

Section #10

“Toward a New World Order”

November 17, 2023

Mekong Delta



Legend



A conversation between Ladejinsky & Diem



How did land reform evolve in Vietnam during 1955-1960?

	Cai San Project	Land Development Program	Agroville Program
When	Late 1955	Early 1957	Summer 1959
What	Rural development in the Mekong Delta, where planned to resettle 100K northern refugees	“To nourish rice fields”: relocation of poor settlers to underutilized land & rely on machinery to transform	Network of “dense and prosperous areas” in the MD; population “regroupment”
How	Short term: rental contract controversy; messy US aid (e.g., tractors); Long term: + wealth & + gov’t sentiment	Personalist revolution but “ambitious goals without adequate preparation”; temp US aid suspension	Forced plot purchases; dismantle & rebuild own homes; Diem abandoned program, though US wanted to reform it

NATION BUILDING THROUGH FOREIGN INTERVENTION: EVIDENCE FROM DISCONTINUITIES IN MILITARY STRATEGIES*

MELISSA DELL AND PABLO QUERUBIN

This study uses discontinuities in U.S. strategies employed during the Vietnam War to estimate their causal impacts. It identifies the effects of bombing by exploiting rounding thresholds in an algorithm used to target air strikes. Bombing increased the military and political activities of the communist insurgency, weakened local governance, and reduced noncommunist civic engagement. The study also exploits a spatial discontinuity across neighboring military regions that pursued different counterinsurgency strategies. A strategy emphasizing overwhelming firepower plausibly increased insurgent attacks and worsened attitudes toward the U.S. and South Vietnamese government, relative to a more hearts-and-minds-oriented approach. *JEL Codes*: F35, F51, F52

(2017)

Can Hearts and Minds Be Bought? The Economics of Counterinsurgency in Iraq

Eli Berman, Jacob N. Shapiro, and Joseph H. Felter

Abstract

We develop and test an economic theory of insurgency motivated by the informal literature and by recent military doctrine. We model a three-way contest between violent rebels, a government seeking to minimize violence by mixing service provision and coercion, and civilians deciding whether to share information about insurgents. We test the model using panel data from Iraq on violence against Coalition and Iraqi forces, reconstruction spending, and community characteristics (sectarian status, socioeconomic grievances, and natural resource endowments). Our results support the theory's predictions: improved service provision reduces insurgent violence, particularly for smaller projects and since the "surge" began in 2007.

“Analogies at war”

What analogies did US policymakers use to support the military occupation in Iraq?

Did these analogies have any merit—why, or why not?

Consider Dower’s piece.



(2007)