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### Our Endless War: inside Vietnam

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he had to go behind the Secretary's back to do so, Fiske was finally successful in getting Congress to establish the position of Chief of Naval Operations.

Fiske was obviously in line to be the first CNO and he and others within and without the Navy expected him to be. Daniels confounded everyone. Not only was Fiske not named; Daniels could find no flag officer that suited him and plucked Captain William Benson, Commandant of the Philadelphia Navy Yard, for the position. Fiske retired after 46 years of active duty and spent 26 years in retirement working on his inventions and commenting and consulting on those areas in which he had always had an interest—administration, technology, aviation, and preparedness. His last article was written in 1942 on airpower. One of his last comments on strategic matters was recorded that year, just before he died at age 87. He was asked how long the war would last. His answer, "How the hell would I know?" may have been his first to contain no opinion.

Coletta's biography of Fiske brings the man out of shameful obscurity and adds much to our understanding of the technologic and institutional changes of the "new navy" and of the preparedness struggles that seem always to have afflicted the Navy. The book adds new and welcome pages to naval history and will appeal to a wide variety of interests.

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Godson, Roy and Haseler, Stephen. *'Eurocommunism': Implications for East and West*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1978. 144pp.

The growth in electoral strength of European Communist Parties, particularly in Italy and in France, along with statements by their leaders repudiating Soviet dominance of the Communist movement, has given rise to numerous books and articles on the West

attempting to understand Eurocommunism, of which this study is one of the most recent examples. In this short work, Godson and Haseler set out to examine the strength of West European Communist Parties, their domestic programs, and their foreign policies with regard to NATO and the U.S.S.R.

Having examined the electoral strength of the European Communist Parties, the authors conclude that European communism is a minority phenomenon. Nevertheless, they also conclude that if these parties entered governments, the result would be highly damaging to the economy and the security of Western Europe as a whole. The authors appear to assume that if the Communists entered governments at all, they would be the major force in them. Yet, because communism is a minority phenomenon it is much more likely that Communist Parties (CPs) would not become the leaders of governing coalitions but would only control less important ministries. Godson and Haseler imply that once in power the CPs would remain there permanently; they thus overlook the possibility of CPs being thrown out of office at a subsequent election.

Regarding the foreign policies of the European CPs, the authors acknowledge that some party leaders have denounced the U.S.S.R. and have even been supportive of NATO. While they correctly state that some ambiguity exists regarding what they would actually do once in office, they believe that European CPs in power would serve to enhance the interests of the Soviet Union. They do not appear to share the belief of some that part of the growing appeal of Eurocommunism is its decreased dependence on Moscow: that any sudden turn to the U.S.S.R. once in the government would result in a loss of popularity.

While Communist participation in European governments would not be politically beneficial to American

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interests, the conclusion that it would automatically be beneficial to the U.S.S.R. is not necessarily correct. The Soviet Union has shown a marked tendency to develop poor relations with Communist governments that come to power largely through their own efforts, as Soviet relations with Yugoslavia and China have shown. Eurocommunism is an extremely complex phenomenon, especially as its strength has been achieved through legal, democratic means. If the United States were simply to oppose it, these parties may well be driven closer to the U.S.S.R. Instead of a balance sheet attempting to show who will gain and lose from Eurocommunism based on speculation about the future behavior of European Communist Parties, an appraisal of the opportunities and the difficulties American foreign policy faces is necessary in order for the United States to understand and make sensible decisions about Eurocommunism.

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Griffith, Samuel B. II, trans. *Mao Tse-tung on Guerrilla Warfare*. Garden City, N.Y.: Anchor Press/Doubleday, 1978. 101pp.

Mao Tse-tung invented nothing new in the art of war. He borrowed almost entirely from the thoughts of Sun Tzu, Clausewitz, and Lenin. His greatest contribution, no doubt, was to synthesize those thoughts to embody in himself the main ideas of those earlier thinkers. Two of his interpretations stand out above all others. The first of these is that "politics is war without bloodshed; war is politics with bloodshed." This aphorism improves considerably on Clausewitz' own expression of the main idea in his book, *On War*. The second key interpretation is broader in its roots and concerns the whole matter of strategy for the physically weaker, but potentially morally stronger side in a struggle for political power.

As translated by Griffith, this essay is an important part of the corpus of Mao Tse-tung's writings. It treats guerrilla warfare not as an isolated military option and technique, but as one aspect of a political struggle. As the essay makes clear, an understanding of the political context of guerrilla warfare is crucial to an understanding of the strategy and tactics of it.

Although guerrilla warfare has been glamorized greatly and assigned much importance in recent decades, Mao considers it to be an indecisive expedient stage in a continuum of violent political struggle. It is worthwhile, he says, only when and while your opponent's orthodox forces enjoy superiority over your own. Guerrilla warfare is a way of protracting the struggle, building toward stronger orthodox forces of your own, wearing down the opponent both physically and mentally, and helping to gain moral (in the sense of psychological) ascendancy. The ultimate end is to achieve physical as well as moral superiority, and at that point to administer final victory with orthodox forces using orthodox methods. In a sense, the way of a Maoist follows the program of a bullfight, and for much the same reason. The matador is physically inferior and would be quickly gored and trampled by a fresh bull. So the matador is preceded by the banderilleros and picadors, who keep their distance and avoid direct encounters while inflicting small but muscle-weakening wounds on the bull and exhausting him in futile charges. By the time the matador enters the ring for a direct encounter, the bull is at least slightly inferior both morally and physically, and the outcome is seldom unpredictable.

Essentially, guerrilla warfare is one of the several forms of indirect approach used with frequent success by the physically weaker side against the morally vulnerable side. In this respect, it belongs in the same classification with civil