Cold War Mind Games – The Memory Hole

The Art of Manipulating Wars
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Some would call it sleeping on the job. That is what Leon Livingston believed his employee was doing, as he peered into Edward Lansdale's office on the top floor of the Mills Building in San Francisco. Livingston had increased Lansdale's salary to bring him over to his advertising firm and now he found him leaning back in his chair, eyes closed, with his feet up on a table and his legs crossed. "You aren't getting paid for sleeping here," Livingston chastised him. Lansdale was unperturbed: "Leon, you're

disturbing my thoughts. I'm thinking. Get out!" This was not the first time Lansdale had been impolite, but Livingston found it difficult to discipline him since he was one of the company's highest achievers.

Livingston later believed that Lansdale had been a great "original thinker," but he resented not being informed of his ideas in advance. At a client meeting with Levi Strauss' board of directors, Livingston presented an advertising plan that involved continuing to employ billboards. Lansdale interrupted his boss impertinently: "No. Don't do that. Put your money into salespeople to get in and hit all the major eastern outlets and get them lined up before you launch any major advertising campaigns." Livingston was in shock and foresaw thousands of dollars in commissions disappearing if the client took this idea seriously. The directors of Levi Strauss liked the idea and agreed to try it out. Walking back to the office, Livingston was fuming, telling Lansdale: "You're a fool for the way you talked back there." Lansdale responded: "No. That was honest advice. I believe what I told them." Livingston could not stand being next to Lansdale any longer; he crossed the street and returned to the office alone. Livingston's attitude was mollified somewhat when Levi Strauss called to inform him that they would be implementing both his and Lansdale's suggestions.

Raised in Detroit and Los Angeles, Lansdale's original career aspiration was to become a journalist. He had moved across the country to New York City, only to find his newspaper job prospects vanish due to the Great Depression. Desperate for work, he took a tedious clerical job through a family connection at a railroad classification office. Though he was eventually promoted, he found the work dull and uninspiring. In the evenings, he tried his hand at writing plays and drawing cartoons for humor magazines, but these too brought no success. His efforts to find meaning in freelance creativity were further frustrated by the Depression's unforgiving job market. During this time, he also joined the Army Reserve, but quickly became disillusioned by its outdated practices and resistance to modernization. Lansdale remained frustrated with his job and the stagnation of their life in the city. When his brother Phil offered him a job in California in advertising, Lansdale persuaded his wife Helen to make the move. Though the pay was lower, he believed the opportunity held more promise.

Following the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, Lansdale thought that it was time for him and all Americans to fight for his country; this was, in his view, "an iron-clad duty, not to be questioned." Livingston tried to question it nonetheless. "What's wrong?" Livingston asked when Lansdale explained his plan to reactivate his Army commission. "If you want to fight someplace, go join the Russian army. They have better-looking uniforms." Lansdale thought this joke was in bad taste and said so, reiterating that he had to defend the country. "You're crazy!" Livingston shouted, "and you're also fired!" In his application to the Army, Lansdale wrote of his five years in advertising, the tactics from which he would end up employing in realms far beyond anything he could have imagined at the time. The advertising agency McCann Erickson took him on after a surprising endorsement from Livingston, who had come to regret his decision: "Grab that guy," he told the firm, "and don't let him get away."

Another Wild Man

In 1942, Lansdale was hired by the Office of Strategic Services (OSS), an organization set up for intelligence-gathering during World War II to work behind enemy lines. There he met and became friends with William Henry Vanderbilt III, a member of the wealthy and prominent American family, who had recently been the governor of Rhode Island. On his first day at OSS headquarters in Washington, DC, Lansdale decided to slip past security instead of reporting to an executive officer as instructed. He used "a little misdirection" to distract the guards and flashed them an item that could pass for an identification badge. He walked into an office and was met by an Army Colonel, who was unimpressed: "You think you're very tricky and clever, don't you?" Lansdale replied: "No, sir. It was just sort of fun to see what I could get away with. Suppose I was a German." The Colonel explained that he was busy going through

cabinets of personnel files and was then told by a secretary there was a phone call for him in another room.

Taking this opportunity, Lansdale walked up to the cabinets, found the drawer marked "L" and began looking for his name. He pulled out his file and began skimming the contents just as the Colonel returned and took the file out of his hand. "That's the fastest time I've seen anybody do that. You were moving even before I left the room." Lansdale tried to hide his embarrassment at being caught: "Let me look at my file," he urged the Colonel. "I want to see what you guys have in there about me."

As part of his duties, Lansdale helped the OSS set up a training program. After weeks spent in the classroom, recruits would be sent out in the field for hands-on learning. In the New York subway system, they were instructed to locate and kill a German agent who was on the loose. They were handed a knife to accomplish the task. The supervisors would keep track of each trainee on his mission, watch his movements, and then inform him at the last minute that the exercise had been a ruse. Those who showed dedication to the assignment would pass that section of the course. One trainee refused to believe that the assignment was fake and continued looking for the supposed German agent, believing that his superiors calling off the assignment was in itself part of the test. "They had to kick him out of the OSS," Lansdale recalled. "He was a real wild man."

Since Lansdale was also renowned for making "wild moves" himself such as attempting to evade security protocols on his first day, he was assigned the task of testing other facilities. While undertaking this work, his superiors decided to play a dangerous prank on him. They phoned a Navy ordnance depot located in Oakland, informing the staff there that a "German secret agent" was in the area. Lansdale happened to already be on site and when he was caught by security, he told them to phone his home office. "No, there's no Lansdale here," came the reply. "We've *never* had anyone here by that name." Lansdale was left in a precarious position, with "loaded rifles pointed at my guts, their fingers on the triggers," he remembered. He managed to convince his captors to allow him access to a telephone and got in touch with his friend Captain Vanderbilt. "Look," he said with urgency. "Get me again some other time but get me out of this now!" Vanderbilt complied with the request.

Degushi

Following the war in May 1946, Lansdale was assigned to survey the conditions of the Ryukyu Islands of Japan, where the U.S. had established a military government. Lansdale was shocked by the living conditions he witnessed on the island of Amami Ōshima: "The people were very badly…undernourished…eating grass and making soup out of grass. It was all they had." He identified the source of the troubles as Kinoje Degushi, the official in charge of distributing rice from the Japanese government, who had instead sold the food on the black market for his own profit. Lansdale confiscated all of the food he could find for distribution to the inhabitants and organized a public meeting to decide Degushi's fate. Locals crammed into a schoolhouse that acted as a courthouse on this occasion. Degushi sat at a teacher's desk while Lansdale spoke to the crowd through his interpreter, Matsue Yagawa. Lansdale first wanted to know from Degushi what his orders had been and why food had been found undistributed. "He wasn't very good at doing his job," Lansdale posited.

During the interrogation, Yagawa approached Lansdale and whispered in his ear: "He's got a revolver in there," he warned, "and he's looking at it and…trying…to get it." Degushi had slowly opened a drawer in the schoolhouse desk, revealing a gun in Yagawa's line of sight. With a .45-caliber automatic pistol strapped under his armpit, Lansdale was not worried: "Tell him I know he's got a gun in there and I'm waiting for him to get it. Tell him I want him to…take a shot at me so I can kill him right in front of the people." David Greene, a U.S. photographer at the meeting, was disturbed by these developments and

asked if he should "go back and make sure our rowboat is safe?" Lansdale replied in the affirmative. James Clark, from the U.S. Army's Counterintelligence Corps, offered to go help him with this task and they both left the schoolhouse. "Make sure we got a way to get out of here," Lansdale instructed them.

As Yagawa translated Lansdale's message, Degushi suddenly leaped up from the desk and proclaimed: "I don't have a gun! I don't have a gun!" Lansdale arrested him and informed him that they would be taking him to a jail near the port of Naze on the south end of the island. Their safety now secured, Yagawa wondered how fast Lansdale was with his weapon. "I don't know," Lansdale replied. "I've never tried one of these shoulder holsters before." He reached down to pull out his gun but the holster was so tightly wrapped around it that he was unable to remove the pistol. Yagawa was profoundly disillusioned: "Oh, Jeez," he lamented. "I thought you were lightning fast…You'd have been creamed on the spot."

Huks

The same year, the U.S. passed the Bell Trade Act, which granted American businessmen significant economic rights in the newly independent Philippines. Filipino leaders like Sergio Osmeña, who had served as president-in-exile, opposed this act and the Tydings Rehabilitation Act, which strained his relationship with the U.S. and diminished his political standing. In contrast, Manuel Roxas, with American backing and media control, won the 1946 presidential election. Upon assuming office, Roxas quickly aligned with U.S. interests by supporting the Bell Act, signing the Military Bases Agreement, and accepting military aid that effectively allowed the U.S. to shape the Filipino armed forces. Roxas thus emerged as a leader heavily dependent on American support.

Simultaneously, a growing internal threat came from the Hukbalahap (Huks), a communist-led guerrilla group rooted in the peasant class of central Luzon. Originally anti-Japanese fighters during the war, the Huks had seized land, governed their territories, and resisted returning authority to what they saw as a corrupt postwar government. Their refusal to disarm led to renewed conflict. President Roxas's harsh stance—what he called a "mailed fist" policy—forced the Huks back into rebellion. To some even in the U.S. government, the appeal of the Huks was obvious: Douglas MacArthur, Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers, was quoted as saying, "If I worked in those sugar fields I'd probably be a Huk myself."

Lansdale, then working in U.S. military intelligence (G-2), sought a deep understanding of the Huk rebellion. Rather than rely on secondhand reports, he personally ventured into remote areas, observed government military tactics, and even interacted directly with Huk fighters. This unconventional and risky approach allowed Lansdale to grasp the social grievances fueling the rebellion. He believed that firsthand experience and human connection, even with enemies, provided the best insight. After the Huks engaged in confrontations with Filipino soldiers, Lansdale would use maps and take to higher ground to estimate the course of the Huks. He would then travel to their presumed destination and wait for them to arrive. Sitting alone in front of the armed group of Huks, Lansdale would offer them cigarettes, food, or a drink. "They would come up and say, 'Yeah, I'd like a cigarette' instead of shooting me," he recalled. "You don't kill a guy laughing, being nice to you."

During this time, Lansdale met Patrocinio "Pat" Kelly, a Filipina journalist and war widow with unique access to Huk leader Luis Taruc, a former classmate. Through Kelly's help, Lansdale gained even deeper access to rural communities. Their relationship developed both professionally and personally, further embedding Lansdale in the local context. Lansdale became incredibly enamored of Kelly and wrote her love letters; the two would marry over two decades later. "You are a beautiful and wonderful person," he wrote to her, "with ability to make friends and find happiness any place. That's all that really counts anywhere in the world."

On a quest to meet Taruc, in late 1946 Lansdale located the home of Taruc's sister. With her front door slightly open, he took off his shoes to avoid getting her floor muddy. He poked his head inside. "Anybody home?" he asked. His question was met with a rifle in his face and other guns pointed in his direction as bodyguards assembled and motioned for him to step inside. One yelled at Lansdale: "You're a spy!"

Lansdale thought of the home's owner. "Don't shoot," he rejoined. "Look at the floor. You'll get it bloody and she'll have to clean it up! If you're going to shoot me, do it outside." An interrogation ensued where Lansdale had to choose his words carefully to preserve his life. "I'm with G-2 of the U.S. Army…What I do, I write reports on what people here tell me and send them on to the Pentagon. If the stories are good or unusual they get before the President much faster than news stories do…What do you want me to tell the President of the United States?" He wrote down their messages and was allowed to meet Taruc's sister, but Taruc himself remained elusive: Lansdale thought that since his bodyguard was present, he probably escaped through a back window during the interrogation. While Lansdale originally believed his scheme to meet Taruc had been "brilliant," he was willing to admit that risking his own life to do so "might have been a stupid mistake."

Vampires

In 1949, Lansdale joined the next iteration of what was to become the CIA, the Office of Policy Coordination (OPC), set up to be the department of "dirty tricks" against foreign adversaries. Lansdale recognized early that the Cold War would be fought not through a massive U.S.-U.S.S.R. military confrontation, but through proxy battles in third-world nations. The Philippines, with its growing Huk rebellion, became his central concern. He was transferred to the Far East Division (FE/Plans), led by Colonel Richard Stilwell, which coordinated psychological and political warfare strategies across Asia. Lansdale found that the U.S. lacked effective psychological warfare capabilities and he sought to remedy this by creating an informal training program in the Pentagon. With help from World War II veterans and Filipino officers studying in the U.S., he taught psychological operations as a tactical weapon in modern conflict.

During this time, Lansdale met Ramón Magsaysay, a young Filipino congressman and war veteran. They bonded over shared concerns about military corruption, ineffective leadership, and low morale in the Philippine Armed Forces. Their conversation revealed that Magsaysay's vision closely matched Lansdale's own plans for countering the Huk threat. This solidified Lansdale's belief that Magsaysay was the ideal person to lead Philippine counterinsurgency efforts. "I decided he should be the guy to handle [the Huk campaign] out in the Philippines because of his feelings toward the people and toward the enemy. He understood the problem, which very few Filipinos or Americans ever did." After meeting with OPC and U.S. State Department representatives, including OPC Chief Frank Wisner, Lansdale was able to convince them to provide Magsaysay with covert support. The U.S. government thereafter placed pressure on President Quirino to name Magsaysay as the next Secretary of Defense of the Philippines, which he did on September 1, 1950.

Lansdale had counterinsurgency ideas to test and received approval from his boss Richard Stilwell to go on assignment in the Philippines. During a planning session at the OPC offices, however, management rescinded their approval after he mentioned he would be taking his former Army intelligence colleague Charles "Bo" Bohannan with him. Lansdale was so enraged by this change in direction that he got up in the middle of the meeting and stood with his back to the door. "This door is going to stay closed," he resolved, "until you come to a conclusion in this meeting that you are going to back me out there with your approval. If I have to come back eventually and meet with you again…and you haven't fully backed me, I'll have my pockets full of grenades. I'll get you all in here, lock you in and throw grenades at you." Lansdale's behavior shocked his superiors, although this would not be the last time violence would be

threatened or carried out in the nascent CIA. Lansdale remembered the "top policy people" calling him "a wild man…Anyhow, I finally got their approval."

Lansdale became a psychological warfare staff officer assigned to the Philippines, coinciding with Magsaysay's promotion to Secretary of Defense. Lansdale feared the government side was losing the propaganda war. When he investigated the Makabulos massacre of August 20, he read in the press that the attack had caused the population to turn against the Huks. In speaking to locals, Lansdale found exactly the opposite: that early warnings from the Huks, many of them related to the local population, had allowed people to remain indoors when the slaughter occurred. Their courtesy was remembered more than the massacre itself. One day, Lansdale encountered a daughter of a Filipino Colonel who was crying on Manila street. She explained she had been on a bus and that at a security checkpoint a soldier got on and instructed all passengers to disembark. Two of her companions moved slower than the soldier wanted and they were beaten. Lansdale tried to console her by saying that things would improve. If the war was going to be won, the military of the Philippines would have to stop seeing themselves as separate from the people, Lansdale believed.

Working through the OPC, Lansdale funneled support to pro-democracy groups, sabotaged corrupt election schemes, and helped orchestrate political strategy. In both the 1951 and 1953 elections, U.S. agents secretly helped ensure "honest" outcomes, even burning false ballots and rigging the system against entrenched elites. Lansdale never denied this; instead, he justified it. In his view, breaking the rules to guarantee "clean" elections was not hypocrisy—it was necessary. He explained his rationale: "if these people went to cheat, to print false ballots, well, to have a fire in the printing plant...and all the ballots burn up in there, the warehouse, who else is going to do it? How openly do you ever talk about something like that? Yet it is a big plus on the right side of things and well worth doing."

Lansdale's unconventional methods often put him at odds with the CIA itself. He disliked their reliance on force and cloak-and-dagger tactics. He preferred persuasion, political reform, and psychological influence—strategies that aligned with his belief in democracy, even if they were achieved through shadowy means. When the OPC was folded into the CIA in 1952, Lansdale reluctantly continued under the new structure but never wavered from his independent style. He refused to become a typical intelligence operative. For him, success was not measured in secret reports or intelligence coups—it was in the visible transformation of a country and the trust of its people. The CIA asked him to keep his activities a secret: "They were the ones that came to me and asked me to swear never to tell anybody. I can see why—the other things they were doing!"

The psychological warfare officer became close with Magsaysay and the two shared a room together. They would discuss ideas and spoke "roughly the way two friends would talk with each other," Lansdale recalled. Soldiers of all ranks would visit the household and together they would pitch ideas for military action. "Magsaysay would come out and have a cup of coffee with us. So here we were getting ideas presented at his level…And every so often he'd say, 'Well, let's try that.'" Magsaysay would then proceed to the presidential palace to obtain backing for their ideas, a process Lansdale called the most "simple and natural way of working in the world." American journalists and officials described Lansdale as a kingmaker and a puppet master. Some Filipinos, skeptical of U.S. motives, wondered if Magsaysay was simply a front for American interests. "Some of the kindlier ones teased us," Lansdale recalled, "by nicknaming me 'Frank' and nicknaming Bo as 'Stein,' the implication of course being that Magsaysay was...'Frank and Stein's monster.'" Lansdale tried to portray his role as simply an advisor to Magsaysay in his memoir. "Of course I tell some white lies in it," he later told a colleague, "mainly to give Asians some sorely-needed heroes from among their own."

One of the ideas Lansdale pitched involved him borrowing a U.S. Navy submarine and for him and Bohannan to pretend to be Russian officers on board. The supposed Soviet vessel would be announced in advance to the Huk leaders with the explanation that they were to listen to speeches and receive medals for their efforts. Once on board, the U.S. officers could seize them and wipe out a significant portion of the Huk leadership. He brought the idea to Admiral Arleigh Burke who was on a visit from Korea to the Philippines. "You got submarines up there I can borrow?" Lansdale inquired. "You're damn right," Burke answered. "Just yell at me. I'll get them down here fast. That's a good idea you got. Whether it works or not, let's try it." OPC management disagreed and refused to approve the plan, believing instead that Lansdale had gone insane.

To find ideas he could implement, Lansdale used folk stories he learned from Filipino barrios. He employed loudhailers used in World War II in aircraft flying over inhabitants providing shelter to Huk rebels to broadcast curses in Tagalog. Lansdale called this the "eye of God" and claimed success in starving some Huk units into surrendering. In the previous war, wrote Lansdale, "the idea was to get exact information about the enemy and then broadcast it through loudspeakers in combat situations, making individual enemy soldiers feel that they couldn't hide from an all-seeing eye and had to follow the directions of the broadcasts." A second variant involved painting large eyes on the side of houses during the night, to scare Huks into realizing that their enemy had been close to them while they slept.

Another loudhailer initiative involved broadcasting the size and personnel of Huk units, to further antagonize their ranks: "You hiding down there. We see you. Yes, I mean you in Squadron 17…We are coming to kill you. Stay there…To our secret friend in your ranks I say thank you! Run and hide so you won't be killed." In fact, Lansdale had had no inside source; the intelligence had been gathered from many sources, but he hoped to cause dissension as the Huk rebels listened to the message and scattered. Lansdale reveled in the Huks suspecting each other of betrayal: "the mention of a mysterious 'friend' in their ranks had aroused the Huk's darkest suspicions of one another. Three of them were singled out and executed on the spot. The words had inflicted as many casualties on the enemy as troops could have done in a running fight."

To prevent Huk nighttime raids, Lansdale spread rumors among the towns that a fortune teller who had predicted the death of President Roxas in 1948 was now proclaiming that Huk hideouts would fall victim to a vampire known as an *asuang*. As the last in a Huk group made his way to a hill camp, an Army contingent would grab the Huk soldier, punch two holes in threat, hang him by his heels, and drain his body of blood. The body was then placed back on the trail for later discovery. Lansdale claimed the gruesome discoveries would deter the Huks from future night operations. "When the Huks returned to look for the missing man and found their bloodless comrade," Lansdale wrote, "every member of the patrol believed that the *asuang* had got him and that one of them would be next if they remained on that hill. When daylight came, the whole Huk squadron moved out of the vicinity."

In northern Luzon, a Huk unit was staking out a position in the mountains and relied on farmers in the land below for support. Lansdale used a local superstition, discovered by a scout, that if a villager had performed an evil deed then his voice could speak from the grave. A Battalion Combat Team (BCT) unit captured a Huk courier and tape-recorded his testimony. The courier was killed and his body left for the villagers to discover, who promptly buried it. The sound recording was then enhanced to sound as if it were emanating from a tomb and was broadcast over the dead courier's grave. The confession terrorized the local population, who fled, forcing the Huks to descend the mountain looking for food, only to be captured or killed by the BCT positioned at the foot of the mountain waiting for them.

Joseph Burkholder Smith, who worked in FE/Plans at the time, recalled that "Long before the presidential election of 1953 in the Philippines they launched a program that would make Magsaysay a national hero

and Lansdale an authority on combating insurgency." To secure victory in the 1951 House elections in Philippines, the CIA created the National Movement for Free Elections (NAMFREL). Though NAMFREL appeared to be an organic Filipino grassroots effort, it was in fact backed and partially directed by Lansdale and funded through the OPC. Lansdale had studied election manipulation techniques during a trip to Washington and applied this knowledge in reverse—teaching Filipinos how to prevent fraud. Volunteers were trained in voter verification, photography for documentation of abuses, and countermeasures against vote-rigging tactics. Prominent Filipino veterans like Jaime Ferrer and Eleuterio Adevoso led NAMFREL, giving it credibility and local roots. In 1953, the press reported that NAMFREL did so well in promoting a "clean election in the Philippines in 1951" that "it decided to keep the organization alive and try to see what could be done about battling communism" and the group was quoted as stating that it could become "a pilot project for the whole of southeast Asia."

Meanwhile, Lansdale employed black propaganda, a covert psychological warfare tactic to make material appear as though it came from the enemy. He crafted a fake Huk leaflet using authentic equipment and styles, which called for a boycott of the election. It was distributed through a cell of the Huk movement that had been penetrated by Philippine intelligence. The leaflet was so convincing that the Huks accepted it as their own directive, causing widespread endorsement of the boycott across their ranks. This removed the Huks from the electoral playing field entirely, leaving their political narrative absent at a key democratic moment. Lansdale was ecstatic: "The Huks talked themselves out of participating in the election; they threw away their own votes."

The result was a resounding success. Voter turnout was significantly higher than in 1949, and opposition candidates scored major victories. In many parts of the country, the military was praised not as an oppressive force but as a protector of democracy. Even in Huk strongholds like Pampanga, the military was warmly embraced by civilians. The election shifted the psychological and moral landscape—showing that change could be achieved peacefully, and that the government could, when committed, act in the people's interest.

Lansdale believed this success demonstrated the power of psychological and political strategy over brute military force. He had shown that insurgents could be defeated not just with guns but by restoring legitimacy to democratic institutions. By helping the Philippine government follow its own constitutional procedures, he and his allies "took the revolution away" from the Huks. Their central claim—that the system was rigged and only violence could bring justice—was severely undermined.

Controlling Magsaysay

Following the successful 1951 congressional elections, Lansdale began strategizing for the 1953 presidential race. President Elpidio Quirino, whose administration was widely regarded as corrupt and discredited, was expected to run again. Lansdale and U.S. policymakers agreed that Quirino was unfit for continued leadership and began searching for a more suitable candidate. To discredit Quirino in the eyes of the public, the CIA drugged his drink in advance of one of his speeches.

Several alternatives were considered. Senator Lorenzo Tañada, a respected nationalist and war hero, was initially favored, but he fell out of U.S. favor after calling for the removal of American military bases from the Philippines. With Tañada dismissed, Lansdale reevaluated Magsaysay. Although initially considered too inexperienced, Magsaysay's rising popularity and reformist stance made him an ideal candidate in Lansdale's eyes. He was soon publicly and privately groomed for the presidency.

To build Magsaysay's image, Lansdale orchestrated a comprehensive publicity campaign involving American and Filipino media, business groups, and propaganda machinery. U.S. newspapers and magazines published favorable stories, and the Philippine press, which relied heavily on U.S.-owned services and advertising, followed suit. Magsaysay's Civil Affairs Office (CAO), which Lansdale helped organize, also played a key role, disseminating millions of anti-Huk and pro-Magsaysay materials, hosting public forums, and distributing materials in schools.

This psywar campaign was meticulously designed to position Magsaysay as a patriotic, anti-communist hero. Lansdale believed in using "symbol manipulation" and psychological warfare as strategic tools to sway public opinion and political outcomes. The media campaign was accompanied by covert and overt support from U.S. diplomatic, military, and intelligence institutions.

In 1952, Lansdale arranged for Magsaysay to undertake a high-profile international trip to the United States and Mexico, including a keynote speech at a Lions International convention. This trip was designed to elevate Magsaysay's stature as a global statesman. Lansdale had already written a speech for Magsaysay and was surprised to see him reviewing a different speech prepared for him by a public relations person. That speech involved raving against "communist guerrillas, dirty reds under every bed," which Lansdale thought was inappropriate for this moment in the campaign. In the rear of the airplane, Lansdale leaned over to speak to Magsaysay: "What are you doing with that?" Magsaysay replied: "I am going to give this speech down there." Lansdale became enraged: "The hell you are. You are going to use the speech that I wrote for you.."

Magsaysay was ready to give up entirely: "All right, I'm going back to Manila. To hell with them. I didn't want to give a speech anyhow." Lansdale was now shouting: "You *are* going down [there]!" The presidential candidate shoved Lansdale, yelling, "No, I am not!" The CIA's asset was getting out of control. Lansdale reacted impulsively with an act in the heat of the moment that threatened the entire operation.

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