



Lansdale, Magsaysay, America, and the Philippines A Case Study of Limited Intervention Counterinsurgency (Defense)

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Historians tend to agree that Ramon Magsaysay's leadership and his relationship with Edward Lansdale are two of the most important features of the Philippine governments campaign against the Huks from 1946-1954. Yet the nuances of his leadership and the nature of their relationship deserve greater investigation. This thesis seeks to further illuminate Magsaysay and Lansdale's relationship by focusing on the role of empathy and sociocultural understanding, in defeating the Huks and restoring the Philippine government's legitimacy. US policy in the Philippines at the time, bolstered regimes riddled with corruption, graft, and nepotism, reinforcing poor governance, and resulting in a loss of government legitimacy. This energized the Huk movement until they were on the verge of toppling the government. A change in US policy coincided with the emergence of Magsaysay and Lansdale. They reversed Huk momentum, rejuvenated the demoralized and oppressive armed forces, and restored the Philippine government's legitimacy, all in less than four years. Their shared, genuine empathy for the Filipino people fostered deep sociocultural understanding. Their combined capabilities and resources then translated empathy and sociocultural understanding into concrete measures to combat the Huks and rebuild popular support for the government.



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