

Naval War College Review

Volume 21
Number 5 May

Article 23

1968

Vietnam Triangle

H. T. Rodgers
U.S. Navy

Donald S. Zagoria

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digital-commons.usnwc.edu/nwc-review>

Recommended Citation

Rodgers, H. T. and Zagoria, Donald S. (1968) "Vietnam Triangle," *Naval War College Review*: Vol. 21 : No. 5 , Article 23.
Available at: <https://digital-commons.usnwc.edu/nwc-review/vol21/iss5/23>

This Book Review is brought to you for free and open access by the Journals at U.S. Naval War College Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Naval War College Review by an authorized editor of U.S. Naval War College Digital Commons. For more information, please contact repository.inquiries@usnwc.edu.

102 NAVAL WAR COLLEGE REVIEW

might have usefully examined the roles of competitive national information-gathering processes. The sums which the United States and the Soviet Union each devote to such purposes far exceed any amounts which could ever become available to U.N. Secretariat officials. It is, of course, also evident that the States' preappointment screening and continuing postappointment surveillance of allegiance of U.N. Secretariat personnel necessarily degrade the level of confidence of opponents in the impartiality or, indeed, even the effectiveness of the information-gathering and communications functions of the Secretariat. It is hard to ask either the United States or the Soviet Union to accept data acquired in this fashion in preference to the information obtained in a far more sophisticated and infinitely more expensive manner through national intelligence services. It is doubtful that in the area of international intelligence operations the Gresham's Law model would be pertinent. In a subsequent edition of the book, the author could usefully examine the concepts that have emerged out of the Mexico City confrontations conducted under the auspices of the United Nations and that have thrown a searching light on the problems of peaceful settlement and intermediaries. Also, the recent efforts of the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) in the area of conflict resolution may prove to be of critical importance in the developing scenario of international conflict resolution.

J.H. SPENCER

Chair of International Law

Zagoria, Donald S. *Vietnam Triangle*.
New York: Pegasus, 1967. 286 p.

Mr. Zagoria contends that study of the public pronouncements of any Communist Party or leader—when compared to the public pronouncements of other Communist Parties and/or leaders—yields important and indispensable clues to the tactical debates taking place

within the Communist world. He admits that this technique, popularly known as Kremlinology, is poorly understood by laymen and academic specialists alike; that he has not been able to devote as much time to source material as the subject warrants; and that the technique alone is not sufficient to understand Communist policies and politics. With this background and the added caveat that he doubts that the United States, as a nation, has the wisdom, skill, and manpower to cope with civil wars, Mr. Zagoria utilizes his own blend of Kremlinology (within the framework of the struggle between Communist China, the Soviet Union, and the United States) to substantiate his foregone conclusions. The author naturally traverses much familiar ground and reads the signposts that offer the best support for his objectives. He contends that Russia sold out the Vietminh in 1954 to Mendes-France for the price of French abandonment of the European Defense Community and that subsequent Soviet policy toward Vietnam has been to limit the amount of assistance provided North Vietnam, the controlling factor being possible endangerment of the Soviet-United States detente. He also believes that both the United States and the People's Republic of China view each other's individual actions in the wars of national liberation as zero sum games, and that Mao Tse-tung has won the battle but will lose the inevitable war for leadership within Communist China. The winner of the war will be either hard-line militarism or softer line economism, and in either case the winner will be drawn closer to Russia. He also holds that while Hanoi has some control over the National Liberation Front (NLF), this organization has a personality of its own. Mr. Zagoria states that Hanoi has given some indications that it is willing to bargain and contends that the famous "Four Points" are not preconditions to negotiations. He believes that the United States

should stop bombing North Vietnam and recognize the NLF in order to precipitate peace talks. Subsequently, America should allow a coalition government to be formed in South Vietnam, "which should be viable in the short run at least," perhaps maintaining a token U.S. military force in the south to act as a tripwire in the event of an

attempted Communist coup. Fortunately, only half of the book contains the author's reasoning; the remainder is composed of some of the source documents and the pronouncements which form the basis of his rationale.

H.T. RODGERS
Captain, U.S. Navy



War acknowledges principles, and even rules, but these are not so much fetters, or bars, which compel its movement aright, as guides which warn us when it is going wrong.

Mahan, 1840-1914