

Expert Says Military Aims at Wrong Foe

WASHINGTON — (UPI) — A U.S. expert on guerrilla warfare believes America's armed forces may be placing too little emphasis on preparing men for unconventional war, and as a result "history is waiting to play a deadly joke on us."

Maj. Gen. Edward G. Lansdale, who retired from the Air Force in 1963 after a 20-year career oriented toward unconventional war techniques, says the nation's war colleges are preparing professional soldiers to expect an opponent not too different from themselves.

Lansdale disagrees.

Cites Ulster

"I believe that this opposite number (to the American military man) will be a revolutionary," he said in

the current issue of Air Force University Review. "I don't want him to be a surprise to us.

"We live in a revolutionary era. My hunch is that history is waiting to play a deadly joke on us."

Lansdale said this is precisely what is happening now to recent graduates of the Imperial Defence College in London, who find themselves facing savage revolutionary warfare in Northern Ireland, and to Pakistani officers "who undoubtedly wish now they had learned better ways of coping with the Mukti Bahini guerrillas (in Bangladesh)."

Political Warfare

It also happened to the United States in Vietnam, he said.

Some Americans never learned to counter — much less use for themselves — the Communist technique of "exploiting internal contradictions in the enemy camp" to win the populace. And the antiwar ferment in the United States, he said, should have come as no surprise since France had experienced "similar political warfare" a decade earlier.

Lansdale, who was the U.S. military representative in the Philippines during the defeat of the Huk rebellion and was a controversial U.S. adviser in Vietnam during the early 1960s, painted a detailed picture of the new — and often urban — revolutionary.

"Our future opponent, the hard-core revolutionary, right now is probably getting his higher schooling in his style warfare by carrying out illegal action on the very battleground where we will come up against him later," he said.

A Realistic School

"For he probably has killed at least one person, face to face; has blown up others with plastic or dynamite, and perhaps has done his share of kidnaping, arson, torture and bank robbery.

"The point is that he is getting ready in a hard, realistic school, learning rules of combat vastly different from those that are being taught in our war colleges. He has many recent examples to assure him the rules he is learning will succeed over the rules that our professionals are learning."