the U.S. embassy. Over a conference table strewn with intercepts and secret reports, the Washington analysts attempted to make their case, but it was useless. Rather than rely on NSA's SIGINT for enemy strength figures, the military relied on prisoner interrogations.

The mood within Westmoreland's headquarters was upbeat. The General asserted that US forces were on the verge of victory. “The gist of their report . . . was blunt: We’ve got to have a big infusion of troops… in order to win the war.”
But after receiving Secretary of Defense Clark Clifford's report Johnson finally realized that the United States couldn’t conquer an enemy it couldn’t understand. The Paris peace talks commenced on May 13, 1968. Johnson concluded his March 31 speech with the line: "I shall not seek, and I will not accept, the nomination of my party for another term as your President."

“Vietnam is like the Alamo.” Lyndon Johnson

Almost as soon as the talks were started, they stalled. South Vietnam President Nguyen van Thieu was suddenly laying down obstacles to a possible settlement. From the FBI wiretaps, Johnson quickly learned about the role of Nixon campaign official Anna Chennault contacting South Vietnam's Ambassador to the United States Bui Diem regarding President Thieu's boycott of the Paris peace negotiations. President Thieu refused to send a delegation until the American Presidential election was over.

The South pulling out meant the war would continue. By the time of the election in November 1968, LBJ had evidence Nixon had sabotaged the peace talks, and as he put it, that Nixon was guilty of treason and had "blood on his hands". Once in office Richard Nixon escalated the war into Laos and Cambodia, with the loss of an additional 22,000 American lives.

It was around this time when Louis found himself designated Class 1-A and sitting aboard a Lockheed Constellation that rattled, shook, and droned on through the night. Every thirty seconds or so the props would go out of sync and the whirring sound increased, making it impossible to sleep.
The plane landed at 04:30, and a tall, muscular sergeant in immaculately pressed fatigues came aboard and began yelling: "get off and fall in line!" They staggered to their feet. Some tried to brush the sleep from their eyes as they stumbled off the plane and fell into a rough semblance of an organized row. They waited in silence for the bus to transport them to the base. The driver, also in starched green fatigues, said, "If you've got any wise-assing to do, you'd better do it now."

At 06:30 they found themselves at the receiving station. The base was little more than scrub desert covered with concrete. The NCOs shuffled papers at a table up front while each group of raw recruits filed into the line-up of sixty chairs. They were assigned a number and then met their Training Instructor, who arranged them by height into a column of four lines, each containing fifteen men.

The sergeant introduced them to their new life with ten or fifteen minutes of verbal abuse. With their bags at their feet, they were showed the position of "Attention": Heels together, toes slightly out, back straight, shoulders back, thumb and forefinger touching pant seam, eyes straight ahead, no motion, no sound, staring at the back of the head of the man in front of you.

"You will not move while at the position of Attention."

"There will be no picking of the nose or ass scratching while at the position of Attention."

"I am your mother, your father, your brother, your sister and even your pet dog! You are lower than cockroach shit. DO YOU HEAR ME?"

"Cooperate and you will graduate."
With sixty people standing at attention, frozen solid, even the slightest movement stood out. You didn't want to stand out. You wanted to disappear. A blink was okay, but a sniffle, a lick of the lips, or a squint invited attention of the worst kind.

They were then marched to the chow hall for their first breakfast. Flocks of large birds roosted in the trees outside the dining hall. There they remained in line while the T.I.’s stood under the eaves and laughed as the warm, heavy, white shit plopped down on them like fitful rain. They waited perfectly still until mess call was played and the doors were opened.

Then they marched single file, each with their hands on the sides of their tray sidestepping smartly down the serving line. Sitting on the edge of their chairs with their backs impeccably straight their forks rose vertically from the plate making a right angle to their mouths. It seemed as if they scarcely sat down, before they were ordered to get up and leave. The T.I.’s waited at the tray window and any food left on their plates had to be eaten right then and there, stuffed into their mouths in a hurry. You ate what you took, and no food was allowed outside the chow hall.

Then it was off to the barracks. They thought that they were about to get some shut-eye since they hadn't slept in 24 hours. But they were wrong. First they had to open their handbags and empty their pockets to be searched for contraband. As each minute passed more and more rules were forced on them. They formed up again, and were marched to get regulation haircuts, and then draw uniforms and equipment. They were given a physical examination, immunization shots in each arm, and standing in their boxer shorts, they were sworn in.
Then they were dispatched to a huge, sprawling building where they were given The Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery and Military Occupational specialty exams which determined everything from mental health to job aptitudes. A counselor explained that their assignments would be based on (1) where men were needed (2) their aptitudes, and (3) what they wanted, in that order.

Finally, it was back to the barracks where it was time to hit the showers. Several shower-heads were mounted on a white tiled wall in one large room. The recruits washed as a unit while they were yelled at and told that they had one minute to look into one of the three mirrors and shave “inspection close" with a safety razor provided by the Salvation Army.

Taps was played from a scratchy worn out record every night at 21:00.

At 04:59 the T.I. walked quietly to the doorway, put one hand on the light switch, and ticked off the seconds. At 05:00:00 he hit the lights and shouted "GET UP!" He could probably be heard half a mile away. Inside the confines of the barracks, the noise was deafening.

"GEEEEEETUUUP!"

Meanwhile, another scratchy old record began to play "Reveille" on the outside PA system. They had to be up instantly, or be thrown onto the floor. With a little training they learned to get up, dress, make their beds, take care of their details, have the barracks in Inspection Order, and be in formation outside the barracks, at 5:05 a.m. every morning for colors.
They were able to do it because the night before they had left their clothes in order on top of their footlocker. They pulled their already buttoned shirt over their heads to save time. They were dressed inside 30 seconds, unless they had to lace up combat boots and then it took a full minute. The second minute was spent making their bed. They learned to sleep without moving, their knees bent, so they wouldn’t have to remake the corners at the bottom. The bed perfect, they then had one minute to clean their detail. At three minutes, they were all dressed, the barracks was spotless, and they were outside at attention. Then they marched double time to breakfast in the dark.

It was a lifetime of marching, chin-ups, push-ups, harassment, discipline, and blind duty crammed into eight weeks of hell. Then they were off to places unknown. But Louis knew where he was going: Fort Benning, Georgia; and eventually jungle warfare training in Panama.

He wanted to be part of a small, highly trained, elite unit. He had volunteered to train for assignments that would include: gathering intelligence, observing enemy movements, pinpointing targets, planning and directing air strikes, search and recovery behind enemy lines, ambushes, hunter-killer missions, and being a sniper killing individual enemy soldiers and officers.

With his hair cut high and tight, he began every morning with the airborne shuffle. Saint Michael’s prayer reverberated in his mind, and his left chest still had scabs where the two points of his wings had been pounded into him with a fist. His instructor was a constant source of encouragement:
“You are Pukes, and I am here to break you and make you quit!!"

“You will move farther, faster, and fight harder than any other soldier!"

“I expect ice water to flow through your veins!”

“When the action gets hot you will fight on and complete your mission even if you are the lone survivor.”

“Surrender is no longer a word in your vocabulary!”

To ripen a person for self-sacrifice he must be stripped of his distinctive identity. The effacement of his separateness must be thorough. He must cease to be an individual. His joys and sorrows, his pride and confidence must spring from the fortunes and capacities of the group. The uniforms, banners, emblems, medals, parades, music, elaborate etiquette and ritual are designed to separate the soldier from his flesh-and-blood self and mask the overwhelming reality of life and death. When confronted by torture or annihilation, his source of strength is not in himself but in being part of something mighty, glorious and indestructible. He is ready to die for a button, a flag, a word, an opinion, or a myth.

Some days the sergeant ground his face into the dirt, placing his boot on the back of his neck while he low crawled across the Red Square. On other days a five mile ruck-run to the ninety foot high rappelling wall was a real smoker. He was able to field strip his M16 by the numbers in his sleep. A fifteen count manual of arms was child’s play. He was ready to do the hard and heavy work until the job got done. With his face painted in tiger stripe camouflage design; he was hard core, mean, and scary.

“Hooah!”
On his last day, a staff NCO came out with a rabbit in his hands and talked to them about escape, evasion, and survival. And with his soft voice droning on, he cracked its neck, skinned it, disemboweled it, and then threw its guts out into the audience. It was his last lesson. Then, like times long ago when a man put out to sea and ceased to exist for two or three years, or forever, he boarded a chartered civilian liner leaving from Washington State.

After a stopover in Alaska, he waited two days in Camh Rahn Bay before hopping a C-130 Hercules to the Replacement Center at Bien Hoa. There he learned about how the war was really fought. Gathered in a hot, stuffy break room, the Major began:

"I never heard of a gook, or a slope-head, or a slant-eye, or a dink, who did anything but eat rice and shit and fight wars. You should never trust a Vietnamese. He's not like you. He's seen too much dishonesty; and he doesn't believe in anything anymore."

And then he pointed to a military map he that had taped to the wall. It had areas marked with Wild West names like "Dodge city," and "Arizona Territory."

"Well, you're going right into the middle of it, men. Your camp is just a few miles north of this village. This whole area is considered VC territory. The general rule is a dead Vietnamese is a confirmed Viet Cong, anyone alive is a suspect. The idea is to clean 'em out of there, pronto." He smiled, and he barked "Gentlemen; welcome to Viet Nam." then dismissed them.
After a week at Cherry School Louis got his orders; and hitched a ride in a deuce and a half. He was young, dumb, and full of it. They drove nearly two hours through unending rice paddies on a bumpy, dusty, joyless, Highway 1. The heat and the constant motion of his head were making him sleepy. He felt the truck slow down, and he saw a group of Vietnamese children standing outside their village. They were giving them the finger. The guys next to him stood up, pulled out their .45’s and blew the kids away. They didn’t even stop.

Forty-five miles south of the DMZ, halfway between Hue and Quang Tri, he arrived at Camp Eagle. The entire northeast corner was built on a Vietnamese cemetery. They didn't plow under any of the graves; they just built the compound on top of it. There were still burial plots between some of the buildings.

Louis hooked up with five guys assigned to an empty hooch at the edge of the perimeter. It was just a simple one floor plywood building fortified with a metal fence. There were sandbags around the outside up to window level and a sandbag blast wall about three feet out from the door to protect the entrance. There were screens for windows with plywood flaps you could let down when it rained. The tin roof had more sandbags on top to help it stay on in the wind.

It was empty because the six-man team that had occupied it had been wiped out shortly before he arrived. It had been completely stripped. They cleared out the dead team’s equipment and personal effects; not a bunk or broom remained. It was never prime real estate and was always known as the dead team’s hooch.
He got squared away in a corner. The first night they woke up with the whole place shaking. A battery of 8-inch howitzers was indiscriminately firing two hundred pound projectiles at a strip west of the camp. The next day, they talked to a specialist up in the battery. They were told that he had orders to fire no less than thirty rounds of harassment fire every night. So they just had to get used to it.

They also had to put up with the mad minutes. Once a week the guys pulling guard duty would line up at the perimeter and open fire for two or three minutes. They just fired in the hope that they killed something. Then they ceased fire and waited for a reaction. Nothing usually happened. Maybe they called it mad minutes because it was crazy.

For the next week the rain kept falling. It pounded against the roof. It was pleasant at first, and then became deafening, and finally inconspicuous. The dampness sank into everything: sleeping gear, clothing, and feet. All had the smell of mildewed canvas. He moved his gear closer to the open doorway, hoping that the rain would scare away the mosquitoes. The GI bug repellant that he had borrowed worked well for a few minutes, but quickly wore off.

Three times a day he moved in a line past the front of a tent that served as the chow hall. Into the two halves of his mess kit the cooks poured, placed, and plopped a variety of foods that included instant potatoes, boiled cabbage, stewed corn, circles of sliced canned bread, and "Gainesburgers," an unidentifiable chewy, dry substance soaked in grease and served in gravy. Then he sauntered back to the bunker to join his comrades as they ate sitting on a pile of sandbags. At night they sat at a long wooden table in the Big Top, playing chess and listening
to the radio. The news was broadcast by Hanoi Hanna. There was more than one woman who announced the news, but they called them all by the same name.

At the end of the day, civilians, mostly women and children, would swarm over the dump. For security reasons the CO wanted to keep them away. He gave permission to all the men who were on guard duty to use CS gas. CS or tear gas is the strongest gas that can be used that will not kill you, but it can cause extremely bad burns. Louis just shrugged his shoulders.

There was plenty to learn and not much time to learn it: "Don't pick up anything without checking it for booby traps. Inside the bunker line, stay on the paths; outside of it, stay off of them. Don't venture outside the perimeter unless you were willing to die."

Louis was part of a forward observation group assigned to recon-security duty along an ambush prone section of the highway. As a rule teams adopted the names of cigarettes; they were known as Lucky strike.

Snipers, land mines, and booby traps infested the landscape of farms and foliage. He watched scores of footbridges, embankment pathways, and other guerrilla travelled avenues in the extensive marshlands commonly called the pineapple plantation. They deserved to be called the Bad Lands. The flat swampy region spread out like a soggy sponge; the area was a maze of swamps, rice paddies, tall elephant grass, and waterways. Walking in it was like "wading in oatmeal." In places it was covered by triple-canopy jungle, sometimes so dense that light had difficulty getting through. It offered an ideal Viet Cong approach corridor and was a well-known enemy route.
His team also conducted patrols with the Navy boats that landed ambush parties along the mud flats and reed-covered shores. The rivers were like winding snakes fed by a lacework of muddy canals and narrow streams. They were a liquid highway that carried countless cargo ships to the docks where they lined up, bow to stern, waiting their turn for heavy tractors to unload their foodstuffs and dusty bags of rice.

On jungle patrol, they would sometimes vanish for days at a time, or even weeks. Then late in the night they would just as magically reappear, moving like shadows through the moonlight, filing in silently from the dense rain forest. By the end of the month the green tape that covered his belt buckle was filthy and almost black: the mark of a veteran.

At zero-dark-thirty, they departed on a search and destroy mission to locate a battalion of NVA located in Indian country about 10 – 15 clicks north. Some of the guys started their day with O2 and Benadryl, but he never drank before a mission, so he wasn’t hung-over. The team had a leader, Kit Carson, medic, radio telephone operator, and pointman. They rotated point, unless someone was gung-ho and volunteered.

Their mission was bodies, equipment, and documents; in that order. The commander was obsessed with body counts and favorable kill ratios. He believed that the hearts and minds approach was overdone...and the only way to overcome the VC was with brute force. Unofficially there was a three-day pass for anyone who could prove that they killed an NVA.
Huey helicopters riddled with AK-47 fire inserted them into the LZ, making false landings to fool the enemy. The Vietcong had shifted their priority targets from the South Vietnamese to the Americans. In a nearby province, the casualty rate for one American unit was running at 40 percent. The insurgents used bamboo or other similar material to make poles, whips, punji stakes, and various other traps.

Punji stakes are designed to injure or kill personnel who step or fall on them. Those pointed sticks were soaked in urine and feces, and guaranteed to sow infection, or death. The guerrillas often used them on prospective LZs to wound personnel as they jumped from a helicopter to the ground. They often placed them on the banks of gullies and streams where troops might hop from one side to the other. They also used them along roads and trails, at entrances to villages, and at ambush sites.

Their patrol scrambled with painted faces and jungle fatigues through a heavily wooded area that provided cover, as they relocated to the operations area. Then they moved out single file across the meadows and paddies to their coordinates. Louis wasn’t good at either leading or following; he was a lone wolf who howled at the moon: a Moondog.

The point man had to cut through thick tangles of vines and bamboo or scurry over or under fallen trees. It wasn't unusual to go around bomb craters or other obstacles. The easy way was always mined. The man behind him was trying to make his eyes and ears reach out as far as possible through the jungle, searching to the immediate front and to the sides, checking his compass to stay on course and counting paces for distance.
Maintain speed. Don’t stop! No talking, smoking, or any noise. A muffled cough could alert the enemy. It was okay to pee, if you twinkled down a twig. On longer missions you dug a cat hole, and then covered it up. You wouldn’t want the enemy to find your trail because he stepped in shit. Some guys just put a cork in it.

Radio contact was by code clicks rather than voice. There were long hours of tense waiting. The quiet heightened your senses; you noticed everything: the sudden snap of bamboo, the jet-like whines of mosquitoes, dive-bombing flies; a darkness so black that the only visible light was the luminous glow of decaying leaves.

While they risked their necks in the jungle, the NVA harassed them, attacked them, and sometimes overran them. With their palm leaf helmets and camouflage nets, the Vietminh soldiers were virtually invisible in the thick bush. Often the enemy would be within ten feet. They would habitually curse under their breath “I just know the little bastards are around here somewhere.”

The basic field gear and ammunition weighed from 50 to 60 pounds. But each team leader added to it according to his own experience and the particular mission. The theory is that a recon unit shouldn’t lug much weight because they need to cover a great deal of ground. As a guy that was actually going out there however, nobody wanted to run out of ammo when in the middle of nowhere and Charlie was up close and personal.
Some of the things he normally hauled were: thirty-five M-16 magazines, each loaded with eighteen rounds. Twenty rounds seemed to compress the spring too much and caused jams. He put seven magazines in a one quart canteen cover because the standard M-56 ammo pouch only held four or five. Six M-26 egg grenades were in another cover. When exploded each was capable of spraying an area within a ten meter radius with a thousand fragments. It supposedly had a five second fuse, but you better count on three to be on the safe side. Most guys removed the shipping safety from their grenades and wrapped some black tape around the pull ring to hold it flat and help avoid accidental pulls.

Some men carried a full light-weight nylon rip-stop camouflage poncho that could be rigged up to a tree to form a one man shelter, or used with the liner to form a sleeping bag. But, while sneaking around in the jungle they couldn’t put up much of shelter, so he opted for a rain suit. They all had M1 steel helmets with a liner and camouflage cover that they wore green side out. Some carried a large compress bandage in the helmet band for easy access. Their steel-centered, nylon-covered flak jacket weighed 6.7 pounds, but on hot days it seemed much heavier.

Inside his rucksack he stashed a can opener (called a "John Wayne" or a "P-38"), pocket knife, heat tabs, wristwatch, dog tags, mosquito repellent, cigarettes, packets of Kool-Aid, a lighter, matches, sewing kit, USO stationery, pencils and pens, Sterno, safety pins, signal flares, spools of wire, razor blades, chewing tobacco, joss sticks and a statuette of the smiling Buddha, candles, grease pencils, The Stars and Stripes, fingernail clippers, Psy Ops leaflets, and a bush hat. His E&E (Escape and Evasion)
gear consisted of a penlight, a fluorescent distress/identification panel, a small emergency radio that only tuned in to the aircraft emergency channel, a hunting knife, first aid dressing, lensatic compass, and a strobe light for signalling aircraft.

If a mission seemed especially hazardous, or if it entailed a particular jungle hell-hole known to be bad, he carried everything he could.

His field rations were freeze dried, pre-mixed dehydrated, C-rats or sometimes Vietnamese indigenous rations. Each meal was in its own cardboard box, which contained one canned meat item; one canned fruit, bread or dessert. The accessory pack sealed in a foil pouch contained cigarettes, matches, chewing gum, toilet paper, coffee, cream, sugar, and salt; and a spoon. Most often he wasn’t hungry and waited until they returned to base camp to eat. Instead, he ate a lot of candy and lifesavers. Each morning he would make sure his two plastic canteens were full, drop in some puritabs to kill whatever was swimming in the water, and put four candy bars in his shirt pocket to eat while on the move.

In addition to the three standard weapons: the M-60, M-16, or the M-79, they carried the enemy’s weapons on a catch-as-can basis. At various times, they carried M-14s and CAR-15s, Swedish Ks and grease guns, captured AK-47s, and Chi-Coms, RPGs and Simonov carbines, black-market Uzis, and .38-caliber Smith & Wesson handguns, 66 mm LAWs, and shotguns, as well as blackjacks and bayonets and C-4 plastic explosives.
He took the tail to cover their six. Some FNG was strap hanging with them and they didn’t want him to get in the way.

"Set up security and make a sweep,” the First shirt grunted, "and don't step on any booby traps."

A security wheel formed with someone staying awake at all times. Crescent shaped Claymore mines were spread in front hopefully with the convex side pointed in the direction of the enemy. They could be detonated remotely, blasting 350 metal balls a range of 100 meters, shredding anyone in their path.

A frightening desolate loneliness settled in. In the 120 degree heat even the air sweated. He lay on his side while flies and gnats swarmed around the sores on his legs. His tropical jungle boots insoles may have protected him, but his feet were wet all the time and he was afraid of getting foot rot. He pried off a few leeches and counted the number of his 365 days he had left before he got to go home.

"Bad night, the ghosts are out."
"Don't get spooked."
"Stay cool, stay alive."

They got the hell rocketed out of them at three A.M., taking fire from boo-coo individuals wearing khakis, carrying AK-47s, and shouting: Tien-len! Tien-len!

Lock and load! It was total confusion: the smell of gunpowder, the yells of the grunts, the radio going crazy. When in doubt empty your magazine. A fifty-caliber machine gun spit out bullets a half inch in diameter and an inch long at 3000 feet per second. Bullets from M16s ripped into their targets with a velocity of 990 meters per second causing fearsome wounds. Once inside the body the small 5.56 round turned internal organs into mush, and splintering hard bone sending fragments into other parts of the body, causing still more damage.
They scattered behind the tree line and he found himself on his belly. He watched the 50 calibre tracers, and knew that between each one were four more bullets. Somewhere overhead the coronel was yelling and cursing into the radio:

"Get in there and mix it up. Shoot the son-of-a-bitches; this is a free fire zone."

"Time to kill a Commie for Mommy."

With casual slowness he brought his gun up to eye level...he had two of them in the field ...his elbows on the ground steadied his weapon. Unmoving, his finger was reluctant to touch the trigger. They must be greased. They were the enemy. His first shot would drop the closer one; he might pull the other one down with a running shot. His training said shoot. Kill them. He owned them both, their lives were his. Then he heard, "Red Dog One, Grunt Six." The Cobras rolled in. And they were all blown to vapor.

The field officers were all extremely happy about the body count. It assured them of being awarded Bronze and Silver Stars for flying over the area in their helicopter.

The fire fight over, they came across the body of an American soldier. He had been captured, pinned to a tree and skinned alive. His genitals were stuck in his mouth and his eyes were still wide open.

The next morning, they were rousted from an uneasy sleep with another unwelcome directive: Conduct a sweep of the nearby fields for enemy forces, and search the hamlets for hidden stockpiles of weapons and food. The order of the day was to kill anything that moved.
“Kill anything you want to kill, any time you want to kill it, just don't get caught.”

As they were trudging along, they sighted a small group about five hundred meters out in the bush. The team leader hollered "Dong Lai!" which meant "Stop." Maybe they didn’t hear, or perhaps they didn’t understand his Vietnamese; but they got wasted. And when they approached the bodies, they shot them again to make sure that they were dead. No weapons were found. The bodies were searched. Identification and passes were destroyed. Then they cut off their heads, jammed them down on bamboo stakes, and placed them in the middle of the trail. Lucky strike was written on the top of some of the heads, and others had company patches hammered into them.

They entered the villages shoulder to shoulder carrying their rifles about hip high. They entered walking while shooting at houses, bushes, or anywhere that looked as if there might be somebody hiding behind, in, or under it. They’d rarely find a military age man, only a ghost town: women, children, and old people. The men had disappeared.

Once someone found a man sleeping in his hut and shot him dead. They used the body for target practice, then propped him up and put a cigarette in his mouth. They took turns taking pictures next to him while wearing a necklace of human ears that they had collected- another souvenir for the scrapbook. Some of them went into the houses and ripped off knick-knacks from the family shrines. Louis dug a skull out of one of the graves thinking it would make a great candle-holder back at his hooch.
Most of the houses had adjoining bunkers where the women and children hid when there was a mortar attack. On that particular day, there was an order given to frag all suspected positions. "Fire in the hole!" echoed all afternoon, as grenades were thrown in all directions, and especially into the bunkers. Anyone found dead was reported as a Viet Cong.

Afterwards, the soldiers searched the houses for hidden entrances and arms caches. They moved the fragments of body parts to one side with the butt of their rifles, and finally found an opening under a fireplace. Two tunnel rats crawled through the long connection to a hideout under the village pond, but it was empty.

Orders had been given to burn the hamlets to the ground. They began throwing heat tabs onto the roofs before they moved out.

A helicopter circled nearby and broadcast a pre-recorded tape through a loudspeaker:

"Nguyen, your fighting is futile; you are being used by the North Vietnamese lackeys of Red China. Give yourself up voluntarily, and the Government of Vietnam promises you food and a place to live."

In the last six months, almost two thousand drops had been made in the area. Each one distributed over twenty-five thousand handbills. A similar ten-minute tape broadcast in Vietnamese was played each time. It was hoped that the Viet Cong huddled in concealed holes near the villages would become disillusioned, raise their arms in the air, and cry out the words "Chieu Hoi". The only time Louis saw an NVA discard his rifle, his team leader just said, "Burn him" and he was sent to the hereafter.
In the distance two aircraft came down at tree top level, jettisoning their black, cigar shaped canisters. A swoosh, a moment of silence, and then there was a sheet of flame topped by an enormous black billow.

Napalm was developed at Harvard and used in WWII. Dow Chemical manufactured it for the U.S. Armed forces throughout the Vietnam conflict. It’s a jelly produced from the salts of aluminum, palmitic, and naphthenic acids. It comes in the form of a grey-white powder resembling soap that’s mixed with gasoline.

The explosion of a 200-litre napalm incendiary bomb fuels massive destruction with a circle of flames about 240 feet in diameter. A human being in the open cannot protect himself against it. In that zone the heat varies from 1,800 to 3,600°F and the carbon monoxide release is massive. It paralyses the will and robs the victim of the ability to move. There are no survivors.

Outside that zone unsheltered individuals suffer burns from flaming splashes of napalm. They are distinguishable from ordinary burns because they are covered with a viscous black magma resembling tar. Underneath the burns are almost always third degree. The destruction of all skin, epidermis and dermis, renders any spontaneous healing impossible.

The wet ground smoked. Scorched mud daubed walls and thatch roofs smoldered. There was no sound. Charred dead bodies lay scattered indiscriminately over a burned-out field that was once a poor peasant village. Unidentified bodies frozen in agony reached up toward the sky. They smelt like fried pork, burnt hair, and gasoline. A child hung lifeless in an old woman´s wrinkled hands; blood ran out of the holes that had been the eyes and mouth of his burnt, black face.

Moondog’s team threw a few Aces of Spades around the bodies, and then they made their way to the Exfil.

*Killing is our business and business is good.*
The FNG never saw the landmine as he stepped on it. Pieces and parts of his body rained on them: a shower of blood and flesh. They found what was left of his head and put it in a body bag. Louis sat in the Huey totally exhausted, picking the brains from the soles of his combat boots.

By the time they got back from the boonies their skin was covered with festering sores from heat rash, leech bites, and jungle rot. They had shaggy beards, haggard emaciated faces, and deep sunken eyes that took little notice of the black plastic sacks waiting in the shadows of the hospital tent; laid out like suitcases for the Angel Flight home.

They dropped off their gear, and then went straight to the sawed-off fifty-five gallon oil drum latrines and showers. Afterwards, they chowed down in the tin roofed mess hall where they listened to a talk on the division’s efforts to win the war followed by useless classes on VD. All were given Military Payment Certificates that could be traded for the customary serviceman’s vices: cigarettes, alcohol, prostitutes, and drugs.

Louis had negotiated a deal before he left: Two beers for each ear he brought back. But his buddy told him to forget it. It seemed that everyone hated one of the master sergeants and wanted to see him go. The guy was a pig: first on the chow line, first to grab the best C rations and to leave the ham and lima beans, but the worst was when he grabbed all the beer and soda which was supposed to be for the whole platoon. They had a pool going: any man with a witness who blew him away would get $2,000. One night someone threw a few Willie Peter grenades into his bunk and he was history.
Willie Peter, that's White Phosphorus. It's not supposed to be used for personnel. It's for marking sites or smoke screens. Probably one of the worst sights is a person that's been burned by it because it doesn't stop. It just burns completely through the body.

Nobody collected, so the whole bounty went for a celebration.

A short way down the road, near a malodorous canal at the edge of the village, a wooden walkway led to an open-sided restaurant/bar/whorehouse. Barbecued chickens with their shiny lacquer-like coatings hung from hooks in the window. Soldiers in big hats and low-slung revolvers nursed their “33” beers at a stand-up counter. Inside, they’d sit around a table, large jaws chewing gum as they squinted from the smoke of a joint that was passed from man to man.

They shot the shit for a while. Sniper teams talked about medals like a bounty system. Supposedly there was an official Division letter saying how many a guy had to zap to get what medal. A bronze star for so many gooks, a silver star for so many more. Conversations were nervous, ritualistic, almost cliché:

"Saigon tea costs many P."

"How's the Nam treating you?"

"Hey, one big party, just living the night life."

"No lie, scary stuff, I almost shit my pants"

"Fuckin’ Choi Oi!"

"Roger-dodger, almost cut me a new asshole."

"Never trust a grunt."

“All I want to do is survive this and get out."

"Look, if it's your turn to die, that's it. It just wasn't your day."
"How did you know he was VC?" and all joined in: "He's dead," with a clink of glasses and a lot of laughter.

Moondog went outside to get some air. Everyone gave him room. Fellow soldiers didn’t mess with anyone who wore a black beret. It wasn’t officially recognized; but it signified respect. He overheard a short private conversation while he took a leak.

"Air America? Who are they?"

"Well, they're supposed to be a civilian passenger and cargo service, but it's a CIA front. You know: Anything, Anywhere, Anytime. Mostly snoopin' and poopin’, flying ass and trash, a few rice drops, sometimes hard drops, and a lot of S and R."

"How much do they pay?"

"That's the good part. They guarantee twenty thousand. Plus you get PX privileges, an airline discount, and ten days of R&R every month."

"Twenty thousand?"

"Yeah. And you can join right now, before you get out."

"You doing that?"

"I’m short, two months left.” He slapped an envelope against his hand. “Got the letter today. It's all fixed. You want in?"

"I'll think about it."

Moondog called his buddies. They grabbed their shit and headed for Sin City to hunt for entertainment and drink their brains out. They loaded up the back of the jeep with some heavies (C-rats of spaghetti and meatballs and ham and lima beans). As they drove through the village any children who were begging along the side of the road were fair game. They
wouldn't throw them to the kids; they would just bounce them off their heads or try and knock them off their bicycles. When they ran out of food they just lit up heat tabs and waited until a kid got really close so they could drop it into his hands.

The beer-can-metal walls of the huts lined both sides of the dusty road. American dollars had led to an inflation where prices just kept going, going, going up. Food had become a luxury and locals were driven to the black market and other corrupt activities just to keep alive. Women became prostitutes so that they could feed their kids. The streets were jumping; crowded with busy vendors from miles around. Gum wrappers, cigarette butts, and Cola girls were everywhere: "Fifty cents, GI. Buy, Croakacrola?" They were young and cute. He was convinced that the soda was poisoned. Never knew who the enemy was: Spies infiltrating among the cooks, shoe shine boys, old women grinning betel black, and girlfriends.

The majority of the doors that they passed were entrances to bars and skivvie houses. Small boys ran up to the soldiers pushing their fingers back and forth through a hole formed by their thumb and indices, as if to say OK.

"Hey, numma one, you want boom-boom?"

"You come with me; two dollar."

Louis and his associates just shoved them away saying “DiDi” (go away) and swaggered inside the dark coolness of a bar-restaurant. Each ordered a beer and a steak. They were served two thin strips of very well done buffalo meat, french-fried potatoes, and crisp-crusted bread. He barely had time to take a bite when a bar girl slid into the adjacent seat saying, "Buy me a
drink?” As flies and gnats swirled around them and played in the beer puddles on the table she repeated, “You numma-one jai, You numma-one jai,” and moved her smiling mask closer.

Warnings about the dreaded Vietnamese cock-rot came to mind. He had been told that "Sometimes amputation is the only answer”. Rumors circulated about “guys who had been quarantined in ’Nam since ’61 trying to be cured; " and " a guy who woke up one morning and found his pecker had fallen off.” Damn, son of a bitch had to squat to piss.

“Maybe later, ” he said.
“Don´t be cheap Charlie,” she whispered in his ear.
“Maybe later,” he repeated as he murmured to himself, “Xin Loi.”

In 1971 his Company commenced final stand-down. And as he was leaving the country, Moondog thought about his own Ghosts of Glory. He hated the rules, the fine print, and the small slips of paper that controlled his life. He wondered why the myth of progress looked so much like destruction. When he got back to the world he would call his friends and family. Then spend money and long hours searching for his soul and ways to reestablish his identity in time and space.

On Good Friday, March 30, 1972 the North Vietnamese Army launched a twelve-division assault across the Demilitarized Zone. Over thirty thousand well-armed soldiers supported by more than four hundred armored fighting vehicles, tanks, mobile missile launchers, and long-range cannons crossed the Ben Hai River and turned the lonely firebases into shooting galleries. The war was over and the United States had lost.
By March 1975, North Vietnamese troops were wiping out South Vietnamese divisions and advancing on Saigon. "I think Ambassador Martin should begin preparing a plan of evacuation," Kissinger said. "I think we owe…it's our duty…to get the people who believed in us out. . . .” Nguyễn Văn Thiệu resigned and left the nation with millions of dollars in gold; finally settling in Massachusetts where he lived in seclusion until his death.

At 4 a.m. on April 29, 1975, CIA Station chief, Polgar awoke to the sound of rockets and artillery. The airport was under fire. The chaotic evacuation had begun. A famous photograph captured an Air America helicopter atop an apartment building as a long line of people waited for the exodus.

Polgar burned all the CIA's files, cables, and codebooks. Then he composed his farewell:

"THIS WILL BE FINAL MESSAGE FROM SAIGON STATION. IT HAS BEEN A LONG FIGHT AND WE HAVE LOST. . . . THOSE WHO FAIL TO LEARN FROM HISTORY ARE FORCED TO REPEAT IT. LET US HOPE THAT WE WILL NOT HAVE ANOTHER VIETNAM EXPERIENCE AND THAT WE HAVE LEARNED OUR LESSON. SAIGON SIGNING OFF."

The next day a T-54 tank with the number 843 painted on its turret demolished the gate that protected the Presidential Palace and Saigon fell.
5- The Tin Drum

Ya gotta start off with ya left, boom- boom. Ya gotta start off with ya left, boom- boom.

Sound off: 1, 2! Sound off: 3, 4! Sound off: 1, 2, 3, 4, 1, 2…3, 4!

Band practice was every Friday night at seven-thirty, sharp. Twenty-four young boys divided into four straight lines. All in uniform. All in place. All lifting their knees to the marching cadence that commanded their movements. Back and forth in a church’s basement they practiced. The glocks, the bugles, the fifes, and the drums. Oh the drums: the snares who played their rolls; the tenors that answered; and the bass that kept everyone together. Boom- boom-boom.

Boom.

1942 - FDR ordered the formation of the Office of Strategic Services. It was a clearinghouse of information for the Joints Chief of Staff; and also quietly engaged in propaganda, espionage, and subversion. The OSS helped train, arm, and supply resistance movements including Mao Zedong’s Red Army and the Viet Minh.

Boom.

1945 – The OSS was abolished. The remaining groups ceased covert operations and returned to harmless information gathering and analysis. General “Wild Bill” Donovan proposed the creation of a new agency to coordinate intelligence and establish national security objectives.
1947- President Truman signed the National Security Act, creating the Central Intelligence Agency and National Security Council.

The CIA became the direct descendent of the paramilitary component of the OSS Special Activities Division accountable to the president through the National Security Council. It had no democratic or congressional oversight; and its charter allowed it to "perform such functions and duties… as the NSC may from time to time dictate." That was the loophole that opened the door to clandestine acts and dirty tricks. It had been written by Wall Street banker and lawyer Clark Clifford at the request of John and Allen Dulles.

1948- The CIA created the Office of Policy Coordination, led by Wall Street lawyer Frank Wisner. According to its secret charter, its responsibilities included “propaganda, economic warfare, and preventive direct actions which included sabotage, demolition, subversive acts,… assistance to underground resistance groups, and supporting indigenous anti-communist elements in threatened countries of the free world."

It had been another day of parades; another day of moth eaten uniforms and dusty medals. Louis sat in the back of the small smoke filled Hunt and Fish club near the base feeling alone and lost. He was finding the slow readjustment to civilian life strained and painful. He
longed for the camaraderie, the brotherhood; the certitude, the self-surrender, and the excitement that helped him feel alive.

He nudged his way across the bar filled with night crawlers and had a short conversation with the guy next to him. They agreed on everything over the loud noise, and a few beers; and seemed to read each other’s mind as one of them complained:

‘The next time we’ll keep out the fucking bleeding heart media and hit ´em with everything we got. We won’t stop until we win; even if we have to kill ´em all. We’ll prove those God- damn hippies wrong.’

Before he left Louis was given a card with a number to call. He didn’t know that he was being recruited to join the behind the scenes struggle protecting American values and saving the world for democracy. Invited to become part of what was known as the Third Force, the Silent Service, the Other Agency, the Firm, or where he was headed: ‘La Compania’. All that he knew was that he was being offered a job and a possible escape from his intolerable present.

He called the next morning, walked though a few standard questions, and was scheduled for an operational interview. At 7AM sharp he was at the McCormack Post Office and Court House building in Boston. The solid, permanently locked, reinforced wood door bore the number 406, and nothing more. The window above it was covered with plywood and nailed tightly shut. He pushed a small black button, and in a few minutes, someone glanced though a peephole and then opened the door a crack. It was just enough to ask him a list of questions that verified his identity. Satisfied, he was let in and greeted by a large, round seal on the opposite wall that bore the words: NATIONAL SECURITY AGENCY-UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.
The receptionist gave him a pencil and a QSX: Quick Social History form to fill out. He was required to disclose in detail the activities of the last ten years of his life. For thirty five minutes he answered questions about his family of origin, development, education, marital history, finances, occupations, legal and military records. His security forms were reviewed, and after being deemed complete, he was fingerprinted. During the entire ordeal he was never let out of the sight of one of the guards. As he was escorted back to the door, he was told that they would be in touch.

Fort Meade, Maryland is named in honor of George Meade, the Union Army general who won the Battle of Gettysburg in 1863. It was inaugurated in 1917 and used for basic training and as prisoner of war camp during World War II. In the 1950s, the post became headquarters of the National Security Agency. Louis was ordered to report to the Friendship Annex for applicant processing. He was given a department code number, but had no idea what the department did.

The massive Headquarters Building was a three million square foot labyrinth completely interconnected in all directions. He entered through the two-story Visitor Control Center, which was one of the more than one hundred fixed watch posts. His clearance was checked, and a temporary badge with a large red V was issued. He was instructed not tell anyone that
he was there for an interview; and to return the badge to the Security Protective Officer before he left.

Permanent badges are about the size of a playing card with the employee's full-face picture, name, and social security number on the front. There are different colored badges, each marked with a variety of designs, from solids to diagonal stripes, indicating affiliation and level of clearance.

Fully cleared contractors wear green; those with merely a secret clearance have Limited Interim Clearance printed on top. Blue badges are worn by those who have passed a background review, polygraph exam, top secret code word clearance, and have been indoctrinated for Special Intelligence. Students have a turquoise border; and former directors and deputy directors have red and blue stripes around them. Other badges are used for specific purposes. For example, anyone transporting documents from the building needs a Courier badge from the section's security officer. Tabs attached to the chain above the badge denote a particular function, others grant special access. The reverse sides of all badges contain a warning against improper use, and a post office box in the event of loss, but no mention of the Agency.

Beyond the Visitor Center, secrecy and security permeate the air. Classified talk in corridors, restrooms, cafeterias, even the barber shop, is forbidden. No meetings of any kind can be held where an un-cleared person may be present. Staring down from pastel walls, posters declare: you are a security target, safeguard classified information. Others are less subtle. One depicts a man with gun in hand, noose around his neck, his feet embedded in a concrete
block, a chain around his ankle attached to a five-hundred-pound weight, and his mouth taped shut. Below is the inscription "You don't have to go to extremes . . . JUST DON'T TALK!"

Above the escalators, moving electronic words on message boards warn employees against discussing work. Along the hallways and in the cafeteria, signs hanging from the ceiling warned: "Don't Spill the Beans, Partner!" It was reminiscent of World War Two slogans that reflected the fear that Nazi spies were listening everywhere:

"Even a fish wouldn’t get caught if he kept his mouth shut."

"Free speech doesn’t mean careless talk."

And his favorite: "Loose Lips Sink Ships"; although he always thought hips instead of lips.

Louis’s escort had a big red E on his badge. The aide answered his questions in a candid, off-the-record manner as he paraded him through the gauntlet of interviews. He was surprised to find that every official who interviewed him was very familiar with his resume, down to the marks on his transcripts. They asked thoughtful, probing questions, and appeared above all to be nice people.

They left him at a computer terminal to fill out forms. The first was the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory which consisted of 567 questions and took him almost an hour and a half to finish. The MMPI has 10 clinical scales that are used to identify different psychological conditions. They were interested to know if he was a hypochondriac, experienced a general dissatisfaction with his life, how he reacted in stressful situations, if he rejected authority, or was amoral. Did he have feelings of persecution, rigid attitudes,
excessive doubts, unreasonable fears, difficulties in concentration or impulse control, feelings of social alienation, or disturbing questions regarding self-identity?

The second test consisted of 175 true-false questions which took him another half hour to finish. The Millon Clinical Multiaxial Inventory (MCMI) is intended to provide information on psychopathology. The 14 Personality Disorder Scales correspond with Axis II diagnoses such as schizoid, avoidant, depressive, dependent, histrionic, narcissistic, antisocial, compulsive, masochistic, borderline, or paranoid. The 10 Clinical Syndrome Scales correspond with Axis I diagnoses such as anxiety, somatoform, bipolar, alcohol or drug dependence, PTSD, depression, and delusional or thought disorders.

When he finished, Louis was escorted to an interview with a clinical psychologist. There he was shown a sequence of ten ambiguous inkblot designs and asked what came to his mind when he saw them: five were black ink on white paper, two black and red ink on white paper, and three were multicolored. Assessing an individual's personality through their reactions to confusing designs is an idea that goes back to Leonardo da Vinci and Botticelli. His responses were: a moth, two people, two people, an animal skin, a butterfly, a rug, faces, an animal, a human, and a crab.

His answers were recorded, and then the inkblots were given to him to hold one at a time. He was told to indicate where he saw what he originally saw, and tell why it seemed that way to him. As he examined the cards the psychologist wrote down everything that he said and did, no matter how trivial. Whether or not he rotated them, how many times he rotated
them, whether he asked permission to rotate them, etc. was all part of his assessment. His answers were interpreted according to:

- their level of vagueness,
- the parts of the inkblots that triggered his response, such as form, color, or location,
- if the basis of his response was the whole inkblot, a detail, or the negative space around or within the inkblot, to what extent a response was faithful to how the actual inkblot looked,
- the amount of mental organizing activity required to produce his response,
- and any illogical, incongruous, or incoherent characteristics that may have been evident.

Any additional comments were also noted.

After lunch he was guided down a narrow passageway past a set of swinging doors that read: Chief of Polygraph Services. The small locked rooms were painted in neutral hues; each having a little sign that said “interview in process” that could be flipped over near the top of the door. Inside there was a glass window on one side, and a large two-way mirror on the other; behind which the Agency’s certified examiners studied the measured, back-and-forth movements of five thin, red-ink pens.

The machine was built into an oversized, well-polished, wood-grain desk-top. Louis sat in a large, heavy, padded, stationary executive-type chair on the other side. The armrests were extra-wide and flat to accommodate his arms being stretched out and his palms being placed
flat. The chair was rotated ninety degrees to the right to face the door, and the examiner stood on his left.

Sensors were placed on his right pointer and middle-finger, and two thick, black pneumatic tubes were strapped around his torso: one across his chest, and another on his diaphragm. The average individual breathes 13 to 18 times per minute. Breathing either over or under those limits was viewed as suspicious. A blood pressure cuff was placed around his left upper bicep. After he was strapped in, he was asked “Do you know how a polygraph works?” And without waiting for a response, the examiner explained:

“It records physiological differences in your body when I ask you questions. Changes in depth and rate of your breathing, sweating, and blood pressure will be recorded. The two rubber tubes record your breathing. The two metal finger plates record changes in perspiration. And finally, the cuff on your arm will monitor gradations of your cardiovascular activity.”

He was then instructed to keep his feet flat on the floor, and not to move. The examiner continued:

“I’m now going to demonstrate the physiological responses we have been discussing. This test is intended for you to become accustomed to the recording components and to give me the opportunity to adjust the instrument to you before proceeding to the actual test. In addition, it will demonstrate to me that you are capable of responding, and how your body reacts when you knowingly and willfully lie.”

The polygrapher then administered an older style test designed to make subjects believe that the exam is nearly infallible. He told Louis to pick a card and not show it to him. Then he was told to respond “no” to each question.

“Did you pick a face card? (No.) …”Did you pick a number card? (No.) ”
“It’s obvious you picked a face card.”

“Did you pick a king? (No.) “…”Did you pick a queen? (No.) ”
“Did you pick a jack? (No.) ”

“You’ve clearly drawn a jack.”
“Did you pick a spade? (No.) “…Did you pick a club? (No.) “…
“Did you pick a diamond? (No.) “…Did you pick a heart? (No.) “

“It’s clear that you picked the jack of diamonds. No doubt about it. You can’t
tell a lie without your body giving you away.”

Of course, every card in the deck was the jack of diamonds.

During the next three and a half hours the examiner administered the Espionage and
Sabotage Test. For the polygraph exam to work, the control questions must emotionally
arouse the innocent person, arouse him at least as much as, if not more than, the relevant
questions. A suspect is identified as guilty if she shows more activity on the polygraph to the
pertinent questions than to the others.

The exam was divided into two sections: lifestyle and counter-intelligence. Each section was
repeated four times. The lifestyle questions included information from his security forms,
such as: “Did you live in Florida? Is your name Louis?” etc. There were some odd
questions about his use of drugs, and innuendos about his sexual liaisons, but he had
answered everything truthfully and completely up to that point, and they didn’t faze him in
the least. The counter-intelligence questions included:

“Have you ever had a security clearance before?”
"Have you intentionally mishandled any classified information?"
‘Have you ever worked for a foreign intelligence agency? ’
‘Did you ever do anything that you're ashamed of? ’
‘Did you ever lie to get out of trouble? ‘
‘Did you ever lie to someone in authority? ‘
‘Have you truthfully answered all of the questions on this test? “
The polygraph exam does not detect lies, just signs of emotion: clammy hands and increased heartbeat. Government agencies use the polygraph because naïve and gullible subjects worry that it will detect the slightest hint of deception and will often make admissions that they might not otherwise make. Those who are innocent and falsely accused in the process are acknowledged as “acceptable losses.” The 1971 Oval Office tapes captured President Nixon explaining why he had ordered screening for the White House staff: “Listen, I don’t know anything about polygraphs and I don’t know how accurate they are, but I know they scare the hell out of people.”

Although the Department of Defense regulation 5219.48-R prohibits it, the NCIS Manual encourages agents to lie during interrogations. Sometimes the imagination and the role-playing ability of the examiner is given free reign. One supervisor was known to suddenly shut off the machine in the middle of a test, remove the attachments from the subject and request them get down on their knees to join him praying for their soul and the courage to tell the truth. His sincerity and conviction carried such tremendous psychological impact that it often brought results.

No such dramatics were used today. Before leaving Louis was told to report back the next day for another polygraph test at 9 AM sharp. He was a bit surprised because they had given him the impression that he had already passed. The second interrogation team got the same results as the first. Louis didn’t register the slightest reaction. There wasn't a squiggle. It was as if he was dead. Some might say that it was the mark of a psychopath. When someone's got ice water running through their veins, there's no way anyone can box him.
The results of the psychological tests, together with the polygraph report, were forwarded to the Pentagon's Defense Investigative Service where an intensive special background investigation was begun to establish his suitability for employment and access to highly classified materials.

His documents were pored over and the authenticity of all of the information was personally verified. They checked every federal investigative agency for derogatory information: FBI name and fingerprint records, verification of birth and citizenship, his college education and full-time employment within the previous fifteen years, local criminal justice records, and Department of Defense files. Written inquiries were sent to schools, employers, and local law enforcement agencies. Friends, current and former neighbors, former employers, even former girlfriends were interviewed. Everything was fair game.

After a few months Louis was deemed "witty" and was issued a blue badge. Once again, he found himself taking a Loyalty Oath, pledging his allegiance to the United States of America. Afterwards he was instructed not to draw attention to himself, nor to his association with the Agency. He was cautioned neither to corroborate, nor deny, any specific questions about his activities. If asked about his employment, he was to reply that he worked for the Department of Defence. He was expected to exercise vigilance and common sense while protecting whatever sensitive information that he came in contact with. That obligation was for his lifetime.

He was subsequently assigned to a desk at the State Department where he spent five weeks reading operational files and getting up to speed. Then, instead of contending with meetings,
paperwork, and small minded politics at headquarters, he was sent to the "farm". He completed their SERE training program, and became part of commando operations: the unit which secretary of State Dean Rusk said fought a never-ending war in the blind alleys all over the world.

When he was finally given his assignment, he packed his bags, hopped a plane, and reported to his new chief. He found a wiry, cigar-smoking, ex-airborne officer who had a healthy respect for just how dangerous the place was. His advice was simple, "Admit nothing, deny everything, and make counteraccusations."

Louis carried a pistol in a town where children owned machine guns. He lived on the fringe, habitually switching residences. Once again he was Moondog; driving around in old rust buckets, blending in with the ravenous local wild men, and staying unpredictable. He was a spook, and if he could move fast enough, he would be impossible to hit.
Louis was shaved and in the lobby by eight o’clock. He decided to finish smoking his cigar. So he pulled his hat down, covered his feelings, and went back outside. He stalled as long as he could before he bought a cup of coffee and Danish to go, then walked through the metal detectors, and got on the express elevator for the 23rd floor.

His area was guarded by an unmanned High Security Portal. The door automatically closed behind him when he stepped into the glass-enclosed booth. He swiped his security badge through the card reader. The computer checked his name against the access list; and then began the programs for fingerprint recognition, voice and facial image verification. Both of his eyes were scanned, and the patterns of retinal blood vessels were compared with the database. Finally, his body weight was checked to ensure that only one person was inside the portal. All standard routine. After everything was confirmed, the door opened.

He collected his mail, and headed for his cubicle. Draping his sports coat, with his clearly visible ID over the back of his chair, he logged onto his terminal. He then sat down to drink his coffee, and put on some music to start his day.

... quick minarets......secret alphabets......Learn to forget...

Louis was a contractor working at No Such Agency, but officially employed by Booz Allen. Edwin G. Booz established a small consulting firm in Chicago in 1914. His theory was that
companies would be more successful if they employed someone outside their own organization for expert, impartial advice. Two years later, he and his partners formed the Business Research and Development Company, which conducted studies for commercial and trade organizations. Today, its largest client is the US Federal Government.

Louis sipped his coffee and perused a short background report on Latin America:

The new republics of Argentina, Chile, Gran Colombia and Mexico were all recognized by the United States in 1822. In 1823, U.S. President James Monroe spoke before Congress in response to rumors of a planned Franco-Spanish action to restore Spain’s Empire in the New World. The Monroe Doctrine declared that any further colonization of the Americas or interference with the affairs of sovereign nations located in the Americas would be viewed as actions hostile toward itself.

In 1902, the Drago Doctrine declared that no European power could use force against an American nation to collect debt. In 1904, U.S. President Theodore Roosevelt added a corollary which asserted the right of the U.S. to intervene to stabilize the economic affairs in Latin America countries if they were unable to pay their international obligations. His successors cited the Roosevelt Corollary as justification for U.S. intervention in Cuba (1906-1910), Nicaragua (1909-1911, 1912-1925 and 1926-1933), Haiti (1915-1934), and the Dominican Republic (1916-1924).
The 1930 Clark Memorandum reversed the Roosevelt Corollary. But during the Cold War it was used as a justification to provide intelligence and military aid to Latin American governments threatened by the spread of Soviet-backed Communism. At a news conference on August 29, 1962, U.S. President John F. Kennedy stated: “The Monroe Doctrine means what it has meant since President Monroe and John Quincy Adams enunciated it, and that is that we would oppose a foreign power extending its influence in the Western Hemisphere...”

Nearly everyone said that the model for the Middle East was Vietnam; but in Louis’s mind it was Latin America. He had witnessed right wing governments fight leftist revolutionaries in long drawn out wars that wound up killing a substantial amount of the civilian population. The same tragedy was endlessly repeated:

Indigent country folk surviving hard, miserable, intolerable existences were motivated by campaign slogans like: “bread, peace, and land”; and by promises to redistribute wealth, nationalize foreign-owned industries, strengthen unions, and regulate businesses, protecting workers, consumers, and the environment.

Anyone who was satisfied with the way things were, who was getting his “piece of the pie” viewed any challenge to the status quo as threatening. They supported tacit and at times direct deals with Right-wing groups and the military. Juntas and dictators are good for business; they provide relatively cooperative, stable governments.
The CIA backed the leaders of several Latin American nations: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Guatemala, Guyana, Honduras, Nicaragua, Peru, and Venezuela. Among the dictators were Hugo Banzer, Alfredo Stroessner, Juan Maria Bordaberry, Jorge Rafael Videla, Castello Branco, Costa e Silva, General Medici, and Augusto Pinochet. Every possible scheme was used to put them in power: stuffed ballot boxes, purchasing elections, extortion, blackmail, sexual intrigue, false stories about enemies in the local media, infiltration and disruption of opposing political parties, kidnapping, beating, torture, intimidation, economic sabotage, and death squads.

Once they were in power the foreign intelligence service kept them informed of world affairs. Weekly briefings shaped their decision making process. The dictator’s security apparatus was trained to crack down on its enemies through counter insurgency, interrogation, spying, torture, and assassination. The State department is under congressional supervision, and bound by legislation pertaining to human rights; but the Pentagon is free to do anything it wants. So the programs were provided through the “School of the Americas." (Now known as the Western Hemisphere Institute for Security Cooperation, WHINSEC). Because many of its students have been associated with death squads and coups it’s more often referred to as the "School of the Assassins".

Often, in the countryside whole villages were tortured and slaughtered in campaigns of terror that left homes and crops burned to the ground. The victims were said to be "communists," but almost all were simply peasants, liberals, moderates, labor union
leaders, political rivals, and advocates of free speech and democracy. It’s estimated that more than six million people died as a result of these covert operations. One former State Department official called it the "American Holocaust."

Military and security advisers turn a blind eye these kinds of activities because they believe that they are fighting communism. The ironic thing is that none of it achieved any long term objectives. The dictators grow comfortable with the security apparatus, and become expert at running the police state. Law enforcement and the military are firmly under their control, and are afraid of being tortured or executed if they oppose the regime. Believing that they cannot be overthrown, they become more independent and openly defiant. Examples of this "boomerang effect", or "blowback," include the Shah of Iran, General Noriega, and Saddam Hussein.

Louis turned to reading S/ND folders. They were marked in bold red: “Destroy by any method that prevents disclosure of contents or reconstruction of this document.” Each page contained the phrase "Burn After Reading" stamped across it.

During the McCarthy years, patience, persistence, and money were not considered enough to fight communism. Real weapons were needed in the hands of the military and police of friendly governments. To fulfill that need, President Eisenhower created the Overseas Internal Security Program. It was run by the CIA in concert with the Pentagon and the State Department.
The man who wrote its manifesto was Al Haney, known from his work on Operation Success. He argued, "There have been charges that it is morally wrong for the U.S. to aid undemocratic regimes to strengthen their security systems, thereby serving to entrench them in power. But, the U.S. cannot afford the moral luxury of helping only those regimes in the free world that meet our ideals of self-government. Eliminate all the absolute monarchies, dictatorships, and juntas from the free world and count those that are left and it should be readily apparent that the U.S. would be well on its way to isolation."

The program trained over seven hundred thousand foreign military and police officers. It helped shape the secret police forces of Cambodia, Colombia, El Salvador, Guatemala, Iran, Iraq, Laos, Peru, the Philippines, South Korea, South Vietnam, and Thailand.

In 1962, the Interagency Committee on Police Assistance Programs criticized the organizational structure and “bureaucratic inertia" of the Overseas Internal Security Program. As a result of its recommendations the Agency for International Development created the International Police Academy and the Office of Public Safety (OPS). The OPS instructed law enforcement personnel in the identification and review of criminal and subversive individuals and their organizations. It advocated that the police conduct small scale guerrilla operations to control militant activities, including demonstrations, disorders, and riots.
Members of Congress and the law enforcement community applauded the Office of Public Safety and the International Police Academy hailing it as part of a legitimate peace keeping force. By pinpointing and destroying potential movements, the police could prevent radical movements from threatening a nation's stability without the expense and commitment of a full scale military intervention. The Kennedy administration regarded the programs as fundamental factors “in resisting the threats posed by insurrection and internal subversion...”

The Office of Public Safety increasingly met criticism from the private sector, certain members of Congress, and indigenous populations within nations hosting the OPS missions. Charges included public safety advisors manipulating politics and encouraging inhumane techniques that included torture.

A more covert operation, simply called Project X, also began to take shape in 1962 when President Kennedy dispatched Army Gen. William P. Yarborough to Columbia. The General specifically urged the government to mount "paramilitary, sabotage, and terrorist activities against ... communist proponents." By 1965 the U.S. Army Intelligence Center at Fort Holabird, Maryland had developed Spanish-language Project X manuals that instructed trainees on censorship, electronic eavesdropping and surveillance, counter-intelligence, counter-sabotage measures, handling of informants, interrogation, torture, break-ins, and assassination.

Students were advised to infiltrate political parties that might sympathize with or support guerrilla movements; and to put governmental officials, political leaders, and
members of the infrastructure, whether "hostile or not," under surveillance. The lessons suggested the creation of block-by-block inventories of families and their assets to keep tabs on the population. Citizens were put on black, gray, or white lists for the purpose of identifying and prioritizing them as adversarial targets.

During 1967-68, some of the Project X training material was used by the U.S. Intelligence School on Okinawa to train Vietnamese connected to the Phoenix program.

In 1968, U.S. General Robert W. Porter stated that "In order to facilitate the coordinated employment of internal security forces within and among Latin American countries, we are...endeavoring to foster inter-service and regional cooperation by assisting in the organization of integrated command and control centers; the establishment of common operating procedures; and conducting joint and combined training exercises." The stated aim of fostering cooperation between the various security services was the elimination of “Marxist subversion".

In the 1970s, the U.S. Army Intelligence Center and School moved to Fort Huachuca in Arizona and began exporting Project X material to U.S. military assistance groups working the world over.

Brazilian Army General Borges proposed the exchange of information to aid in the "struggle against subversion" at the Tenth Conference of the American Armies held in Caracas on September 3, 1973. Representatives of the police forces of Chile,
Uruguay, and Bolivia met with Alberto Villar, deputy chief of the Argentine Federal Police and co-founder of the Triple A death squad, to implement cooperation guidelines in March 1974. One of Villar’s concerns was the “threat” of thousands of political exiles in Argentina. By August the garbage dumps in Buenos Aires were invested with Bolivian refugee corpses.

In May 1975, Paraguayan police arrested two men trying to cross the border. They were identified as Jorge Fuentes Alarcon, a member of the Chilean MIR, and Amilcar Santucho, a representative of the ERP. Fuentes admitted that the MIR, ERP, Tupamaros, and the Bolivian National Liberation Army had begun working together, pooling resources, information, and safe houses as early as October 1972. The group was known as the Revolutionary Coordinating Junta and was headed by Amilcar’s brother, Mario Santucho. The JCR was attempting to unify efforts against the Southern Cone Dictatorships. During his interrogation, Jorge Fuentes provided information that helped the Argentine security agencies destroy the ERP.

A letter from the United States Justice Department dated June 6, 1975, demonstrates that Robert Scherrer, a FBI official, passed on information disclosed by the two men to the Chilean DINA. Fuentes was released and sent to Chile (extraordinary rendition), where he was last seen in the torture center Villa Grimaldi before disappearing. The director of Chilean Intelligence, Manuel Contreras wrote the U.S. Justice Department a thank-you note, dated September 25, 1975.
In October, Manuel Contreras invited Paraguayan General Benito Guanes and the chiefs of intelligence from Argentina, Brazil, Bolivia, and Uruguay to a clandestine reunion. It concerned the need for a coordinated effort against guerrilla activities. One month later, at the closing of the First Inter-American summit on national intelligence, an agreement was signed by Army Coronel Manuel Contreras of Chile, Navy Captain Jorge Houses from Argentina, Army Major Carlos Ore from Bolivia, Army Coronel José A. Fons from Uruguay and Army Coronel Benito Guanes Serrano from Paraguay.

The “war on subversives” called Operation Condor was born. Multinational intelligence organizations agreed to hunt down, torture, murder, and otherwise "disappear" one another's dissidents. The precise number of deaths is highly disputed. It’s estimated that anywhere from 13,000 to 60,000 were killed, and hundreds of thousands were imprisoned in concentration camps.

The US was not a key member; nevertheless it provided intelligence, financial aid, and technological assistance. A 1978 cable from the US ambassador to Paraguay Robert White, to the Secretary of State Cyrus Vance, reported a conversation with General Fretes, chief of staff of Paraguay's armed forces, informing him that the South American intelligence chiefs involved in Condor "[kept] in touch with one another through a U.S. communications installation in the Panama Canal Zone which covered all of Latin America". US agencies had full knowledge of Project Condor’s agenda for the elimination of subversives. And there was a tacit approval of their methods.
Assistant Secretary of State Harry Shlaudeman states that "the military regimes of the southern cone... are joining forces to eradicate 'subversion', which increasingly translates into non-violent dissent from the left and the center left. The security forces of the Southern Cone: now coordinate intelligence activities closely; operate in the territory of one another in pursuit of subversives; have established Operation Condor to find and kill terrorists of the Revolutionary Coordinating Committee [JCR] in their own countries and in Europe...

Shlaudeman concludes that "the problem begins with the definition of 'subversion'... [it] has grown to include nearly anyone who opposes government policy..."

This siege mentality shading into paranoia is perhaps the natural result of the convolutions of recent years in which the societies of Chile, Uruguay and Argentina have been badly shaken by assault from the extreme left. But the military leaders, despite near decimation of the Marxist left in Chile and Uruguay along with accelerating progress toward that goal in Argentina, insist that the threat remains and the war must go on. Some (including Uruguayan Foreign Minister Blanco) talk of the "Third World War", with the countries of the southern cone as the bastion of Christian civilization.

The result of this mentality internally is to magnify the isolation of the military from the civilian sector, thus narrowing the range of political and economic options. The use of bloody counter terrorism by these regimes threatens their increasing isolation from the West and the opening of deep ideological divisions among the countries of the hemisphere. An outbreak of PLO-type terrorism on a worldwide scale in response is also a possibility. The industrial democracies would be the battlefield.

Aside from his contribution to the daily six page, single-spaced President’s daily brief, Louis was occupied updating the Kubark Counterintelligence Interrogation Manual and re-naming it the Human Resources Exploitation manual. He was also writing segments of the counterinsurgency manual: FM 31 which was part of Security Assistance Programs. His job was to explain internal defense tactics, techniques, and procedures.
The primary mission of an internal defense program is to organize, train, advise, and improve the tactical and technical proficiency of the host nation’s forces. The emphasis is on preparing elite cadres who will in turn instruct their compatriots. The operations are designed to prop up friendly governments facing popular revolution or guerilla insurgency. Interventions are often covert or quasi-covert due to the unpopular nature of the governments being supported.

Most of the counterintelligence measures are aimed at protecting installations, and detecting espionage, sabotage, and subversion. Examples of counterintelligence measures are: background investigations of persons in sensitive positions or those whose loyalty may be questionable, maintenance of files on organizations and individuals of counterintelligence interest, internal security inspections of installations, control of civilian movement, and unannounced raids and searches of suspected gathering places of dissident groups.

Control measures include curfews, blackouts and travel restraints. Checkpoints, roadblocks, searches, surveillance, and constraint of the activity of groups such as labor unions and political parties increase the effectiveness of the program. Registration and pass systems to regulate sensitive items and critical supplies such as weapons, food, and fuel are likewise recommended. Color coded maps can depict which sectors of the civilian population are: loyal to the government, ambivalent, possibly loyal to the insurgents, or controlled by the insurgents.
In countries where governments don’t have the authority, special or emergency legislation can be enacted. Legislation may include martial law, permitting searches without a warrant, and detention or imprisonment without bringing formal charges.

Censorship and press control remain essential to inspire a favorable government image. Psychological Operations (PSYOP) should attempt to make restrictions more palatable by explaining the necessity of the controls for public safety and well-being.

The host nation needs to carefully explain the benefits of the presence of foreign military advisors to its citizens. It must provide a credible justification in order to prevent the dissenting elements from labeling their presence as an "imperialistic intervention." The struggle is not over terrain; it’s over public support. In general, people want to be left alone, to earn a livelihood, and to conduct their normal daily life undisturbed. The local population doesn’t want to be involved with either the government or the insurgents. However if the government doesn’t win the popular support, its military successes will be irrelevant.

Once advisors are committed, their successful integration into the host nation’s society is essential. They must learn local customs quickly and become involved with youth groups, student groups, labor unions, political parties, and community organizations.

Information about dissident organizations at national, district, and local levels is basic. Intelligence personnel must gather information on members of the
underground, their movements, and their methods. Biographies and photos of suspected underground members, detailed information on their homes, families, education, work history, and associates are essential. A black list of persons whose capture and detention are of foremost importance should include enemy agents and anyone suspected of being subversive. Indications of guerilla activity include accusations of government corruption, circulating petitions, attempts to discredit the government or armed forces, calling government leaders puppets, urging youth to avoid the draft, demonstrations or strikes, or accusations of police or army brutality.

Of course, all team members must understand their responsibilities concerning acts of misconduct by Host Nation personnel. Team members receive briefings before deployment on what to do if they encounter or observe acts such as: murder, mutilation, cruel treatment, or torture. If they encounter prohibited acts they cannot stop, they must disengage from the activity, leave the area if possible, and report the incidents at once to the proper in-country authorities. Team members are prohibited from discussing such matters with non-Government authorities such as journalists or civilians.

If the host nation’s situation deteriorates to the point that vital interests are in jeopardy, covert short duration Strike Operations can eliminate the insurrection’s infrastructure. Small, highly mobile combat forces locate, pursue, attack, and destroy the units. Direct military intervention can provide the time and space needed to regain the strategic initiative and resume control.
Louis had been called “the man with a suitcase” because he was forever being sent where the ghost money came and left in secret. And whenever somebody couldn’t be influenced, whenever somebody didn’t cooperate with the program, he worked with Task Force 373 eliminating them from their Joint Priority Effects Lists (JPEL). He worked mostly alone, without judicial process or review.

At present he was wearily spending the second half of his life recovering from the bad luck, mistakes, and failures of his earlier years. He began daydreaming about his missions; back to the dead past when his sins were committed, when he was a lonely animal howling in the night. When there was no easy way to tell the sane from the mad.

Louis pensively touched his hairy ears. The perfume of cigar smoke and the faint smell of murder filled his cubicle. More than most people, he knew that it was a dangerous world; and that some secrecy is vital to save lives. But sometimes bureaucracies suppress, mislead, and withhold information in order to protect the administration for which they work. Secrecy should exist to guard national security, not government officials and its agencies.

He stared at all the files on his desk. What could he do with them? Was he a traitor to his country if he revealed its crimes against humanity? What would you do? Leak them, sell them, forget them, drink them into oblivion, protest, start a revolution…….? Nobody wanted to buy secrets about third world operations. Nobody cared.

He stole them anyway.
He stood to receive him, one arm naturally loose and the other held behind his back. They shook hands. Hands with well-manicured and polished nails, not the hands of humble roots. Then they sat down in the dirty white plastic seats. The old wooden table’s uneven legs wobbled and caused the drinks to spill every time one of them moved. Whispering under the stars they gulped their aguardiente.

Inside the cantina the florescent lights harmoniously buzzed with the flies and mosquitos. The green felt on the two ancient pool tables was darkened with beer stains and mold, the corners scarred from cigarettes left dangling while their owners concentrated on winning enough to buy another drink. An old man slept in the corner; the scars on his hands and face marked a time when discussions ended with a machete.

The shadows against the dimly lit bamboo walls hid their faces. It was a place where no respectable woman was ever seen; where they could be together because nothing and nobody was deemed to be of any importance.

"Ya know, my granddad was a regular Johnny Fucking Appleseed. He planted so many banana trees that they called him the Green Pope. He came down here from Brooklyn in 1871 when he was 23. Engineered the construction of the first railroad. Smart enough to plant bananas on both sides of the tracks. Earned a bundle with "La Frutera".
He brought this country progress, civilization. But the people here don’t like improvement, they prefer their hovels, dirt roads, and miserable poverty. Such backwardness! You can’t tell me they aren’t savages. Peasants, every last one of ém sonsofbitches.

When he wanted to buy more acres he offered to pay whatever they asked. They told him their land didn’t have a price, and then gave him some crap about the earth from which they were born having some kind of sweetness. What can you do with people like that? If they don’t want gold, then what they need is a good whipping, a kick in the ass, or some lead!"

“You’re right’, the man he knew only as ‘the blond ghost’ replied. He spoke with his eyes on the pretty pensive mulatta whose job it was to smile, fan herself, and sigh with cool iguana breath while the customers stared at her legs. Lucky men glimpsed at her cleavage when they lit her cigarettes.

“You can’t treat these people with charity or any kind of pity. They’re like children who need to be punished for their own good. “

“Estrada and General Ubico, those guys were open to foreign investment and development. With their help the company easily bought controlling shares of the railroad and the electric company. By 1913 we created the Tropical Radio and Telegraph Corporation. Through favors, we were given a mile of land on either side of the municipal pier. That gave us control over the only port facilities. And the
beauty of it all was we were exempt from virtually all taxes for 99 years. Loyalties are complex but a few million here and there still works wonders.

The class structure isn´t our fault. We didn´t create it; we´re just want cheap labor. If the politicos arrest citizens, torture them, extract confessions, or even at times kill them, we´re not the ones terrorizing anybody. “

“And now some freakin´ army captain, who was part of that dipshit 1944 Revolution, won the election.”

“Oh, the October Revolution really didn´t matter much to us. Another overthrown general was nothing new. But that God damn constitution with all of its nationalist, socialist, "New Deal" reforms caused hysteria in Washington. Let him build schools and hospitals, we can applaud any progress in education and health care. But labor protection and land expropriation laws are going too far. Both Eisenhower and Dulles said that "the defense and survival" of United States was in peril until that virus was exterminated. “

“Yeh, I can understand him constructing an Atlantic port and a highway, even building a hydroelectric plant to get cheaper energy. Hell, that´s just good business sense. I don´t mind some competition once in a while. But this Decree 900, with its so called Agrarian Reform, it´s outright communist! He just stole almost 400,000 acres of our uncultivated land. Then he had the balls to offer us $525,000 for it. I
know that’s what we declared; but you and I both know it’s worth almost $16 million. I tell ya compadre, ya gotta help me with this one.”

“Give me another drink, I got a bitter taste in my mouth.”

“The Undersecretary of State sees him as nothing more than a Communist puppet. Nobody wants a Soviet beachhead here in the western hemisphere. The Director of Central Intelligence already sent an agent to investigate potential candidates and organizations that could oust him.

Somoza told us Castillo Armas was soliciting arms, money, aircraft, boats, any help whatsoever from him, Trujillo, and Batista. We were able to get approval from the State Department for Operation PBFORTUNE and shipped 380 pistols, 250 rifles, 64 machine guns, and 4,500 hand grenades, labeled as farm machinery, from New Orleans. We also sent Armas $225,000 in cash.”

“You and I both know that operation failed. Somoza blabbed about the invasion plan and the operation’s cover was blown. That aging navy transport brought only a part of the weapons. And when Armas tried to seize some remote army garrison he was crushed. He narrowly escaped to Honduras. Worse was when his men were put on trial and they squealed that we had donated $64,000 in cash; but nothing about your end of it.
"Last I read in the Imparcial, the president is trying to strengthen the military and is making arms deals."

"Look, we were successful against Mossadegh in Iran and we’ll do the same here. The agreements to buy arms and ammunition from Canada and Germany were stopped by our agents. That Czech freighter that got through just proves that the Kremlin is pulling strings all over the world. Anybody who thinks differently doesn’t know what he’s talking about.

The Ambassador is convinced that if the President isn’t a communist, he’ll certainly do until one comes along. The State Department quietly approved cuts in economic aid and trade which will produce a devastating effect on the local economy. Our Navy has put operation HARDROCK BAKER in place. Air-sea patrols forged a blockade which is halting all ships coming in and out of the port. Instructions are to use any means necessary, even if they have to damage the ships. A contingency evacuation force of five amphibious assault boats plus an aircraft carrier has been dispatched with a Marine Battalion Landing Team.

We’ve begun local propaganda activities using student groups. They distribute pamphlets every week and get media attention by plastering the number "32" on buses and walls across the whole country. That’s in reference to Article 32 in the constitution that prohibits international political parties, i.e. Commies! Moreover, they’re putting stickers on the homes of the president’s supporters that say: "A communist lives here". Some groups have gone as far as sending fake death notices
for the president and his cabinet to local newspapers. The police have arrested numerous students, limited the right of assembly, and intimidated newspapers in response. Civil unrest is rising as planned.

We´ve also revived Armas´ covert operation and re-coded it: "PBSUCCESS". He has four hundred armed and trained Liberation Army fighters. Colonel Haney is now the head of operation headquarters in Florida. As of this moment his blueprints with precise timelines for the invasion remains pinned to the wall at the Opa-Locka barracks. He´s forwarded a roster of fifty-eight high government and organizational leaders suspected of communist leanings whose removal is mandatory for the success of the military action. So you see my friend, everything is moving ahead according to plan. ”

The city had already closed its doors. They left, blind drunk, swaggering arm in arm, bracing themselves against the infinite solitude of the slum´s streets. Groups of boys stood on the corners; some still dirty from playing soccer. They passed around small cups while complaining about everything or bragging about women. One old man was calling out: The lottery, friend, the lottery! Selling tickets to dreams he was too poor to buy, to people born into this cemetery of poverty. Men and women were sleeping like thieves in doorways, cursing each other, insulting each other, fully dressed, covered with cardboard, wrapped in newspapers, oranges and old banana peels. Each mumbled their evening prayer: Give us today our daily bread…
In the morning American F-47 Thunderbolts flown by CIA pilots began dropping leaflets urging the military to: “Struggle against Communist atheism, Communist intervention, Communist oppression . . . Struggle with your patriotic brothers!”

That afternoon the planes returned to Guatemala City, machine gunning houses, military barracks, dropping fragmentation bombs, and strafing the National Palace. At 8 PM Castillo Armas’s forces crossed the border. Ten saboteurs slipped in ahead to blow up bridges and cut telegraph lines. His men were divided into four groups, all instructed to minimize encounters with the enemy. The entire course of the offensive was specifically designed to convey the impression of insurmountable odds.

President Arbenz appealed to the United Nations for support against what he saw as an invasion. US representative Henry Cabot Lodge pressured the other western nations to vote with him against the Guatemalan request for international observers. Only the Soviet Union supported Arbenz. Lodge warned Moscow to “Stay out of this hemisphere!”

The Guatemalan Army was well trained. Its 5,000 soldiers were more than a militarily match for the rebels. Almost immediately, Armas's forces met with decisive failure. Invading on foot and hampered by heavy equipment they were delayed in reaching their objectives. Within three days, two of the four prongs were out of commission. The group whose mission was to capture the city of Zacapa was severely crushed; only twenty-eight eluded death or capture. Those who undertook the seizure of the port were crushed by local workers who had been armed by the police chief.
Armas tried to regain momentum. He ordered an air assault on the capital. The attacks continued daily for a week: strafing and bombing ports, fuel tanks, ammunition dumps, military barracks, the International airport, and a school. The residents’ anxiety was heightened during nighttime raids when tape recordings of exploding shells were played over loudspeakers set up on the roof of the US embassy. When President Arbenz went on the air to try and defuse the public’s fear, his broadcast was jammed.

A young doctor named Ernesto Che Guevara joined an armed militia organized by the Communist Youth. Frustrated with the group's inaction, he soon returned to his medical duties. However, his resistance was noted by coup supporters, and he was marked for murder. Guevara sought asylum in the Argentine consulate, where he remained until he received a safe-conduct pass and fled to Mexico. His experience had a profound effect upon his political consciousness: he became convinced that any struggle against an oligarchic system or Yankee imperialism must be armed and supported by the populace.

E. Howard Hunt of later Watergate fame broadcast from the radio station “La Voz de la Liberacion”. It claimed to be operating from "deep in the jungle" but was actually pre-recorded in Opa-Locka. A mix of popular music, humor, and anti-government propaganda was transmitted along with false reports of the invasion and demands that the President resign at once:

“Our special intelligence service has infiltrated every level of the national military. We have compiled the names and the activities of the traitors and are announcing them before the Guatemalan public. “

Rumors spread. Worried about the loyalty of his military officers, Arbenz sent an envoy to the front. His messenger returned with their exact words “Tell the President he can go to
hell! An entire army garrison surrendered to Armas a few days later in the town of Chiquimula.

At President Arbenz’ request, Colonel Carlos Enrique Diaz solicited American Ambassador Peurifoy’s help in putting an end to Armas. He was told that Arbenz must leave office. The president agreed to publicly resign on the condition that he could hand the country over to Diaz. He then summoned his cabinet and explained that the army was in revolt. He announced his resignation at 9PM on June 27:

“In whose name have they carried out these barbaric acts? What is their banner? They have used the pretext of anti-communism. The truth is very different. The truth is to be found in the financial interests of the fruit company. They fear the example of Guatemala would be followed by other Latin countries.”

Arbenz told his foreign supporters to leave the country, and then went into exile. He eventually moved to Mexico where he mysteriously drowned in his own bathtub in 1971.

The U.S. Ambassador gave Colonel Diaz a list of suspected communists to be executed as a sign of good faith. But Diaz had promised Arbenz to continue his reforms; and at noon the following day he announced that all political prisoners including the communists would be released.

Peurifoy immediately sent a cable to the CIA in Opa-Locka:

“We have been double crossed...”

With the ambassador watching, Colonel Diaz and his supporters were ousted from office at gunpoint. His presidency had lasted only 24 hours. And with that, the definitive blow had been dealt to the "Ten Years of Spring".
On July 3, 1954 Castillo Armas returned to Guatemala City aboard a U.S. Embassy plane. Five days later, he assumed the presidency. He celebrated his victory in numerous ways. His new government immediately repealed the agrarian reform law, and all expropriations of land already carried out were declared invalid. The government banned workers’ unions; and employees who had been active labor organizers were found murdered. In July, thousands were arrested on suspicion of communist activity; many were tortured or killed. In August, a committee was formed that could legally declare anyone a communist with no right to appeal. Those black listed were arbitrarily arrested. Within four months the committee had registered 72,000 names.

Armas was shot dead in the presidential palace by supporters of Jacobo Árbenz on July 26, 1957. Gen. Miguel Fuentes immediately took power. Over the next four decades the military dominated the Guatemalan government.

In 1960, a group of junior military officers revolted and tried to overthrow President Ydigoras in an attempt to, “install a regime of social justice in which wealth belongs to those who work and not those who exploit.” Thousands of students, workers and peasant groups took to the streets in sympathy, protesting against economic policies, and electoral fraud.

Cuban exile pilots who were being trained by the US to launch an attack on their homeland were called on for assistance. They took off from their outpost on a coffee plantation in a remote corner in the south west, bombed and strafed the rebel headquarters and the insurrection collapsed.
Several of the officers went into hiding and became the nucleus of an armed insurrection. They demanded a government that respected human rights and declared that no people could live in a country without democracy. They slowly organized the Guatemalan National Revolutionary Union consisting of: the Guerrilla Army of the Poor, the Revolutionary Organization of Armed People, the Rebel Armed Forces, and the Guatemalan Labor Party. They targeted army outposts to stockpile guns, staged bank robberies and kidnapping to raise money, and attacked government installations and members of government security forces to demonstrate their growing strength. Over time the groups grew in size to become 8,000 full time armed guerrillas, 40,000 irregulars, and popular support base of 150,000 citizens.

In March 1966, twenty eight political leaders and popular intellectual opponents disappeared amid preparations for the transfer of the government to the elected civilian, Julio Caesar Méndez. They had been captured on the orders of the minister of the defense, colonel Rafael Arriaga Forest. After being tortured to death, their cadavers were transported on Air force planes and thrown into the sea.

Political repression and assassinations of opposition figures continued as Intelligence operations became more organized under the leadership of Manuel Antonio Callejas y Callejas and Ortega Menaldo. Each officer had briefly trained at the U.S. School of the Americas, in 1970 and 1976, respectively. Under their direction, the intelligence directorate became an elite ‘club’ within the officer corps known as the “cofradía”. The high-level officers in turn cultivated strong ties with subordinates, who were dubbed “the operators.” This vertical column of intelligence officers, from captains to generals, represented a strong
internal network of loyalties within the institution. Although not as tight knit as the cofradía, the operators also developed a network of recognition, relationships, and loyalties.

When President Lucas Garcia hand-picked Gen. Angel Guevara as his successor in 1982, army troops denounced the electoral victory as a fraud; and staged a coup preventing him from assuming power. The coup split the officer’s corps into two factions, straining long held friendships and loyalties. Efrain Rios Montt was asked to negotiate the departure of Lucas and Guevara.

Rios Montt was at that time a lay pastor in the evangelical protestant "Church of the Word." He formed a three-member military junta that annulled the 1965 constitution, dissolved Congress, suspended political parties, and canceled electoral law. After a few months, he dismissed his junta colleagues and assumed the de facto title of "President of the Republic."

Montt claimed that the civil war forced him to rule with an iron hand. His strong anti-communism position allowed him close U.S. ties. Reagan publically backed his regime, saying: "President Ríos Montt is a man of great personal integrity and commitment. ... I know he wants to improve the quality of life for all Guatemalans and to promote social justice." He subsequently overturned the arms embargo placed by President Carter in 1977 and sold millions of dollars’ worth of military hardware to Montt ‘s government.

Montt headed a military regime with one of the most fearsome military forces in Latin America: the Kaibiles. Commanding officers instructed patrols to assume that an entire village was hostile and was cooperating with the guerrillas if they received any resistance. Standing orders were to eliminate it. Guatemalan officers called their scorched earth
approach the practice of “draining the sea to kill the fish.” These death squads destabilized
the country, turning it into an extermination field. Counter insurgent plans: “Victoria 82”,
“Firmeza 83”, and “Sofia” executed 1,771 indigenous Mayas women, children and men.
Fifty-four communities were completely demolished.

A U.N. Truth Commission found widespread human rights abuses including massacres,
rape, torture, and acts of genocide committed against the indigenous Mayan population. The
government refused to even acknowledge the existence of crimes being committed.
Guatemala’s military intelligence maintained a code of silence (the cofradía).

The Army’s intelligence directorate (G-2) coordinated an anti-dissident campaign from the
southern airbase at Retalhuleu and its headquarters on the fourth floor of the National
Palace. With a contingent of more than two thousand agents, the G-2, and its smaller
affiliated unit called the Archivo, became the brains behind the terror state.

The G-2 maintained files on anyone that they regarded as an opponent of the state. They
coordinated their torture, assassination, and disappearance. "If the G-2 wants to kill you,
they kill you. They send one of their trucks with a hit squad and that's it." Hooded informers
accompanied them along city streets and in the countryside, pointing people out: …men
found dead with their eyes gouged out, their testicles in their mouth, without hands or
tongues, women with breasts cut off. There was rarely a witness to a killing even when
people were dragged from their home at high noon; their children forced to watch as they
gang raped their mother, or pulled the skin off their fathers face before they put a grenade in
his mouth and pulled the pin, or sometimes for variety, the parents watched while they did those things to their children.

Lawyers, students, journalists, teachers, trade unionists, members of opposition parties, and anyone with vaguely leftist political association or critical of government policy were gunned down. Even nuns were abducted, raped, and tortured. All were executed under orders from above. All hope was trampled in the bloody mud of the streets.

Lowered into open pits
full of bodies:
children, men, women.
Some decapitated; all caked with blood.
A few still alive,
moaning,
weeping.
Rats swarmed over them,
and a stench of decay rose from the hole.

John Galt, president of the American Chamber of Commerce in Guatemala, shrugged and commented on the situation: “why should I be worried about the death squads? They’re bumping off our enemies. Hell I’d get some cartridges if I could….The death squad; I’m for it…Shit! I enjoy killing Commies, even though half of them probably don't even know what it means!”
8 – Guantanamera

by Moondog

I am an honest man
from where the palm trees grow.
And before dying, I want
to share the verses of my soul.

Long thick nails picked at the worn frets. He sat on a stool with his Panama hat tilted forward to shade his eyes. And he began:

I’m a trovadore; grew up in the Oriente. I’ve rambled my whole life with my guitar and songs. I learned to write in my teens, and then joined the War for Independence. It’s not many men can say they’ve shaken hands with both Jose Marti and Fidel!

José Martí, who was born in Havana in 1853 when Cuba was still a Spanish colony. Who spoke to us of Our America. Who wrote simple verses, free verses, verses fraught with anger: Anger against injustice; against ignorance mistaken for wisdom. Against the egotism of a puritanical bourgeois. Against colonized tyranny that enslaved the native races of the lands that they believed were theirs by a God given right. Against those who still believed in the uncontestable superiority of the European race. Who hadn’t learned that man is more
than white, more than mulatto, more than black, red, or yellow. Who couldn’t accept the truth that all are souls born with equal rights.

Marti, who believed that the slavery of one nation endangered the freedom of all.

Who spoke about a sincere, authentic mankind. Who lamented an honorable rural people who lived in silent ruin, while bankers and monopolies amassed immoral fortunes.

Jose Marti, whose rhythmic soul wrote about cosmic forces that gave meaning to life’s mysteries. Who had faith in the sincerity and purity reflected in nature.

Who, in his hour of pain, planted his tears in this grim earth. Whose somber tormented verses sang about young men raising their arms against a cruel, despotic government. Youths, who slept in the mud, ate shrubs and roots, obeyed like soldiers, fought years without pay, then drowned in their own blood. It was he, who harvested those exiled flowers, embarked for the homeland, and then was killed at the Battle of Dos Rios on May 19, 1895.

He sat, strumming his guitar, at times frantically plucking, half talking to himself, half singing: “Ah, mi pais, cuanto se lloraba con rios de sangre….let me tell you our sad story. Our black days began in 1492 when Columbus claimed our island for Spain. We prayed to the Virgin of Caridad del Cobre to be liberated from four hundred years of domination. We should have asked to be free.
The Great War began on October 10, 1868 when sugar mill owner Carlos Manuel de Céspedes and his followers proclaimed Cuba's independence. Unable to reach an agreement with the insurrection forces, the Spanish began a war of extermination in early 1869: all arrested leaders and collaborators were executed on the spot, ships ferrying weapons were seized and anyone onboard executed, males 15 and older caught outside of their plantations or places of residence without justification were summarily executed, and all towns were ordered to raise the white flag, otherwise they were burnt to the ground.

Additional troops were sent to Cuba when the Spanish civil war ended in 1876. The total forces numbered more than 250,000. The US was selling weapons to Spain, but not to the Cubans; which put the liberation forces at a severe disadvantage. However, neither side was able to win a concrete victory, let alone crush their opponent and win the war.

On October 19, 1877 Spanish troops captured Tomas Estrada Palma who was then the president of the Republic in Arms. By February 8, 1878, the constitutional organs of the Cuban government were dissolved. Negotiations for peace began in Zanjón and the war ended on May 28, 1878.

For his support of the rebellion, sixteen year old Jose Martí was detained and condemned to 16 years of hard labor, and later deported to Spain.

General Calixto Garcia, had been one of the leaders of the uprising. For five years he had successfully fought against the Spaniards, but in September 1873 he and a group of sixteen men were surprised by 500 troops. There was no escape, and unwilling to be captured alive, he put the muzzle of his pistol in his mouth and pulled the trigger. Instead of going through
his brain, the bullet came out of his forehead between his eyes, and he recovered. He was sent to Spain and held prisoner until the peace of Zanjón was signed.

Following his release, García travelled to New York and organized the Cuban Revolutionary Committee. In 1878, he issued a manifesto against Spanish rule in Cuba. It met with the approval of other revolutionary leaders, and the Little War began on August 26, 1879. After the Ten Year War, possession of firearms by private individuals had been prohibited. As a result, the revolutionaries had a dire shortage of weapons and ammunition.

The revolution scored some minor successes, but by September 1880 the majority of the leaders had been arrested and the rebels had been completely vanquished. General Calixto García was captured again, his life was spared, and he was sent back to Spain, where he lived for seventeen years under police supervision in Madrid.

José Martí left Spain and moved to the United States in 1881. He immediately began lobbying for Cuba’s independence. The United States had offered to buy the island from Spain in 1848 and again in 1852. The 1854 Ostend Manifesto argued that the U. S. could seize Cuba by force. Martí mobilized the support of the exile community, and was elected Delegate of the newly formed "El Partido Revolucionario Cubano" on April 10, 1892.

By the end of 1894, the conditions were ready for launching another revolution. On December 25, three ships (the Lagonda, the Almadis and the Baracoa) set sail for Cuba from Fernandina Beach, Florida, loaded with fighters, weapons and supplies. In early January two of the ships were seized by US authorities, who also alerted the Spanish government.
The insurrection began on February 24, 1895. The central part of the country suffered from poor co-ordination and failed; the leaders were captured, some of them deported and some executed. In the province of Havana, the rebellion was discovered before began and its organizers were jailed.

From the opening salvo, the major obstacle to the success of the rebels was weapons supply. Most were acquired in raids. Although guns and supplies were sent from the US, their international transportation violated American laws. Of 71 attempted supply missions, 27 got through, 5 were detained by the Spanish, and 33 were stopped by the US Coast Guard.

It was essential to take the revolution to the western provinces where the island's government and wealth were located. The Ten-Year War failed because it had not advanced beyond the eastern provinces. After a successful cavalry campaign, the revolutionaries had finally invaded every province. Surrounding all larger cities and well-fortified towns, they arrived at the westernmost tip of the island on January 22, 1896.

The Spanish General Campos was replaced by General “The Butcher" Weyler who began a campaign of terror: executions, mass exile, and destruction of farms and crops. On October 21, 1896, he ordered all countryside residents and their livestock to be relocated into unsanitary concentration camps or towns occupied by his troops within eight days. Hundreds of thousands of people had to leave their homes, creating appalling and inhumane conditions and causing the death of many of Cuba’s rural population.

Calixto Garcia finally slipped away from Madrid and reached Cuba in March 1896. Although severely outnumbered, the Cubans fought on using guerilla tactics and machetes. They defeated the Spanish in various encounters, such as the Battle of La
Reforma, and the surrender of Las Tunas which had been guarded by over 1,000 well-armed and well-supplied men. The Spaniards were on the defensive.

Madrid decided to change its policy. Weyler was replaced, a new government was installed in Havana, and a colonial constitution was written for Cuba and Puerto Rico. But with half the country out of its control and the other half in arms, the concessions were rejected by the rebels.

The prolonged struggle began to effect American business concerns. Shipping firms that relied on Cuban trade endured huge losses. The firms pressed Congress and the President to restore order. McKinley sent Stewart Woodford to discuss a settlement with the Spanish Prime Minister on the grounds that the revolt “injuriously affects the normal function of business, and tends to delay the condition of prosperity.” He neglected to mention anything about liberty and justice for the Cubans.

Negotiations went smoothly; and Cuban autonomy began on January 1, 1898. A riot by Cuban Spanish loyalists erupted in Havana eleven days after the new government took power. Printing presses of four local newspapers were destroyed in retaliation for publishing articles criticizing Spanish Army atrocities. Fearing for the lives of Americans living in Havana, the US Consul-General cabled Washington. In response, the battleship USS Maine was sent to Havana in the last week of January.

At 9:40 pm on February 15 1898, the Maine sank in the harbor, destroyed by a mysterious explosion. Two hundred and sixty-six seamen and two officers were killed. A Navy inquiry board erroneously declared that it was the result of a mine. Yellow journalist newspapermen
such as Hearst and Pulitzer leapt to the conclusion that Spanish officials in Cuba were to blame. They published incendiary articles that started a public hysteria. The American cry of the hour became "Remember the Maine, To Hell with Spain!" Senator Redfield Proctorís speech delivered on March 17 concluded that war was the only answer.

Many in the business and religious communities began to agree to U.S. intervention. John Jacob Astor, William Rockefeller, and Thomas Fortune Ryan were all "feeling militant." J. P. Morgan believed further talks with Spain would accomplish nothing. On March 21, Henry Cabot Lodge wrote McKinley a long letter, saying that he had talked with "bankers, brokers, businessmen, editors, clergymen and others", and "everybody," including "the most conservative classes," wanted the Cuban question "solved." On March 25, a telegram from an adviser arrived at the White House saying: "Big corporations now believe we will have war. Believe all would welcome it as relief to suspense."

On April 11, McKinley petitioned Congress for authority to send American troops to Cuba. He did not recognize the rebels as belligerents, or demand Cuban independence. On April 19, while Congress was considering joint resolutions, Senator Henry Teller proposed an Amendment to ensure that the U.S. would not establish permanent control over Cuba after the war. The amendment proclaimed Cuba "free and independent" and disclaimed any U.S. intention towards the island. It passed the Senate 42 to 35; and the House concurred the same day, 311 to 6. The amended resolution demanded Spanish withdrawal and authorized the President to use as much military force as he thought necessary to help Cuba gain independence.
President McKinley signed the joint resolution on April 20, 1898, and an ultimatum was sent to Spain. In response, Spain broke off diplomatic relations with the United States on April 21. Spain declared war on April 23. On April 25, Congress declared that a state of war between the U.S. and Spain. One month later, a Spanish fleet docked in the Santiago de Cuba harbor. A U.S. naval force soon arrived and blockaded the harbor entrance.

As soon as the United States saw that war with Spain was unavoidable, three American officers were sent to Cuba to secure the cooperation of the Cuban Army. They arrived on May 1st and interviewed Gen. Calixto Garcia in Bayamo. Garcia sent commissioners to the United States to make all essential arrangements regarding American and Cuban operations. The United States sent the Cubans rations and ammunition.

The Civil War had left the United States Army short on manpower. President McKinley appealed for volunteers and within 24 hours, twenty-three hundred men had offered their services. A diverse assemblage of cowboys, mining prospectors, hunters, gamblers, Native Americans, and college boys came from New Mexico, Texas, and Indian Territory (Arizona and Oklahoma) to become the First U.S. Voluntary Cavalry. The unit was mustered into service in May. Their uniform was a slouch hat, blue flannel shirt, brown trousers, leggings, and a handkerchief knotted loosely around their neck. Their appearance earned them the title of “The Rough Riders”.

Leonard Wood was appointed as their Colonel. He had established his military reputation in the 1886 campaign against the Apache warrior Geronimo for which he had received the Medal of Honor. Theodore Roosevelt served as his Lieutenant-Colonel. Roosevelt used his
political connections to equip the volunteer regiment with clothing and tents, as well as arming them with the Krag-Jorgensen carbine carried by the regular cavalry.

On May 29, 1898, one thousand and sixty Rough Riders were ordered from San Antonio, Texas to Port Tampa, Florida. On June 6 General Miles sent a dispatch to General Garcia informing him that the plan was to attack the city of Santiago by sea and land; and that it was necessary that Cuban forces proceed towards the city in support. General Garcia suggested that the landing of the American forces be at Daiquiri.

On June 8 the troops began loading on transport ships. In the confusion surrounding their departure, half the men, along with the majority of the horses and mules, were left behind. It unfortunately placed them at a harsh disadvantage because they weren’t trained as infantry or conditioned to doing heavy marching; especially long distances in hot, humid, and dense jungle conditions. On June 14 the Rough Riders embarked for Cuba aboard the Yucatan, toasting to: "The officers; may the war last until each is killed, wounded, or promoted."

On June 21st, 1898, five hundred Cuban soldiers were transported by American ships to a village two miles from Daiquiri. Their instructions were to keep firing on the Spanish troops during the landing of the American forces.

It was about 9:45 a.m. on June 22 when the first boat reached the shore with American troops. The United States battleships immediately began to bombard the surrounding positions. The Spaniards retreated, and the Cuban soldiers took possession of the town.
After debarking, the U.S. Army, led by Cuban troops, advanced on Siboney. The town of Siboney is seven miles from San Juan Hill, and was chosen for the landing of reinforcements and supplies. When General Wheeler reached the town he agreed with Cuban General Castillo on the advancement towards San Juan Hill. American and Cuban troops reached Las Guasimas on June 24th.

Fifteen hundred Spanish troops battled to keep them from Santiago. They were well-equipped and concealed along trenches, roads, and underbrush so dense that you could hardly see twenty feet in front. Their 7 mm Mauser rifles used a smokeless powder that made it difficult to establish their positions.

Two and a half hours later 250 Spanish lay dead, and countless others were gravely wounded. They retreated, and Las Guasimas was captured. Maj. Gen. Shafter ordered the men to make camp and hold position. Many became stricken with yellow fever. As a result, Leonard Wood took command as Brigadier General of the second brigade and Roosevelt was promoted to Colonel of The Rough Riders.

On June 25th Generals Shafter and Garcia finished their assault strategy. The next day the combined forces joined in a march towards the San Juan territory and El Caney, by way of the road to Sevilla. Suffering through intense tropical heat, the troops continued under harassing fire from Spanish snipers. As they advanced, the Spanish guard were driven back and had to take cover in the San Juan Hill Blockhouse.

On the 30th, the Americans and Cubans camped on the Salado. General Garcia was ordered to move to Marianaje to protect the artillery batteries from any Spanish attacks coming from
Santiago. The American General Lawton was sent with 6,000 men to fight at El Caney.

General Shafter and his staff rode two miles up to village called "El Pozo," to survey the heights and outline a plan of action.

San Juan heights consists of two ridges, San Juan Hill, and 550 yards away San Juan de Marjores. San Juan de Marjores is known to Americans as "Kettle Hill," having been given the name because of four large kettles on top of the hill that were used to boil sugar when there had been a plantation there centuries earlier.

General Shafter was overweight and his gout was so bad that at times his men had to carry him. On July 1, he ordered the attack. He was too ill to lead the troops so he set up his headquarters at El Pozo and communicated through mounted staff officers.

The 2nd U. S. Artillery, commanded by Captain Grimes opened fire at 7:30 a.m. shattering the Spanish Fort to pieces. Reaching the San Juan River, the cavalry waded across and began taking casualties. As men were hit, parts of the San Juan River valley were dubbed "Hell's Pocket" and "Bloody Ford." Hundreds fell under gunfire before reaching the base of the heights, where the force split up into two flanks. No further orders came from General Shafter, who could not even see the battle. The men waited while Mauser bullets claimed more lives.

Colonel Roosevelt and his men forced their way their way towards the base of Kettle Hill. They were vulnerable and pinned down. They took cover in the tall grass along the riverbank to avoid sniper and artillery fire. While in line waiting for the order to charge
Captain O'Neill moved back and forth smoking a cigarette. A cloud of smoke followed him. His men begged him to lie down. He smiled as he turned around. Then a bullet struck him in the mouth and came out at the back of his head, and he was dead before he hit the ground.

Shortly afterward, Lieutenant Colonel Joseph H. Dorst rode up and told Roosevelt 'to move forward and support the Regulars in the assault.' Roosevelt called his troops out from cover and formed them into a column. He remained mounted, posting himself behind his regiment.

The whole line was tired of waiting, and was straining to go forward. A yell rang out and the entire The 1st Volunteers (Rough Riders), along with the 3rd and 10th Cavalry (Buffalo Soldiers) began a near simultaneous assault up Kettle Hill. There was a great confusion; the officers were on foot and mingled with the men. There was no company formation; the various regiments were completely intermingled. One of the 10th's officers who took part in the attack, Lt. John J. "Black Jack" Pershing, later recalled that:

"...the entire command moved forward as coolly as though the buzzing of bullets was the humming of bees. White regiments, black regiments, regulars and Rough Riders, representing the young manhood of the North and the South, fought shoulder to shoulder, unmindful of race or color, unmindful of whether commanded by ex-Confederate or not, and mindful of only their common duty as Americans."

They scrambled up the 30-degree slope, clutching tufts of grass, charging blindly forward ten or twenty yards at a time. Three Gatling guns commanded by Lt. John H. Parker gave them cover fire, spraying the enemy trenches with .30 caliber rounds. As the troops swarmed over Kettle Hill they began fighting hand to hand. The enemy began to retreat and within twenty minutes Kettle Hill was captured. The first American soldier to reach the crest was
Sgt. George Berry from the "Negro" 10th Cavalry. Sergeant Berry took his unit colors and that of the 3rd Cavalry to the top of before the Rough Riders' flag arrived.

Several of the men took shelter behind one of the huge iron kettles. They could see the charge of the infantry led by Hawkins on the San Juan blockhouse. Col. Roosevelt gathered his men together to support the assault on San Juan Hill. They began volley-firing against the blockhouse and the trenches around it. When they reached the trenches they found them saturated with dead bodies, each with a little hole in their head from which their brains were oozing. The battle was over and General Summer ordered Roosevelt back to Kettle Hill.

He and his men returned exhausted. The counterattack by some 600 Spanish cavalrny, marines, and infantrymen was stopped by the fire of a single ten-barreled .30 Gatling Gun manned by Sergeant Green. All but 40 of the Spanish attackers were wounded or killed. Col. Roosevelt declared that “The charge was great fun…we had a bully fight.”

The ultimate goal of securing the Heights was to move downhill and overcome Santiago. General Garcia was ordered to occupy the right flank as General Shafter advanced. The next day the Spanish laid down heavy rifle and cannon fire from their fortifications. The Americans and Cubans began the bloody siege of the city. Three to four thousand Cuban troops prevented Spanish reinforcements from arriving from the north. The soldiers slept on their arms (rolled blankets) and didn’t remove their boots or clothes for two weeks as almost ten thousand Spanish bitterly contested the offensive.
On July 3, the entire Spanish fleet was destroyed by U.S. warships under Admiral William Sampson. On the 4th of July General Shafter halted the bombardment of the city and authorized the exit of the all families. On the 7th (Cuban) General Estrada with his column of 700 men joined the siege. More American regiments arrived from the United States.

On the 9th a brief truce ended and the U.S. and Cuban lines opened fire with rifles and canon. General Garcia advanced his right wing to close the lines around Santiago. At the same time the (U.S.) fleet began to shell the city from the coast which continued on and off until the 11th, when another truce was signed. Both sides took advantage to make defensive positions and place artillery batteries.

At noon on the 14th, the firing began again; but, the enemy requested a prórroga (truce extension). As a result of talks, the Spanish decided to surrender the city and all territory in the Oriente Province. On July 17th, the commander of the Spanish Army Corps, Maj. Gen. José Toral y Vazquez, signed articles of 'capitulation' that handed Santiago over to the Americans in return for safe passage back to Spain. The American military pretended that the Cuban rebel army did not exist. No Cuban was allowed to confer on the terms, or to sign it. General Garcia wrote a letter of protest to General Shafter:

“I have not been honored with a single word… informing me about the negotiations for peace or the terms of the capitulation by the Spaniards. ... when the question arises of appointing authorities in Santiago de Cuba ... I cannot see but with the deepest regret that such authorities are not elected by the Cuban people, but are the same ones selected by the Queen of Spain.”
All hostilities were halted on August 12th 1898 with the signing of a Protocol of Peace between the United States and Spain in Washington. A formal peace treaty was signed in Paris on December 10, 1898.

American newspapers began to print some of the soldier’s letters:

“The Cubans never could have whipped the Spaniards. They never did anything more than harass small bodies of the troops.”

“If I got a chance to go back to whip those dirty, thieving Cubans, who will neither fight nor work, I think that I would embrace the opportunity… We have no use for them”

“About the Cubans! They are absolutely no good except to feed… They would not fight and would not work. At first we gave them full rations and when we learned what kind of cattle they were we quit. Then they stole from us, taking anything we had, clothing, blankets, tents or anything that they could get their hands on.”

"Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori"

On December 13, John Rutter Brooke became the military governor of Cuba.

Along with the U.S occupation army came increased American capital. Americans continued taking over railroad, mine, and sugar properties. United Fruit bought 1,900,000 acres of land for about twenty cents an acre. The American Tobacco Company quickly followed.

The United States did not annex Cuba, but the Cuban Constitutional Convention was told that the United States army would not leave until the Platt Amendment was incorporated into the new Constitution. The Convention overwhelmingly rejected it. The Platt Amendment encumbered Cuba’s rights to conduct foreign policy or establish commercial
relations. Within the next three months, and after several refusals, the Convention acquiesced.

Cuba also agreed to sell or lease to the United States "lands necessary for coaling or naval stations at certain specified points to be agreed upon;" and granted the United States the right to militarily stabilize Cuba as needed. General Leonard Wood wrote to Theodore Roosevelt: "There remains, of course, little or no independence left in Cuba under the Platt Amendment."

Before the Spanish American War, Tomás Estrada Palma had favored outright annexation of Cuba. He became the leader of the Cuban Revolutionary Party when Jose Marti died. In 1901 the Republican Liberals, the National Liberals, and the Cuban occupational government supported his candidacy for president. He took office when the civil government was formed on May 20, 1902. His administration brought improvements in education, communication, and public health. On February 16, 1903, Estrada signed the Cuban-American Treaty agreeing to lease the Guantanamo Bay area to the United States in perpetuity.

Following his disputed re-election in 1906, Tomas Estrada, faced an armed revolt. The U.S. intervened, occupying Cuba and naming Charles Edward Magoon as Governor. In 1908, Jose Miguel Gomez was elected President and self-government was restored. A constitutional government was maintained until 1930. However the pattern of American intervention in Cuban affairs continued.
Hay señor, our government officials grow rich robbing us all blind. The pinchos, the fiana, they all want to sacar una mordidita of whatever we do to make our daily bread. Eventually we throw them out and get new ones. But it’s the same story. Maybe some are honest at first, but when they gain power they all turn crooked to make money.

Gerardo Machado was one of the youngest Generals of the war of independence. The two missing fingers on his left hand provided a vivid reminder of the days when he rustled cattle from the Spanish Army and distributed the meat to starving Cubans. After the war, he became a businessman running a sugar mill, and later, the vice president of Havana’s electric company. He became president of Cuba in 1924 with a platform that combined national sovereignty and foreign investment. His government promoted tourism, industry, mining, and major national development projects such as the Carretera Central (a 700-mile central highway) and El Capitolio.

Through a combination of threats and bribes, Machado became the single legal candidate in the 1928 presidential elections. But the political climate was changing. The 1929 Wall Street crash brought a decline in the demand for exported agricultural produce, and sugar prices dropped. The sudden collapse of external markets brought a general crisis among the ruling elite and political turmoil followed.

Strikes and protests were organized. The political left along with student groups and organized labor called for new fair elections. The Communist Party allegedly began committing terrorist acts. Bombs were placed in hotels and movie theatres in Havana killing innocent men, women, and children. The threat of revolutionary upheaval served to unite the
military, the land owning oligarchy and some members of the urban middle class.

Stabilization policies were emphasized. According to Ruby Hart Phillips, the New York Times correspondent in Cuba “the Chase National Bank, with its influence in Washington, was determined that President Machado would remain in office as long as he continued to make payments on public works loans.”

As dissention grew, Martial Law was declared. Machado's retaliations became more violent and bloody. His secret police, known as the "Porra," were brutal. The confrontations between the government and the political opposition grew to resemble all-out war. In March he was overthrown in what became known as the 1933 Cuban Revolution.

Machado died six years later in Miami Beach, Florida.

"A cada lechón se le llega su Nochebuena."

With the collapse of the Machado government a five-member coalition known as the Pentarchy assumed power. It ruled from September 5th to the 10th, at which time the Student Directory ousted four of its members, and Dr. Ramón Grau became the provisional President. Army chief of staff Batista force Grau's resignation in January 1934. Grau was replaced by Carlos Mendieta. Within five days the U.S. recognized Cuba's new government; and Batista became the *de facto* leader of Cuba.

Batista was formally elected president in 1940. He had been endorsed by a coalition of political parties. The Communist Party supported him owing to his labor laws. In fact, the
Communists attacked the anti-Batista opposition, saying they were fascists, reactionaries, and Trotskyites. While in office, he carried out major social reforms and inaugurated numerous economic regulations and pro-union policies.

In 1944, Batista's handpicked successor, Carlos Zayas, was defeated by Ramon Grau. In his final months in office Batista sought to handicap the incoming president in every way possible. He left the country shortly after the inauguration; and for the next eight years remained in the background, spending time between the Waldorf Astoria in New York and his home in Dayton Beach, Florida.

Then, three months before the 1952 general election, former president General Batista, returned to Cuba, staged a coup, and seized power. He was supported by the United Fruit Company, labor unions, and the army. The United States government quickly recognized his regime. Upon his return to power, Batista did not continue the progressive social policies of his earlier term. Instead, consumed by power, he ruthlessly profited from the exploitation of all possible commercial interests.

While Batista charmed American Ambassadors, the U.S. government continued to aid private American companies to dominate the island's economy. In the beginning of 1959, U. S. corporations owned forty percent of the Cuban sugar lands, almost all the cattle ranches, ninety percent of the mines and mineral concessions, eighty percent of the utilities, practically all the oil industry, and supplied two-thirds of Cuba's imports. Almost all aid from the U.S. to Batista's regime was in the form of weapons assistance, which merely strengthened his dictatorship.
Batista had also formed personal relationships with the mobsters Meyer Lansky and Lucky Luciano. He knew them from The Organized Crime Conference held at the Hotel Nacional in Havana in December, 1946. Batista’s government welcomed large-scale gambling in Cuba; granting a gaming license to anyone who invested a million dollars in a hotel or two hundred thousand dollars in a nightclub. In return for license fees and a percentage of the profits, the Cuban government provided public funds for construction, a 10-year tax exemption, and duty-free importation of equipment and furnishings.

Havana became known as "the Latin Las Vegas"; and twelve and thirteen year old girls quickly found their way to the city, where they became whores for the jaded American tourists. Meyer Lansky took the opportunity to turn Cuba into an international drug trafficking port for Sicilian heroin.

While corrupt upper class Cubans lived in fabulous luxury, the average family sank further into poverty. The vast majority of agricultural workers were employed four or five months a year; and the average rate of unemployment was one in four. Those who found work subsisted on an income of about $6 a week. A majority couldn’t afford to buy the kinds of food ordinarily considered indispensible for the sustenance of life. They survived on beans and rice. Sixty-four per cent of the people had neither indoor toilets nor out door privies; just 3.24 percent had running water. Women carried pails of water down long dirt roads, while peasants tilled the soil with crude wooden plows, and oxen pulled wooden homemade sledges. Under these conditions, and as a consequence of an almost complete absence of medical care of any kind, death and disease rates were astronomical.

“In all my travels through Europe, America, and Africa, rarely have I come across peasants who existed in greater misery than the Cuban agricultural workers.”
Dr. Jose Ignacio Lasaga, 1957
Catholic University Association

“The corruption of the government, the brutality of the police, and the regime’s indifference to the needs of the people for education, medical care, and housing, for social and economic justice…is an open invitation to revolution.”
Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr.

While studying law at the University of Havana, Fidel Castro became enmeshed in violent student politics and was implicated in a number of shootings. By 1947 he had joined the Partido Ortodoxo. The party fostered a strong sense of national identity and economic independence from the United States. It denounced government corruption and demanded social justice.

In 1948, Castro married Mirta Díaz Balart. Mirta's father gave them money to spend a three-month honeymoon in New York City. They also received a $1,000 wedding gift from Batista who was a friend of both families. Afterwards, Castro returned to Cuba and completed his law degree in 1950. He then opened a law office and two years later ran for election to the House of Representatives.

Those elections were cancelled by Fulgencio Batista’s coup. Castro became discontent and abandoned his law practice. With time, he formed an underground organization that plotted the overthrow of Batista. They stockpiled guns and on the 26th of July, 1953, attacked the Moncada barracks outside Santiago. Castro and the other surviving members of his group managed to escape to the Sierra Maestra mountains where they were discovered and captured. He was tried and sentenced to fifteen years in prison. It was during his trial that he declared:
"I warn you, I am just beginning! If there is in your hearts a vestige of love for your country, love for humanity, love for justice, listen carefully...."

Shortly after the attack on the garrison, Frank País told students and workers to organize their friends and close associates that they could trust. They prepared carefully: finding, repairing, and hiding weapons, participating in demonstrations against the dictatorship, raising money, and storing medical supplies. Even with Batista’s strong censorship, they were able to publish a mimeographed bulletin criticizing the government.

In 1955 a general amnesty was declared. Castro was released and went to Mexico. He reunited with other exiles and founded the 26th of July Movement: M-26-7. While there, Ernesto "Che" Guevara joined the group and contributed to their evolving political ideology. The conditions of the poor living in Latin America had already convinced him that the only solution lay in violent revolution. Cubans living in the United States, including ex-president Carlos Prío Socarrás, provided funds and training.

Police and paramilitary groups such as Les Tigres violently responded to the more frequent student riots and anti-Batista demonstrations. All youths were suspect; to be a University student was enough in many cases to warrant a death sentence. País’ organization merged with Fidel’s Movement. Up to that moment neither the police, nor the members of the group themselves, knew the extent of the organization. One day each cell was given the order to paint the name of the movement on all the walls and buildings in their neighborhood. The next morning, the army, the police, and the people of Santiago awoke to
the magnitude of the resistance. Every block in the city was splashed in paint: “Down with Batista! M-26-7.”

Afterwards, the police were given the power to enter homes and arrest at will. They went into restaurants and ate without paying, killed rivals in love and business, and raped women without fear of inquiry. Some became notorious for their treatment of prisoners, tearing out the names of sympathizers in police-station basements. The movement struck back, assassinating some of the worst torturers, and taking reprisals against the police whenever a revolutionary was killed.

Castro and his forces left the port of Tuxpan aboard the yacht Granma on a day when all sea travel was prohibited. After seven days plagued by seasickness, they landed at Las Coloradas beach on December 2, 1956.

Wearing new boots, the raw recruits trudged through endless saltwater swamps. Almost all of them suffered open blisters and fungal infections on their feet. Their medical supplies had vanished, and most of their backpacks had been left behind. All they had left of their equipment were their rifles, cartridge belts, a few wet rounds of ammunition and a little food. They managed to satisfy their hunger and thirst by eating sugarcane; and left a trail of cane peelings behind them.

By daybreak on December 5 they reached Alegría de Pío. On the verge of collapse, the men staggered a short distance and then begged for a long rest. Orders were given to halt; and they slept through the morning hours in some bushes close to the dense woods. Some
of Castro’s men continued peacefully cutting and eating sugarcane. Some leaned against trees talking, eating their meager rations of sausage and crackers.

At noon Piper planes and small army aircraft began circling at a slow speed and low altitude. Within seconds, bursts of gunfire scattered the men. Running for cover, they picked up their ammunition, and headed for the cane field. Someone kneeled in the bushes to fire his submachine gun. One compañero whose thumb had been blown away by a bullet, bandaged his hand with a bandana. Another, vomiting blood and bleeding profusely from a deep wound screamed and fell flat to the ground, firing his rifle into the air. A few were able to crawl among the rows of sugarcane and reach the safety of the woods. Then they hiked until the darkness made it impossible to go on. Starving and thirsty, they laid down and went to sleep huddled together in a heap.

They marched on, lugging twenty-three working weapons: nine rifles equipped with telescopic sights, five semiautomatic machine guns, four bolt-action rifles, two Thompsons, two submachine guns, and a 16-gauge shotgun. They were able to evade the Rural Guard by seeking refuge in the house of one peasant after another. No more than twenty of the original eighty-two men survived the bloody encounters with Batista’s forces. They re-organized in the Sierra Maestra Mountains; and marked time under Fidel's command until March when Frank País sent a group of fifty armed recruits.

Batista recalled Ramon Barquín from his post as military attaché to the United States. Believing he would support his rule, Batista appointed him General and Chief of the Army. However, Barquín's Conspiración de los Puros was already underway. On April 6, 1956,
Barquín led a coup supported by hundreds of career officers. It was frustrated by Lieutenant Ríos Morejón, who betrayed them. Barquín was sentenced to solitary confinement for eight years on the Isles of Pines while several of the officers were sentenced to death.

The purge of the officer corps contributed to the Cuban army´s inability to combat Castro and his guerrillas. Frustrated by failure, the secret police began torturing innocent people. Suspects, including children, were publicly executed as a warning to others. Hundreds of mangled bodies were left hanging from lamp posts or dumped in the streets.

On June 30th 1957, Frank País was found lying dead in the middle of the road. People wanted to shut things down and go out on strike: bosses and workers, everybody. Workplaces closed. There were no police anywhere. The funeral procession became a public demonstration. Those not going to the burial threw flowers as he passed by dressed in an olive green uniform and wearing a bracelet with the red and black colors of the revolution.

In February 1958, Coronet Magazine published an interview with Castro. He declared that the movement´s goals were “to do away with the dictatorship and establish the foundations of a genuine representative government”. He promised general elections within twelve months after his success. He also affirmed that there were no plans for the expropriation or nationalization of foreign investments. Forty-five organizations signed an open letter supporting the 26th of July Movement, among them national bodies representing lawyers, architects, dentists, accountants, and social workers. Castro, who had originally relied on the support of the poor, was beginning to gain the backing of the more influential middle class.
Jim Noel, the CIA station chief, and his officers were all "Fidelistas" who spent their time reporting from the Havana Country Club.

Batista's rule became increasingly unpopular. In March, President Eisenhower suggested that he hold elections. Over 75 percent of the voters in Havana boycotted the polls. In some areas, such as Santiago, it was as high as 98 percent. The election placed another puppet in power, but Batista knew that his days were numbered.

In May, with the backing of the Pentagon, Batista initiated his last significant attempt to wipe out the rebel forces. The campaign was called Operation Verano; to the revolutionaries it was known as La Ofensiva. Batista sent 1,300 American-trained troops against Castro and his 300 men. First they dropped American napalm bombs in the mountains; then they strafed them with American bullets from American guns. They advanced with American Sherman tanks, bazookas, and machine guns.

Castro survived by virtue of the rugged mountain terrain, and with the support of the overwhelming majority of the surrounding farmers. His unpaid army lived on sugar cane and rice mush served from buckets. Weapons were brought from Florida or Venezuela or deserters from Batista’s army, or captured the hard way, by killing someone for it. Their shoulder patches and insignias of rank were sewn and embroidered by their wives or village women. Their uncut hair and whiskers earned them the nickname Barbudos. Those who stayed and survived grew accustomed to the dirt, the lack of water, food, shelter, and security, and to a life where the only things one could rely on were a rifle and their small guerrilla cell.
Although heavily outnumbered, the guerrilla forces scored a series of victories. During the Battle of La Plata, Castro's forces overpowered an entire battalion. When Operation Verano ended, Castro ordered the invasion of central Cuba. In December 1958, Che Guevara and Camilo Cienfuegos advanced with their columns through Las Villas province. They succeeded in occupying several towns, and then began preparations for an attack on Santa Clara, the provincial capital. Guevara's fighters derailed an armored train which Batista had sent to aid his troops, and then launched a direct assault on the Cuban army. Cienfuegos won the Battle of Yaguajay.

Defeated on all sides, Batista's forces crumbled.

On December 11, the U.S. Ambassador visited Batista at his hacienda. Smith informed him that the United States could no longer support his regime. He knew that his presidency was over. Batista inquired about his house in Daytona Beach. The ambassador denied his request and suggested that he seek asylum in Spain.

"A cada lechón se le llega su Nochebuena."

On December 31, 1958, Batista raised a New Year's Eve toast to his cabinet members and senior military officers and told them "hasta la vista". At three A.M. on January 1, 1959, he boarded a plane at Camp Columbia with one hundred and eighty of his supporters and flew to the Dominican Republic. With him went his personal fortune amassed through graft and payoffs. Meyer Lansky had helped him to transfer 300 million dollars into secret numbered Swiss bank accounts. Batista ultimately found political asylum in Portugal, invested in

On January 8, 1959, a thirty-two year old Fidel Castro rolled victoriously into Havana. At his side, smoking his Monte Cristo Number 4 was Dr. Ernesto Che Guevara. The New York Times described a scene of jubilant crowds pouring into the streets waving the black and red flag of the 26th of July Movement. Honking automobile horns announced the fall of Batista's government; and the atmosphere became chaotic as the news spread.

Castro was sworn in as Prime Minister on February 16. Wearing a military uniform, “El Comandante”, projected the image of a perpetual revolutionary. Large throngs of people gathered to cheer at his fiery speech, which lasted for hours:

“The working class produces what material wealth exists in a country. And the power is not in their hands …it is in the hands of the landlords who exploit them, in the hands of the speculators, in the hands of the monopolies. It is in the hands of foreign and national interest groups. And while the armaments are in the hands of those in the service of these groups and not in their own hands, the working class will be forced to lead a miserable existence no matter how many crumbs those groups should let fall from their banquet table”

On May 17, Castro signed the First Agrarian Reform into law. It limited landholdings and forbade foreign land ownership. The new government began expropriating property basing compensation on the values that the corporations had declared. The companies were dissatisfied since tax assessments reflected only a fraction of the properties’ true worth.
American companies still dominated the Cuban economy, and the revolution became a direct threat to those business concerns.

Castro continued to deny that he was a communist as the new government began nationalizing industry, redistributing property, collectivizing agriculture, and socializing health care and education. His policies alienated many former middle and upper-class supporters. Over one million Cubans migrated to the U.S. forming a vocal anti-Castro community in Miami, Florida.

On 11 December 1959, Colonel J.C. King, chief of the CIA's Western Hemisphere Division, sent a confidential memorandum to CIA director Allen Dulles. King argued that if a "far-left dictatorship was allowed to remain in Cuba, it would encourage similar actions against U.S. holdings in other Latin American countries." As a result, Dulles created a unit named Operation 40, named from the National Security Council group that followed Cuba. The group was presided over by then-Vice President Richard M. Nixon.

The individuals who composed Operation 40 were selected by Jose Sanjenis Perdomo, former Chief of Police under Cuban President Carlos Prio. He recruited former Batista intelligence officers such as Eladio del Valle and Rolando Masferrer, soldiers of fortune such as Frank Sturgis (one of the Watergate burglars), Felix Rodriguez, Luis Posada Carriles, Orlando Bosch, Rafael ‘Chi Chi’ Quintero, Virgilio Paz Romero, Pedro Luis Diaz Lanz, Bernard Barker, Porter Goss, Antonio Veciana…and CIA case officers Col. William Bishop and David Sanchez Morales. Barry Seal may have flown for the Operation.
On January 8, 1960, Allen Dulles ordered Deputy Director Dick Bissell to organize a special task force to overthrow Castro. Bissell appointed Tracy Barnes operating officer of the Cuban Task Force. He called a meeting on January 18th. According to Fabian Escalante, head of a counter-intelligence unit (G-2) in Cuba, those attending included:

Howard Hunt (future head of the Watergate team), Frank Bender (an alias of CIA agent Gerry Droller), Jack Esterline (former director of a CIA group in Venezuela), David A. Phillips (a psychological warfare expert), and others who had been part of the team accountable for the overthrow of Guatemalan President Jacobo Arbenz in 1954.

Barnes talked at length. He explained that Vice-President Richard Nixon had assembled a group of businessmen headed by George Bush and Jack Crichton, both Texas oilmen, to round up funds for Operation 40. Nixon was a protégé of Bush's father [Prescott], who in 1946 had supported Nixon's bid for Congress. In fact, Prescott Bush was also the campaign strategist who brought Eisenhower and Nixon to the presidency.

On March 2, 1960, Dulles briefed Vice President Nixon on the operations already under way. Reading from a seven-page paper entitled "What We Are Doing in Cuba," Dulles specified acts of economic warfare, sabotage, political propaganda, and a proposal to use a drug, which if placed in Castro's food, would make him behave in an irrational manner. Nixon was all for it.

On March 4, 1960, La Coubre, a ship flying a Belgian flag, exploded in Havana Bay. It was loaded with arms and ammunition for the Cuban armed forces. A second bomb was set
nearby and timed to go off later killing the volunteers attempting to rescue the casualties of the first explosion. Operation 40 was involved in more than just sabotage operations. Frank Sturgis, allegedly told author Mike Canfield: “upon orders, the group would assassinate either members of the military or the political parties of the foreign country to be infiltrated… (They) were concentrating strictly in Cuba at that particular time."

On March 17 1960, President Eisenhower signed a National Security Council directive authorizing the CIA to organize, train, and equip Cuban refugees as a guerrilla force to overthrow Castro’s government. Howard Hunt began supervising the training of Cuban expatriates in Guatemala. Brigade 2506 was modeled on the guerrilla organizations of World War II.

Mr. Vicente Leon arrived at the Guatemala base with fifty-three men from Operation 40. They would be the rearguard occupying towns and cities. Their prime mission was to seize the files of intelligence agencies, public buildings, banks, and industries. Cuban leaders would be captured and interrogated under their directive. The Cuban exiles believed that the real purpose of Operation 40 was to 'kill Communists' and after eliminating hard-core Fidelistas, to set up a right wing dictatorship, presumably under Manuel Artime. The exiles believed all of the plans had CIA approval.

Cuba continued to need money to finance its programs. The International Monetary Fund refused to make any loans until "stabilization" conditions were applied to its economic system. Cuba refused on the grounds that it would undermine their revolutionary programs. Instead, trade agreements were signed with the Soviet Union. When the American-owned
oil companies refused to refine the crude oil that came from the Soviet Union, they were expropriated.

The United States responded by breaking off diplomatic relations. On July 6, 1960, Eisenhower canceled Cuba’s sugar quota, on which its economy depended. Cuba responded on August 6th, by nationalizing another $850 million worth of U.S. owned industrial and agrarian enterprises. On August 18, 1960, President Eisenhower approved a $13 million budget for the guerrilla war against Castro.

On September 17th, Cuba nationalized all the US banks including First National City bank of NY, First National of Boston, and Chase Manhattan Bank. The US then began a partial embargo on Cuba.

Bissell went to Colonel Sheffield Edwards, the CIA’s chief of security, and requested to be put in touch with a go-between for a Mafia contract against Fidel Castro. Robert Maheu, contacted Al Capone's successor in Chicago, Salvatore Giancana and his right-hand man, Miami Syndicate leader Santos Trafficante, about the possibility of an assassination. Maheu said that he represented numerous international business firms in Cuba that were being expropriated; and offered $150,000 for the "removal" of Castro.

According to Lucky Luciano, Castro’s coup had caused Mafia gambling empires to collapse overnight. Giancana was receptive to the proposal, and suggested using pills that could be put in Castro's food and drink. The poison was given to Juan Orta, an official in the Cuban government who had access to Castro. After six failed attempts Orta asked to be let out of
the contract. Another attempt was made using Dr. Anthony Verona, the leader of the Cuban Exile Junta. Verona requested ten thousand dollars in expenses and a thousand dollars’ worth of communication equipment. It’s not known how far he progressed before the entire program was cancelled.

By the end of 1960 all opposition newspapers in Cuba had been closed down, and all radio and television stations were under state control. By the spring, almost all sectors of the Cuba economy were entirely state owned. One hundred Spanish speaking KGB advisors helped to organize Committees for the Defense of the Revolution. Neighborhood watch groups reported any "counter-revolutionary" activities. Castro then exhibited Soviet manufactured tanks and weapons in the 1961 New Year’s Day parade.

Bissell drafted a top-secret policy paper entitled: "A Program of Covert Action against the Castro Regime" (code-named JMARC). Its aim was to replace Castro with someone "more ... acceptable to the U.S. without any appearance of U.S. intervention." President-elect John F. Kennedy was given a draft of the proposal on November 18, 1960. Kennedy put the question to the Joint Chiefs of Staff. The JCS reported that if Brigade 2506 were given four days of air cover, if the people of Trinidad, Cuba joined the rebellion, and if they were able to join the guerrillas in the Escambray Mountains, the overall rating of success was 30%. They did not recommend that Kennedy go along with the project.

Kennedy rejected Bissell’s proposal on March 11th and instructed him to draft a new plan. The landing was moved to the Bahia de Cochinos (Bay of Pigs); 80 miles from the Escambray Mountains and across an impenetrable swamp. That meant that the guerrilla
fallback was no longer a viable option. Allen W. Dulles felt: “that when the chips were
down, when the crisis arose in reality, any action required for success would be authorized
rather than permit the enterprise to fail." Some believed that Bissell and Dulles were setting
a trap to force U.S. intervention.

On March 13th the Kennedy administration unveiled its multibillion dollar program: The
Alliance For Progress. It was meant to be a vehicle of social change for Latin America in
place of revolution or socialism; and included a broad range of strategies for economic
growth, equitable distribution of the national income, reduced unemployment, education,
housing, and healthcare for all citizens.

In President Kennedy’s words:

“Our nations are the product of a common struggle: the revolt from colonial rule.
And our people share a common heritage: the quest for the dignity and the freedom
of man…I have called on all the people of the hemisphere to join in a new Alliance
for Progress … to satisfy the basic needs of the American people for homes, work
and land, health, and schools…

For unless necessary social reforms, including land and tax reform, are freely made,
unless we broaden the opportunity of all of our people, unless the great mass of
Americans share in increasing prosperity, then our alliance, our revolution, our
dream, and our freedom will fail… we call for social change … in the spirit of
Washington and Jefferson, of Bolivar and San Martin and Marti…”
On April 14th, Kennedy questioned Bissell about the number of Douglas B-26 Invaders that were going to be used. He replied sixteen. Kennedy told him to use eight. Bissell knew that the invasion could not succeed without adequate air cover. Yet he accepted the President’s decision.

On the morning of April 15th, unmarked Douglas B26s bombed and strafed the airfields San Antonio de Los Baños, Libertad, and Santiago de Cuba. The Cubans had anticipated the raid and had already moved their planes out of harm's way.

The CIA had a cover story for the attack. Captain Zuniga departed from a base in Nicaragua on a solo, low-level mission that took him over Cuba, and then toward Key West. His plane bore Cuban Air Force markings. Prior to his departure, the engine was shot at to render the appearance that it had taken ground fire at some point over the course of its flight. Once across the island, Captain Zuniga ascended to be detected by US radar, feathered his engine, and radioed a mayday call. He claimed to be defecting. UN Security Council, Adlai Stevenson quickly claimed that the assault was the result of an internal conflict. Reporters on the scene however, noted that the plane’s machine guns hadn’t been fired and that the plane was not the type used by the Cubans.

The remaining Douglas bombers returned to their base in Nicaragua to re-arm and refuel. Upon landing the flight crews received a cable from Washington ordering the indefinite stand-down of all further combat operations.
On April 17, about fourteen hundred armed exiles landed and established a small beachhead on the Bay of Pigs. Vicente Leon and part of Operation 40 were put ashore via the CIA-chartered freighter Atlantico. He was killed in action. Those who were aboard the freighter Lake Charles retreated without engaging in the battle. The freighters containing food, fuel, medical equipment, and ammunition were sunk.

It quickly became evident that the local population was not going support them, and that they were likely to lose. At 7 a.m. on April 18, Bissell told Kennedy that the invasion force was trapped on the beaches and encircled by Castro’s forces. Bissell requested that Kennedy send in American forces to save them. He expected him to say yes. Kennedy replied that he still wanted "minimum visibility."

That night Bissell had another appointment with John F. Kennedy in the White House. General Lyman Lemnitzer, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and Admiral Arleigh Burke, Chief of Naval Operations were both present. Bissell told Kennedy that the operation could still be saved if warplanes were allowed to fly cover. Kennedy decided against it. U.S. Marine support was also denied even though there were ships off the coast ready at a moment's notice.

Within seventy-two hours all the invading troops had been killed, wounded, or had surrendered. The Batalla de Girón ended on April 19th. The captured men were tried, and sentenced to thirty years in prison for treason. Twenty months of negotiations later, Cuba released them in exchange for $53 million in food and medicine.
CIA Director Allen Dulles, Deputy CIA Director Charles Cabell, and Deputy Director of Operations Richard Bissell, were all forced to assume responsibility for the failure of the operation, and resigned.

Four months after the Bay of Pigs, Che Guevara gave a speech at the Meeting of the Inter-American Economic and Social Council in Uruguay. He called to mind Jose Marti´s words: “Whoever speaks of economic union speaks of political union… The nation that buys, commands, the nation that sells, serves… The excessive influence of one country over another country’s commerce becomes political influence…” Che denounced the Alliance for Progress as “a vehicle designed to separate the people of Cuba from the other people of Latin America, to sterilize the example of the Cuban Revolution, and to subdue the other people according to imperialism’s instructions.”

Che later met with Richard Goodwin, President Kennedy’s special counsel. Guevara had a message for Kennedy: Cuba was prepared to forswear any political alliance with the Soviet bloc, pay for confiscated American properties in trade, and consider curbing support for leftist insurgencies in other countries. In return the US would cease all hostile actions against Cuba.

Goodwin counseled the president to quietly intensify pressure. In November 1961 Kennedy approved a new covert program. A task force was formed that included members of the CIA, the U.S. Information Agency, and the departments of State and Defense. "Operation Mongoose" (aka "The Cuban Project") intended to disrupt the Cuban government and economic infrastructure. In addition to political propaganda programs such as radio
broadcasts and leaflets aimed at stimulating a rebellion, it contained plans to disable or destroy power plants in Cuba, lay mines to disrupt shipping, and in any way possible, undermine Fidel Castro’s Communist regime.

Theodore Shackley headed a project known as "JMWave" in the Miami office. JMWave employed more than two hundred officers who handled approximately two thousand Cuban agents. CIA agents began to compile secret files on Cuban exiles and the Americans who associated with them. Some became paid informants. Activities were also conducted in Los Angeles and New York to support future anti-Castro guerrilla raids.

Air Force Brigadier General Edward Lansdale advised the PsyOps component of the operation. One proposed plan called for a space launch at Cape Canaveral to be sabotaged and blamed on Cuban agents. Operation Bingo suggested a staged attack on the U.S. Naval Base at Guantanamo Bay. The Joint Chiefs of Staff recommended Operation Northwoods, under which innocent people would be shot on American streets in a wave of violent terror beginning in Washington, D.C., Miami, and elsewhere. People would be framed for bombings they did not commit; and planes would be hijacked. Using phony evidence, Castro would be held accountable for all of it. Lieutenant General Marshall S. Carter, deputy director of the CIA recalled that "The President said to put it back in the box and nail it tight."

Castro declared himself a Marxist-Leninist, and Cuba a Communist state in a nationally broadcast speech on December 2, 1961. The Cuban government received increased military
support from the Soviet Union in preparation for another large-scale attack. It’s likely that Khrushchev believed that the deployment of missiles would protect the island. MRBM on Cuban soil, with a range of 2,000 km could threaten Washington, DC and around half of the U.S. SAC bases with a flight time of under twenty minutes. The U.S.’s radar system was oriented toward USSR and provided little warning of any launch from Cuba.

By July 1962, over sixty Soviet ships were en-route to Cuba. A U-2 flight in late August photographed a new series of SAM sites being constructed. On the night of September 8, the first consignment of SS-4 MRBM was unloaded in Havana, and a second shipload arrived on September 16. On October 19 U-2 flights indicated four sites were operational. Soviet forces in Cuba had already received tactical nuclear warheads. On October 22, Kennedy announced the discovery of the installations and warned that any nuclear missile attack from Cuba would be regarded as an attack by the Soviet Union. He placed a naval quarantine around Cuba to prevent further Soviet shipments from arriving.

On October 25 at an emergency session of the UN Security Council, U.S. Ambassador Adlai Stevenson produced photographs taken by U.S. surveillance aircraft showing the missile installations in Cuba. He attempted to force an answer from Soviet Ambassador Valerian Zorin as to the existence of the weapons, famously demanding, "Don't wait for the translation!"

Soviet field commanders in Cuba were authorized to use tactical nuclear weapons if attacked by the United States. Khrushchev offered to withdraw the missiles in return for a U.S. guarantee not to support an invasion of Cuba, and withdrawal U.S. missiles from Turkey. As Soviet merchant ships neared the quarantine zone, Kennedy responded. He publicly
accepted the deal guaranteeing not to attack and secretly sent Robert Kennedy to the Soviet consulate with an agreement to withdrawal the U.S. missiles.

Khrushchev announced the removal of the Soviet missiles and ordered the ships turned back on October 28. President Kennedy ordered an end to the quarantine of Cuba on November 20. The compromise satisfied no one, although it was a particularly sharp diplomatic embarrassment for Khrushchev who was seen as backing down from a situation that the Soviets had created. The United States no longer publically sanctioned anti-Castro raids and it became clear that they had no intention of invading Cuba again. The Cuban exiles regarded the Kennedy-Khrushchev deal as a betrayal.

By the fall of 1963 the Kennedy administration began to consider talks between the United States and Cuba at the United Nations. In an interview one month before he was struck down by rifle fire in Dallas, President JFK stated: “I believe that there is no country in the world including any and all the countries under colonial domination, where economic colonization, humiliation, and exploitation were worse than in Cuba, in part owing to my country’s policies during the Batista regime. I approved the proclamation which Fidel Castro made in the Sierra Maestra, when he called for justice and especially yearned to rid Cuba of corruption. I will even go further: to some extent it is as though Batista was the incarnation of a number of sins on the part of the United States. Now we shall have to pay for those sins. In the matter of the Batista regime, I am in agreement with the first Cuban revolutionaries. That is perfectly clear.”
Luis Posada Carriles separated from the service at Fort Benning and was trained in sabotage and explosives by the CIA between March 1963 and March 1964. By 1965 he was on the CIA payroll (codenamed AMCLEVE 15). His Personal Record Questionnaire portrayed him as "strongly anti-Communist" and pro-democracy. He was judged as "very reliable", having a "good character", and being "security conscious." His CIA handler Grover Lythcott stated that he was "acutely aware of the international implications of ill planned or over enthusiastic activities against Cuba." The CIA recommended that he be considered for a civil position in a post-Castro government in Cuba (codenamed PBRUMEN).

In July 1965, Posada reported that he had completed two ten-pound bombs for Jorge Mas Canosa to be used against Soviet and Cuban ships in the port of Veracruz, Mexico. In a July 1966 memo to Lythcott, Posada, using the name "Pete," requested permission to join the coordinating junta for four groups run by Mas. "I will give the Company all the intelligence that I can collect," Posada wrote. "I will gain a more solid position among the exiles and because of that I will be in a better position in the future to perform a good job for the company." By August 29, he was officially associated with the 'coordination of forces' which the group "Cuban Representation in Exile" was organizing.

In 1968, the CIA began to question Posada about his association with criminal elements. Relations became strained, and Posada relocated to Venezuela, taking with him various CIA supplied weapons including grenades and fuses. He became a naturalized Venezuelan citizen, and began his association with fellow Cuban exile Orlando Bosch. He then became chief of operations of the Venezuelan intelligence service (DISIP), which had links with Operation Condor. He was implicated in numerous covert international operations as an explosives expert; and was dismissed in 1974.
The CIA formally broke ties with him on February 13, 1976; and Posada formed a private
detective agency in Caracas. On September 21, former Chilean minister Orlando Letelier
was killed by a booby-trapped car in Washington, D.C. Two weeks later, on October 6, two
time bombs planted on the Douglas DC-8, Cubana Flight 455, exploded. All 73 people on
board were killed, including all 24 members of the 1975 national Cuban Fencing team. Both
CIA and FBI intelligence records establish Posada and Orlando Bosch as masterminds of the
bombing. Michael Townley, a former CIA agent, stated that Posada was at the reunion
where both the Cubana bombing and the Letelier assassination were planned.

Two employees of Posada's private security firm, Freddy Lugo and Hernán Ricardo Lozano,
were found guilty of planting the Cubana bombs and served twenty years in a Venezuelan
jail. Posada was also behind bars for nine years, until a changing of the guard at midnight on
Aug. 18, 1985. Then, dressed in a black jacket with a collar turned up like a priest's, he
crossed the courtyard of the prison. Carrying a Bible, a satchel containing food, and a lamp,
he simply strolled out of the Venezuelan jail.

The escape was planned and financed by the head of the Cuban-American National
Foundation, Mr. Jorge Mas. Mas helped his longtime friend settle in El Salvador. Posada
was issued a Salvadoran passport in the name of Ramon Medina Rodriguez; and was
assigned as deputy to the CIA operative, Felix Rodriguez. The pair coordinated the flights of
rickety planes that ferried drops of military supplies from the Salvadoran air base to the
Contras. Posada was paid $3,000 per month plus expenses from U.S. Major General Richard
Secord, who was directing operations for Oliver North. The flights ended in October 1986,
when Sandinista forces shot down a plane flown by a long-time CIA asset Eugene Hafenfus.
Documents were discovered directly linking him to the U.S. government. The incident threw
a spotlight on the whole illegal contra network, and in the following month then Attorney General Ed Meese was forced to go public with some of the details of the operation.

In 1997 Posada organized a string of bombings at hotels, restaurants, and discotheques in Cuba. He was found with 200 pounds of dynamite and C-4 explosives in Panama City in November 2000, and was arrested for plotting to blow up the auditorium where Fidel Castro would be speaking at an Ibero-American summit. Posada was convicted of endangering public safety and was sentenced to eight years. He was pardoned by outgoing President Mireya Moscoso in 2004; but Panama's Supreme Court declared the pardon to be null and void in June 2008.

Posada illegally crossed the Mexican border and entered the United States in the spring of 2005. On September 28th a U.S. immigration judge ruled that Posada could not be deported, citing that he faced torture in Venezuela or Cuba. Both countries accused the Bush administration of hypocrisy in its "war on terrorism" for not prosecuting him.

His was released on bail on April 19, 2007 and returned to Miami. On Feb 25, 2010 Posada went on trial. Mr. Posada Carriles was found not guilty on all charges against him.

"The C.I.A. taught us everything," Mr. Posada said. "They trained us in acts of sabotage, the use of us explosives, everything. Now they call it terrorism. The times have changed."

As Minister of Industries, Che Guevara opposed Soviet proposals for decentralization and greater local autonomy. He also viewed material enticements a threat to the moral incentive that he regarded as fundamental to Cuba´s socialism. Guevara convinced Castro that
accelerated industrialization and centralization of the economy was necessary to end Cuba’s
dependence on sugar production. By 1963 Guevara recognized that the industrialization
project needed to be scaled down. His policies had brought the economy to its lowest point
since Castro took power.

Castro began to dedicate his energies to the economic problems. By mid-1964,
revolutionary fervor was tempered and Cuba began to follow Soviet advice more closely. In
November, Cuba took a pro-soviet posture at the Havana conference; and relations with
China deteriorated.

In December, Guevara departed on a three-month trip to the United States, Africa, and
China. When he returned, Castro no longer supported his economic theories and began to
favor the revisionist school headed by President Dorticos and Carlos Rodriguez. In January,
Castro announced material incentives for workers: The five thousand most productive cane
cutters would receive rewards such as motorcycles, trips abroad and vacations at Cuban
resorts.

Che left again. On February 26, 1965 he attended the Second Economic Seminar in Algiers
and delivered a speech:

“ We cannot be indifferent to what happens anywhere in the world, for a victory by
any country over imperialism is our victory…

... Socialism cannot exist without a change in conscience to a new fraternal attitude
toward humanity, not only within the societies which are building or have built
socialism, but also on a world scale toward all peoples suffering from imperialist
oppression…”
…This is the time to throw off the yoke, to force renegotiation of oppressive foreign debts, and to force the imperialists to give up their bases for aggression on our territories…”

On April 1, 1965 Che wrote his farewell letter to Fidel:

“…I say farewell to you, to the comrades, to your people, who now are mine…Other nations of the world summon my modest efforts of assistance… and the time has come for us to part… I leave a people who received me as a son. I carry to new battlefronts the faith that you taught me, the revolutionary spirit of my people, the feeling of fulfilling the most sacred of duties: to fight against imperialism wherever it may be.”

Guevara headed off to the Congo on April 24, 1965 to establish “a thousand Vietnams”. His guerrillas were highly mobile, self-sufficient, small groups rooted in the rural outback. They went to offer support to the Marxist Simba movement. By November 20, suffering of dysentery and acute asthma, a disheartened Guevara and his surviving troops left Africa. He spent the next months living clandestinely in Dar es Salaam and Prague; and found time for a secret trip to visit his family in Cuba.

In the late 1950’s the Bolivian government initiated reformist programs improving the conditions of the indigenous majority and nationalizing the tin mines. Washington became concerned of a Cuban-style Communist insurgency. In 1964 the CIA backed the overthrow of President Victor Paz by a military junta and Vice- President General Rene Barrientos seized power.

On November 3, 1966, Guevara arrived in La Paz, Bolivia. He was posing as Uruguayan businessman, Adolfo Mena González, working for the Organization of American States. He
established a base near a mining camp in the rural southwest; where he waited, amassing supplies and men. By February 1967, Guevara's guerrilla force was well equipped and ready.

March 27, 1967: Guevara issued Communiqué Number One of the National Liberation Army of Bolivia announcing that the war’s first battle had taken place on March 23. The Bolivian Army suffered 7 dead; 14 prisoners were given a lecture then set free.

April 28: The Bolivian Second Ranger Battalion began a four month intensive training led by a sixteen-member U.S. Green Beret team. The goal was to produce a rapid reaction force capable of counterinsurgency operations and in particular, pursue Che Guevara's guerrilla band. The CIA sent two Cuban veterans of the Bay of Pigs down to join the hunt.

Guevara’s units continued to win several skirmishes against Bolivian troops during the spring and summer. He writes:

May

There has been no contact with Manila, Paz, and Joaquín, which reduces the group to 25 men. The peasants are less fearful, but incorporating them into the struggle is a slow and patient task. The enemy continues to be unorganized and its fighting ability hasn’t improved.

June

My asthma is getting worse and there is very little medicine. We have not made contact with the other group or the Bolivian Communist Party. We still have not been able to integrate with the rural community, and we need more men. We are now down to 24. The Bolivian Army is still quiet, but has begun to use the local peasants as informers. “The Massacre of San Juan,” when the soldiers opened fire on the miners and killed around thirty men and women should help our cause.

July
We have lost more men and are now down to 22. Three of us, including myself are crippled, which is slowing us down. We have had three encounters with the Army, killing seven and wounding ten of them. The most urgent tasks remain: to reestablish contact with the other group, to incorporate more men, and to find medicine.

**August**

This was, without a doubt, the worst month that we have had. Losing our supply caves with their documents and medications was a hard blow. Having to eat horse meat is demoralizing. It is difficult to march in the hills without water. We lost two more men, and had one case of desertion.

September 22: The guerrillas arrive at Alto Seco village. Inti Peredo, a Bolivian guerrilla, gives the villagers a lecture on the objectives of the movement. The group resupplies and leaves later that night.

Guevara Arze, the Bolivian Foreign Minister, informs the Organization of American States that Che Guevara is leading operations in Bolivia. The foreign minister gives his assurance that "we’re not going to let anybody steal our country away from us. Nobody, at any time."

September 24: Che and his men arrive, exhausted and sick, at Loma Larga, a ranch close to Alto Seco. All but one of the peasants flee upon their arrival.

September 26: The guerrillas move to the village of La Higuera and notice that all the men are gone. As they are departing for Jahue, they hear shots coming from the road and are forced to stay and defend themselves. Three guerrillas are killed. Che orders his men to evacuate the village along a road leading to Rio Grande.
The Ranger Battalion sets up along the river San Antonio to prevent exfiltration of the guerrilla force. They capture a guerrilla known as "Gamba." He appears to be poorly clothed and in poor health.

**Che: Sept**

It should have been a month of recovery, but the ambush wasted everything and now we are left in a dangerous position. The Army is becoming more effective and the peasants don’t help us at all.

October 7: Evening- Che and his men stop to rest in a ravine in Quebrada del Yuro.

October 8: A peasant women alerts the army that she heard voices along the banks of the Yuro close to the spot where it runs along the San Antonio River. The troops receive information that there is a band of 17 guerrillas in the Ravine.

By morning, several companies of Bolivian Rangers are deployed through the area. About 12 p.m.: A unit from Captain Prado’s company, all recent graduates of the U.S. Army Special Forces training camp, entered the ravine to the north. A machine gun was brought up for cover. 1st platoon came under fire and lost three men.

Simon Cuba (Willy) Sarabia, a Bolivian miner, and "Ramon" (Guevara) tried to escape. The machine gun crew took them under fire. Ramon was hit in the lower calf and was helped by Willy who tried to carry him away from the line of fire.

The firing started again and Che’s beret was knocked off. Several soldiers chased them as they scrambled. Che attempted to keep firing but couldn’t. He was hit again in his right leg.
and forearm; and he dropped his gun. As the soldiers approached Che shouted, "Don´t shoot! I am Che Guevara and worth more to you alive than dead." The battle ends at approximately 3:30 p.m. and Che is taken prisoner.

"Hello Saturno, we have Papá!"

Saturno is the code for Colonel Joaquin Zenteno, commandant of the Eighth Bolivian Army Division, and Papá is code for Che. In disbelief, Colonel Zenteno asks to repeat the message. With confirmation, euphoria erupts among the divisional headquarters staff. Colonel Zenteno immediately ordered the transfer Che and any other prisoners to La Higuera.

Che survives the seven kilometers to La Higuera stretched out on a blanket carried by four soldiers. The group arrived just after dark in La Higuera and both Che and Sarabia are put into the one-room schoolhouse. Five more guerrillas are brought in later that night.

October 9: 6:15 a.m. - Félix Rodríguez arrives by helicopter in La Higuera, along with Colonel Joaquín Zenteno. Rodríguez is using the codename "Félix Ramos" and posing as a Bolivian military officer. He had been instrumental in a lengthy interrogation of one of the captured guerrillas that lead the 2nd Ranger Battalion to focus on the Villagrande region where Guevara's rebels were operating.

He arrived with a portable field radio and a camera. He quietly observed Che lying in dirt: his arms tied behind his back, his feet bound together, with matted hair, torn clothes, his shirt open without any buttons, and wearing only remnants of leather on his feet for shoes. Rodríguez sets up his radio and transmits a coded message to a CIA station, and then photographs Che’s diary and other captured documents.
10 am- The Bolivian officers are confronted by the question of what to do with Che. Bolivia has no death penalty. Félix Rodríguez receives a message by the Bolivian Superior Command ordering Che to be executed. Rodríguez advises them not to shoot Guevara in the face so that his wounds would appear to be combat-related. The CIA and the U.S. government arranged helicopters and airplanes to transfer Che to Panama for interrogation. Rodríguez decides to leave the matter in the hands of the Bolivians.

Rodríguez entered the schoolhouse to tell Che about the Bolivian high command orders. Che understands and says, "It is better like this ... I never should have been captured alive." Che gives Rodríguez a message, 'Tell my wife to remarry, and tell Fidel Castro that the Revolution will rise again in the Americas."

The top ranking officers in La Higuera instruct the noncommissioned officers to carry out the order. It’s not clear if they drew straws or if Sergeant Jaime Terán volunteered to execute Che. Sgt Terran had been drinking, possibly from a celebration from the night before. Terán entered the room at 1:10 p.m. Guevara said: "I will remain standing for this." …"Shoot; you are only going to kill a man." Terán fires a borrowed M-2 carbine and knocks Guevara back against the wall. Several soldiers, also wanting to shoot Che, enter the room and shoot him in the chest filling his lungs with blood.

Rodríguez took Che's Rolex and then left by helicopter with senior army officers for headquarters. Upon landing, Rodríguez pulls his Bolivian army cap over his face and quickly leaves without being noticed.
October 10: Che’s body is flown to Vallegrande by helicopter. The certificate states that “on October 9 at 5:30 p.m., there arrived...Ernesto Guevara, approximately 40 years of age, death resulting from multiple bullet wounds in the thorax and extremities.

Local peasants come to view his body. They claimed that he looked like Christ off the cross; and discreetly clipped locks of their newly found saint’s hair.

October 14: three officials of the Argentine Federal police were shown a metal receptacle containing Che’s two amputated hands floating in a liquid solution. The experts compared the fingerprints with the ones in Guevara’s Argentine identity record, No. 3.524.272, and they were the same. Under the supervision of CIA agent Gustavo Villoldo his body was then secretly buried near a desolate airstrip where it was not found until June 1997.

October 18: Fidel Castro delivered a eulogy for Che Guevara to nearly a million people in Havana’s Plaza de la Revolución. He proclaims that Che’s ideals and life-long struggle against imperialism will be an inspiration for future generations of revolutionaries.

November 8, 1967: The CIA reports that Cuba threatens to assassinate a prominent Bolivian figure in revenge.

On April 27, 1969, General Rene Barrientos was killed in a suspicious crash while piloting his helicopter. It had been a gift of the Gulf Oil Company.

"A cada lechón se le llega su Nochebuena."

And with that the trovadore stooped over, grabbed the few pesos from the ground, stood, brushed off his pants, grabbed his guitar, tipped his hat, and left.
The last Incan emperor, Tupac Amaru, was tortured and killed in Cuzco in 1572. In 1780, his direct descendent, Túpac Amaru II, headed a revolutionary movement attempting to reestablish the archaic Tahuantinsuyo Empire. When he was captured, his tongue was cut out, then his arms and legs were tied to horses and he was dragged in four directions. He was then beheaded, and his torso was burned. Finally, his ashes were thrown into a river.

In the 1960s Tupac Amaru once again raised his voice ...

Uruguay was a country stained by the bloody throat cutting wars between the whites and the reds. When José Batlle became president in 1903, he began the process of governing the chaos that ruled. He created labor reforms, universal adult suffrage, and the decentralized executive power that was sanctioned by the 1917 constitution.

During the 1940s and 50s, Uruguay was an island of peace. It was called the Switzerland of America. Thriving from the sale of meat, wool, and leather, it became a provincial state with broad social services, and an overblown state bureaucracy (one in five working Uruguayans was employed by the federal government in some fashion). When the export boom ended after the Korean War, mass unemployment, inflation, and a steep drop in the standard of living soon followed. The corrupt, power-alternating Blanco and Colorado parties blinded themselves to the social tensions and economic reality that existed.

Raúl Sendic was born near the rural village of Juan Jose Castro. He worked with his father on a crab apple farm until he finished high school, then left to study in Montevideo. In 1952, he became an attorney and joined the Socialist Party. Between 1960 and 1962, he and a group of young labor leaders succeeded in unionizing “los cañeros”: the poverty stricken sugarcane and sugar beet cutters. The Union de Trabajadores Azucareros de Artigas initially
demanded better working conditions and higher pay. When the plantation owners were forced to comply with new work laws and pay scale they began to close their businesses. The peasants found themselves without work, and began to demand land expropriation and redistribution.

Four hundred workers marched bearing banners that read: ‘‘Land for those who work for it’’ and ‘‘For land and with Sendic’’. Marching some 350 miles, the peasants arrived in Montevideo. Uruguay’s legislative and executive branches immediately ignored their demands. Confrontations, shooting incidents, and arrests soon followed. After spending time in prison, Sendic, and others with him became dissatisfied with their legal options. They decided that if the political system were not capable of listening to its constituents, then it was time to abandon it.

Inspired by the Cuban Revolution, they began to consider the use of violence as a legitimate tool for curbing the extent of their government's authority. It is an inalienable right of people to revolt against their government. Thus they wrote, "the solutions … will not be achieved without an armed struggle, because those solutions go against the personal interests of those who have everything in their hands, just as they go against powerful foreign interests."

The robbery of a gun shop in Colonia marked the birth of the Tupamaro National Liberation Movement. The Tupamaros then started robbing banks, casinos, and other businesses, winning sympathizers with their Robin Hood philosophy of distributing stolen food and money among the poor.

In the early morning hours on July 31, 1963 a group of men assaulted the Swiss Gun Club in Nueva Helvecia taking with them a number of assorted rifles. Police sources attributed the
attack to "left wing militants led by Raúl Sendic"; and issued an order for his capture. Sendic immediately went underground.

The Tupamaros directed their struggle against what they saw as the ruling oligarchy and the concomitant foreign domination. They accused Uruguay’s traditional parties of deep seated corruption. The government, they wrote, had turned into a regime "that serves only a handful of privileged people. Those who have gained the most are big bankers, cattle owners, industrialists, and merchants." They were convinced that the growing foreign debt, the flight of domestic savings, and the trade deficit increased the economic and political dependence on foreign industrial countries.

Their ultimate objective was the creation of a socialist socioeconomic system with a strong, independent, national identity. The means of production would be controlled by the state, under a central planning agency. There would be an agrarian reform with the expropriation of the large landholdings, but small private enterprises would be allowed to continue operating. Foreign businesses would be expropriated without compensation. Health, education, and welfare would also undergo reforms. The core of the Tupamaros' ideology was emphasized in the often repeated slogan "There Will Be a Fatherland for All or for Nobody."

Many officials in the Argentinean federal government were outspoken Nazi sympathizers. Not the least of them was an Army colonel named Juan Domingo Peron. Peron paid a personal visit to Hitler in the spring of 1940 and accompanied the Fuehrer on his triumphal march into Paris. Afterwards, the Reich began to send submarines to Argentina carrying crates of gold, jewelry, and art treasures stolen from occupied countries. An estimated
billion dollars was smuggled into the country. Some of the money went to purchase thousands of square miles of fertile grasslands in Patagonia. Some was set aside for Nazi leaders, just in case. And some of it went to finance Peron.

S.S. Gen. Wilhelm von Faupel and Willi Koehn, chief of the Latin American section of the German Foreign Office arrived in June 1943. They came to assist the United Officers’ Group in a military coup against the government of Ramon Castillo. Colonel Juan Perón had been one of the presiding military leaders. He was rewarded by being placed in charge of the Ministry of Labor. General Arturo Rawson, another leader of the coup, admitted to a U.S. Embassy official that Nazi technicians and party brass were setting up shop in Argentina.

On January 22, 1945, Reichsfuehrer S.S. Heinrich Himmler notified his police, Waffen S.S., and intelligence commanders, that party leaders would soon be sent abroad on a clandestine mission. The following month, three hundred and forty high-ranking Nazis were ordered to Argentina. Hitler’s Deputy Fuehrer Bormann, Propaganda Minister Goebbels and Labor Minister Robert Ley met in the Berlin bunker on April 12, 1945 and drew up secret plans for Die Spinne, a postwar Nazi underground organization with its headquarters in Argentina. At least three German U-boats landed passengers on the southern Argentine coast between June, 1945, and October, 1946.

Perón ran for president in 1946. Twelve days before the elections, the U.S. State Department accused the Argentine regime of collaborating with the Axis enemy, espionage, intrigue, deceit, and harboring Nazi war criminals. Peron first ignored, and then denied the State
Department charges. All he wanted, he insisted, was to head a free and democratic government "for the good of the common man." He won the election with 52% of the vote.

Perón’s political platform proposed a compromise between capitalism and communism. He was supported by both young idealists whose icons included Che Guevara (Montoneros, Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias, Fuerzas Armadas Peronistas, Peronist Youth) and right-wing groups such as the Guardia de Hierro and the Movimiento Nacionalista Tacuara. He ordered the mass nationalization of public services, strategic industries, and the farm export sector, while enacting progressive labor laws and social reforms, and investing in public works projects. His government established the General Confederation of Labor, built thousands of homes and schools and began a universal healthcare program. These reforms earned him the loyalty of much of the working class and trade unions, but alienated the upper and middle class sectors of society.

His government did employ ex-Nazis. Ante Pavelic, a puppet ruler of Croatia became boss of the Peronista secret police. On his staff at the Buenos Aires Police Headquarters were Dido Kvaternik, the Croatian secret police chief, and several Gestapo agents, including S.S. Colonel Eugene Dollman, one time Gestapo commander in Rome; Dr. Hans Koch and Dr. Hans Richner.

The government had its share of critics and began purging them from publicly held jobs. Jorge Luis Borges was informed that he was being “promoted” from his appointment at the Miguel Cane library to a post as a poultry inspector at the Buenos Aires municipal market. He immediately resigned; and later at a dinner given in his honor remarked: “dictatorships
Borges was elected president of The Argentine Society of Writers in 1952. In light of its non-Peronista political overtones, it became a refuge for other critics of the regime. The meetings were monitored by police agents. A typical reunion fell into a pattern: the artists would discuss complex literature and philosophy until law enforcement would be bored into sleeping or leave, after which the real political discussions would take place. When Borges was told to hang portraits of the ruling couple in the foyer, he refused. That September the writer’s association was forcefully closed.

The size of the government bureaucracy increased along with massive social spending programs. Censorship and repression intensified. Economic mismanagement, high levels of corruption, and disagreements with the Roman Catholic Church eventually led to Peron’s overthrow. General Pedro Eugenio Aramburu led a violent coup called the Revolucion Libertadora on September 16, 1955. Peron went into exile in Paraguay; and then moved to Spain which was under the control of Generalissimo Francisco Franco.

Franco’s victory in the Spanish Civil War had been achieved through economic and military support from Hitler and Mussolini. When a Die Spinne Nazi delegation visited Madrid in 1959, Franco had told them, "Please regard Spain as your second Fatherland."

Franco, the army general who on July 17, 1936 led a coup against the elected, leftist Republican government; and brought the Nationalists to power. Who called himself: Caudillo de España, por la gracia de Dios.
And imprisoned his enemies in concentration camps: Los Merinales, San Marcos, Castuera, Miranda. Who in 1937 allowed Hitler’s Condor Legion to terror bomb the Basques in Guernica; because in a Total War, no one is spared. -then promptly denied it took place. Whose politically motivated violence was called the White Terror that claimed 200,000 lives in mass executions. And in the tranquil hills, and amidst the olive trees of Viznar, near ancient Granada, poets were forced to dig their own unmarked graves. At five in the afternoon. It was exactly five in the afternoon. A boy brought the white sheet. At five in the afternoon. A trail of lime already prepared. At five in the afternoon, the bells tolled. The rest was death, and death alone.

On Dec 6, 1967, Uruguayan President Oscar Gestido died of a heart attack and Vice president Jorge Pacheco assumed office. He had the support of all the industrial chambers. His cabinet was a picture of the bourgeois class: the Secretary of Industry was the president of the Chamber of Industry, the Secretary of Cattle raising was the president of the rural association, and Jorge Peirano Facio, who eventually went to prison for bank fraud in Argentina and in Uruguay, was the Secretary of Economy.

Pacheco found himself ruling a country with very deep economic troubles, with strikes, and student unrest. There was talk of violent rebellion and radical political upheaval. Pacheco tried to control inflation by implementing price and wage freezes. By June 1968, he had declared a state of emergency which stayed in effect until March 1969. Constitutional safeguards were repealed, political dissidents were imprisoned, and demonstrations were brutally suppressed.
A Small, Elite Rebel Band Harasses Uruguayan Regime

They operate in tightly disciplined, clandestine cells of 8 to 15 members. The core of the group represents the political and professional elite of Uruguay. The police believe that about 50 leading activists and about 1000 support personnel have blown up radio stations, carried out a series of bank robberies, stolen weapons and dynamite and organized a variety of strikes and riots.

Recently a courthouse door was forced open and various weapons that the police had seized were stolen. They left a black calling card: a five pointed star with the letter T for their name, and the note “accept our respectful salutations.”

The Tupamaros saw themselves as urban guerrillas. They believed that they were spearheading a struggle that would lead to a popular uprising, an insurrection of the masses. Actions were generally undertaken for their propaganda content. Political and military engagements were part of a strategy to inspire the general public to bring the conflict a final revolutionary leap forward, or in their words a “salto”.

Their "armed propaganda" was meant to discredit government authorities and the security forces. On February 14, 1969, the Tupamaros broke into the offices of Financiera Monty and took a set of highly confidential account records. The books supplied evidence of the misuse of public funds and the involvement in illicit lending and currency speculation of several important government officials. They were forwarded to a judge, and the ensuing investigation brought a major scandal involving former presidential candidate Jorge Batlle, presidential advisor U. Pereyra Reverbel, and well known architects Pintos Risso and Perez Noble, who held important government and business posts. The Minister of Agriculture, Frick Davies was forced to resign. An "accidental" fire destroyed all the other records at Monty's management offices.
Individuals suspected of corruption, torture of jailed guerrillas, or behaviors detrimental to the well-being of workers, were kidnapped. Those abducted were regarded as enemies: members of Uruguay's oligarchy or those representing foreign nations with neocolonial influence. Ransom was sometimes demanded and obtained, but the kidnappings were usually meant to be a show of force and for the publicity. Victims were held in the “people's jail (Cárcel del Pueblo),” which consisted of small cells constructed underneath basements or in other underground locations. Captives were interrogated and the results of the interviews were made public.

New York Times; Sep 21, 1969
CITY GUERRILLAS WORRY URUGUAY

Italian born banker and newspaper publisher, Gaetano Pellegrini was kidnapped by two gunmen as he sat in a car outside the offices of La Mañana and el Diario. The building is within 100 yards of the Presidential palace.

Pellegrini, who is also a lawyer and a senior member of the Bank Association, was spokesman for bank management in negotiations with striking bank workers. Many of the 9000 bank workers who had struck were subject to military punishment for having failed to comply with the mobilization decree. (President Pacheco had responded to the strike by drafting the workers into the military and then threatening to prosecute them for desertion) The Tupamaros demanded a favorable settlement in exchange for Mr. Pellegrini’s life.

Since last May they have made sporadic broadcasts from clandestine transmitters. The government is jamming the radio frequency. Strict press and radio censorship is now in effect; news media are forbidden to mention them by name or report any guerilla developments apart from official statements.

New York Times; November 23, 1969
URUGUAY: BANKER AND EDITOR GAETANO PELLEGRINI RELEASED BY KIDNAPPERS.
Mr. Pellegrini who was kidnapped 72 days ago was freed last Friday after close friends donated $60,000 to a worker’s hospital and a primary school in Montevideo. He was abandoned at Buceo Yachting port after phoning his close friend Dr. Eugenio Barofio, who picked him up in his car and took him home to be reunited with his wife. He was unhurt, but ostensibly exhausted when he spoke to interviewers at a press conference outside of a police station.

The Tupamaros obtained their financial resources by robbing private and government-run banks, casinos, and wealthy individuals. They believed that the wealthy and the government should provide the money for their own destruction: "We do not go outside the country to seek financing for our revolution, but seize from our [ideological] enemies the money to mount the necessary revolutionary campaign." The bourgeoisie's property is, beyond doubt, the outcome of workers' exploitation…therefore, we have the right to expropriate it without compensation.” Robberies were complex operations that included the extensive use of disguises (such as posing as policemen, repairmen, or utility workers). Sometimes they temporarily kidnapped people who had keys or knew the combination of a vault. In most cases the robberies were possible through the collaboration of insiders.

In June 1969, New York State governor Nelson Rockefeller visited Uruguay on a fact-finding mission. He was met by violent demonstrations and a General Motors factory was burned down. In response, the government re-imposed the state of emergency and began looking to the Metropolitan Guard and the Department of Information and Intelligence to restore law and order.

The Public safety office of the U.S. Agency for International Development had been operating in Uruguay since 1965. Over the course of its operations it had supplied the police with funds, equipment, arms, and anti-terrorist training. Dan A Mitrione was chief of the
four-man U.S. AID Office where he had worked since 1969. He was a former FBI agent who was hired to train policemen in Brazil and Uruguay. He and CIA operations officer William Cantrell were instrumental in setting up the Department of Information and Intelligence (DII) in Montevideo.

Whereas torture had previously been used as a last resort, Mitrione believed that it should be part of routine practice. He built a soundproofed room in the cellar of his house and brought in some of the equipment that he needed through diplomatic pouches. Then, he invited select groups of police officers to observe demonstrations of his techniques. He took beggars from the outskirts of the city for his subjects.

Mitrione advised them to first establish the physical state of their subject and their ability to resist pain. “It’s important to know in advance if we can permit ourselves the luxury of the subject's death… A premature death means a failure…” He considered interrogation to be an art. “One should begin with a softening-up period. The object is to humiliate the prisoner, to make him realize his helplessness, and to cut him off from reality. No questions, only beatings and insults.” It was a progressive humiliation, little by little, step by step. Finally there were just the blows, in a hostile, consummate silence.

“Only after this, one starts the questioning. Now, no pain should be produced other than that caused by the instrument being employed. The precise pain, in the precise place, in the precise amount, for the desired effect. During the session you must keep the subject from losing all hope of life, because it can lead to stubborn resistance. You must always leave him some hope … a distant light. After you get what you want, it may be good to prolong the
session a little and apply another softening-up. Not to extract information, but as a political measure, to create a healthy fear of meddling in subversive activities."

Among the types of torture Mitrione demonstrated were electric shocks to distinctive parts of the human body including the genitals, electric needles under the fingernails, burning with cigarettes, the protracted compression of the testicles, and the use of a drug which induced vomiting. All of his demonstration subjects died.

The DII was composed of eight departments, one of which, the Department of Intelligence and Liaison, was headed by Alejandro Otero. Mr. Otero conducted most of the investigative work related to the Tupamaros. He studied and understood their ideology, respected Tupamaro prisoners and never ill-treated them. Chief Otero stated, "The violent methods caused an escalation in Tupamaro activity. Before, they had tried to create embarrassment for the Government and general disorder. They chose public villains, whose acts had gone uncensored by the legislature, the courts, and the press, subjecting them to an informed and uncompromising interrogation, and then publicizing the results of the dialogue."

July 31

Mitrione was kidnapped a block and a half from his home in Montevideo at about 8:15 a.m. while riding to work in a police chauffeured automobile. Five men traveling in two stolen pickup trucks stopped his car by ramming it with one of the trucks. While one man quickly covered the police driver, the others forced Mitrione into the second truck, cursing, beating, and accidentally shooting him near his shoulder.

The Tupamaros issued their first communiqué (# 3) later that afternoon. It was left in the bathroom of a downtown bar and addressed to the newspaper El Diario. They demanded the liberation of some 150 Tupamaros imprisoned or detained by the government. It was the largest prisoner ransom ever demanded for kidnapped diplomats. The message ended with the warning that "for every revolutionary killed, one policeman will be killed."
Mitrione was taken to a house located in the urban area. He was confined in a tent within a room, on the lower half of a wooden bunk bed, with a bucket for a toilet. There he was given medical attention. His wounding was apparently a mistake.

He was interrogated right from the start of his captivity. He was questioned about U.S. activities in Vietnam, big business and CIA operations in Latin America, police assistance in Brazil and Uruguay, Embassy security, and the names of Uruguayans and Americans with whom he had contact. He denied knowing anything in particular about the CIA and talked about his advisory work with the Brazilian Military police. He expressed some respect for the ideas, organization, and leadership capability of the Tupamaros, but said that he disagreed with their methods as he took issue with the methods of US radical groups that also held some ideas with which he sympathized. Finally, he expressed hope that the Uruguayan and US government would bargain for his release.

Sweeping searches were promptly initiated and roadblocks on all thoroughfares leading out of the city were set up. In the days ahead, entire areas were sealed off and then checked house by house. The identity of all persons leaving the country by air, automobile, or water was questioned. At the suggestion of the American advisors, they also examined medical clinics. Police detained numerous suspects, while checkpoints halted and examined tens of thousands of vehicles and pedestrians.

In the midst of all this police pressure, Tupamaro units continued to commit armed robberies for cash or medicine.

August 2

At 3:30 p.m., El Diario received another telephone call. A message left in a downtown bar restroom demanded the liberation of all prisoners judged or condemned for political crimes anywhere in the country. Freed prisoners were to be sent to Mexico, Peru, or Algeria. No deadlines were set. A note from Mitrione was also sent to his wife: ‘Please tell the ambassador to do everything to liberate me as soon as possible. I have been and am being interrogated deeply about the AID program and the police.’

August 3

At noon the government issued a statement directed at the public, not the Tupamaros. The Interior Ministry called the kidnapping an act of aggression and extortion against the legitimately constituted state by common criminals.

August 4

In Washington D.C., Uruguayan Ambassador Luisa reportedly believed that a capitulation by his government would (1) destroy Pacheco, forcing his resignation or overthrow by the military, (2) cause Pacheco to be replaced by an ineffective military
government for several months, during which time old-line politicians would maneuver to gain favor with the Tupamaros, and (3) result in a new government that would either accommodate or be led by the Tupamaros. Luisa himself was firmly opposed to negotiating with the kidnappers or releasing prisoners.

August 5

A spokesman for the Executive Branch maintained that the government would not negotiate and had no intention of replying to the Tupamaros. Press reports meanwhile suggested considerable discussion within the government about proposals for deportation, exile, or amnesty for imprisoned Tupamaros.

August 6

At 1:05 a.m., Communique #6 was delivered to a radio station. It declared that Mitrione was a North American spy who had infiltrated the security forces of Uruguay. "According to his own declarations, he has advised the Metropolitan Guard, the Republican Guard, and other repressive forces that in recent years had killed patriots in popular manifestations or in actions against revolutionary groups. Also, according to his declarations, deadly arms had been provided for the repression of the Uruguayan people…" the communique delivered the ultimatum: "We will wait until 2400 hours next Friday, the 7th, for the authorities to definitely declare themselves regarding the liberty of our imprisoned comrades. In case there is no affirmative answer, we shall consider the case closed and will do justice…"

Some Congressmen called for an investigation of Mitrione and of AID police activities in Uruguay, claiming that they had been kept secret from the public.

August 7

The Tupamaro leaders decided that if the government continued to refuse their demands they would hold Mr Mitrione indefinitely and not kill him. Subsequently, the police raided the house where the leadership was staying and captured nine Tupamaros, many of them high ranking, including two of the top leaders (Raul Bidegain Gressing and Raul Sendic). A short time later… the replacement leadership, which knew of the decision to keep Mr Mitrione alive, was also captured.

August 8

In the morning, a note from Mitrione was delivered anonymously to the office of the President. It was directed to Mitrione’s wife. Written in a shaky hand were the words: “Please advise the Ambassador to do all in his power to get me liberated because my life depends on it.”

The captive leaders provided no useful information, nor did their imprisonment serve to break the deadlock. Sendic later said that “Those captured lost all contact with the
others, and when the deadline came the group that was left with Mitrione did not know what to do.

The Tupamaros sent a message to the police, which stated that inflicting death or torture or filing accusations against the captured leaders would lead to severe reprisals.

In the afternoon, the Tupamaros notified a radio station that another Communique could be found on a downtown street. It stated that in view of the government’s refusal to exchange prisoners, they resolved to execute Mitrione at noon the next day.

**August 9**

At 11:30 am, a secret cable from U.S. Secretary of State William Rogers instructed U.S. Ambassador Charles Adair that the Nixon administration recommended a “threat to kill Sendic and other key MLN prisoners if Mitrione is killed.”

At 12:03, in response to Secretary Rogers’ suggestions, Ambassador Adair explained that he showed the Secretary of State’s message to the Uruguayan Foreign Minister. While the latter stated that “his type of government did not permit such action,” “he [the Foreign Minister] understood that through indirect means, a threat was made to these prisoners that members of the ‘Escuadrón de Muerte’ (Death Squad) would take action against the prisoners’ relatives if Mitrione were killed.”

**August 10**

*New York Times; Aug 11, 1970*

**Kidnapped U.S. Official Found Slain in Uruguay**

*The body of Dan Mitrione, chief US police advisor to Uruguay was found in an automobile parked in a Montevideo street eleven days after he was kidnapped by urban guerillas. He had been blindfolded and taken from where he was being held to be executed.*

*At 4 a.m. on August 10, he was shot twice through the head and covered with a blanket. His body was left in the back seat. Examination showed no signs of torture, binding, or other mistreatment.*

*President Jorge Pacheco characterized the murder as “the greatest attack this country’s political institutions have faced in this century” then demanded and received Congressional approval of a bill giving him sweeping powers and suspending the right of habeas corpus and other civil rights....President Nixon and other officials issued statements of outrage and grief over the murder.*

*White House spokesman, Ron Ziegler, solemnly stated that "Mr. Mitrione's devoted service to the cause of peaceful progress in an orderly world will remain as an example for free men everywhere."*
Public apathy, cynicism, and fear of involvement in the conflict had been mounting. Up to this point, the Tupamaros had been gaining popular support. The execution of Mitrione however, proved to be very unpopular and greatly damaged their image. The assassination aroused support for law and order measures; and the public began to volunteer information, suggestions, and help to the police.

From 1955 until 1971, the military dictatorship in Argentina issued a ban on Peronism. It was illegal not only to possess pictures of Juan and Eva Perón, but even to speak their names. On March 11, 1973, Argentina held general elections for the first time in ten years. Although Perón was prevented from running, voters elected his stand-in, Hector Campora, as president. Perón sent his personal secretary José López Rega from Spain, who was appointed Minister of Social Welfare.

López Rega was known as El Brujo. He joined the Federal Police in 1944 and became part of the Casa Rosada guard. In 1965 he met Isabel, Perón's third wife. They shared a belief in esotericism, particularly astrological divination, and the two quickly became friends. Under pressure from Isabel, Perón appointed López to his security force in Spain and he eventually became the couple's personal secretary.

On June 20, 1973, three and a half million people assembled near the Ezeiza International Airport to witness Juan Perón's return from exile. Perón was accompanied by President Héctor Cámpora (El Tío), and José López Rega. While greeting the crowds, camouflaged snipers opened fire. Three hundred and sixty five people were injured and at least thirteen were killed. Members of the Peronist Youth and the Montoneros were especially targeted. The Ezeiza massacre marked the downfall of the alliance between left and right-wing
Peronists. Within a few days, Mario Roberto Santucho, leader of the *Ejercito Revolucionario del Pueblo* (ERP), held a press conference. He accused López Rega and Colonel Jose Manuel Osinde of the massacre.

The ERP had been founded as the armed wing of the Workers' Revolutionary Party. They concentrated on urban guerrilla warfare using tactics such as assassinations, kidnapping government officials and foreign company executives, and attacking military outposts, police stations, and convoys. In 1971, the ERP was responsible for the demise of fifty seven policemen, and in 1972 it gunned down another thirty-eight officers.

The ERP leadership had shifted its base of operations to the rural Andean highlands in province of Tucumán. There they quickly organized a base of sympathizers and took control of almost a third of the province. The guerrilla group attempted to secede part of the province as an independent nation. The rural guerrillas numbered about one hundred fighters, some of which had been trained in Cuba, and a support network of about four hundred.

Cámpora and his vice-president resigned in July, after finding out about Perón's meetings with right-wing organizers such as General Confederation of Labor leader Jose Ignacio Rucci. All of Cámpora's followers were fired from their government positions, and López Rega's son-in-law, Raul Alberto Lastrini, became interim president. It was during this period when López Rega, Jose Ignacio Rucci, and Deputy Chief of the federal police Alberto Villar organized The Argentine Anticommunist Alliance (Triple A). The Triple A
was a commando death squad that Rega financially supported with funds from the Ministry of Social Welfare.

Some members of the (guerilla movement) Montoneros became concerned by what they saw as a right-wing shift in the government. In response, Jose Ignacio Rucci was ambushed and shot twenty-three times as he approached his car on the morning of September 25, 1973. The assassination gave López Rega a pretext to close the left wing newspaper *El Mundo*. A month later, radical senator Hipólito Solari Yrigoyen was seriously injured in an attack by the Triple A, purportedly organized by Federal Police Chief Rodolfo Almirón.

New elections were held, and Perón won with 62% of the vote. His wife, Isabel became his Vice President. He began his third term on October 12, 1973. Among his first acts was a mandate of tougher sentences for "sedition" or "subversion". Perón was in precarious health, and suffered a succession of heart attacks in June. He died on July 1, 1974.

The more radically right-wing factions in the government quickly took control. Isabel essentially became a figurehead. José López Rega became de facto prime minister vetting nearly all domestic and foreign policy. He retained the title of Minister of Social Welfare, and promoted himself to *Comisario General*, the highest rank in the Federal Police. With Rega's support, the Triple A began hunting down, kidnapping, torturing, and killing members of Montoneros, and the Ejército Revolucionario del Pueblo. In total, the AAA is suspected of having killed more than 1500 people; including suspected leftist guerrillas judges, police chiefs, and social activists.

The ERP continued to commit violent acts throughout 1974. In January they attacked a barracks at Azul which resulted in the death of the Commanding Officer and his wife. They
claimed responsibility for the murder of criminal court Judge Jorge Quiroga and received a $12 million ransom for Esso executive Victor Samuelsson. By the end of the year, the ERP approached strength of roughly three to five hundred men and women with a base of some 2,500 sympathizers.

Although expelled from the Juan Peron’s Justicialist movement, the Montoneros claimed to represent the “authentic social revolutionary vision of Peronism”. Organized in 1968, they were fiercely nationalistic, claiming to be vanguard of a popular revolution.

The Montoneros were responsible for the murders of former de facto President Pedro Aramburu, construction workers’ union leader Rogelio Coria, former Interior Minister Arturo Mor Roig and U.S. Consul John Egan. They also began bombing foreign-owned companies throughout Argentina. Targets included three Ford showrooms; Peugeot and IKA-Renault showrooms; Goodyear and Firestone tire distributors, Riker and Eli pharmaceutical laboratories, the Union Carbide Battery Company, branches of the Bank of Boston and Chase Manhattan Bank, Xerox Corporation, and the Coca-Cola and Pepsi-Cola bottling companies.

They additionally detonated bombs in the homes of foreign executives: the managers of Ford, Chrysler, and GM were murdered. In order to finance their operations, they kidnapped two members of the Bunge and Born business families. In exchange, they received a ransom of $60 million in cash and another $1.2 million worth of food and clothing to be given to the poor. On November 1, 1974, they blew up the yacht of General Commissioner Alberto Villa killing him and his wife.

In early 1975, President Isabel Perón took a leave of absence and left the country.
Urban Guerrillas in Uruguay Seem to Have Modified Tactics

...bombings and terrorist assaults followed Mr Mitione’s murder...the Tupamaros now believe that the socialist revolution can only be brought about through armed warfare.

The Tupamaros claimed that The International Agency for Development and the Alliance for progress smuggled weapons into Uruguay to help support President Pacheco’s oppressive regime. Their rhetoric became more confrontational:

The Dictatorship will not dominate or govern the people.
The homeland is for everyone- Liberty or Death!

The revolutionaries took the offensive. They were engaged in armed struggle against the dictatorship, big businesses, and foreign imperialists. The Tupamaros turned to assassinations, extortion, and political kidnapping. Attacks became increasingly bloody, resulting in the deaths of various policemen.

Tupamaros Tunnel to Uruguay Prison and Free 111

All of the leaders of the Marxist urban guerilla organization including Raul Sendic were freed from the maximum security penitentiary Punta Carretas. A 40 foot tunnel had been dug from house across the street.

In July, 39 Tupamaro women had been freed from the woman’s jail in Montevideo by a tunnel that lead to the sewers.

By 1971, 113 policemen had gone through the eight-week course at CIA/OPS schools in Washington and Los Fresnos, Texas. Part of the course was on the use of assassination weapons and the design, manufacture, and use of bombs and incendiary devices. Another
700 officers underwent similar training in Uruguay. In the end the DII became a cover for the Escuadron de la Muerte (Death Squad).

By September 1971, President Pacheco had decided that despite their best efforts, the anti-Tupamaro work of the National Police was insufficient, inadequate, and misguided. He had given up hope that they could contain or eliminate the guerrillas. The President called for direct involvement of the armed forces to deal with the problem. While the Tupamaros declared a cease fire during the election period, the Army Intelligence Service carefully began to prepare for a future military offensive. Using information provided by the Information and Intelligence Directorate, a group of military officers prepared the background for counterinsurgency operations.

Pacheco intended to run for a second term, however the constitution did not allow for re-election, and a referendum for a constitutional amendment was defeated. The national elections were held on November 28, 1971; and Mr. Pacheco's handpicked successor, Juan M. Bordaberry, took office in March, 1972. Both the right and the left opposition claimed that the election was fraudulent.

Confrontations between the MLN-Tupamaros and security forces/death squads intensified during 1972. Guerrillas, students, social movement and labor leaders were jailed. The MLN continued to assassinate police and government agents.

*New York Times; Apr 15, 1972
‘War’ Proclaimed In Uruguay as 12 Die in Rebel Action*

*Tupamaro guerillas struck in a series of fatal ambushes around Montevideo. ‘We are at War, ‘ Defense Minister Enrique Magani said after a Cabinet meeting. President Bordaberry summoned Congress to convene in an emergency session and declare a state of internal war.*
The four officials killed in ambushes had all been connected with anti-guerilla operations. Eight Tupamaros were also killed.

On April 18, four soldiers were killed by machine gun fire while guarding the house of the commander-in-chief of the Army, General Florencio Gravina. The circumstances forced the military to take a stand. The government declared a state of internal-war, individual liberties were canceled, and the armed forces were free to launch a sustained and definitive anti-Tupamaro campaign.

In May 1972, the U.S. government approved covert material and intelligence assistance for the counter-insurgent operation. The assault was significantly aided by the willing collaboration of top Tupamaro leader, H. Amodio Pérez. He is reported to have supplied the military with information on the whereabouts of at least thirty guerrilla hideouts, a key field hospital complex, a number of arsenals and documentation centers, and the famed "People's Jail" where hostages were kept. This major betrayal caused irrevocable long-term damage to the guerrillas.

The Tupamaros were internally organized by compartments: the fundamental operational unit was the cell, consisting of at least two but usually not more than six members. Cell members did not know each other's true identity, and they were given nicknames and false identification papers from the inception of the recruiting process. Information flowed from the cell and through the cell leader to the Executive Committee and vice versa. Contact among the cells was minimized. The Executive Committee directed the entire Tupamaro organization, setting priorities and evaluating and approving military and political projects. Although their organizational structure was effective in preventing information leaks from
the bottom, it was more vulnerable at the top of the organizational hierarchy, as was the case with H. Amodio Pérez.

_News York Times; Sep 2, 1972_  
_Tupamaro Leader Shot and Captured_

_The police captured nine people connected with the National Liberation Movement Tupamaros, eight of which were fugitives. Their leader Raul Sendic is reported to have said: “I’m Rudo and won’t surrender alive!” He was subsequently shot in the head and is in stable condition at a local hospital. The apartment, number 004 located on Almeria Street, was later searched by police who reportedly found a large quantity of subversive material._

Sendic and eight of the MLN leaders would spend the next twelve years confined to prisons in aberrant and humiliating conditions, where they suffered continuous physical and psychological torture.

On July 10, State Security Law (No. 14.068) was approved. The legislation transferred part of the judicial function from the civil to military courts, thereby extending their power. Slowly but steadily the Tupamaro machine began to crumble. Weakened by information leaks extracted through torture and betrayals, disappointed by the ease with which bases in the countryside collapsed to the military, and plagued by organizational difficulties, the Tupamaros ceased activity and retreated into hiding. By the end of 1972 thousands of Tupamaros were imprisoned, and their organization had been virtually destroyed.

A succession of government corruption scandals were publically exposed during January and early February 1973. Bordaberry lost substantial support. Military officers insisted on a thorough investigation and punishment of the guilty parties. The Armed Forces took over the airwaves and began communicating directly to the nation on February 9. Bordaberry and
the Armed Forces came to a covert agreement on February 13. The agreement created the National Security Council (COSENA) through which the military was integrated into the government.

Confrontations between the Congress and the executive branch escalated. Congress called for an inquest into allegations of torture committed by the security forces. In retaliation members of Congress were accused of being part of the MLN guerrilla group. On June 27, 1973, the government dissolved Congress and suspended the Constitution. Political activity was prohibited, and censorship was imposed. Bordaberry justified the seizure of extra-constitutional powers by telling the U.S. Ambassador that "Uruguay's democratic traditions and institutions...were themselves the real threat to democracy." The base of power then moved from the President to the Armed Forces in a bloodless coup d'état.

On July 10, the Chief of the Montevideo Police received orders for increased coordination between the military and law enforcement. The police were ordered to launch "intelligence gathering and operations of a ‘special’ nature" (meaning death squad activities). Bordaberry, acting on the orders of the seven member "National Security Council", intensified the war against a population deemed subversive and "enemies of the state." Tens of thousands were detained and tortured. Besides guerrilla fighters, "the enemy" included organized workers, students, professionals, and anyone seen to be leftist or liberal. Thousands of citizens were seized in their homes, blindfolded, beaten, and brought to secret locations, where they endured inhuman conditions and the daily fear of death. Many were arbitrarily executed; their bodies burned, or tossed into large garbage dumps. Some were heavily sedated and thrown, still alive, from airplanes into the Rio de la Plata. Their names written in a book of sand where they were lost and forgotten.
"And the color of the earth
is the blood of the fallen."

Argentine Senate President Ítalo Luder was granted executive power in Isabel Perón´s absence. His first presidential decree 261/1975 stated: "the general command of the Army will proceed to all of the necessary military operations to the effect of neutralizing or annihilating the actions of the subversive elements acting in Tucumán Province."

Operation Independence began on February 5, 1975. It was the first large-scale military operation of what was later called the Dirty War. Its goal was to crush the ERP in Tucumán. Over 4,000 soldiers were deployed; including two companies of elite army commandos backed by jets, dogs, helicopters, US satellites and a naval Beechcraft Queen Air B-80 with surveillance equipment. The Argentine military used methods of “counter-revolutionary warfare” taught first by the French, and then by The Pentagon. The campaign was brutal: using terrorism, kidnapping, "forced disappearances" and concentration camps such as "Ingenio de Lules" (Lules Sugar Mill) where hundreds of guerrilleros and their supporters were tortured and assassinated.

The ERP enjoyed considerable support from the local population and its members moved freely among the towns of Santa Lucía, Los Sosa, and La Fronterita around Famaillá and the Monteros mountains. The guerrillas began to strike back at the commando units. During the second week of February they ambushed a platoon at Río Pueblo Viejo. However, the ERP's effectiveness was reduced after three months of the army´s constant patrolling and search-and-destroy missions. In June, the Fifth Brigade moved to Tucumán´s frontier to guard against ERP and Montoneros guerrillas crossing into the province.
Military control and the state of emergency were extended to the whole country by other Unconstitutional decrees 2270, 2271, and 2272, issued on July 6. The decrees created a Defense Council headed by the president that included his ministers and the chiefs of the armed forces. The Council was given command of the national and provincial police and the correctional facilities. Its stated mission was to "annihilate … subversive elements throughout the country". These "annihilation decrees" became the source of charges against Isabel Perón which led to her arrest in Madrid, and subsequent attempted extradition to Argentina more than thirty years later.

The journalist Marie-Monique Robin claimed that the annihilation decrees had been inspired by the French. Her writings exposed ties between the French far right and Argentina; in particular through the Roman Catholic fundamentalist organization Cité catholique. La Cité published a review, Le Verbe, which guided military officers during the Algerian War (1954–62). During the war, police forces were put under the authority of the Army, and in particular of the paratroopers, who conducted interrogation sessions that used torture, disappearances, and "death flights".

At the end of the 1950s, the Cité catholique enshrined itself in Argentina and set up cells in the Army. The key figure of the Cité catholique was priest Georges Grasset. He had been the spiritual guide of the Organisation de l'armée secrète (OAS) which was a militant, right wing, pro-French, Algeria movement founded in Franquist Spain. He was Videla’s personal confessor. The French methods adopted in Argentina led to a massive extension of intelligence services and to the use of torture as the primary anti-subversive weapon.
López Rega resigned on July 11, 1975. Economic policies initiated by his protégé Celestino Rodrigo led to a riot in front of his offices. He was hastily appointed Ambassador to Spain by Isabel Perón and boarded a flight into exile. He was arrested in Spain in December 2006 and died in prison awaiting extradition.

The Montoneros began a chain of attacks on military installations including dynamiting a nearly finished Navy destroyer near the port of La Plata. On August 28th, they planted a bomb at the Tucumán air base in support of the ERP. The blast destroyed an Air Force C-130 transport killing and wounding sixty anti-guerrilla Gendarmerie commandos heading for home leave. The following day, they derailed a train carrying troops back from the guerrilla front. They continued to commit armed guerilla activities in the nearby city of Córdoba, bombing the local police headquarters and radio communications center.

On October 5th, they hijacked a civilian airliner and redirected it to the Formosa Province. Joined by a tactical support unit, they broke into the nearby 29th Infantry Regiment's barracks, firing automatic weapons, and throwing hand grenades. In the aftermath, twelve soldiers and two policemen were killed; the Montoneros lost sixteen men. Once Operación Primicia ("Operation Scoop") was over, the Montoneros escaped in the hijacked plane and landed in a crop field not far from the city of Rafaela. The sophistication of the operation, the getaway cars, and safe houses that they used all suggested that several hundred guerrillas and supporters were involved.

The country had become the stage for widespread violence and was in a state of emergency. The commandos discovered ERP leader Santucho’s base camp in August, and the ERP urban headquarters was raided in September. A Special Forces operation in October killed nearly
all of the ERP’s Compañía de Monte's general staff. But the guerrilla unit continued to fight on. Anxious to put Argentina's terrified public at ease, Isabel Peron and Lúder signed blanket immunity to the Armed forces on October 6th so that they could (in her words) "annihilate the subversives". Mrs. Perón returned from "sick leave" and was back in the Casa Rosada on October 16th.

A new military directive called: "Struggle Against Subversion" was initiated on October 28th. It divided the country into five zones, each of which was assigned to a military unit. A similar tactic had been used during the 1957 Battle of Algiers. Three soldiers of the 5th Brigade were killed during nighttime maneuvers on the banks of Fronterista River that same day. President Isabel Perón declared a state of siege on November 6 (suspending, among other rights, Habeas Corpus). Six other soldiers were lost in engagements between November 8 and 16.

On December 23rd, ERP units, supported by the Montoneros, mounted an assault on the army supply base Domingo Viejobueno located in an industrial suburb south of Buenos Aires. The ERP and Montoneros deployed about 1,000 guerrillas; and had intended to seize some 20 tons of armaments. They were defeated and endured heavy casualties. On December 30th the guerrillas exploded a bomb inside the Army headquarters in Buenos Aires, injuring six soldiers.

By the end of 1975, a total of one hundred and thirty-seven servicemen and police had been killed by left wing guerrillas throughout Argentina.
Several hundred ERP and Montonero guerrillas still remained operating in the jungles and mountains throughout 1976. During February, the Montoneros sent a company of their elite "Jungle Troops" commanded by Carlos Alsogaray ("El Hippie") to Tucumán in an effort to rekindle their guerrilla campaign. The ERP sent their elite "Decididos de Córdoba" as reinforcements. On February 13, the 14th Airborne Infantry Regiment ambushed "El Hippie" killing him and finishing his company.

In March, allegations surfaced that Mrs. Perón had embezzled large sums from a government-run charity into her personal accounts in Spain. The allegations destroyed her remaining support in Congress, and the UCR initiated impeachment proceedings. Even as the Joint Chiefs of Staff were professing loyalty to La Presidente, they were secretly planning "Operation Aries;" the coup d’état that initiated the National Reorganization Process.

Just after 3 a.m. on March 24, 1976, a military junta, headed by General Jorge Videla broke in on national radio with "Comunicado No. 1" declaring that the government had been overthrown. The Junta would be based on a conservative Catholic, anti-communist doctrine, and free-market economic policies. Videla strongly backed the activities of the AAA; stating "…as many Argentineans as is necessary will die in order to preserve the order."

The majority of Peronist officials in the national, provincial, and municipal governments were promptly arrested, and many joined the ranks of the "disappeared". Isabel Perón remained under house arrest in Villa La Angostura and other secluded locations for five years, before being sent into exile in Spain in 1981.
Kissinger’s top deputy on Latin America, William Rogers, told him two days after the coup that “we’ve got to expect a fair amount of repression, probably a good deal of blood, in Argentina before too long.” Kissinger responded, “I want to encourage them…”

Kissinger’s met with Argentine Foreign Minister Admiral Guzzetti on June 19:

Guzzetti: The terrorists work hard to appear as victims in the light of world opinion even though they are the real aggressors.

The Secretary: We want you to succeed. We do not want to harass you. I will do what I can…

The Argentine military believed it had U.S. approval for its all-out assault on the left. The U.S. Consulate in Buenos Aires complained to Washington that the Argentine officers were "euphoric" over signals from high-ranking U.S. officials that the U.S. Government’s overriding concern was not human rights but rather that they 'get it over quickly.' The armed forces moved ahead with the "Dirty War" and expanded its campaign against "subversives" through mass arrests, torture, and executions without trial of non-violent students, intellectuals, and political activists who were presumed to form the social, non-combatant base of the uprising.

The Montoneros and the ERP continued raiding military bases for weapons and explosives and attacking business and political figures throughout Argentina. On July 2, they detonated a bomb in the Argentine Federal Police killing twenty-four and injuring sixty-six people. On September 12, a car bomb destroyed a bus in Rosario, killing eleven policemen and two passers-by. There were at least fifty wounded. October 17 and December 15 bombs planted in movie halls killed and injured several officers and their families. On November 9, eleven
officers were wounded at the police headquarters of La Plata during a meeting of police chiefs.

The U.S. Department of State Bureau of Intelligence and Research reported on the Argentine military's counterterrorism activities and complicity in human rights abuses:

*There is no doubt that most, if not all, of the right-wing terrorists are police or military personnel who act with the knowledge and/or direction of high-level security and administration officials.* ... 

*They continue to act with an impunity that belies government denials of complicity.*

In October 1976, Secretary of State Henry Kissinger again spoke with Foreign Minister Guzzetti and said,

"Look, our basic attitude is that we would like you to succeed... The quicker you succeed the better... We want a stable situation. We won’t cause you unnecessary difficulties. If you can finish before Congress gets back, the better... The American people, right or wrong, have the perception that today there exists in Argentina a pattern of gross violations of human rights."

Mothers began to congregate in cafes, living rooms, churches, and parks. Azucena Villaflor was an ex-telephone operator who ran an orderly home, put meals on the table, and fretted about her four children. She brought them together in Plaza de Mayo in the afternoon on April 30, 1977. With their heads covered by white scarves, the mothers raised the question: Dónde están? Where are they, our sons and daughters? They were ignored, ridiculed, called 'crazy, and told: Por algo será. "It had to be for something." Videla finally answered them: "They are neither alive nor dead. They are disappeared."

An official report said that some 13,000 people had disappeared; but human rights groups put the figure at closer to 30,000. 30 percent of the victims were working class; 21 percent were students; 18.3 percent were liberal professionals and teachers; 17.9 percent were white-collar employees. Most of the victims were young; more than 43 percent were between the
ages of 16 and 25. Villaflor ultimately joined her son on the list of the tortured souls who had vanished.
Church bells rang out in Chile when the first miner was extricated. They had spent sixty-nine days in the hot, humid, black solitude of a collapsed shaft. Six hundred and fifty meters deep, where the gold and copper was mixed with the silence of primordial buried sorrows. The oldest had worked for fifty years. He was brought to the surface breathing from an oxygen mask. As soon as he was helped out of the capsule, he immediately dropped to his knees to pray. Blind faith had kept him alive. Thirty-two more times men were hoisted through a narrow tunnel to freedom and were met with joyous reunions.

The last one out was the son and stepchild of men killed during the dictatorship. His father was murdered when he was almost a boy. He belonged to the Communist Party. His stepfather was a Socialist who fell to the caravan of the death. Both disappeared, buried in an open grave. When they were brought the surface, they were without caskets. Untouchable bodies covered with white sheets, cuts on their face, hands, and legs.

From that land, from that mud, from that silence, from that darkness, they came out to walk, and sing for the world. And their shadows disappeared into the light.

Dr. Salvador Allende ran for president of Chile in 1952. The U.S. noticed that he was gaining popularity when he ran again in 1958. His socialist sentiments and friendship with Fidel Castro made him unpopular with both John F. Kennedy and Richard Nixon. They
believed there was a danger of Chile becoming the next Cuba and forming an alliance with the Soviet Union.

On July 23, 1964, the U.S. decided to intervene in Chile’s elections. The 303 Committee supported the campaign of Christian Democrat candidate, Eduardo Frei. In a memo to George McBundy, the CIA’s Peter Jessup said, "We can't afford to lose this one…". Allende lost again, this time with 38.6% of the votes. Years later, the Church Committee discovered that the US had spent more than three million dollars which was more money per capita than was spent by both candidates in the US election that same year!

The US Army and the Department of Defense began "Project Camelot" in response to what they now believed was a red threat. Although presented as scientific research in the form of sociological investigation, it was in reality a covert form of espionage. It was carried out in Latin America (Chile, Uruguay, Peru (Operation Task), Colombia (Project Simpatico), Brazil, and Venezuela), in Africa (Senegal and Nigeria) and in Asia (India, Vietnam, and Laos). The project was denounced by the Chilean Chamber of Deputies in 1965 as a violation of national sovereignty. It then went underground with a variety of covers: as government agencies, individual academics, and private corporations. And while Ambassador Dungan apologized to the Chileans for Camelot, the CIA began to restructure its embassy network to accommodate the clandestine operations.

The Peace Corps was part of the Alliance for Progress program. Unknowingly, thousands of U.S. youths, thinking that they were helping the Chileans, were in reality collecting data for the now undercover Project Camelot. As their assignments brought them into contact with working class people, they were likewise identifying leftist leaders, and those who could
work for US interests; or be trained as future agents. It wasn’t essential to have many
contacts within the organization, just in the right places with access to all the information
that was generated. The Peace Corps was also used as a front to get paramilitary equipment
into the country. Ellis Carrasco, who was head of the Corps, was accused of gun-running.
The U.S. Army donated and installed radio receivers in all the regional offices to facilitate
communications. Those same receivers were put to use during the coup to facilitate
coordination of the Junta’s activities.

The International Development Foundation worked in parallel with the Corps. Its chief goal
was the infiltration of the peasant movement. Leaders were selected and trained in U.S.
labor ideology. The objective was to use them to influence rural attitudes and disrupt the
growth of political organization. The IDF was forced to leave Chile when its connections to
the CIA were revealed in 1967.

By 1970, Salvador Allende was the front-runner. The moderate Radomiro Tomic, backed by
the Christian Democrats, looked like a very long shot. The right-winger Jorge Alessandri had
a strong pro-American track record, but was corrupt. National security advisor Kissinger was
preoccupied; from his viewpoint, an Allende victory would be a disaster for the U.S. government.
In March, June, and August, he chaired the "40 Committee" (a high-level inter-agency group) and
ordered covert operations to "denigrate Allende and his Popular Unity coalition." In March, $135,000
was approved for a political-warfare program. On June 27, another $165,000 was approved. Kissinger
remarked: "I don't see why we have to let a country go Marxist just because its people are irresponsible."
Soviet intelligence archives suggest that Allende got at least $50,000 from Moscow and $100,000 in
Soviet funds laundered through the Chilean Communist Party; but the CIA was probably outspending the
KGB by at least two-to-one.
The State Department questioned the alarmist fears. They reported to the White House on Aug. 18, that “we identify no vital U.S. national interests within Chile.” Nevertheless, the U.S. ambassador and other senior Nixon officials saw it as a regional crisis. Ambassador Edward Korry began sending frantic reports to Washington alleging a communist takeover. In one cable, he announced that “there is a graveyard smell to Chile: the fumes of a democracy in decomposition.”

No presidential candidate obtained a majority in the 1970 election. According to the Chilean Constitution, Congress would choose one of the two leading candidates. Tradition was to vote for the nominee with the highest popular vote, regardless of margin. Allende was the frontrunner with 36.2 percent.

Allende’s platform called for the nationalization of large-scale industries including copper mining and banking. The most prominent U.S. corporations in Chile were Anaconda, Kennecott Copper, and International Telephone and Telegraph. Anaconda and Kennecott accounted for 28% of U.S. corporate holdings in Chile. ITT owned 70% of Chitelco, the Chilean Telephone Company and funded El Mercurio, a Chilean right-wing newspaper.

Before the 1970 elections, ITT had given $700,000 to Jorge Alessandri.

One of the wealthiest men in Chile, Augustine Edwards Eastman, played a crucial role convincing the U.S. to “lend a helping hand”. He approached the chief executive officer of Pepsi-Cola, who had access to President Nixon. Nixon was notified of the “problem” in Chile and from that point on, according to Henry Kissinger, was “triggered into action”. Nixon barked, “We should never have lost the Chilean election!” And on Sept. 16, CIA
director Richard Helms informed his senior covert action staff that "President Nixon had concluded that an Allende regime in Chile was not acceptable to the United States," and has authorized $10 million to stop him from coming to power.

"Project FUBELT" had two "Tracks". Track I was considered the "soft line", and in Nixon's words, would "make the economy scream." Kissinger demanded that "the Agency keep pressuring every weak spot in sight: now and into the future until such time as new marching orders are given." In addition to economic sabotage, Track I included an attempt to persuade the Congress to vote for Alessandri. Upon appointment, Alessandri would immediately resign his office it and call for new elections. Eduardo Frei would then be constitutionally able to run again, and presumably beat Allende.

Track II was the "hard-line". Helms sent the chief in Santiago, Henry Hecksher, a secret "eyes only" cable from CIA headquarters: "It is a firm and continuing policy that Allende be overthrown by a coup ...” Helms was very nervous, and with good reason: Nixon had ordered him to mount a military coup to block the inauguration of Allende without telling the secretary of state, the secretary of defense, or the American ambassador.

On September 27, a team of deep-cover CIA men with phony passports (one posing as a Colombian businessman, another as an Argentine smuggler, a third as a Bolivian military intelligence officer) solicited the U.S. Army attaché at the consulate, Colonel Paul Wimert, to help them find Chilean officers who would overthrow Allende. On October 6, one of them had a long talk with General Roberto Viaux. Within hours, Ambassador Korry learned for the
first time that the CIA was plotting a coup behind his back. He had a confrontation with Henry Hecksher:
"You have twenty-four hours to either understand that I run you, or leave the
country." Korry then cabled Kissinger: "Any attempt on our part actively to encourage a
coup could lead us to a Bay of Pigs failure." Kissinger became annoyed and ordered the
ambassador to stop meddling. He summoned Helms to the White House again; and a flash
cable to the CIA station in Santiago was sent: "CONTACT THE MILITARY AND LET
THEM KNOW USG (U.S. government) WANTS A MILITARY SOLUTION, AND THAT
WE WILL SUPPORT THEM NOW AND LATER…"

The immediate obstacle to a military coup was the Commander-in-Chief of the Army, Rene
Schneider. Schneider was a "constitutionalist" who believed that the army's role was
exclusively professional. Its mission was to protect the country's sovereignty and not to
interfere in politics. He needed to be "expunged".

One month after the election, on October 20, General René Schneider was shot resisting a
kidnap attempt organized by General Roberto Viaux. Hospitalized, he died of his wounds
three days later. General Schneider's death was widely disapproved of, and for a time,
ended military opposition to Allende.

On November 3, 1970, Allende became the first democratically-elected Marxist head of
state in the history of Latin America. As soon as he assumed power, he began to implement
his: "Chilean Path to Socialism". One of the first things that he did was to institute a free
milk program for half a million very poor, malnourished children. He explained that there
were “over 600,000 children mentally retarded because they were not adequately nourished
during the first eight months of their lives." He then proposed government administration of the health care and educational systems, as well as an expansion of land seizure and redistribution already begun under Eduardo Frei. The government's intention was to seize any holdings of more than eighty irrigated hectares. Allende attempted to improve the socio-economic welfare of Chile's poorest citizens; a key element was to provide employment, either in the new nationalized enterprises or on public work projects.

The function and composition of an Embassy staff is modified according to the political situation of the country. Agents are scattered throughout the diplomatic structure according to what areas within the local society need either to be penetrated or aided in some way. The Agency personnel assigned to Chile shifted radically in 1970. Previous to the election, emphasis was on collecting information. Once Allende was elected, the emphasis switched to covert operations. There was a massive destabilization and disinformation campaign. Stories were planted in El Mercurio. Twenty-three foreign reporters were put on the payroll to stir up international opinion against the spectre of "godless communism". One radio spot featured the sound of a machine gun followed by a woman’s cry "they’ve killed my child". The announcer cut in with impassioned tones "Communism offers only blood and pain."

The Nixon administration moved quickly and quietly to shut down foreign aid. Over the next three years financial assistance or guarantees to private investors were cut back sharply and American businesses were given the word to tighten the economic noose. The US Export-Import Bank, the Inter-American Development Bank, and the World Bank didn’t extend any new loans during 1971-73.
"Not a nut or bolt [will] be allowed to reach Chile under Allende", warned American Ambassador Edward Korry. The boycott translated into things like buses and taxis being out of commission because there were no replacement parts. Industries such as copper, steel, electricity, and petroleum had similar difficulties. American suppliers refused to sell to them despite offers to pay cash in advance. Perhaps nothing was more frustrating than the shortages, the daily annoyances when one couldn't get flour, cooking oil, toilet paper, soap, or the one part needed to make the TV set turn on. Or, worst of all, when a smoker couldn't even get a cigarette. Allende froze all prices and raised salaries. The combination of inflation and government-mandated price-fixing, together with the disappearance of basic commodities from supermarket shelves, led to a growth in the black markets.

Forced to seek alternative sources of trade and finance, Chile sought commitments from the Soviet Union. Declarations from KGB General Nikolai Leonov confirmed that the Soviet Union supported Allende's government economically, politically, and militarily. Leonov stated that economic support included over $100 million in credit, three fishing ships, factories, three thousand tractors, seventy-four thousand tons of wheat and more than a million tins of condensed milk. However, Allende's government received far less economic assistance than it had hoped for.

The destabilization process escalated during the spring and summer of 1972. There was a series of demonstrations and walk outs, including a long trucker strike. Allende’s government began requisitioning trucks and buses in order to keep the nation from coming to a halt. Supporters helped to mobilize the vehicles and attempted to end the strike; but they were deterred by violence, even under police protection.
Time magazine reported: "While most of the country survived on short rations, the truckers seemed unusually well equipped for a lengthy holdout." A reporter asked a group of truckers who were camping and dining on "a lavish communal meal of steak, vegetables, wine and empanadas" where the money for it came from. "From the CIA," they answered laughing.

Two facts remain undisputed. First, the 40 Committee did not approve any funds to be given directly to the strikers. Second, that the two lengthy strikes could not have been maintained by union funds alone. It is clear that anti-government strikers were actively supported by several of the private sector groups which received CIA funds. There were extensive links between these private sector organizations and the groups which coordinated and implemented the strikes.

With or without CIA help, small-scale businessmen, some professional unions, white-collar workers, and student groups unsympathetic to the government joined the strike. Much of the campaign was aimed at wearing down the patience of the public, convincing them that "socialism can't work in Chile". Multinational ITT stated in a memorandum: "A hope among those who want to block Allende is that a swiftly deteriorating economy will touch off a wave of violence leading to a military coup."

The nationalist paramilitary group Patria y Libertad was responsible for placing three-pronged steel tacks called "miguelitos" on highways in order to help bring the country's transportation system to a halt during the October 1972 national truckers' strike. Afterwards, they announced that they would unleash an armed offensive to overthrow Allende's government. On June 29, Colonel Roberto Souper surrounded the presidential palace with his tank regiment. The coup d’état, known as the Tanquetazo, failed to depose the Allende
Government. It was followed by a general strike in July. Both actions had been organized by Patria y Libertad.

Throughout his presidency, Allende remained at odds with the Congress. The Christian Democrats and the National Party accused him of leading Chile toward a Cuban-style dictatorship, and sought to overturn some of his more radical policies. On August 22, 1973, the Chamber of Deputies charged his Government of committing unconstitutional acts, and disregarding the separation of powers, " . . . [with] the goal of establishing a totalitarian system."

Two days later, President Allende responded. He accused the Congress of promoting a coup d'état or a civil war. He wrote:

"Chilean democracy is a conquest by all of the people. It is neither the work nor the gift of the exploiting classes, and it will be defended by those who, with sacrifices accumulated over generations, have imposed it. . . . I sustain that never before has Chile had a more democratic government than that over which I have the honor to preside. . . . Parliament has made itself a bastion against the transformations . . . and has done everything it can to perturb the functioning of the finances and of the institutions, sterilizing all creative initiatives."

He concluded by calling upon the workers, all democrats, and patriots to join him in defending the Chilean Constitution and the revolutionary process. That same day, Gen. Augusto Pinochet became the Army's Commander-in-chief. Allende planned a speech outlining a resolution to the constitutional crisis. It was scheduled for September 11; but he was never able to deliver it.
With the initial failure of Track II, the CIA rebuilt its network of contacts and remained close to Chilean military officers. For their part, Chilean officers who were aware that the United States had sought a coup to prevent Allende from becoming president were sensitive to indications of continuing U.S. support. It is clear the CIA received intelligence reports on the coup planning throughout the months of July, August, and September 1973.

Just prior to the assault the commanders purged officers sympathetic to the president or the constitution. Chile's military struck amid mounting chaos, and seized control of strategic sites throughout the country. Its mission was to "redirect the country along the path of liberty and law". Nixon officials were ecstatic.

By 7:00 AM, the Navy captured Valparaíso, stationing ships and marine infantry on the central coast. The Province Prefect informed President Allende of the Navy's actions. The president immediately went to the presidential palace, La Moneda, with his bodyguards. By 8:00 AM, the Army had closed most radio and television stations in Santiago city; and the Air Force bombed the remaining active stations.

President Allende and Defense Minister Orlando Letelier were unable to communicate with the military leaders. Admiral Montero, the Navy's commander and an Allende loyalist was rendered incommunicado when his telephone service was cut and his car sabotaged. Leadership of the Navy was transferred José Toribio, who was part of the coup d’état. General Pinochet and Air Force General Gustavo Leigh didn’t answer President Allende's telephone calls. The General Director of the Carabineros, José María Sepúlveda, and the head of the Police Investigations, Alfredo Joignant did, and went to the La Moneda at once.
When Letelier arrived at the Ministry of Defense, it was already under the control of Adm. Patricio Carvajal, and he was arrested.

Despite evidence that all branches of the Chilean armed forces were involved in the coup, President Allende nevertheless hoped some units remained loyal. He was convinced of Gen. Pinochet's allegiance, telling a reporter that the coup d'état leaders must have imprisoned him.

By 8:30 AM, the armed forces declared complete control of Chile. It became clear to Allende that he no longer had a single ally. Despite the lack of military support, he refused to resign from office. By 9:00 AM, the military announced that they would bomb the presidential palace if Allende continued to resist. The Socialist Party proposed that he escape to the San Joaquín industrial zone in southern Santiago, re-group, and lead a counter-coup d’état. The president rejected the proposition.

The commanding generals repeatedly demanded Allende’s resignation, offering him and his family safe passage out of the country. He refused, and busied himself organizing an armed resistance, evacuating as many people as possible from the building.

Annoyed with negotiating, General Leigh ordered the presidential palace bombed. General Pinochet followed by ordering an armor and infantry assault. At 11:52 A.M. the Air Force began its bombardment and the Army its tank attack. For the next twenty minutes, Hawker planes launched projectiles into the heart of the government building, reducing it to a burning pile of rubble.
The worst thing about the rockets was not the explosion itself, but the fire and the expansive wave that followed through the corridors, shattering windows and ripping doors off their hinges. Getting up and shaking off the dust that had fallen on him, Allende looked to see if anyone was hurt. Everyone in his immediate group was unharmed; but the assault had annihilated his personal bodyguards positioned in throughout the presidential building.

Finally, Allende gave his farewell speech:

“"My friends, surely this will be the last opportunity for me to address you. The Air Force has bombed the antennas of Radio Magallanes. My words do not have bitterness but disappointment…

They have force and will be able to dominate us, but social processes can be arrested by neither crime nor force… At this definitive moment, the last moment when I can address you, I wish you to take advantage of the lesson: foreign capital, and imperialism together, created the climate in which the Armed Forces broke their tradition; the tradition taught by General Schneider and reaffirmed by Commander Araya, victims of the same social sector who today are hoping, with foreign assistance, to re-conquer the power to continue defending their profits and their privileges…

I address the man of Chile, the worker, the farmer, the intellectual, those who will be persecuted, because in our country fascism has been already present for many hours…. 

Workers of my country, I have faith in Chile and its destiny. Other men will overcome this dark and bitter moment when treason seeks to prevail… These are my last words, and I am certain that my sacrifice will not be in vain…

I am certain that … it will be a moral lesson that will punish felony, cowardice, and treason.”

Allende's supporters surrendered at 2.30 pm. In all, forty-six of the Praetorian Guard were killed. The Junta officially declared that President Allende committed suicide with an AK47 assault rifle given to him by Fidel Castro. He was buried secretly, in silence. Only his widow was allowed to attend.
The military decreed a state of siege. The country was closed to the outside world for a week while tanks rumbled through the streets. The universities were put under military control, and subversive books were thrown into bonfires. Congress was declared on indefinite recess, and the press was censored. A wave of terror spread over the city: the military arrested anyone suspected of being a communist or in any way an adversary of the new government. Thousands were rounded up.

Chile Stadium served as a detention center. The prisoners were segregated according to their political importance. The interrogations were largely conducted by Army Intelligence Service operatives.

"Chile Stadium was no joke. We saw them kill people right in front of us. We saw how people went crazy from that terrible, tense situation."

Some Chile Stadium prisoners were taken out, executed, and their bodies abandoned on nearby roadsides. Victor Jara was brought there on the day of the coup. His dead body was found on September 16.

"The poet is not offended because they call him subversive. He isn’t scared when they call him a rebel. Poetry is an insurrection."

"We are 5,000
How many more shall we be?
One dead, one beaten,
like I never knew a human being could be beaten.
The other four wanting to die,
wanting to leave all the terror,
beating their heads against the wall…"

The Army took control of the National Stadium. Prisoners were brought there from all over the country. It became the largest detention camp in Santiago. The Red Cross International
estimated that there were about seven thousand there as of September 22. They were held incommunicado, unable to receive visits from family members, lawyers, or any outside persons. The lights were on day and night. Men slept in the locker rooms or the tower room, without beds. The women's areas had sleeping mats.

Their days were spent sitting in the bleachers. At times, a hooded man, escorted by Army officials would point someone out; and they would be taken to the inside chambers where they were tortured. Years later, the hooded man disclosed his identity: Juan Muñoz Alarcón, a former Socialist Party member. Days after his confession, he was found dead with seventeen knife wounds throughout his body.

Even without being singled out by an informant, a large number were subjected to intense interrogations, torture, mock executions, and other inhumane practices.

"Every night we would hear the screams of the workers who were executed in the east wing. The next day, the blood stains were washed away with hoses. Every day, we would see a pile of shoes that had been worn by the victims of the previous night."

It was a like a bullring; the earth soaked with blood. A cruel sacrifice.

Shiny black
polished skin
boots
marked the crusade
between shadows and the light.

A worker was shoved. He protested, "There´s no need to push; there´s no reason for it". The soldier shouted at him and called the Camp Commander, saying that he had rebelled, that he had tried to get hold of his revolver. The Commander ordered two officers from the Black
Berets to deal with him. They beat him until he fell down, dead. Then the Commander fired point blank at his skull.

The National Congress was dissolved by Decree Law No. 27. On the 25th of September, the U.S. government officially recognized the Junta. On the 26th, a reward of $500,000 escudos was offered to anyone providing information as to the whereabouts of members of the former Popular Unity government. On the 28th, ITT's headquarters in New York City was bombed by the Weather Underground for their alleged contribution to the overthrow of Allende.

The U.S. government knew the reality. Nineteen days after the coup, Kissinger received a secret briefing paper entitled "Chilean Executions", which put the "total dead" at fifteen hundred. The ambassador brought up the question of torture. Kissinger rebuked him sharply, saying: “Don't give me any of those political science lectures. We don't care about torture, we care about important things” He was concerned that social democracy would become contagious. It could infect southern Europe and lead to Euro communism. The CIA quickly forged a liaison with the general's junta and provided a list of "radicals”.

Chilean police and air force units combined to form the Caravan of Death; tormenting and terrifying the local population. They broke down doors, tortured civilians, and then lined them up before firing squads to be slaughtered. The bodies piled up along the streets.

Lonquen’s limestone ovens were used to dispose of fifteen men arrested in the rural community of Isla de Maipo:
"Yellowing splinters of skull with some traces of loose, black, head hair; torn clothing which can be recognized as being from a pair of jeans, a man’s sweater..."

lonely cemeteries
A mixture of blood and flesh
The graves teeming with ruined bones, of speechless death rattles
With blue mouths
buried
so the weeping cannot be seen

The justification was always the same: Chile was at war. The country was about to be taken over. The military had acted just in time to save the nation from a brutal Marxist regime loyal to Cuba and Moscow.

On October 13, the Junta issued Decree Law Nº 77 outlawing leftist political parties and organizations. Four days later, it was extended to all political parties. Their assets were seized and became state property. Various locations were converted to interrogation centers. LONDRES 38 had been the municipal headquarters of the Socialist Party before being expropriated.

Villa Grimaldi originally belonged to a wealthy family, named Vasallo. The family surrendered the land in return for the release of their daughter who had been arrested shortly after the coup. The ornate Italian villa and gardens was transformed into military intelligence offices renamed the “Terranova Barracks.” It was in a state of permanent activity. Equipment entered and left the compound at all times of day and night without interruption. Prisoners were not allowed to clean or change their clothes, and could only use the toilet at certain times, without exception. Poor and insufficient food added to the steady deterioration of the prisoners’ health. Their day began with a breakfast of boiled tea in a
small metal container and half a loaf of bread. Lunch was at midday: soup with potato skins floating around in it and traces of carrots. Sometimes the guards' leftovers, with olive pits, bits of fish, and bones were mixed in with it. It was almost impossible to swallow. The screams and moans of the others took one's appetite away.

The secret police, DINA (Dirección de Inteligencia Nacional), was inaugurated in November under the direction of Colonel Manuel Contreras. The Colonel officially reported exclusively to, and received orders only from, President Pinochet. Unofficially, he was a paid CIA agent. DINA's members had been trained at the U.S.'s School of the Americas; and had the power to detain anyone during the declared state of emergency.

On March 11, 1974 the Junta issued its "Declaration of Principles". It asserted that Chile needed a more authoritarian political system in order to restore the Christian values that it believed were the underpinning of western civilization. How long they would remain in power would be determined by how long it took to achieve those objectives. In June, all executive powers were transferred to the president of the Junta, General Augusto Pinochet.

From the onset of the coup, the MIR became a major focus of death squads. Its members were subjected to extrajudicial executions and forced disappearances. The Revolutionary Left Movement, MIR, had been founded on October 12, 1965. It emerged from various student organizations that represented all the left ideological tendencies: Revolutionary socialists, Maoist, Trotskyites, and social anarchists. It took almost two years before the Maoists, Stalinists, and Trotskyites abandoned MIR or were ousted by General Secretary Dr. Miguel Enriquez. Thereafter it declared itself a revolutionary vanguard party and advocated
a Marxist-Leninist model of revolution in which it would lead the working class to a
"dictatorship of the proletariat".

The MIR had supported Allende, but felt that he was too centrist and that his reforms, while
a good start, failed go far enough. When it became apparent that the military was likely to
overthrow Allende, the MIR began an active program of making contacts within the armed
forces. Their plan was to convince junior officers to support the civilian government. They
hoped that when the time came, these young men would disobey the orders of their
superiors. Chile's top army officers discovered the plot. They endeavored to identify those
young officers and soldiers who had been contacted by the MIR to weed them out. They
believed that a divided army could have led to an all-out civil war. That may explain the
vigorous and brutal purges of armed forces personnel who were suspected of being
sympathetic to Allende.

Among the thousands of ordinary citizens that were detained were several hundred young
men and women with ties to the MIR. They confessed under torture and gave away names of
other members, locations of safe houses, information about attacks, etc. Although the MIR
had built up a solid network of safe houses, arms dumps, and information sharing during the
Allende years, it was all quickly and irrevocably compromised during the first few months
of the Pinochet era. On October 5, 1974 the DINA killed Miguel Enriquez Espinoza. On
February 19, 1975, four MIR leaders, who had been arrested by the DINA, appeared on
national television to declare the political and military end of the MIR and directed their
troops to renounce armed struggle.
In January 1976, The Inter-American Human Rights Committee of the Organization of American States charged Chile to be violation of international agreements. El Mercurio newspaper published details of the OAS report, constituting the first public denouncement in Chile since the military coup.

U.S. Defense and Air Force attachés provided eyewitness accounts of the beating of detainees outside a Chilean Air Force interrogation building in Santiago in February 1976. The officers reported that guards “armed with police type Billy clubs repeatedly struck prisoners behind their knees”. Others sources reported a small boy being struck by the guards and elderly man having his head banged against the wall. By July, the United States government approved the "Kennedy Amendment", which banned military assistance to Chile.

Assistant Secretary of State Harry Shlaudeman´s monthly report to the Department of State in August 1976 indicated that the military regimes of Chile, Uruguay, and Argentina saw themselves as embattled with violent dissent from the left. Their intelligence services held formal meetings to organize ‘Operation Condor'; a campaign to find and kill what they considered terrorists of the “Revolutionary Coordinating Committee”. Despite the near decimation of the Marxist left in Chile and Uruguay along with accelerating progress toward that goal in Argentina, the military leaders insisted that the threat remained and that the war must go on. Uruguayan Foreign Minister Blanco... was the first to describe the campaign against terrorists as a ‘Third World War'. Shlaudeman concluded that "the problem begins with the definition of ‘subversion’... [it] has grown to include nearly anyone who opposes government policy..."
A U.S. cable sent on August 23, 1976, signed by Secretary of State Kissinger, reflected an attempt to stop Condor projects known to be underway. The U.S. government had received information that plans may have included “the assassination of subversives, politicians, and prominent figures both within the national borders of Southern Cone countries and abroad. Kissinger instructed the ambassadors of Argentina, Chile, and Uruguay to meet as soon as possible with the chief of state or the highest appropriate official of their respective countries. They were instructed to convey a direct message, known in diplomatic language as a "demarche" expressing the U.S. government's "deep concern," about the reports and to warn that, if true, they would "create a most serious moral and political problem."

An August 30th memorandum notes that U.S. ambassador to Montevideo, Ernest Siracusa, had resisted delivering the demarche to the Uruguayan generals for fear that his life would be endangered, and wanted further instructions. Several days earlier, the U.S. Ambassador to Chile, David Popper, had also protested the order to present the demarche to General Augusto Pinochet. "[G]iven Pinochet's sensitivities," Popper cabled, "he might well take as an insult any inference that he was connected with such assassination plots." Like Siracusa, Popper requested further instructions.

In the meantime, on September 1, Pinochet requested an urgent favor. He wanted to send two officials of the Chilean army, Captain Juan Williams and Lieutenant Alejandro Romeral, to the United States to carry out an investigation of some private companies that he claimed could be screens for the Chilean left. According to a US Department of State memo, the US consul in Paraguay granted B-2 visas to both men.
In a September 16th cable, Kissinger reversed instructions to the U.S. ambassadors in Chile and Argentina to deliver the demarche to General Augusto Pinochet and General Jorge Videla. The instructions effectively ended efforts by senior State Department officials to interfere in Project Condor.

The DINA was dissolved on August 13, 1977 and replaced by the National Information Central (CNI). Some saw it as a sign that the repression against them would slacken. But key DINA leaders were given posts in the CNI; and over time the CNI proved to play virtually the same role as the DINA had.

CIA Director Richard Helms had lied about what the CIA had done to overthrow the elected government of Chile. On November 4, 1977, he stood before a federal judge in Washington, humiliated but defiant, and pleaded guilty to perjury for the false testimony he gave. Helms had argued that he had sworn a higher oath as director to protect the nation's secrets. Federal judge Barrington D. Parker told him, "You now stand before this court in disgrace and shame." The court concluded that the dictates of the Constitution and the laws of the United States were stronger than the power of secrecy. "Covert action," the late Senator Frank Church concluded after his long inquiry into CIA operations in Chile and elsewhere, is a “disguise for murder, coercion, blackmail, bribery, and the spreading of lies...."

In December, the United Nations finally denounced the Chilean regime for "the continued and inadmissible violation of human rights."

On March 1, 1978 photographs of Captain Williams and Lieutenant Romeral were published in Chilean newspapers implicating them in the murder of Orlando Letelier. The following
day, anonymous readers declared that the photos were in fact of Michael Townley, and Army Captain Armando Larios, who had joined DINA in 1975.

Michael Townley had served in the Peace Corps and in 1970 was recruited by the Agency as a contact to the right-wing paramilitary group, Patria y Libertad. He additionally went to work for DINA. According to his testimony, Manuel Contreras ordered him to devise General Carlos Prats’s’ murder in Buenos Aires in 1974. He acknowledged links between DINA and the detention and torture center Colonia Dignidad, revealing that the Army's Bacteriological Warfare Laboratory had been located there. The toxin that allegedly killed Eduardo Frei Montalva may have been manufactured in the lab.

Townley accused Pinochet of ordering Orlando Letelier's death. He confessed that he had hired five anti-Castro Cuban exiles to booby-trap his car after consulting with Luis Posada Carriles and Orlando Bosch. Michael Townley, General Manuel Contreras, and Brigadier General Pedro Espinoza, were all convicted of the crime. On April 8, 1978, he was expelled from Chile; and went to the US where he lived under the witness protection program.

And mournful death bells
sung lonesome lullabies
to silent poet bones
that lay in forlorn cemeteries.
Bones that died of cancer
or poison
or as the miners from the Atacama Desert say,
from a broken heart.
For some time he felt as though he were walking in his sleep, dreaming, dead to the world; disinherited, loving nobody, caring for nothing, indifferent to everything, and wanting to be left alone. He was an insignificant automaton, existing in a land of infidels whose sole purpose was to do the least amount of work possible just to get by.

At times he suffered; coughing, straining, gasping for air. Often lying awake at night; waiting to find himself on all fours- retching, heaving, vomiting out his black past. Choking on the bile and hate while his thoughts spilt out like dominoes on the floor.

*Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.*

Mai Anh cut off her Bodhidharma hand at the pagoda Xa Loi offering it to Buddha.

A Buddhist monk, Quang Duc, sat down in the lotus position at a busy Saigon intersection. He poured gasoline over his body, struck a match, and set himself alight. He maintained a serene meditative posture while four meter flames consumed his body. All that remained was his heart.

Others, feeling helpless, hoping to touch something human inside the madness, followed his example:

- Dieu Nu at Hon Khoi Nha Trang
- The 71 year old nun, Tieu Dieu, at the Tu Dam pagoda in Hue
- Nhat Chi Mai in front of the Tu Nghiem Pagoda in Saigon
- Duc Phong
- Thich Quang Due
- 82 year old Alice Herz in Detroit, Michigan
- Roger Allen LaPorte in front of the United Nations
- A young Quaker, Norman Morrison, outside the Pentagon.

Defense Secretary McNamara witnessed a burning body from his office window. For him, the anti-war protest began that day. He later said: “Morrison’s death was a tragedy not only
for his family but also for me and the country. It was an outcry against the killing that was
destroying the lives of so many Vietnamese and American youth. . . .

Thou shall not kill.

During the Tet Offensive death squads murdered National Police officers and their
families. A Viet Cong was captured near a ditch holding thirty-four bound and shot
bodies; six of whom were Nguyen's godchildren.

While standing in the street in Saigon, South Vietnam's chief of National Police
General Nguyen Loan casually took out his Smith & Wesson Model 38 sidearm and
shot the terrified officer in the head.

Thou shall love thy neighbor as thyself.

A South Vietnamese plane dropped its napalm on a suspected Viet Cong hiding place
near Trang Bang. Within seconds, a naked 9-year-old Kim Phuc ran out of the Cao
Dai temple and down Route 1 screaming "Too hot! Too hot!" as her burnt skin fell off
onto the dirt road.

My God, My God, why have you forsaken me?

In an alleyway between two prison buildings, a tiny door led to the five by nine-foot
Tiger Cages. The air was moist with the stench of diarrhea and the open sores where
shackles cut into the prisoners' ankles. They were political prisoners, student
protestors, Buddhists, and writers declared "criminals". Those at Con Son were not
covered by the Geneva Convention, they didn't even have numbers: A man with
three fingers cut off; another whose skull had been split open by truncheons, a
woman suspended above the ground by an iron hook, her head locked between two
steel bars while water was forced down her throat, beaten and subjected to electric
shock until she became insane . . . they all begged, "Donnez-moi de l'eau" (Give me
water).

Louis who had lived a life of guts and danger, was now kneeling on the floor; both hands
pressed against his thighs, bent forward, mouth open, regurgitating all that he had been told
would keep America safe for freedom and democracy.

"If I knew anything, I'd be guilty of a war crime."
"If I knew anything, I'd be guilty of a war crime."
"If I knew anything, I'd be guilty of a war crime."
We were mired in an inescapable labyrinth. The corruption had become so bad that the South Vietnamese Colonels let their troops go home if they would come in once a month to sign their pay vouchers. Half of the uniforms, boots, and M-16's were sold to the communist forces. Trucks were used to haul produce, and helicopters to smuggle heroin.

And we lived with it, and we saw it, and everybody talked about it openly but nobody could report it, or do anything about it.

The commanders kept pressuring. Missions had one explicit objective and the score cards were posted everywhere you looked. The message was drummed into your head: success was measured by body counts, body counts, body counts. Besides, it wasn't like they were humans. They were gooks and Commies. And it was for the good of the country. And it was all right.

But by 1965 even LBJ was asking: "You think that we can really beat the Vietcong out there?" And still the nation closed its eyes, unanimously ignoring Bertrand Russell’s 1967 War Crimes Tribunal when it concluded that the government and armed forces of the United States:

**Subjected the civilian population to inhuman treatment prohibited by international law.**

**Were guilty of the deliberate, systematic, and large-scale bombing of civilian targets including, dwellings, villages, dams, dikes, medical establishments, leper colonies, schools, churches, pagodas, historical and cultural monuments.**

**Were guilty of genocide against the people of Vietnam.**

*Father, forgive them for they know not what they do.*
Bomb the village.
Kill the people.
Throw some napalm in the square.
Do it on a Sunday morning.
Kill them on their way to prayer.
Ring the bell inside the schoolhouse.
Watch the kiddies gather round.
Lock and load with your 240.
Mow them little motherfuckers down.

Charlie Company had been in country for three months. Captain Ernest Medina ordered to ‘kill everything that breathes.’ They expected fierce resistance from the Viet Cong as they moved from village to village. But this time they encountered no hostility; no VC.

The Lieutenant had the civilians rounded up and herded into a ditch. Then he ordered his men to open fire. Anyone trying to escape was pushed back in and shot. Some were mutilated, disemboweled; a few had "C Company" carved into their chests. Four hours later more than five hundred unarmed women, children, and old men, were dead. There they laid, five feet deep in the slaughter.

Three U.S. Servicemen (Hugh Thompson, Jr., Glenn Andreotta, and Lawrence Colburn) witnessed the carnage from their helicopter. It was Hugh Thompson who ended the massacre. He placed himself between the troops and the surviving Vietnamese, and then ordered his machine gunner to aim at any soldiers who continued killing the villagers. He radioed for help, and reported what he had seen to his section commander. Soon afterwards, Charlie Company was ordered to stand down.

Stars and Stripes promptly reported it as a stunning victory against a Viet Cong stronghold. The soldiers were commended for having risked their lives. Hugh Thompson was removed from
Vietnam, separated from the service, and threatened with prosecution. He was rebuked by U.S. Congressmen, received hate mail, death threats, and mutilated animals were thrown on his doorstep.

Thirty men were accused, sixteen were charged, but only five stood trial. The doctrine of command responsibility laid the blame solely on Lt. Calley. At his court martial, his defense was straightforward: "I was ordered to go in there and destroy the enemy. That was my job. That was the mission I was given. I did not sit down and think in terms of men, women, and children. They were all classified the same. When you receive an order you don’t discuss it, you follow it, automatically. It’s your duty to obey."

The Geneva Convention in no uncertain terms states that it’s a crime to harm any non-combatant. The Army Field Manual is unambiguous: orders in violation of the Geneva Convention are illegal and not to be obeyed. Military Tribunals have sustained that blind obedience is not an excuse to commit atrocious acts. You don’t have to be a pacifist to refuse an order if war crimes are being committed. In a just war, we get the guilty, not the innocent.

Lt. Calley was found accountable and was sentenced to life imprisonment. President Nixon ordered that he serve his time under house arrest. He was paroled in less than a year. The move effectively disarmed the military justice system. Commanders balked at pressing charges, lawyers didn’t want to prosecute, and juries were unwilling to convict.

Gen. William Westmoreland moved swiftly to contain the scandal as outrage spread around the world. He issued directives reiterating the army’s legal obligation to investigate any and
all allegations of war crimes. The Pentagon formed a task force: Vietnam War Crimes Working Group. All major divisions faced accusations. More than three hundred cases were substantiated by the army’s own inquiries. According to officers who helped compile the records, those numbers represented only a fraction of the offenses actually committed. Cases such as “the Concerned Sgt.” whose letters described battalion commanders overriding the rules and ordering artillery strikes on occupied hamlets. Cases such as Kien Hoa in the Mekong Delta, where the 9th Infantry Division reported 10,899 enemy killed, but only 748 weapons recovered. Cases such as Ben Tre, when an American military officer commented: “It was necessary to destroy the village in order to save it.”

“Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter.” Martin Luther King

So what did the army do with the cases after they were compiled, numbered, and sent to higher-ups? Generally, nothing. No action was taken. The army was reticent. Court martial trials would bring all of the problems out into the open. It would be admitting that they had failed in their training and command of the troops. And because the military structure is hierarchical and regimented, the ultimate responsibility went from the rice paddies all the way to the Pentagon. President Nixon sent word to: “Get the army off the front page.”

The files became paper, for official use only, pushed across the desks of distracted officers. They were statistics to be ignored, sent up the chain of command, ending up in a reservoir of official documents known as the Col. Henry Tufts Archive at the University of Michigan Special Collections Library.

Are you a traitor to your country if you reveal its crimes against humanity?
Some veterans tried to turn themselves in. Some, like John Kerry, testified on Capitol Hill. Others tried to alert the government and the public to the problems. In 1971 the Vietnam Veterans Against the War sponsored the Winter Soldier Investigation. Discharged servicemen from all branches of military service, civilian contractors, medical personnel and academics gave testimony about war crimes they had committed or witnessed during the years 1963 to 1970. The VVAW suggested that massacres like My Lai were not the fault of Lieutenant Calley, not the fault of the infantryman in his platoon, not isolated and rare occurrences, but instead were frequent and rooted in the official policies of the American government, the command climate of the U.S. military establishment, and a lack of concern about civilian lives.

They concluded that it is the very nature of guerrilla style wars that bring about these types of atrocities. The insurgents are mixed in with the civilian population making it difficult to distinguish among friends, neutrals, and foes. Anyone living in the war zone becomes an enemy. In such a war the deliberate mass killing of innocent civilians such as what happened in My Lai, Tiger Force, Operation Wheeler, and Speedy Express reflects the myopic response to that frustration. A “Killing Club” mentality becomes standard operating procedure and collateral damage is unavoidable.

And killing civilians is short sighted and counterproductive. It radicalizes neutral and moderates and increases support for the insurgency. Winning any war depends on gaining local collaboration, political control, and stability. It appears that “hearts and minds” was never a serious priority in tactical planning.
When it could no longer deny the truth, the Nixon administration responded with an aggressive campaign to discredit the veterans who spoke out. They were accused of being liars and traitors. Top White House aides encouraged attacks on their accounts of murder, rape, torture, and mutilation. A rival organization, Vietnam Veterans for a Just Peace, publicly condemned the allegations as being part of a Communist plot planted by North Vietnam and Hanoi to undermine the war. The whistle-blowers were silenced. Another holocaust was denied and forgotten.

No records of fraudulent participants or testimony have ever been produced. And all the while, the army had evidence in its files that proved that what they had said was true.

With his eyes still closed, Louis’s head kept grimly nodding as Major General Butler´s words circled in his mind:

“I helped make Mexico safe for American oil interests. I helped make Haiti and Cuba a decent place for the National City Bank boys to collect revenue in. I helped purify Nicaragua for the international banking house of Brown Brothers. . . . I brought light to the Dominican Republic for American sugar interests; I helped make Honduras "right" for American fruit companies. Looking back on it, I might have given Al Capone a few hints.”

Warfare
rips apart the economic and social fabric,
creating conditions
where children can't go to school,
where women are terrified inside and outside their homes,
where government programs grind to a complete halt,
where the hospitals are treating wounded in place of the sick,
where international capital is scared away and the country goes bankrupt.
Bringing
violence, dehumanization, delinquency, prostitution
and economic depression.
Bringing the choice between affluence and ethics.
And the madness continues.  
A collective dysfunction,  
A paradox of unprecedented violence.  
A collective insanity,  
at the heart of the human condition.  
A history of fear, avarice, and the desire for power.  
Chronic criminal, paranoid delusions  
that distort the facts with self-justification, denial,  
and clever artistic.  
People do it, corporations do it, governments do it.  
Keep looking for more, keep buying, keep consuming.  
Keep stuffing that bottomless hole.  
Unconscious living  
egendering unacknowledged suffering.  
And there are barely a few who whisper to themselves:  
This should not be happening; I don't want to be here; I don't want to  
be doing this.

Louis’s years in Latin America compelled him think about injustice; about an elite ruling  
class who would never give up their special privileges; about training programs for the  
police and military that only served to keep corrupt governments in power. He knew that  
whatever American policymakers thought they were doing, it was not about containing evil,  
or communism, or terrorism. It was about keeping leadership in the hands of people who  
command not by virtue of their intellect or integrity, but because of economic and political  
power. Leaders who are self-serving and at times scandalous. Leaders who are accomplices  
in the poverty, hunger, death, and destruction that are the result of the policies that they  
endorse.

And he knew about the leaders in the intelligence community who see themselves as point  
mens in a global war. Who sometimes believe that they have a license to operate outside of  
the law and by their own set of rules. Station chiefs who have been accused of lying, sexual
harassment, stealing money, threatening underlings at gunpoint, and running counternarcotic operations where tons of cocaine wound up on United States streets.

Directors who have been bribing people, corrupting people, and organizing, financing, and equipping death squads around the world. They pretend that it isn't true; because they don’t meet them on the streets where they're lynching, or chopping people up, or running trucks over their heads. They meet the police chiefs, and the military officers beside a swimming pool in their villas or country clubs. And it's a sophisticated, civilized kind of relationship. Where they talk about their children who are attending some elite school, and their vacations in Europe. And they sip dry martinis while someone else worries about the mangled bodies, new gravestones, shattered minds, broken hearts and homes.

These are the facts. The Pentagon knows it. The State Department knows it. Congress knows it. The President knows it. And no one does anything about it. It’s out of control.

And Louis was the sacrificial rooster during the feast of San Juan. Buried alive up to his neck, purging the suffering of his village; crowing, while blindfolded men with machetes took turns trying to silence him.

A ruling elite clinging to power though force, subterfuge, corruption.
A totalitarian regime working to save the soul of America.
All safe, all free.

Good rhetoric wrapped in red, white, and blue. Factually wrong and deliberately misleading.

Responsible members of society so afraid that they willingly give up their constitutional rights.
Good bourgeois family men
amidst a world in ruins
afloat in an ocean of nothingness
hanging on to any miserable fragment of wreckage
as if it were the tree of life;
ready to sacrifice everything: belief, honor, dignity;
willingly to undertake any function, even that of hangman
in order to avoid facing up to the failures of their private-profit system.

Pavlovian dogs with human faces
grab all they can and hold on,
leading others to the scaffolds built by
the "Charitable Foundations for Institutional Care":
Auschwitz, Chelmno, Majdanek, Belzek, Treblinka, Sobibor.

Such unlimited power can only be secured if all men,
without a single exception,
are totally dominated in every aspect of their life.
Fed to a machine that regurgitates men; destroying our lives,
our families, our communities, and nature.

Individuality must be destroyed.
Spontaneity must be destroyed.
Democratically liquidated.

National Security has been used as a pretext for suspending civil liberties, pre-emptive wars, espionage, targeting and killing undesirables, persecution, and torture. Mass murder, the misuse of science, and corruption are deemed acceptable if they achieve victory.

Reality is hidden from the public. We are kept distracted, engaged, and fed on distorted facts. Our thinking becomes biased. Problems are created that appeal to emotions instead of reason. Fearing for our personal safety, we are ready to accept whatever prefabricated solutions that are offered. Nobody wants to know the truth. It’s how the state easily exerts control over the personal lives of its citizens. All actions and sources of information are censored. The government dictates what you can do; and what you can know.
You don't have to be paranoid to realize that the history that we are taught, which
newspapers print, or broadcast through radio, television, and electronic means is not always
the truth. Sometimes the deceit lies in the things not mentioned. Was it a madman who told
us?:

The truth is condemned. The truth is in the gas chamber, in your stockyards; in your
slaughterhouses…the truth is in your ghettos, and your jails.

And Dr. Seuss whispered to Sinclair Lewis: "It can happen here, it can happen anywhere."

Economic imperialism
Machiavellian political policy;
with its ethics limited to: the end justifies the means.

Desperately clutching any solution.
Convinced by its own pathology,
convincing others to follow.
Perpetuating the violence of hunger,
institutionalized poverty,
despair.

the violence of the respectable, the privileged
the violence of the board rooms, legislators and jurists
cold, heartless,
white collar violence
with cash register hearts, and dollar sign eyes.

A cold calculation, the logic of profit
crushing humanity and life
insisting that untold millions suffer inhuman conditions;
while others rape and ravage the earth.

*He has made all nations of men of one blood to dwell on all the face of the earth.*

How do you justify the slaughter, the ethnic cleansing, the holocausts? How do you decide
which people are marginal, outcast, subhuman? Why do you call them impure, manchada,
mestizo, mulatto, ladino, zambo, cholo, salto atras, cuarteron?
homo homini lupis

How do you defend your actions? Do you claim divine right? Are you part of some elect found in some sacred book? Are you convinced that yours is the one true path to heaven, and that anyone who contradicts you is ignorant, immoral, or evil? That they are so wrong that they need to be tortured and burned alive? Are you so righteous that you emboss biblical citations on your combat rifles?

"For it is God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, who hath shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." 2 Corinthians 4:6

Have you come to power through some religious authority?

A person may think their own ways are right, but the Lord weighs their heart. To do what is right and just is desired by the Lord more than sacrifice.

Proverbs 21:2-3

In 1455, Pope Nicholas V issued the bull Romanus Pontifex to King Alfonso V of Portugal.

... [W]e bestow suitable favors and special graces on those Catholic kings and princes, ... to invade, search out, capture, vanquish, and subdue all ... enemies of Christ where so ever placed, and ... to reduce their persons to perpetual slavery, and to apply and appropriate ... possessions, and goods, and to convert them to ... their use and profit ...

When Columbus returned to Europe in 1493, Pope Alexander VI issued a new papal bull, the Inter Caetera, which granted Spain the right to conquer the lands that Columbus had already "discovered" as well as any that might be "discovered" in the future.
The king and queen of the Inquisition, Ferdinand and Isabella, decreed that a statement called “the Requirement” be read to the natives of these lands. The fact that the people could neither speak nor understand Latin or Spanish was not important.

... We ask that you acknowledge the Church as the ruler and superior of the whole world.... if you do not do this... with the help of God, we shall powerfully enter into your country, and shall make war against you in all ways and manners that we can, and shall subject you to the yoke... we shall take you, and your wives, and your children, and shall make slaves of them, and as such shall sell and dispose of them as their highnesses may command; and we shall take away your goods, ...and we protest that the deaths and losses which shall accrue from this are your fault, and not that of their highnesses, or ours, nor of these gentlemen who come with us.

The 1494 "Treaty of Tordesillas" divided the world in half: everything 370 leagues west of the Cape Verde islands went to Spain, everything east to Portugal. Fueled by a lust for gold, Cortes in 1520 and Pizarro in 1532 struck with violent avarice.

Native populations were decimated. Entire families committed suicide, hanging themselves to escape the misery and torture of their daily living. Guilty consciences invented alibis that transformed the blood and tears of genocide into acts of charity. Juan Ginés de Sepúlveda, wrote that the Indians sins and idolatries constituted an offense against God and they deserved whatever maltreatments that they received. Father Gregorio García insisted that the Indians were of Jewish origin, because they were the same as the Jews: "lazy... and not grateful to the Spaniards for all that they have made them." A person who rejoices in the suffering of others is himself deeply wounded; and will continually justify violence as necessary.
Pope Paulo III’s issued a Bull in 1537 that declared the Indians were "true men" with souls; but many theologians and thinkers were still not convinced. To them, the natives were brutes; degenerate dogs that didn't know how to bark. As late as 1957, the Supreme Court of Paraguay sent a circular to all the judges of the country insisting that the Indians were human beings; and still eight out of ten Paraguayans didn’t believe it.

Social evolution theorists categorize the world’s populations in terms of hierarchical differences such as ‘advanced’ or ‘backward’. Such logic prevents policymakers from believing that the natives are capable of governing themselves. Tyrants, despots, and dictators are sincerely convinced that their rule is legitimate and in fact beneficial; that theirs is government for the people.

What do you do to relieve the pain when truth smiles in your face? Do you deny it; do you displace it on scapegoats? Do you confront it, or do you make yourself numb? Where does the responsibility lie? Who answers for crimes against humanity? Personal accountability is a heavy cross to bear.

In April 1961, Adolf Eichmann was arrested in Buenos Aires. He was the Gestapo officer who oversaw the shipping millions of Jews to concentration camps. At his Nuremberg trial he insisted that all decisions were made by his superiors. He considered it his duty and his moral obligation according to his oath as an officer to obey any orders given to him. Never, not once did he accept any blame, or responsibility for his actions. He was found guilty of war crimes and hanged.
Albert Speer, the third man in the wartime Nazi hierarchy was the only defendant at the Nuremberg trial who accepted accountability for his actions. He included those acts in which he had not taken part, even those he said he had been ignorant of at the time. He said it was because he had been in a position to know about them, and that in effect he chose not to know. And he said that such willed ignorance, far from being an excuse for inaction against such evils, conveyed full responsibility for them. He wrote:

"... If I was ignorant, I ensured my own ignorance. If I did not see, it was because I did not want to see. . . . I was like a man following a trail of bloodstained footprints through the snow without realizing someone has been injured... In the final analysis I myself determined... the extent of my ignorance. . . . Those who are expecting me to offer justifications. ... I have none. No apologies are possible."

The lesson is that it isn't only the Gestapo, or some other secret police that do inhuman things to people, we are all answerable for the heartlessness that exists today. Our wealth generates the poverty in the rest of the world. The well-being of our dominant classes condemns the multitudes to the life of load beasts. We pretend like we don't know it's going on, and we pretend like it's acceptable because we're fighting some vague threat. We collaborate with our silence.

The United States Declaration of Independence and Constitution inspired liberty, justice, and democracy on every continent. But its leaders forfeited their principles and foreign policy since the twentieth century has moved America from being the much admired champion of liberty and self-government to the hated and feared advocate of a new imperial order. A world held in check with military garrisons, economic control, and support for brutal and undemocratic leaders; with an economy fueled by exploitation and depletion of the world’s natural resources.
'There comes a time when one must take a position that is neither safe, nor politic, nor popular, but he must take it because his conscience tells him that it is right... it's necessary to say to the policy-makers of our country that we are wrong.'

**Martin Luther King Jr.**

"God intended the earth and all that it contains for the use of every human being and people. Thus, as all men follow justice and unite in charity, created goods should abound for them on a reasonable basis." All other rights whatsoever, including those of property and of free commerce, are to be subordinated to this principle.

**Pope John XXIII**

*On the eve of his execution he told his disciples: ‘I give you a new commandment: love one another just as I have loved you.’*

Chinese, Islamic, Hindu, American, and European traditions share fundamental concepts and principles: peace, equality, social justice, tolerance, and freedom of conscience.

“All human beings... should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood”.

**United Nations, Article 1**

“The disregard and contempt for human rights have resulted in barbarous acts which have outraged the conscience of mankind; and it is essential, if man is not to be compelled ... as a last resort, to rebellion against tyranny and oppression, that human rights should be protected by the rule of law. All human beings have the right to life, liberty and security of person. No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. No one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest, detention or exile. No one shall be subjected to arbitrary interference with his privacy, family, home or correspondence. Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience, and religion...”

**The Universal Declaration of Human Rights;** unanimously signed by the UN General Assembly on December 10, 1948.

These rights are guaranteed to all human beings. They are for everyone and cannot be bartered, sold, stolen, negotiated, or vetoed away. The community of nations asserts that everyone is entitled to them by virtue of the inherent dignity common to us all.

Human rights abuses are crimes against humanity, by whoever commits them. There is no statute of limitations. No government can pardon itself. There is no immunity; since not
punishing those responsible would guarantee that the crimes persist in being committed. All must be bound by the judgment of an international tribune (and as a very real aside, once judged guilty any monies hidden in secret accounts must be returned to the victims or their families).

They were reconfirmed when a civic initiative in communist Czechoslovakia issued Charter 77 openly criticizing their government. Even though the official press characterized the manifesto as "antisocialist" and its signers were labeled "traitors, renegades, and loyal servants of imperialism." Even though spreading the text of the document was a political crime. They were reconfirmed.

On the 60th anniversary of the UN's Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 303 Chinese scholars, lawyers and writers issued an open letter calling for the country to take concrete steps to protect the rule of law and human rights. Later that year, a group of activists released Charter 08, an ambitious manifesto calling for broad changes including an end to the Communist Party’s monopoly on power. Charter 08 recognized freedom, equality, and human rights as universal ideals shared by all humankind. It declared that freedom exists at the core of human values: Freedom of speech, freedom of the press, freedom of assembly, freedom of association, freedom in where to live, and the freedoms to strike, to demonstrate, and to protest. It too was banned by the State, and its signers were labeled as criminals. Its chief author, Liu Xiaobo, was arrested and sentenced to 11 years in prison for “inciting subversion of state power.” In 2010 he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize.

“Let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like a mighty stream”
As the disparity between the wealthy and the poor increases, conflicts grow more intense. Those who feel their rights as citizens stripped away, who find themselves powerless, frustrated, hopelessness, who have suffered cruelty, who have been suppressed with no avenues of protest, people deeply concerned by what they see as social, political, or religious injustice and hypocrisy, who are the victims of broken promises, those are the ones who will become angry and militant. Terror is not a new weapon; throughout history it has been used by those who felt that they could not prevail. It’s rooted in the rage of the dispossessed. Whenever any form of government revokes the Constitutional rights of its citizens, the People raise their arms to abolish it.

"Those who make peaceful revolutions impossible will make violent revolutions inevitable"  
John Fitzgerald Kennedy

When will it stop? Not until we each realize that business as usual is a bullet in the head. It will continue as long as individuals want it to continue; as long as elitist structures, academic sponges, amoral businessmen, or any other type of hangers-on try to get something for nothing. It will not end until we all say no; until we realize that the something is taken from someone else.

We must be willing to develop an ongoing critical view of our values, operating premises, and relationships. Public policy making must become transparent and examined to determine whose benefit is really served. Human survival depends on a decentralized, community-based, people-centered alternative beyond the extremist ideologies of communism or capitalism. A global world must provide equal opportunity and justice for all human beings on earth.
There will be a world for everyone or a world for no one.

“Whatever you did for one of these brothers of mine, you did for me.”

Kant tells us that there is a moral law, a right and wrong. We should do the right thing because it is the right thing to do, and for no other reason. Thoreau tells us to begin, here and now, to refuse to do what we know to be wrong. There exists only one road to peace: reform and social justice.

Individual moral responsibility cannot be delegated to another person or group. It means an active opposition to those acts and attitudes that demean and brutalize anyone, and an active support of those values and expressions that foster human solidarity.

Louis asked himself: If your entire life was lived as a lie, built on misrepresentations and hidden agendas, if you have never shown your true self to anyone, have you ever really lived?

Then he contemplated his mother’s goodbye kiss and closed his heavy hemlock eyes. He breathed in the surrounding loneliness, loneliness, loneliness; while the airplane engines sang him a melancholy lullaby and he drifted off to sleep.