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"Intertribal" Development Strategies in the Global Cold War: Native American Models and Counterinsurgency in Southeast Asia

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INTRODUCTION

In his recent critique of historical writing on American foreign relations, Paul Rosier lamented that scholars all too often separate twentieth-century U.S. interventions abroad from Native American historical dynamics.[1] This essay directly responds to this concern by revealing the intimate interconnections between two contexts typically treated as unrelated: development programs in Native American communities and U.S. counterinsurgency interventions in Southeast Asia in the late 1960s and early 1970s.

In 1967, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) were deeply engaged in counterinsurgency-related rural development activities among ethnic minority populations in Laos and Thailand, the "shadow" theaters of the escalating Vietnam conflict.[2] Back

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[1] Paul C. Rosier, "Crossing New Boundaries: American Indians and Twentieth Century U.S. Foreign Policy," *Diplomatic History* 39, 5 (2015): 955–66.

[2] See, for example, John Prados, *Safe for Democracy: The Secret Wars of the CIA* (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2006), 344–65; Kenneth Conboy, *Shadow War: The CIA's Secret War in Laos* (Boulder: Paladin Press, 1995); Arne Kislenko, "Bamboo in the Shadows: United States Relations with Thailand during the Vietnam War," in Andreas W. Daum, Lloyd C. Gardner, and Wilfried Mausbach, eds., *America, the Vietnam War, and the World: Comparative and International Perspectives* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 197–220. For contextualization of development as counterinsurgency in U.S. foreign policy during this era, see Daniel Immerwahr, *Thinking Small: The United States and the Lure of Community Development* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2015); Michael E. Latham, *The Right Kind of Revolution: Modernization, Development, and U.S. Foreign Policy from the Cold War to the Present* (Ithaca:

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at home, amid the Johnson administration's War on Poverty initiative, Native American communities more forcefully pushed for the expansion of tribal development programs and asserted their rights to shape their socioeconomic futures on their own terms.[3] Responding to both of these contexts, a few well-connected American bureaucrats, with careers spanning both foreign assistance and Native American development work, saw great potential in capitalizing on the "success stories" of Indian achievement and initiative to enhance American agencies' development efforts among what they viewed as similar tribal societies in Southeast Asia. Thus, over the next few years, USAID and the CIA organized a series of development tours for official visitors from Laos and Thailand among various Native American communities in Arizona and New Mexico. They were representatives of a Laotian village development association and officers from a Thai paramilitary force, each engaged in state-sponsored and USAID- and CIA-supported development/counterinsurgency initiatives among "hilltribe" populations in their respective countries. They made successive visits to observe White Mountain Apache, Hopi, Navajo, Zuni Pueblo, and other Indian resource management programs, handicraft centers, and other tribal enterprises. Attempting to build on the momentum of these transnational visits, the tours' organizers, with support from others in these agencies and in the Laotian and Thai armed forces, and from certain Indian political and business leaders, made further strategic efforts to launch a program of sending selected Native Americans as development advisors to targeted rural communities in Southeast Asia.

By looking at these episodes and the curious entanglements of these disparate sets of actors, this essay builds upon and brings together contributions from some of the recent rich literature on American development dynamics and the global Cold War. On one hand, scholars have increasingly examined the political and ideological links between domestic Great Society and anti-poverty initiatives and American agencies' use of overseas development assistance as anti-communist counterinsurgency.[4]

Cornell University Press, 2011); David Ekbladh, *The Great American Mission: Modernization and the Construction of an American World Order* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010).

[3] For overviews, see Bradley G. Shreve, *Red Power Rising: The National Indian Youth Council and the Origins of Native Activism* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2011); Paul C. Rosier, *Serving Their Country: American Indian Politics and Patriotism in the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2009); Daniel M. Cobb, *Native Activism in Cold War America: The Struggle for Sovereignty* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2008); Charles F. Wilkinson, *Blood Struggle: The Rise of Modern Indian Nations* (New York: W. W. Norton and Co., 2006); Thomas Clarkin, *Federal Indian Policy in the Kennedy and Johnson Administrations, 1961–1969* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2001).

[4] Stuart Schrader, "To Secure the Global Great Society: Participation in Pacification," *Humanity: An International Journal of Human Rights, Humanitarianism, and Development* 7, 2 (2016):

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Others have illuminated how the global Cold War context significantly inflected debates and negotiations over development within and between Native American communities and U.S. federal agencies during a critical period of intensifying Indian political activism.[5] My intention here is to bridge these often separated fields by tracing the contours of a collection of revealing schemes—involving American bureaucrats, Native American leaders, and Laotian and Thai government personnel—that focused on deploying "tribal development" strategies to foster desired socioeconomic and political changes in rural southern Laos and northern Thailand. Taking cues from Joe Bryan and Denis Wood's recent discussion of the contending and overlapping constructions of "indigenous territories" and "tribal areas" that shaped the U.S. military's counterinsurgency strategies in the Americas, I will examine how a wide array of actors and agendas intersected around the potential of Indian development dynamics, transnational "intertribal" training, and "tribe-to-tribe" foreign assistance to serve U.S. Cold War interventions in Southeast Asian communities.[6]

More specifically, this analysis draws from recent insights into the historically elastic, contingent, and at times contradictory meanings of key domestic and overseas development concepts in order to examine the politics that shaped how Native American models were mobilized to serve American counterinsurgency agendas abroad.[7] Collectively, the episodes examined below reveal how flexible and multivalent definitions of Indian achievement, tribal initiative, and "intertribal" understanding both facilitated and constrained designs to harness such models to support political and military agendas in rural Southeast Asia. Despite the varied stakes and interests of the different American and foreign actors involved, these diverse participants at the same time shared a key perspective: that Native Americans' economic experiences and achievements might provide instructive and uniquely suited development models for "tribal" peoples elsewhere. USAID and CIA-affiliated promoters of these "intertribal" initiatives sought to reap

225–53; Immerwahr, *Thinking Small*; Ananya Roy, Stuart Schrader, and Emma Shaw Crane, "'The Anti-Poverty Hoax': Development, Pacification, and the Making of Community in the Global 1960s," *Cities* 44 (2015): 139–45; Sheyda Jahanbani, "One Global War on Poverty: The Johnson Administration Fights Poverty at Home and Abroad, 1964–1968," in Stuart Schrader and Emma Shaw Crane, eds., *Beyond the Cold War: Lyndon Johnson and the New Global Challenges of the 1960s* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), x, 97–117; Alyosha Goldstein, *Poverty in Common: The Politics of Community Action during the American Century* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2012).

[5] For example, Shreve, *Red Power*; Rosier, *Serving Their Country*; Cobb, *Native Activism*.

[6] Joe Bryan and Denis Wood, *Weaponizing Maps: Indigenous Peoples and Counterinsurgency in the Americas* (New York: Guilford Press, 2015).

[7] Schrader, "To Secure the Global Great Society"; Goldstein, *Poverty in Common*; Immerwahr, *Thinking Small*.

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advantages from this common basis, by showcasing and exporting particularly selective models of tribal development that they imbued with rather different political connotations than those intended by some of the Indian leaders engaging in these schemes. In some cases, as we will see, tensions emerged between organizers, foreign visitors, and local Indian participants over the deeper meaning of appropriating Native American economic models to support U.S. foreign development interests and interventions.

CHALLENGES OF DEVELOPMENT AND COUNTERINSURGENCY IN LAOS

The initial impetus for all of these "intertribal" schemes was the intensification of security concerns in one increasingly important "backyard" theater of the larger Vietnam conflict: southern Laos. In 1967, as CIA and USAID officers sought more effective strategies for using village development programs to counter political unrest among ethnic minority populations, a unique window of opportunity was created for officials to experiment with new types of "intertribal" development training.

Over the previous decade, USAID and the CIA had actively supported the Royal Lao Government through a variety of technical and material assistance programs across the countryside, as it battled threats from the communist Pathet Lao and incursions by North Vietnamese troops. In the mid-1960s, with the rapid escalation of American military actions in Vietnam, the strategic significance of the broader Laotian theater rapidly grew more urgent. The southern Laos panhandle, containing the vital North Vietnamese supply route to the battle zones of South Vietnam and populated predominately by various Lao Theung ethnic groups, became a focal point of U.S. concern and intervention. As the USAID's *Termination Report* later described it, U.S. officials realized "that economic and development assistance had to be extended and increased to the isolated mountainous hilltribe areas for political reasons."[8]

A key player in this initiative was a notable CIA front contractor—Community Development Counseling Service (CDCS). For several years prior CDCS had played a pivotal role in various community development programs linked to American counterinsurgency strategies in Southeast Asia, Latin America, and beyond. Through its diverse activities, the organization had actively supported the CIA's broader development agenda: it helped foreign governments deploy rural development initiatives as mechanisms for

[8] Seth Jacobs, *The Universe Unraveling: American Foreign Policy in Cold War Laos* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2012); James Lilley and Jeffrey Lilley, *China Hands: Nine Decades of Adventure, Espionage, and Diplomacy in Asia* (New York: PublicAffairs, 2004), 115–21; Prados, *Safe for Democracy*, 344–57; USAID, *Termination Report: USAID in Laos* (Washington, D.C.: USAID, 1976), 205.

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thwarting communist expansion, defusing potential sources of popular insurrection, and extending the national reach and influence of state institutions among geographically and culturally remote populations.[9] Expanding its footprint in Southeast Asia in the mid-1960s, CDCS pursued a similar blend of strategic motives, now led by Joseph Z. Taylor, who had spent several years managing civic action and counterinsurgency operations for USAID's Vietnam office. Under Taylor, CDCS projects in Laos sought "to build confidence in, and support, for government among half the population (tribal)" and "to counter the insurgency efforts of the Pathet Lao."[10]

In particular, CDCS was formally contracted by USAID to manage the newly minted Village Development Association of Laos (VDAL). This effort was coordinated in conjunction with the Royal Lao Armed Forces operational commander in the southern military sector, General Phasouk Somli, whose ongoing commitment to CIA- and USAID-funded "civic action" and "pacification" programs had enhanced his reputation among American operatives. By mid-1967, through CDCS support and under Phasouk's watch, VDAL's operations had expanded into a loose network of fledgling cooperative associations pursuing a range of agricultural assistance programs for outlying "tribal hills people": marketing and providing basic commodities, extending credit, and helping with crop and livestock improvement.[11]

As CDCS moved forward with VDAL projects, one of the pressing challenges it and other local USAID-supported operations faced was convincing targeted rural communities of these programs' legitimacy. Various reports from field officers stressed concerns that the Pathet Lao was gaining ground in the "hearts and minds" battle for villagers' loyalty, and the dominance of American personnel and cultural approaches in the administration of USAID programs increased local skepticism regarding their relevance and motives. What was needed, some argued, was "a new model

[9] Immerwahr, *Thinking Small*, 122–25; CDCS, *Remote Areas Development Tropical Notebook: Dedicated to a Better Life for the World's Tropical Farmers, Villagers, and Tribals* (Arlington: CDCS, 1966), 1, 12, 47.

[10] CDCS, "'Popular Participation' in Rural Development in Laos," n.d., enclosed in Joseph Z. Taylor to Si Fryer, 27 Sept. 1967, box 24, folder 5, Fryer papers (hereafter "Popular Participation"); Harvey C. Neese and John O'Donnell, eds., *Prelude to Tragedy: Vietnam, 1960–1965* (Annapolis: Naval Institute Press, 2001), 165–66.

[11] Douglas S. Blaufarb, *Organizing and Managing Unconventional War in Laos, 1962–1970* (Santa Monica: RAND, 1972), 36, 39–41, 80–81; USAID, *Termination Report*, 236–41; Conboy, *Shadow War*, 141–42, 170–71; Ted Shackley and Richard A. Finney, *Spymaster: My Life in the CIA* (Dulles: Potomac Books, 2006), 117–18, 143–44; Thomas Ahern, *Undercover Armies, 1961–1973: CIA and Surrogate Warfare in Laos* (Washington, D.C.: CIA, 2006), 196–201; CDCS, "Popular Participation." Harvey Neese (VDAL's CDCS manager in the mid-1960s), e-mail to author, 11 Jan. 2016.

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of a development program" more strategically attuned to the "behavioral factors" and cultural perspectives of local ethnic minorities.[12]

U.S. officials, then, were becoming more interested in escalating counterinsurgency efforts through VDAL, recognized the limited effectiveness of past development approaches, and were open to alternative strategies for connecting with local communities. This unique context became fertile ground for USAID and CDCS administrators to consider incorporating Native American development models into their equation. But such transnational possibilities might never have been identified and mobilized were it not for the coincidental transfer of a certain Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) official in Washington, D.C. into a directly relevant position at USAID.

FASHIONING NATIVE AMERICAN DEVELOPMENT MODELS FOR COLD WAR LAOS

In mid-1967, Dale Clark was persuaded to leave his job at the BIA, where he worked on tribal development financing, to join USAID's East Asia Bureau. Assigned to support CDCS's work with VDAL, Clark was inspired by his recent BIA experiences to float the idea of utilizing successful Indian economic initiatives as models for potential replication in southern Laos. Collaborating with a former BIA colleague and CDCS staff, they put together a plan for bringing VDAL representatives to Arizona to observe firsthand Native American enterprises and programs. In launching this training project, the organizers worked from a shared conviction that selected models of Indian development and government-tribe relations could be usefully applied to advance American counterinsurgency objectives in Laotian villages.

Clark had been actively recruited to USAID by the director of the East Asia Bureau's Technical Advisory Unit, Clifford C. Matlock. For Matlock, Clark's "special ability" to "blaze new trails in rural development" throughout his diverse career was particularly attractive, such as his postwar work in the State Department's Point Four assistance programs in the Middle East and the prominent International Development Advisory Board, coordinating loans as a private banker for Middle Eastern development projects, and his latest stint, at the BIA since 1964.[13] Matlock was also

[12] Kenneth G. Orr, "Security in the Lao Village; An Anthropological Introduction" (Vientiane, Laos: USAID, Vientiane, Laos), 13 Apr. 1967, 42–44; Galen Beery, "American Aid in Saravane Province, Laos," 1 June 1968, box 1, folder 9, William W. Sage Collection on Laos (MSS281), Arizona State University Library.

[13] Robert Zigler, "Interview with Dale D. Clark," 14 Oct. 1998, Association for Diplomatic Studies and Training, Foreign Affairs Oral History Collection, http://adst.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/Clark-Dale-D.pdf (accessed 31 Aug. 2017); Brian H. Smith, *More than Altruism: The Politics of Private Foreign Aid* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990), 50–51.

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drawn to Clark's involvement since the mid-1950s in launching and directing the foreign-service organization International Voluntary Services (IVS). Through this work, Matlock felt, Clark had successfully demonstrated how direct "people-to-people" interactions and American private sector involvement could significantly benefit the implementation of U.S. development agendas overseas. He thus saw great promise in bringing Clark to USAID as his special advisor, assigned to generate similar public-private partnerships and "'people programs' that reach the grassroots" in direct support of the agency's economic development and counterinsurgency projects among "underdeveloped" East Asian communities.[14]

Settling into his new position, Clark's attention was immediately directed to CDCS's VDAL operations in the crucial hotspot of southern Laos and administrators' desires for new, more effective strategies there. And as he immersed himself in the details of VDAL's activities from his Washington office, Clark began to reflect deeply on how CDCS in Laos might profitably draw from what he saw to be parallel and successful Native American enterprises and other tribal economic development programs he had recently engaged with at the BIA. Since 1964, Clark had served as special advisor to the BIA's Assistant Commissioner of Resources Si Fryer, working on financing "self-help" projects for Indian cooperative development. Those years had coincided with a dynamic expansion of development programs in many Indian communities, tied to the Johnson administration's War on Poverty initiatives and the newly established Office of Economic Opportunity (OEO), as well as the concerted activism and leadership of Indians themselves. Clark himself became closely involved in certain reservation financing projects in Arizona, for instance, at a time when some groups were launching the first national test cases of tribal development corporations. As he would later reflect, his immersion in Native American development and dynamism during these momentous years had "convinced me that there were technologies, skills, traditions and practices utilized on Indian reservations that could make a contribution in tribal areas abroad."[15]

[14] Richard D. McKinzie, "Oral History Interview with Clifford C. Matlock," 29 Oct. 1973, Harry S. Truman Presidential Library, https://www.trumanlibrary.org/oralhist/matlock.htm (accessed 31 Aug. 2017); Dale D. Clark, "New Partnership in International Development: A Citizen Participation Program Demonstrating Self-Help Works," n.d., Appendix C, Clifford C. Matlock, "Performance Evaluation Report—Dr. Dale D. Clark," 9 Aug. 1968, and ch. 1, "The Self Help Works Movement," 7, USAID Development Experience Clearinghouse, http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PNAAR543.pdf (accessed 31 Aug. 2017); Robert A. Packenham, *Liberal America and the Third World: Political Development Ideas in Foreign Aid and Social Science* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973), 98–109; Thomas Carothers, *Aiding Democracy Abroad: The Learning Curve* (Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 1999), 22–25.

[15] Zigler, "Interview with Dale D. Clark"; Si Fryer to Joseph Z. Taylor, 3 Oct. 1967, box 24, folder 5, Fryer Papers; Daniel Killoren, "American Indian Water Rights in Arizona: From

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To think through how this broad idea might be applied to VDAL's particular agendas, Clark almost instinctively turned to his old colleague Fryer, newly retired from the BIA. Not only had the two men collaborated closely during their recent BIA stints, but Fryer had previously experienced a lengthy career back and forth between the BIA and American governmental and private agencies engaged in international development. At one point in the early 1950s he had worked with Clark on U.S. Point Four projects in the Middle East. Like Clark, Fryer had long been committed to the value of U.S. technical assistance in promoting Cold War interests, and he shared Clark's enthusiasm about the prospects of showcasing Native American development achievements to advance American projects abroad.[16]

Working together, they soon settled on a scheme that they felt could immediately benefit some of CDCS and VDAL's goals: bringing a small group of VDAL members to the American Southwest on an "intertribal" development tour, where they could directly observe Indian tribes' economic activities. Clark was well-positioned to organize such a tour through USAID and CDCS, while Fryer could use his deep connections in the BIA and certain tribal governments to enlist government officials and Indian leaders to participate and serve as tour guides. During the tour, Native American representatives would then offer firsthand demonstrations to their "tribal" counterparts of thriving enterprises with potential application in Laos.[17]

Fryer and Clark further envisioned that such a tour would not just highlight the successes of the Indian enterprises and programs, but also promote a particular political model of government-tribe relations that could also be exported to Laos and aligned with CDCS' counterinsurgency strategies: a federal government actively encouraging the self-sufficiency of its tribal minority communities and thereby earning their trust. Such a picture was, to say the least, a highly selective rendering of the recent and ongoing political dynamics surrounding Indian economic development, which were often characterized by intense debates and negotiations between government

Conflict to Settlement, 1950–2004," (PhD diss., Arizona State University, 2011), 145–47; Clarkin, *Federal Indian Policy*; Cobb, *Native Activism*; Clark, "New Partnership," 27.

[16] For example, prior to rejoining the BIA in 1961 Fryer had been BIA supervisor of the Navajo Reservation, served in the War Relocation Authority and the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration, worked on Bolivian state development programs for Indians, returned to the BIA as chief of the Division of Resources, and headed the State Department's Point Four assistance programs in the Middle East and North Africa, after which he did several years of development consultancy work for American companies in Saudi Arabia and beyond. His career is extensively recorded in the E. Reeseman Fryer Papers, Center of Southwest Studies, Fort Lewis College (hereafter Fryer Papers).

[17] CDCS, "Popular Participation"; Si Fryer to Joseph Z. Taylor, 3 Oct. 1967, box 24, folder 5, Fryer Papers; Fryer, "Laotian Diary," enclosed in Fryer to Taylor, 17 Nov. 1967, box 24, folder 5, Fryer Papers.

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agencies and Indian communities. As other scholars have detailed, Indian activists consistently pressed the federal government in these years to expand its developmental and anti-poverty initiatives for Native Americans. They utilized new opportunities presented by the OEO to intensify their criticisms of the very agency Clark and Fryer represented, the BIA, and its historically paternalistic control over reservation planning, and forcefully asserted native communities' rights to determine the trajectory of their socioeconomic futures on their own cultural terms.[18] For Fryer and Clark, however, such messy political dynamics could be glossed over in the VDAL tour, to instead highlight a simpler, and more tactically useful, model of government-tribe relations that could serve as a counterinsurgency messaging tool back in southern Laos. In that presentation, "cooperation," "harmony," and mutual "understanding" had paved the way for tribal developmental successes.[19]

To move forward these various goals for the VDAL tour, Clark started pitching their ideas to colleagues at USAID and to CDCS's president, Joseph Taylor, over the summer of 1967. Taylor, eager for novel approaches to enhance VDAL's work, responded enthusiastically. He and his staff were already organizing a U.S.-based training program for a small group of VDAL representatives for that fall—a short course on rural cooperatives at the University of Wisconsin—and he saw a ripe and relatively affordable opportunity to extend that training to include a trip to Indian communities in the Southwest along the lines Clark and Fryer proposed. Following Clark's recommendation, Taylor hired Fryer to choose the appropriate Indian case studies for observation and organize the tour's logistics. By September, Fryer had prepared a draft itinerary that focused on visits to a variety of well-established cooperatives, enterprises, and economic development programs among Hopi, Navajo, and White Mountain Apache communities in Arizona.[20]

As they finalized their preparations for the tour, Clark, Fryer, and Taylor put together a background report that underscored their shared political aspirations for the unique training experiment they were about to launch. Through the Laotians' travels among Indian groups in Arizona, the report emphasized, the visitors would be able to directly observe the range of American governmental mechanisms for supporting rural development and strategically gaining the trust and support of target populations. The selected Native American case studies would provide profitable comparative models for how VDAL might similarly make developmental and political inroads among ethnic and tribal minorities with "limited education, experience, and

[18] Goldstein, *Poverty in Common*, 184–96; Cobb, *Native Activism*; Clarkin, *Federal Indian Policy*; Rosier, *Serving Their Country*.

[19] CDCS, "Popular Participation."

[20] Joseph Z. Taylor to Si Fryer, 27 Sept. 1967, box 24, folder 5, Fryer Papers; Fryer to Taylor, 3 Oct. 1967, box 24, folder 5, Fryer Papers.

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resources for modern Western-type institutions." "Successful cattle associations and other cooperative activities which Indian tribes have built on tribal practices" would illustrate how VDAL might capitalize on the "strong persistence of family-tribal systems" in Laos in developing new income-generating enterprises and more "formal, sophisticated cooperative" organizations. At the same time, the Laotians would be exposed to how the U.S. government was facilitating such Indian development, enlisting the "understanding, support, and cooperation of people," and helping "to harmonize relations, and establish cooperation, between tribal and non-tribal populations," a model that could inform VDAL's efforts to enhance its legitimacy among Laotian villagers.[21] All told, the tour's organizers thus saw great potential for this exercise in tribal development modeling to help VDAL, and the American agencies supporting it, more effectively compete in the "hearts and minds" campaign for rural Laotians' allegiance.

"INTERTRIBAL" ENCOUNTERS AND DEVELOPMENT MODELING IN NATIVE ARIZONA

With such lofty aspirations, Clark, Fryer, and Taylor launched the VDAL training program in late September. At the end of the capstone tour of Arizona Indian reservations several weeks later they would deem the program a tremendous success. The overall positive responses from both Indian hosts and the VDAL representatives to this "intertribal" experiment had boosted the organizers' confidence that Native American development models could be repurposed to further counterinsurgency agendas in Laos.

CDCS administrators in Laos had selected three VDAL representatives for the U.S. training program. Leading the cohort was Sinlap Sengsay, assistant manager of VDAL's operations from its headquarters in Pakse, and the only member from the dominant Lao ethnic group. Given his elevated position and that he was the only participant who both understood and spoke English fluently, Sinlap served as group leader and translator for the entire trip. The other two representatives, Vene Sivilay and Dod Phianoulaklaounemouang (both vaguely identified as "tribals" in Taylor's correspondence), worked on VDAL projects in outlying rural districts, running a cattle management program and a VDAL branch store, respectively.[22]

Soon after their arrival from Laos, the training began with an ambitious itinerary of orientation meetings in Washington, D.C., organized primarily by Clark and Taylor. One goal of these sessions was to illustrate significant "relationships between Laotian conditions and problems with those of U.S. populations (Indian tribes and others)," and two consultants were brought in

[21] CDCS, "Popular Participation."
[22] Neese, e-mail to author, 11 Jan. 2016; Joseph Z. Taylor to Si Fryer, 27 Sept. 1967 and 9 Oct. 1967, box 24, folder 5, Fryer Papers.

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for that purpose.[23] One was anthropologist Arthur Niehoff, based at George Washington University, who had served as a USAID field officer in southern Laos and had recently produced applied anthropology manuals for American overseas aid agencies.[24] The other was Gordon Macgregor, a professor of development anthropology at American University, who boasted a long career in both Native American and international development work and had recently been a colleague of Fryer and Clark at the BIA.[25]

Working with Clark, Niehoff and Macgregor presented their noticeably jet-lagged Laotian guests with a barrage of background materials, including an introduction to the economies and cultures of the Indian Southwest, developmental parallels between those societies and southwestern Laos, and the potential for expanding VDAL's operations and financing. According to Macgregor's follow-up assessment, the visitors showed most interest in some of the specific reservation programs raised at the meetings, such as when the screening of a documentary film about White Mountain Apache enterprises inspired them to ask about their livestock ownership and range management practices. By contrast, they were mostly turned off by the general, comparative presentations on international development that offered "nothing precise that they could visualize for their country."[26]

Following a few days of orientation, the VDAL group traveled to the University of Wisconsin-Madison, where they attended an eighteen-day, short course at the International Cooperative Training Center. Besides providing the Laotians with an overview of cooperative operations and how they might be applied to distinct developmental challenges back home, a larger goal here was to glean comparative insights from examples of American and other international communities "building on family-tribal systems" to establish successful cooperatives. At the same time, it was felt that thinking comparatively about how "family-tribal" institutions could be used to expand community development would further prepare the Laotians for their upcoming field-based training among southwestern Indians.[27]

[23] CDCS, "Popular Participation."

[24] Arthur Niehoff and Conrad Arensberg, *Introducing Social Change: A Manual for Americans Overseas* (Chicago: Aldine, 1964); and *A Casebook of Social Change* (Chicago: Aldine, 1966); Arthur Niehoff, *On Being a Conceptual Animal* (Bosnall: Hominid Press, 1998), "About the Author" page, and 76.

[25] Kelly, "Interview of Gordon Macgregor"; CDCS, "Popular Participation."

[26] Gordon Macgregor to Si Fryer, 8 Oct. 1967, box 24, folder 5, Fryer Papers.

[27] The seminar also coincided with an ICTC training program for a group from South Vietnam. Joseph Z. Taylor to Si Fryer, 27 Sept. 1967 and 9 Oct. 1967, box 24, folder 5, Fryer Papers; Fryer, "Laotian Diary," enclosed in Fryer to Taylor, 17 Nov. 1967, box 24, folder 5, Fryer Papers; David Douthit, *Operation Cooperation: The Role of U.S. Cooperatives in the Foreign Assistance Program* (Washington, D.C.: USAID, Advisory Committee on Overseas Cooperative Development, n.d.), 20–21.

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Taylor next personally escorted the VDAL visitors to Phoenix, Arizona, where Fryer began the capstone three-week tour of Indian enterprises, with Clark intermittently showing up to participate in group discussions. Fryer had prepared an itinerary, in coordination with relevant authorities in tribal governments and local BIA offices, focused on Indian economic activities he felt were most successful and would be most replicable in Laos.

The tour started with visits to enterprises and cooperatives among the White Mountain Apache, including a cattle auction, livestock associations, forestry companies, and businesses catering to recreation (fishing, hunting, etc.) and tourism. On the Hopi Reservation the Laotians attended a meeting of the Tribal Council and toured the studios of well-established potters, silversmiths, basket-makers, and woodcarvers, as well as a tribal cooperative that connected local artisans to regional handicraft markets. On the Navajo Reservation they visited the decades-old Navajo Arts and Crafts Guild and toured the operations of prominent silversmiths and rug weavers. A few of the tribal leaders and BIA officials involved also hosted the visitors at their homes, providing additional opportunities for discussing and comparing realities in the Indian Southwest and in Laos.[28]

Unfortunately, the only documentation of this tour that I have been able to find is Fryer's reports, and they provide only fragmentary glimpses into how the participants themselves—both Indian leaders and Laotian visitors—perceived this "intertribal" experience and the developmental modeling involved. One revealing example concerned the newly elected White Mountain Apache tribal council chairman, Ronnie Lupe, and how he chose to introduce the tribe's development approaches to his VDAL guests. The son of the first tribal council chairman and trained in business administration at Arizona State University, Lupe had assumed the council leadership promoting a developmental mission of "modernizing" the tribal economy to improve peoples' job opportunities and standards of living, while also sustaining tribal traditions and culture and enabling Indians to determine their own developmental paths. He had been a major proponent of OEO-assisted poverty reduction programs in local communities, and during his early months heading the council had continued to promote ways for Apaches to assume greater managerial control and leadership positions in multiple reservation enterprises, ranging from the tribe's long-standing ranching cooperative to the expansion of new initiatives in forestry, fishing, and tourism.[29] During the VDAL tour Lupe seems to have embraced the opportunity to showcase many of these achievements for his foreign visitors

[28] Fryer, "Laotian Diary," enclosed in Fryer to Taylor, 17 Nov. 1967, box 24, folder 5, Fryer Papers.

[29] David C. Tomblin, "Managing Boundaries, Healing the Homeland: Ecological Restoration and the Revitalization of the White Mountain Apache Tribe, 1933–2000," (PhD diss., Virginia

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and especially chose to emphasize how all the reservation's development programming was centered on principles of "tribal involvement" and building from inherited Apache norms and practices. "Too many of our young people are forgetting the proud history and traditions of our tribe," he explained to the group. "We want to build our future on the best of both cultures."[30]

The VDAL representatives, for their part, repeatedly told Fryer how impressed they were by the scale and scope of all that the Apaches and the other Indian groups had achieved. But in contrast to Lupe's emphasis on cultural and political approaches to tribal development, the Laotians focused their attentions on the economic viability of replicating Indian programs back home. In fact, in many instances the visitors were quick to note the sharp contrasts between the contexts of these Indian "success stories" and the conditions of life in rural Laos. Despite the tour organizers' general idealism about the transferability of such Native American models of "tribal development," the VDAL officers saw immediate challenges in transposing much of what they observed to Laos, given Laotian villagers' relative lack of resources, political instability, and the highly militarized environment. For instance, while awed by the Apaches' massive lumbering and sawmill operations, Sinlap frankly pointed out that an Apache lumberman's daily earnings equaled about half of Sinlap's annual salary. And when discussing financing with the White Mountain Apache tribal credit officer, the Laotians likewise saw little prospect for establishing a comparable system back home. As Sinlap explained, whenever VDAL tried to get villagers to repay loans, they simply refused and "go to the Pathet Lao."[31]

On the other hand, the visitors were intensely interested in the kinds of reservation operations that they thought could be established in Laos by building upon VDAL's existing development activities, especially the livestock and handicraft enterprises. Vene, a livestock manager himself, stated repeatedly during his tour of the Apache reservation his desire "to stay here for a year or so and learn how to handle cattle, 'like the Apaches.'" Dod, witnessing the impressive work and successful businesses of prominent Hopi artisans commented more than once that "if the people in his tribal area were taught how [to] make things similar to those of the Hopi, there would be a good market for them in Laos, 'I could sell them in my [VDAL] store.'"[32]

Polytechnic Institute, 2009), 278–83; Cobb, *Native Activism*, 139–41; Stan Steiner, *The New Indians* (New York: Harper and Row, 1968), 128–29.

[30] Fryer, "Laotian Diary," enclosed in Fryer to Taylor, 17 Nov. 1967, box 24, folder 5, Fryer Papers.

[31] Ibid.; Si Fryer to Joseph Z. Taylor, 4 Nov. 1967, box 24, folder 5, Fryer Papers.

[32] Fryer, "Laotian Diary," enclosed in Fryer to Taylor, 17 Nov. 1967, box 24, folder 5, Fryer Papers.

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By the tour's end, as Fryer, Clark, and Taylor took stock of the participants' different responses, they found much to appreciate. Even if not all of the observed Indian enterprises and programs were suited to Laos, the dynamic participation of Lupe and other Indian hosts, coupled with the Laotians' strong interest in borrowing development strategies, far outweighed the visitors' occasional skepticism. For the tour's organizers, one of its principal goals had thus been largely achieved: it had showcased models of successful tribal enterprises, rooted in local cultures and supported by the federal government, which could be adapted and strategically redeployed overseas. As Fryer summed it up, the tour's great accomplishment was that the Laotians were able to directly witness "developed competence in action": "three cultures and three dis-similar economic dependencies thriving, amazingly, within the dominant culture of our country," enabled by the prudent developmental assistance of the U.S. government. They would thus return to Laos "with the warm friendship of the tribes they have visited and with considerable, and undisguised admiration, for what they have seen Indian tribes do with the help of the government. They will be driven by an urge to try similar things with the tribes they serve." For Fryer and his colleagues, the tour had thus provided useful political and economic models that could contribute directly to VDAL and American agencies' counterinsurgency objectives in Laos: stimulating and cultivating development strategies that could better earn the trust and allegiance of rural populations.[33] The different development models observed, emerging out of a political environment in which Indians increasingly asserted their power to determine their own socioeconomic futures, could be selectively repurposed in pursuit of starkly different ends in Laos: curbing political unrest and tying minority populations more closely to the central government's authority.

EXTENDING "INTERTRIBAL" TRAINING TO THAI PARAMILITARIES

With the perceived success of the VDAL tour, the organizers felt even more confident about profitably extending such "intertribal" training to other Southeast Asian contexts in which USAID and CDCS, now operating as Development Consultants International (DevCon), were centrally involved. Toward the end of the Laotians' visit, Clark and Taylor began to develop a similar tour based in selected Native American communities in Arizona and led again by Fryer, to aid American agencies' support of paramilitary operations in northern Thailand. Though the project was ultimately beset by logistical problems on the ground, it nevertheless reflected and boosted American and Thai officials' optimism about the educational value of Indian

[33] Ibid.; Si Fryer to Joseph Z. Taylor, 4 Nov. 1967, box 24, folder 5, Fryer Papers; Joseph Z. Taylor to Si Fryer, 27 Nov. 1967, box 24, folder 5, Fryer Papers.

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development models for enhancing counterinsurgency strategies in Southeast Asian hotspots.

In November 1967, Clark and others in USAID's Washington office initiated plans for a one-month, U.S.-based training program for two Thai paramilitary officers engaged in development and security operations in their country's northern districts. Following a three-week seminar on "civic action" run in Washington by DevCon, the tour would culminate with a week-long, intensive experience "in an Indian reservation atmosphere," modeled on the VDAL program and organized and headed by Fryer.[34] As in the VDAL case, the organizers and the participating Thai officers envisioned the tour experience contributing directly to ongoing American and Thai development and counterinsurgency strategies among rural populations in Thailand's northern borderlands.

Since the early 1950s, overt and covert American assistance to Thailand had played an important role in the U.S. government's anti-communist strategies in Southeast Asia. Supporting the Thai government's building of roads, railways, and airports and training police and paramilitary units in northern districts for secret deployment against the Pathet Lao in neighboring Laos worked hand-in-hand with strengthening Thailand's security as an ally and buffer against looming threats of Chinese and North Vietnamese expansion. An increasingly prominent recipient of American technical assistance in this equation was the Thai Border Patrol Police (BPP), responsible for securing border areas against foreign and communist infiltration and for the paramilitary training of village units. In the late 1950s and early 1960s, the BPP also initiated, with direct CIA and USAID assistance, a number of "civic action" programs among hill tribe populations in border regions of the north and northeast, such as establishing schools, medical clinics, and community development centers. These programs were employed as surveillance and intelligence-gathering mechanisms in politically-insecure highland districts.[35]

In the mid-1960s, with the sharp rise of Thai communist unrest in the northeast amidst the intensification of the Vietnam conflict, American support to the BPP accelerated. To coordinate this wider counterinsurgency initiative, USAID again contracted Taylor's DevCon. A fleet of DevCon advisors were soon advising BPP officers in an expanding range of civic action efforts. These included training highland populations in agriculture and animal husbandry at growing numbers of state-sponsored hill tribe development centers and developing local handicrafts markets to provide

[34] Ibid.; Joseph Z. Taylor to Si Fryer, 2 Nov. 1967, box 24, folder 5, Fryer Papers.

[35] Kislenko, "Bamboo in the Shadows"; Jeremy Kuzmarov, *Modernizing Repression: Police Training and Nation-Building in the American Century* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2012), 109–10; Sinae Hyun, "Indigenizing the Cold War: Nation-Building by the Border Patrol Police of Thailand, 1945–1980," (PhD diss., University of Wisconsin-Madison, 2014).

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incentives for women from Yao, Lahu, and other communities to move away from opium poppy cultivation. Underlying these activities were some key objectives: to solidify the Thai government's knowledge of and control over these remote areas and to secure the allegiance of people living there.[36]

In late 1967, with these goals in mind, Taylor and Clark began organizing the U.S. training program for two Thai BPP officers. The men chosen were Colonel Taweep Dumrongsat, chief commander of the BPP's entire civic action effort, and Major Uphai, a BPP deputy commander in the north central police district along the Thai-Burma border. As with the VDAL tour, Taylor and Clark agreed that the program should culminate in a comparative exploration of Native American cases in the Southwest. In November, as the Laotians' visit was finishing up, Taylor approached Fryer about his ideas for developing and leading this new BPP tour and laid out the strategic value of immersing Taweep and Uphai in Native American contexts. By observing BIA and tribal government programs in such fields as agriculture, social services, and the arts, Taylor explained, the Thai visitors could gain important comparative insights into ways of using rural community development to solidify the Thai government's ties to remote northern hill tribes. "What AID is hoping to accomplish," he stressed, "is some first-hand observation of a central government program designed to establish a meaningful relationship with a tribal minority while encouraging activities in themselves conducive to raising tribal living standards."[37]

In response, Fryer suggested an itinerary focused on the reservation he was most familiar with, the Navajo, which he felt could best represent a variety of robust programs relevant to the BPP officers. In consultation with the director of the Navajo Public Services Division, Fryer proposed to Taylor that the Thais visit a Navajo Police orientation course, the Navajo Tribal Museum, the Navajo Arts and Crafts Guild, and several other program offices. Taylor was delighted and told Fryer that with Taweep and Uphai's intimate involvement in Thai "tribal programs … I am sure they will benefit from an exposure to the Navajos."[38]

[36] Thomas Lobe and David Morrell, "Thailand's Border Patrol Police: Paramilitary Political Power," in Louis A. Zurcher and Gwyn Harries-Jenkins, eds., *Supplementary Military Forces: Reserves, Militias, Auxiliaries* (Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, 1978), 153–78; Hyun, "Indigenizing the Cold War," 230–42; Raymond I. Coffey, *Thailand: Public Safety/Border Patrol Police Remote Area Security Development. An Approach to Counterinsurgency by the Border Patrol Police* (Bangkok: U.S. Operations Mission, 1971), appendices 7 and 8; Kuzmarov, *Modernizing Repression*, 113–14; Joseph Z. Taylor to Si Fryer, 2 Nov. 1967, and enclosure, 6 Mar. 1967, Pol. Col. Taweep Dumrongsat, Chief G-5, BPP GHQ, "Hill Tribe and Remote Area Security Development: Border Patrol Police," box 24, folder 5, Fryer Papers.

[37] Joseph Z. Taylor to Si Fryer, 2 and 27 Nov. 1967, box 24, folder 5, Fryer Papers.

[38] Ibid.; Wilbur W. Dixon, Public Services Division, Navajo Tribe, to Si Fryer, 6 Dec. 1967, box 24, folder 5, Fryer Papers; Joseph Z. Taylor to Si Fryer, 15 Dec. 1967, box 24, folder 5, Fryer Papers.

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Much to everyone's chagrin, most of these plans were ultimately confounded by an unexpected adversary: the weather. At the time of the tour, heavy snow and ice pummeled much of northern Arizona, including the Navajo Reservation, closing many roads and forcing Fryer to improvise with on-the-fly excursions to more accessible locations in the southern half of the state. Taweep and Uphai were only able to briefly visit agricultural and other sites on the Papago (Tohono O'Odham) Reservation, learn about some U.S.-Mexican border issues, and see some regional tourist sites (from Las Vegas to the Hoover Dam). Little of the intended itinerary came to fruition.

Despite this setback, the BPP officers seem to have greatly enjoyed their experiences and were keen to learn much more.[39] As will be seen, such positive responses eventually helped lay the groundwork for DevCon to pursue further BPP-related training in Native American communities. More immediately, the encouraging feedback from this latest "intertribal" exchange, combined with the momentum of the previous VDAL tour, heightened Clark, Fryer, and Taylor's interests in pursuing additional ways for Native American connections to support DevCon's counterinsurgency work in Laos and Thailand.

MOBILIZING "TRIBE-TO-TRIBE" ASSISTANCE

Besides the observations and insights these "intertribal" tours had provided the Laotian and Thai visitors, an additional idea emerged that excited the program's organizers: deploying selected Native American specialists as overseas development agents themselves. This was originally suggested by some of the Indian hosts of the VDAL entourage as a way to highlight the significance of Indian experience and transnational tribal affinities within the global context of decolonization. The model soon drew further support from an incipient organization of prominent Indian business leaders and administrators devoted to pan-tribal development. At the same time, Fryer, Clark, and Taylor jumped at the concept, as did some Laotian officials tied to VDAL and even a former CIA expert in Southeast Asian "unconventional warfare," though for rather different reasons. While their support of the tribe-to-tribe model and the notions of intertribal "brotherhood" upon which it was based in some ways dovetailed with that of Indian leaders, the initiative appealed to them primarily for its potential to provide unique inroads for American counterinsurgency objectives among "tribal" peoples in Southeast Asia, and even beyond.

During the VDAL tour, some of the participating Indian leaders had not only responded positively to hosting their Southeast Asian visitors but also

[39] Joseph Z. Taylor to Si Fryer, 15 Dec. 1967, and 8 Jan. 1968, box 24, folder 5, Fryer Papers; Fryer to Taylor, 24 Dec. 1967, box 24, folder 5, Fryer Papers.

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expressed special interest in expanding Indian engagement in such transnational, "intertribal" projects. In doing so, they reflected broader sensibilities resonating in many Indian communities at that moment regarding both the affinities between Native Americans and other historically colonized groups around the world and the transnational significance of Indian experiences for rethinking ways of assisting similarly disadvantaged and marginalized populations. As the influential Native American writer and activist Vine Deloria Jr. famously put it at the time: "We have more in common with the Africans and Vietnamese and all the non-Western people than we do with the Anglo-Saxon culture of the United States.… We are a tribal people with tribal sympathies. It's the same *feeling* here as there. An Indian doesn't have to know, or understand, anything about Kenya, or Burma, or Peru, or Vietnam. He *feels* the way they feel." By contrast, American foreign assistance policies in Africa, Asia, and Latin America were stuck "in a box," limited by the same attitudes of dominant "Anglo-Saxon culture" that often inhibited the government's understanding of Indians' problems and potential ways of resolving them. William Hensley, an up-and-coming Inupiaq political leader in Alaska, likewise asserted that, due to their parallel experiences of subordination and discrimination, "there is not much difference between the native people up in Alaska or in Africa.… We have the same problems. We have the same solutions."[40]

One expression of such sentiments, occurring just months before the VDAL tour, was the short-lived project initiated by LaDonna Harris and other Indian activists in Oklahoma to recruit Native American youth to serve overseas in the Peace Corps. While the service training of a cohort of young Indian volunteers could potentially provide long-term benefits to various Indian communities at home, it was also felt that such recruits could more immediately and productively identify with the poverty and inequalities facing recipient communities overseas than could the typical white, middle-class Peace Corps volunteers.[41] In a similar vein, at one point during the VDAL tour, White Mountain Apache chairman Ronnie Lupe questioned aloud the limits of standard American approaches and personnel involved in assisting "underdeveloped" societies in Laos and elsewhere. Considering the evident benefits of the "intertribal" exchanges during the tour, why was it, he directly asked Fryer, that "Indians were not being used in tribal programs abroad." Later, at the end of the Hopi Tribal Council meeting, with Fryer, Clark, and the Laotians in attendance, one councilman likewise asserted: "This ought to be made a two way street by sending some of us over there."[42]

[40] Steiner, *New Indians*, 279, 282–83; Cobb, *Native Activism*, 147, 204.
[41] Goldstein, *Poverty in Common*, 103–6.
[42] Both quotes from Si Fryer, "Laotian Diary," enclosed in Si Fryer to Joseph Z. Taylor, 17 Nov. 1967, box 24, folder 5, Fryer Papers.

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Brief as these suggestions were, Fryer and Clark were nonetheless thrilled by the idea. Capitalizing on "intertribal" affinities and interests by directly engaging Native Americans in foreign assistance work seemed like a uniquely advantageous way to further America's linked projects of tribal development and counterinsurgency in Laos and beyond. So enthused were they that they spent much of the day following the Hopi Tribal Council meeting discussing possibilities for expanding Native American involvement in future overseas initiatives. That evening, Fryer returned to his motel room in Gallup, New Mexico and mapped out their thoughts in a lengthy and highly animated proposal to Taylor at DevCon.[43]

The VDAL tour's success, Fryer explained to Taylor, was not only that the Laotian visitors had observed positive democratic models of government-supported tribal development, but also that they had "felt a rapport with these American tribes obvious even to the insensitive." It was thus crucial to "capture the multiplication value" of these "intertribal" exchanges and rapport in ways that could have "profound meaning if used sensitively as tools of foreign policy." Expanding on the ideas of Lupe and Hopi council members, Fryer thus urged that the U.S. recruit and dispatch a team of "carefully selected" and "skillful Apaches, Hopis and Navajos … as teachers and showers, to Laos." These consultants, working on two-year contracts for VDAL, would include such needed specialists as an "Apache cowboy," a Hopi "handicrafts designer-maker and marketing expert," a Navajo silver crafts teacher, and another Navajo wool-dyer and rug-weaving specialist: "We speak of imprinting the non-military heart of core-America on the minds of the tribal peoples of Laos and elsewhere. That is one of the reasons for bringing such people to this country. I find warmth in imagining how lasting that imprint might be … if an Apache cowboy … were to arrive with full gear and his horses, and spend two years with tribes of that area, as a teacher and a do-er."

Such a strategy of harnessing "intertribal" rapport to "imprint" American values, he added, might potentially enhance overseas assistance beyond Southeast Asia, in the United States' use of development to gain the confidence of tribal populations around the globe: "Most of the people we are trying to reach and win, in the 'Point Four'-type things we do abroad, are tribal, with non-tribal white Americans playing the dominant roles. Indians have been widely used as exhibits but never have they, as the tribesmen of America, been given a part in the directional orientation of foreign policy toward tribal people elsewhere."[44] Fryer would repeat this

[43] Ibid.; Si Fryer to Joseph Z. Taylor, 4 Nov., box 24, folder 5, Fryer Papers; Dale Clark, "Livestock Complex and Development Center for Bolovens Plateau, Laos," n.d., box 2, folder "Clark, Dale, 1968–1974," Edward Geary Lansdale Papers, Hoover Institution Archives, Stanford University (hereafter Lansdale Papers).

[44] Si Fryer to Joseph Z. Taylor, 4 Nov. 1967, box 24, folder 5, Fryer Papers.

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theme in his discussions with Taylor: "Actually, I think we have lost ground, we might otherwise have gained, by not deliberately designing programs that would link tribe to tribe in our effort to win and hold the tribal people of Africa and Southeast Asia."[45] Moreover, Fryer stressed to Taylor, engaging America's own indigenous minorities as overseas development agents would serve as wonderful "publicity" for American democracy at work, in Southeast Asia and across the Cold War world. "We couldn't buy a better press."[46]

Upon reading Fryer and Clark's proposal, Taylor was equally excited by its prospects and began circulating copies of the document "to anyone and everyone I thought might be interested" in his foreign aid and intelligence networks.[47] Taylor's seemingly immediate enthusiasm here becomes more comprehensible when one understands that DevCon and the CIA had already been investing in similarly unconventional counterinsurgency strategies in Laos and Vietnam, deploying overseas development agents from cultures outside the American mainstream. By the time of the 1967 VDAL tour, the CIA and USAID had for several years been facilitating a program known as Operation Brotherhood in different parts of Laos, including the southern panhandle. Originating with the American military engagement in Vietnam in the mid-1950s, Operation Brotherhood was an effort to export to Vietnam, and Laos soon thereafter, community development-as-counterinsurgency tactics previously employed by the CIA and CDCS to suppress communism and rural insurrection in the Philippines, by stationing Filipino "development workers" in targeted Vietnamese and Laotian villages. Publicly advertised as a voluntary effort by Filipino civic organizations to assist their "Asian brothers" through medical care and training and livelihood development projects, the program was ultimately funded and operated by the CIA, who saw the strategy as a valuable mechanism for deeper intelligence gathering and anti-communist ideological persuasion in militarily insecure areas. U.S. officials hoped that this "Asian-to-Asian" approach might more effectively secure the trust of villagers and erode some of the resentment and suspicion often associated with the interventions of American field agents. As Simeon Man has recently analyzed, such "affective labor," "the work of befriending and forging intimacy with the population," was believed critical to the "hearts and minds" counterinsurgency campaign across Southeast Asia.[48]

Thus for Taylor, the proposal to implement a parallel "tribe-to-tribe" "brotherhood" program in the region, sending selected Native American

[45] Si Fryer to Joseph Z. Taylor, 2 Jan. 1968, box 24, folder 5, Fryer Papers.
[46] Si Fryer to Joseph Z. Taylor, 4 Nov. 1967, box 24, folder 5, Fryer Papers.
[47] Joseph Z. Taylor to Si Fryer, 16 Nov. 1967, box 24, folder 5, Fryer Papers.
[48] Simeon Man, *Soldiering through Empire: Race and the Making of the Decolonizing Pacific* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2018), 11, 49–76, 106–8, 122–23; Immerwahr, *Thinking Small*, 122–26; Blaufarb, *Organizing*, 53; USAID, *Termination Report*, 158–59.

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development agents to provide assistance and attempt to forge such strategic intimacies among villagers in southern Laos and elsewhere, had tremendous appeal, for it aligned well with ongoing CIA efforts. Over the following weeks, Taylor repeatedly discussed with Fryer and Clark his strong desire to quickly develop project proposals for converting these ideas into actual plans. To get the ball rolling, he prodded Fryer to compile a preliminary short-list of potential "Indian advisors overseas"—skilled candidates who might best contribute directly to DevCon's "tribal" development and counterinsurgency engagement in Laos and Thailand. Taylor expressed special interest "in candidates who have political savvy," Indians with experience in setting up tribal councils, coordinating between such councils and government bureaus and agencies, and developing projects focused on training local leaders. In other words, he wanted individuals whose skills could facilitate DevCon and USAID's strategic goals of tying ethnic minorities in outlying regions to the programs and institutions of the central Thai and Laotian governments. Taylor also noted the urgent need for expatriate advisors in northern and northeastern Thai districts, where the BPP was actively engaged in handicrafts development programs intended to draw hilltribe communities into regional markets and state institutions and thereby, as one DevCon report put it, make them "resistant to the blandishments of the CT's (Communist-Terrorists)."[49]

In April, Fryer provided a representative roster of Indian tribal leaders and specialists (such as livestock managers and artisans) whom he felt were best qualified for consultancy work in comparable "tribal areas of the Far East." Those listed were all from the Hopi, Navajo, and Apache reservations involved in the VDAL tour and each had deep experience in development programs in their communities. Beyond merely suggesting viable candidates, Fryer had also already gone so far as to ask individuals about their potential interest in overseas assignments, especially several who had initially voiced the need for Indian involvement in international assistance. For example, Emory Sekaquaptewa—an influential Hopi leader, silversmith, and teacher who had discussed the issue with other members of the Hopi Tribal Council during the VDAL tour—responded positively when approached and expressed his potential willingness to work on crafts development in different Southeast Asian communities.[50]

[49] Joseph Z. Taylor to Si Fryer, 16 Nov. 1967, 15 Dec. 1967, 8 and 11 Jan. 1968, 14 Feb. 1968, and 8 Apr. 1968, box 24, folder 5, Fryer Papers; Fryer to Taylor, 2 and 19 Jan. 1968, box 24, folder 5, Fryer Papers; Thomas Luche, "Bordercrafts of Thailand" (Bangkok: U.S. Operations Mission, 1968), cited in Lobe and Morell, "Thailand's Border Patrol Police," 162.

[50] Si Fryer to Joseph Z. Taylor, 15 Apr. 1968, box 24, folder 5, Fryer Papers; Si Fryer, "Laotian Diary," enclosed in Si Fryer to Joseph Z. Taylor, 17 Nov. 1967, box 24, folder 5, Fryer Papers. On Sekaquaptewa, see Margaret Nickelson Wright, *Hopi Silver: The History and Hallmarks of Hopi Silversmithing* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2003), 59–62.

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At the same time, Fryer and Clark further sought to develop Native American support for such "tribe-to-tribe" assistance via a new tribal development organization they had begun working on in late 1967 and early 1968. "Intertribe, Inc." pooled the skills, knowledge, and experience of influential Indian political, business, and development leaders who Clark and Fryer had come to know through their BIA work to offer consultancy services for tribal economic development programs across the country. Although information on Intertribe's formation is thin, a common impulse that seems to have brought its diverse co-organizers together was a shared commitment to Indians taking the initiative in the training and development of Indian communities, reflecting the tenor of much native activism and intertribal organizing nationally at the time.[51] For example, some of the prominent members of Intertribe's executive board included: Francis McKinley, member of the Ute Tribal Council and a significant voice in Ute politics, former chairman of President Johnson's 1965 Task Force on Indian Poverty, Director of the Indian Education Center at Arizona State University, and a long-running advocate for Indian rights and Indian leadership in tribal development programs; Marvin Franklin, former chairman of the Iowa Tribe of Kansas and Nebraska, Director of Cooperative Projects at Phillips Petroleum, and a former officer at other tribal companies who had worked closely with Fryer and others at the BIA on industrial development programs on different reservations; and Pete Homer, former tribal chairman of the Colorado River Indian Tribes in Arizona, with whom Clark had worked particularly closely on development financing projects. When the board first convened in Phoenix in August 1968, Fryer was elected president and Clark was appointed as secretary and treasurer, particularly tasked with exploiting his networks in public and private agencies to explore potential funding sources and possibilities for launching Intertribe's initial projects.[52]

From the outset, Clark and Fryer were particularly eager to steer Intertribe toward projects that involved foreign "intertribal" assistance as well as domestic Indian programs. Early on in the process of recruiting board members Clark had pitched to Taylor at DevCon the idea of Intertribe eventually supporting the assignment of Native American specialists to Southeast Asia, a move that Taylor energetically embraced.[53] And as the Intertribe board began hashing out its mission statement in mid-1968, though the consensus was that the organization would focus primarily on Indian

[51] Si Fryer to Joseph Z. Taylor, 4 and 17 Nov. 1967, box 24, folder 5, Fryer Papers; Clark, "New Partnership," Appendix J: "Minutes-First Meeting," Phoenix, [n.d.] Aug. 1968; Shreve, *Red Power*; Cobb, *Native Activism*.

[52] Dale Clark, memorandum for Intertribe Board of Trustees, 27 Aug. 1968, box 5, folder 18, Fryer Papers; Clark, "New Partnership," Appendix J: "Minutes-First Meeting," Phoenix, [n.d.] Aug. 1968; Clark, "Livestock Complex"; Cobb, *Native Activism*, 30–31, 90, 113.

[53] Joseph Z. Taylor to Si Fryer, 27 Nov. and 15 Dec. 1967, box 24, folder 5, Fryer Papers.

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development at home, Clark and Fryer continued to suggest that, in view of the momentum of the recent "intertribal" tours, some of Intertribe's initiatives "might involve American Indians in projects of international character." The extent to which the counterinsurgency goals of such Southeast Asian projects were openly acknowledged among board members remains unclear from the records, however. Over the next several months, Clark continued to work on developing "suitable overseas projects" and eventually circulated to the board an Intertribe funding proposal he was preparing to submit to the Commerce Department. It highlighted such objectives as promoting cooperative organizations "among disadvantaged peoples at home and abroad" and "the enrichment of the American Indian…. by creating domestic and foreign involvement," given the "numerous opportunities for the American Indian, both locally and abroad."[54]

While Clark and Fryer were busy setting up Intertribe and other possibilities for overseas "tribe-to-tribe" projects, interest in such ideas also grew among some of the foreign participants of the recent "intertribal" tours, especially members of VDAL. In the months following their visit to Arizona in late 1967, when the notion of exporting Native American development advisors was first raised, Sinlap Sengsay and his colleagues continued to express their strong desire to follow up on the idea, both in a letter to Fryer and in direct appeals to Phasouk Somli, the Lao general in charge of VDAL's overall operations. As the general subsequently explained in a letter to Fryer: "These young men returned to Laos with a very favorable impression of American Indians and told me of the friendships formed and of the things they saw and learned. They have inquired of me, as they have apparently of you, of the possibility of developing a tribe to tribe association by which the skills of selected American Indian tribes might be joined with those of the tribal people of Laos in a program of economic development beneficial to both people."[55]

In the fall of 1968 Phasouk had the opportunity to pursue such matters in greater depth while visiting Washington to discuss military and aid matters with American officials. Eager to secure additional resources for VDAL at a time of dwindling USAID support, he participated in a series of wide-ranging brainstorming sessions with Fryer, Clark, and Taylor on strategies for expanding Native American participation in VDAL's development programs, from contracting Indian advisors for specific projects to the potential role of

[54] Clark, "New Partnership," Appendix J: "Minutes-First Meeting," Phoenix, [n.d.] Aug. 1968; Dale Clark, memorandum for Intertribe Board of Trustees, 27 Aug. 1968, box 5, folder 18, Fryer Papers; Dale Clark, "A Proposal for the Funding of Intertribe," to the Office of Minority Business Enterprise, U.S. Department of Commerce, n.d., box 5, folder 18, Fryer Papers.

[55] Sinlap Sengsay, Dod Phianoulaklaounemouang, and Vene Sivilay, VDAL, to Si Fryer, 18 Dec. 1967, box 24, folder 5, Fryer Papers; Phasouk Somli to Si Fryer, 16 Oct. 1968, box 2, folder "Clark, Dale, 1968–1974," Lansdale Papers.

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Intertribe in sponsoring "tribe-to-tribe" collaboration. He also held an additional conference with the BIA's Indian Arts and Crafts Board chairman to consider avenues for promoting handicrafts development in Laos. Once back home, Phasouk followed up on these discussions with an additional appeal to Fryer—which Fryer immediately shared with Clark—that emphasized the unique inroads Native Americans' involvement as "intertribal" overseas advisors might provide for VDAL:

> I was particularly impressed with your briefing on the objectives and program concepts of Intertribe. I am very interested in the possibility of the use of American tribal people such as Apache cattlemen, Navajo weavers, or Hopi potterers [*sic*] as advisors and teachers to Laotian tribal groups. American Indians living in and among Laotian villagers and teaching their crafts within the pattern of the tribal culture could add a new dimension to the program undertaken by VDAL.
>
> Accordingly, in furtherance of your general ideas of which I find myself in sympathy, will you now … forward to me a program spelling out in considerable detail how an intertribal project would work.[56]

Reading this eager letter and having seen the intense interest in "tribe-to-tribe" assistance that Phasouk had displayed during their Washington meetings, Clark was inspired to try to build from this momentum. In search of new thoughts about how to turn these long-gestating ideas into reality, Clark sought sage advice from one of the best-known, influential, and colorful "experts" on "tribal" counterinsurgency and intelligence strategies in the region, Edward Lansdale, who was transitioning into retirement from his latest advisory role in the escalating Vietnam War. Over the previous decades Lansdale had led a storied career in fighting communist insurgencies in the Philippines, Vietnam, and other neighboring countries through covert "civic action" programs and other "unconventional warfare" techniques. Given Lansdale's central role in spearheading the initial Operation Brotherhood program, Clark's turning to him for advice represented a return to the "source."[57]

In early October 1968, Clark arranged to meet Lansdale for a lengthy lunch conversation, during which he provided the general with an impassioned overview of his and Fryer's "intertribal" schemes and dreams to date. Lansdale was receptive to all that he heard. "You have the makings of one of the most exciting undertakings of this particular period of history," Lansdale glowed in an extensive follow-up letter. He especially relished the

[56] Relations of the United States, 1964–1968, vol. XXVIII, Laos, doc. 379: Telegram from the Embassy in Laos to the Department of State, Vientiane, 25 Sept. 1968, 1044Z, http://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1964-68v28/d379 (accessed 31 Aug. 2017); Phasouk Somli to Si Fryer, 16 Oct. 1968; and Fryer to Dale Clark, 23 Jan. 1969, both in box 2, folder "Clark, Dale, 1968–1974," Lansdale Papers.

[57] See Immerwahr, *Thinking Small,* 106–10, 125–26, 128–29; Edward Lansdale, *In the Midst of Wars: An American's Mission to Southeast Asia* (New York: Harper and Row, 1972); Cecil B. Currey, *Edward Lansdale: The Unquiet American* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1988); Jonathan Nashel, *Edward Lansdale's Cold War* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2005).

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idea of engaging Native American advisors in highland Laos and Thailand and in the type of community development and "unconventional warfare" approaches he and others had deployed in the Philippines, Vietnam, and elsewhere. As he emphasized to Clark, a comprehensive program of training local villagers in handicrafts, agriculture, and other income-generating activities could serve as an important regional bulwark against communist encroachment.[58]

Building from Clark's enthusiasm, Lansdale envisioned unique opportunities for engaged Native American actors to serve these broader agendas in significant ways. Indian community leaders and businessmen, it seemed, were experiencing a parallel historical "awakening," seeking "to find a place as first-class American citizens, not second-class." From this position, they could therefore empathize and connect more immediately with the comparable needs and concerns of tribal minorities in Southeast Asia than could the typical American bureaucrat or aid volunteer. Lansdale thus saw great potential in capitalizing on the recent tribe-to-tribe activities: the VDAL and Thai officials' Indian tours, the expressed willingness of some Native American entrepreneurs to train fellow "tribesmen" overseas, and the consideration by Intertribe's leaders of getting involved in Southeast Asian development projects. On the latter point, Lansdale even pondered ways in which Intertribe might develop as a regular consultancy business for international projects, asserting a definite "need for a well-thought-out part" for "our Indian tribes" to play in overseas assistance: "Perhaps the US Government could contract with them to handle visitors to Indian reservations, such as the Lao tribesmen who visited the Apaches. Also, they might be a manpower agency, to furnish skilled and experienced persons to visit tribes abroad and act as advisors on developmental projects. Or, they might become participating partners in private enterprises abroad." Such expanded activities might also have a positive ripple effect on broader Native American participation in and support of American overseas initiatives: "If some lively things were started, other tribes might well want to join in with the present tribes…."[59]

With this ringing endorsement from Lansdale, Clark set to work. Over the next several months he received the Intertribe board's approval to move forward with Phasouk's request to assist VDAL with Indian development advisors, sought private investors to fund the operation, and pitched the idea to his higher-ups in USAID's East Asia Bureau. Yet in the end it was all to no avail. The recorded details are murky, but it appears that USAID officials were not receptive to this type of experimental foray at a time of budgetary

[58] Edward Lansdale to Dale Clark, 9 Oct. 1968, box 2, folder "Clark, Dale, 1968–1974," Lansdale Papers.
[59] Ibid.

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constraints and as American counterinsurgency strategies in Laos, amid the intensification of the broader Vietnam theater, moved away from rural development to a sharper focus on paramilitary training for indigenous groups. Striking out in securing sufficient support, Clark and the rest of Intertribe shifted their energies instead to more immediately viable domestic initiatives related to Indian development.[60]

Although the model of "tribe-to-tribe" foreign assistance was never implemented, it had attracted significant interest over the many preceding months from a peculiar collection of diversely situated actors. With varied intentions, this unlikely set of bedfellows found some common cause in championing the special capacity of Native American advisors to facilitate positive developmental change among "tribal" peoples overseas. While originally suggested by certain Native American hosts of the Laotian and Thai tours, with confidence in the transnational value of Indian experience and in the spirit of trans-tribal understanding, and then endorsed by Indian leaders in the fledgling Intertribe organization, the idea gained currency, for very different ends, among various actors involved in American military and development interventions in Southeast Asia, from Clark, Fryer, Taylor, and Lansdale to General Phasouk and VDAL representatives. The productive potential of tribe-to-tribe aid was not only that it might enhance rural livelihoods and community development in Laos and beyond more effectively than did conventional approaches, but also that such benefits, and the strategic use of intertribal "brotherhood," might directly further counterinsurgency objectives in unique ways.

ANOTHER THAI TRAINING PROGRAM IN THE INDIAN SOUTHWEST

Although the plan of sending Indian advisors to Southeast Asia never got off the ground, there was still sustained interest among certain actors in DevCon and USAID in continuing to utilize Native American examples in Southeast Asian development and counterinsurgency training strategies. By the early 1970s, enthusiasm for "intertribal" exchange projects simmered among Taylor and others in DevCon as they wrestled with an increasingly problematic political and military situation in northern Thailand. In 1971, this led Taylor and his staff to initiate another training program, this time for a high-ranking Thai BPP officer, modeled on the previous Lao and Thai tours and sited again in Native American locations in the Southwest. While this training exercise was, again, designed to strategically draw from Native American development models and shared notions of intertribal

[60] Joseph Z. Taylor to Si Fryer, 15 Dec. 1967, box 24, folder 5, Fryer Papers; Dale Clark to Donald Goodwin, USAID, 21 Feb. 1973, box 2, folder "Clark, Dale, 1968–1974," Lansdale Papers; Clark, "New Partnership," 17.

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understanding, its realization exposed some conflicting local Indian perspectives on such premises.

Since the previous U.S. visit of Taweep and Uphai, DevCon counterinsurgency efforts had expanded dramatically in northern Thailand in response to mounting security challenges. Assistance to the BPP accelerated in a wide range of activities—organizing volunteer village defense and other paramilitary units, training highland minority volunteers in agriculture, animal husbandry and medicine, and establishing new village-level schools, development centers, and handicraft markets. By 1971, one of the more problematic and insecure districts for the BPP to control was the sector along the northeastern border with Laos, under the command of Police Major General Manas Khantatatbumroong. He had risen to prominence in BPP civic action programs over the previous decade, eventually moving to Chiang Mai in the late 1960s from which, for the next few years, he directly planned and implemented DevCon-funded projects in the northern region. In mid-1971, with American officials' concerned about the "full-blown insurgency" erupting in the districts under Manas' watch, DevCon, now officially reincorporated as Joseph Z. Taylor and Associates, began arranging for Manas to travel to the United States for specialized training in relevant counterinsurgency, border patrol, and rural development strategies.[61]

Coordinating this training program for Taylor was the organization's vice president, Thomas Luche, who had worked closely with Manas on various BPP initiatives in the north.[62] Besides enrolling Manas in specialized military courses at U.S. Army bases in the fall of 1971, Luche also wanted to expose him to more practical, hands-on "tribal" development experiences that could be directly applicable to his BPP work in Thailand. In their discussions of possible study sites, Taylor and Luche agreed that an excursion to the American Southwest would do the trick. There, Luche suggested, Manas could not only briefly observe how the U.S. dealt with its own issues of border control along the boundary with Mexico, but further—following the lead of the previous VDAL and BPP "intertribal" tours—examine in more detail how the American government productively encouraged the development and secured the loyalty of its own tribal populations. Manas responded enthusiastically to the idea, writing that he was "very interested" in learning from "the Indian affair" and how it might inform the BPP's civic action and counterinsurgency work in northern Thailand, particularly its

[61] Lobe and Morrell, "Thailand's Border Patrol Police," 162–64; Hyun, "Indigenizing the Cold War," 89–90, 209–60; Sinae Hyun, "Building a Human Border: The Thai Border Patrol Police School Project in the Post-Cold War Era," *Journal of Social Issues in Southeast Asia* 29, 2 (2014): 332–63; Thomas Luche to Si Fryer, 17 Dec. 1971, box 24, folder 5, Fryer Papers.

[62] "RASD Monthly Report for October 1967: Chiengmai," 2 Nov. 1967, box 24, folder 5, Fryer Papers.

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handicraft-development projects in local villages and its efforts to recruit loyal volunteers for "border security" militias.[63]

To handle the details of this new part of Manas' itinerary, Luche turned to the veteran of the previous "intertribal" tours, Fryer, to once again plan and lead the training project and to serve its combined economic, political, and military ends.[64] Enjoying an easy retirement on Jekyll Island, Georgia at the time, Fryer was happy to oblige. He quickly composed a program for Manas that included visits to numerous Indian communities and projects in Arizona and New Mexico. Through this exposure, Fryer assured Luche, Manas would learn, "that American[s] too have their tribal problems; that they have special problems relating to indigenous people of varying languages, customs and arts[;] that our official representative[s] working on socioeconomic problems of Thailand are not without experience comparable to those of his government in administering to the tribal people of Thailand."[65]

Manas' tour with Fryer began on 3 January 1972, and for roughly the next two weeks they traveled an impressive 1,800 miles across disparate parts of Arizona and New Mexico. The trip's first component was a two-day visit to U.S. Border Patrol operations in southern Arizona, where Manas observed activities comparable to the BPP's work in northern Thailand. The rest of his training was devoted entirely to engaging Indian issues through a variety of visits: from learning about resource use and social services on the Papago (Tohono O'Odham) and Pima (Akimel O'Oodhom) reservations, to observing craftsmen and police work among the Navajo, to exploring cooperative self-help programs in horticulture, farming, handicrafts, and tourism among a range of Pueblo Indian communities in New Mexico. It was among the Hopi in northeastern Arizona, Fryer later reported, that Manas most "came alive" in discussions with tribal government leaders, and where he seemed to feel "a closer affinity … than with any of the other Indian tribal groups we visited.… I think he saw understandable similarities between the life style of the Hopi and those of the hill tribes of his own border region."[66] At the same time, Fryer and Manas' conversations during the tour revealed some of their shared perspectives on the proper model of relations between tribal minorities and central state governments and on the political limits intended for tribal communities through government-supported "self-help" programs. For instance, while both admired the state-assisted economic activities and tribal initiatives on the Navajo reservation,

[63] Manas to Thomas Luche, 14 and 21 Nov. 1971, enclosed with Luche to Si Fryer, 17 Dec. 1971, box 24, folder 5, Fryer Papers.

[64] Thomas Luche to Si Fryer, 17 Dec. 1971, box 24, folder 5, Fryer Papers.

[65] Si Fryer, "Tentative Itinerary, Jan 3–14/'72, for General Manas of Thailand," n.d., box 24, folder 5, Fryer Papers.

[66] Si Fryer to Joseph Z. Taylor, 22 Jan. 1972, box 24, folder 5, Fryer Papers.

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the fact that Navajo "insist on designating themselves a 'Nation,'" Fryer reported, "seemed to amuse the Major immensely, as it always has me."[67]

More direct tensions between Manas' and Fryer's intentions for the tour and the perspectives of certain Indian groups flared during their visit to Zuni Pueblo. Fryer had held particularly "high expectations" that Manas would observe "things useful in Thailand" at the pueblo, including local jewelry-making operations that might connect with the BPP's counterinsurgency-related work in handicrafts development. All began smoothly enough when the Zuni Governor Robert Lewis greeted them warmly and provided a personal guide and interpreter for their visit. But the conversation shifted abruptly when Fryer suggested that they tour some of the community's family-run silversmith cooperatives. The guide sharply clarified that "he would be embarrassed to take us to homes where the family coops were at work making jewelry; … they would 'not want their secrets taken.'" After following the guide's lead and instead visiting a silver studio where, he assured Fryer and Manas, they would be much more welcome, the situation with local artisans quickly deteriorated. As Fryer recounted: "I had no sooner introduced Major Manas,… than we were given the full treatment of 'Japanese exploitation of our secrets of jewelry making'…. 'We know the Major is one of our good friends from S.E. Asia but it seems even our friends from that part of the world are getting our secrets.'"[68] At this time, a growing tourist demand for southwestern Indian arts and crafts was indeed increasingly creating market opportunities for fake foreign replicas, particularly from different Asian manufacturers, in ways that were undercutting many local artisans.[69] While Fryer and Manas had intended to easily glean from Zuni practitioners some transferable models for Thai village development, in the spirit of some presumed bonds of "intertribal" cooperation, they discovered the hard way that some communities viewed the meaning of such transnational modeling in contrasting ways—as a potential threat to their livelihoods.

Despite these unexpected tensions at Zuni Pueblo, Fryer, Manas, and their associates at DevCon still viewed the tour as a relative success overall.[70] Even if "intertribal" connections had not been fostered in every instance and obstacles existed for transposing certain Native American economic activities

[67] Ibid.

[68] Ibid.

[69] William J. Hapiuk, "Of Kitsch and Kachinas: A Critical Analysis of the Indian Arts and Crafts Act of 1990," *Stanford Law Review* 53, 4 (2001): 1009–75; Jon Keith Parsley, "Regulation of Counterfeit Indian Arts and Crafts: An Analysis of the Indian Arts and Crafts Act of 1990," *American Indian Law Review* 18, 2 (1993): 487–514.

[70] Si Fryer to Joseph Z. Taylor, 22 Jan. 1972, box 24, folder 5, Fryer Papers. In recent interviews with BPP researcher Sinae Hyun, Manas still favorably recalled his 1972 visit to Native American communities. Hyun e-mail to author, 2 Jan. 2016.

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to northeastern Thailand, Manas' training, much like the previous VDAL and BPP tours, had still accomplished some of the organizers' overarching goals. They had all showcased examples of Indian economic achievement and the U.S. government's successful encouragement of "self-help" development among its own tribal minorities, models that could hopefully inspire creative counterinsurgency approaches among what were seen to be comparable communities in rural Southeast Asia.

CONCLUSION

Following Manas' trip, some of the key "intertribal" organizers continued to pursue similar avenues for utilizing Indian development models, though with limited tangible results. Dale Clark, for example, was particularly active in this regard over the next few years. After returning to his position at USAID from a brief hiatus working on Indian OEO programs in Utah, he campaigned among a wide variety of groups—congressmen, religious organizations, Native American businesses and associations, and colleagues at USAID—for the expanded use of Native American experience and enterprise to support U.S. development and military agendas in different parts of Southeast Asia. Although none of Clark's schemes were ever implemented, his efforts and the interest of several others in his government and private sector networks evinced their continuing optimism about the potential to draw from Indian models and "intertribal" understandings to serve overseas agendas.[71]

As the above discussion has shown, a wide and curious variety of actors ended up sharing an attraction to such potential in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Facilitating this dynamic were the flexible and multivalent meanings associated with such concepts as Indian achievement and initiative, tribal development, and "intertribal" affinities during this dynamic period of Native American socioeconomic change. Clark, Fryer, and Taylor's "intertribal" initiatives drew the support, cooperation, and interest of some surprising and prominent bedfellows—from General Phasouk to Hopi and Apache tribal leaders, from General Lansdale to the Indian board members of "Intertribe, Inc."—because they all shared a sense, imbued with diverse meanings and intentions, that Native Americans and their economic accomplishments could offer unique "intertribal" pathways for achieving desired developmental changes among Southeast Asian villagers. The organizers of these "intertribal" initiatives attempted to capitalize on this shared vision as well as on Indian communities' development activities and programs—which had often evolved out of intense political negotiations with governmental

[71] Clark, "New Partnership," and various materials on these efforts in box 2, folder "Clark, Dale," Lansdale Papers.

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agencies over native peoples' rights to determine their own futures—by promoting instead strategically selective and more politically benign models of tribal development and government-tribe relations that might directly further counterinsurgency agendas in Laos and Thailand. As the case of Manas's visit to Zuni Pueblo suggests, though, tensions could also erupt over the fundamental meaning and stakes of "intertribal" sharing, as some local communities perceived such transnational modeling for the benefit of distant foreigners' development as economically threatening.

The "intertribal" schemes traced in this article were admittedly small-scale and unevenly realized, and they were never a central thrust of U.S. policy in Southeast Asia. Yet, when viewed together, these stories illuminate some of the ways in which diversely situated international actors commonly saw the affairs of Native Americans and the dynamics of American foreign relations, too often segregated in scholarly writing, as interconnected and mutually relevant. While Native American leaders and communities directly participated in important conversations and activities surrounding U.S. "tribal development" initiatives in the region, a host of American and foreign government actors engaged with and perceived the immediate significance of a variety of Indian contexts. Thus, to build upon the ideas of Philip Deloria, these episodes suggest the importance of investigating the historical meaning of Indian experiences in "unexpected places"—in this case, in the construction of American overseas development and counterinsurgency initiatives. Such exploration can further complicate and expand our understandings of where, when, and how Native Americans' experiences have resonated both at home and abroad.[72]

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[72] Philip J. Deloria, *Indians in Unexpected Places* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2004).

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Abstract: This article bridges the traditionally segregated fields of Native American history and the history of American foreign relations by investigating a series of activities in the late 1960s and early 1970s that interconnected Native American development and American counterinsurgency agendas in the unstable political landscapes of Southeast Asia. A small coterie of American bureaucrats, with careers spanning foreign assistance and Native American development work, saw great potential in selectively showcasing Indian economic "success stories" to serve "hilltribe" development and counterinsurgency programs in Laos and Thailand sponsored by the U.S. Agency for International Development and the Central Intelligence Agency. One result was a series of "intertribal" development tours arranged for Laotian and Thai representatives in multiple Native American communities in Arizona and New Mexico. Moreover, sharing a sense that Native Americans could offer unique advantages as direct development agents among other "tribes" overseas, the tours' organizers garnered support from a diverse range of actors—CIA and USAID officials, Laotian and Thai military officers, and Indian political and business leaders—for launching a "tribe-to-tribe" foreign assistance program. Viewed together, these transnational schemes and discussions reveal how the flexible and multivalent meanings of key development concepts at the time—such as Indian achievement, tribal initiative, and "intertribal" understanding—both facilitated and constrained official designs to employ Native American models to support political and military agendas in the "shadow" theaters of the escalating Vietnam conflict.

Key Words: Native Americans, development, counterinsurgency, Southeast Asia, Laos, Thailand, Cold War, USAID, CIA, BIA

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