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# SCIENCE AGAINST THE PEOPLE



BERKELEY SESPA

THE STORY OF JASON - THE ELITE GROUP OF ACADEMIC SCIENTISTS  
WHO, AS TECHNICAL CONSULTANTS TO THE PENTAGON, HAVE DEVELOPED  
THE LATEST WEAPON AGAINST PEOPLES' LIBERATION STRUGGLES:  
"AUTOMATED WARFARE"



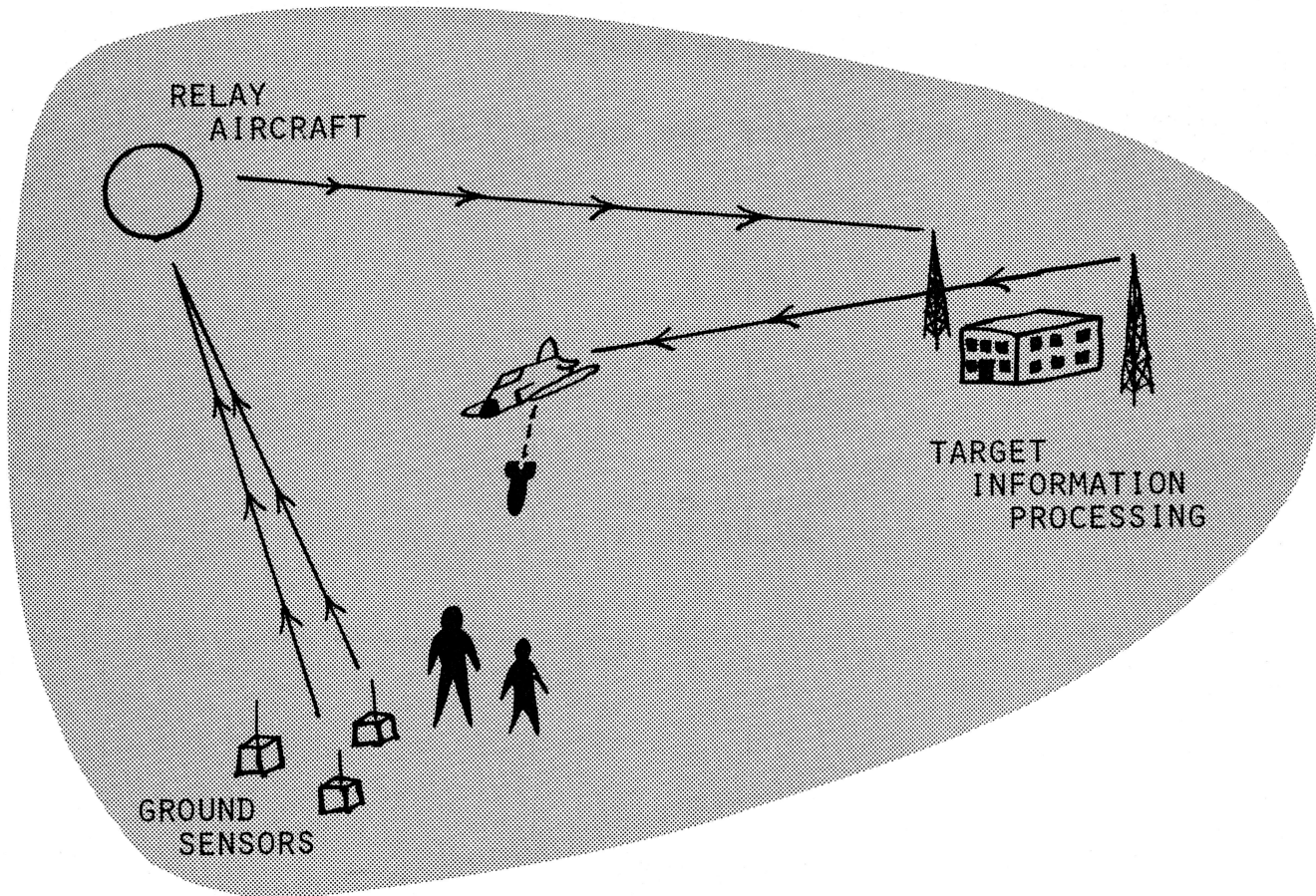
PHYSICISTS HAVE CONSISTENTLY UNDERPLAYED THE MAJOR EXTENT TO WHICH THEIR SUBJECT IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE MODERN HORRORS OF WAR. THE POST-BOMB GENERATIONS HAVE A DRAMATICALLY CHANGED ATTITUDE TO THE WORLD IN DIRECT CONSEQUENCE OF WHAT, EVEN 27 YEARS AFTER, REMAINS A TERRIFYING SWORD OF DAMOCLES. A THREAT, MOREOVER, WHOSE FEARFUL REALITY IS IN NO SENSE DIMINISHED BY LESSER TECHNOLOGICAL EVILS. IT WAS PHYSICISTS WHO PRODUCED LASER BOMBING; IT WAS PHYSICISTS WHO INVENTED THE ELECTRONIC BATTLEFIELD; IT WAS PHYSICISTS WHO DEvised PLASTIC ANTI-PERSONNEL BOMBS, "GRAVEL", "SPIDER MINES", "DAISY CUTTERS" - AND A PLETHORA OF OTHER PERVERSIONS. WHY SHOULDN'T THE PUBLIC DISTRUST THEM AS A RACE? THEY DO LITTLE TO PURGE THEIR OWN RANKS OF THE MONSTERS WHO CONTRIVE SUCH APPALLING INHUMANITIES.

--Peter Stubbs, Editor of NEW SCIENTIST, in  
NEW SCIENTIST, August 24, 1972.



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## THE STORY OF JASON



RESEARCHED, WRITTEN AND PRODUCED BY

BERKELEY  
SESPA

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### Some abbreviations used:

IDA ... Institute for Defense Analyses  
PSAC ... President's Science Advisory Committee  
DCPG ... Defense Communications Project Group  
          (later called DSPG)  
ARPA ... Advanced Research Projects Agency  
          (an arm of the DOD)  
DOD ... Department of Defense  
U.C. ... University of California







# Introduction

In June of this year, a world-famous American scientist was chased out of the Collège de France by a group of young French scientists who were outraged at his contributions to the Vietnam War. Dr. Murray Gell-Mann, a Nobel Prize-winning physicist from Cal Tech, had come to Paris to lecture on the theory of elementary particles, but the audience which met him wanted to ask about his work for the Pentagon, through his participation in the Jason group. Gell-Mann's response to this challenge was, "I am not free to answer."

At an international symposium on physics held in Trieste in September, five Jason physicists (Professors Wigner, Wheeler, Townes, Weinberg, and Montroll) were confronted by 300 persons who denounced them as war criminals. The only response by the five came from Professor Wigner, who said, "I am flattered by your accusations. They are compliments for me." When the meeting was moved to a suburb, 100 riot police were called on to block the protesters. (Le Monde, 9/30/72).

At a summer school on the history of physics, held at Varenna, Italy, in August, there was circulated a Statement on Vietnam, saying, in part:

THE OPERATIONAL USE OF SCIENTIFIC KNOWLEDGE IN THE INDOCHINA WAR IS OF PARTICULAR CONCERN TO US...OUR DISCUSSIONS HAVE CONVINCED US THAT IT IS NO LONGER POSSIBLE TO SEPARATE OUR ATTITUDES ON THESE ISSUES FROM OUR PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES. THIS IS WHY WE EXPRESS, AS SCIENTISTS AND IN THE PUBLICATIONS AND INSTITUTIONS OF SCIENCE, OUR

CONDEMNATION OF THOSE COLLEAGUES WHO HAVE WILLINGLY INVOLVED THEMSELVES IN THE WAGING OF THIS WAR: WE ASK THAT THESE ISSUES SHOULD BE HONESTLY FACED WITHIN THE SCIENTIFIC COMMUNITY, WHEREVER IT MEETS.

The Jason group was specifically cited in this statement for their contribution to the technology of the war. This statement was signed by almost all (about sixty) of the participating scientists -- mostly Europeans, and some of them were men of considerable prestige. This same statement was circulated for signatures at a large physics meeting in the United States in September (the high-energy conference at the National Accelerator Laboratory). Only 21 scientists signed out of over 700; and most of the signers were European.

Can American scientists evade these issues? We feel that we make up a community of shared work and common understanding -- students, teachers, and researchers. Can it be a matter of indifference to us that some members of the community -- even some of its leaders -- serve a military adventure that most of us regard as criminal?

The overall involvement of scientists with government is an enormous subject. The issue is posed perhaps most sharply by the Jason group, an elite panel within the Institute for Defense Analyses (IDA). The President's Science Advisory Committee (PSAC), which works directly for the President, is still more select than Jason and presumably more influential. But in Jason, we see long-range strategic advice to the Department of Defense associated with the symbols of academic science. The forty-odd members of Jason include some of the very best known physicists in America,



working at the most prestigious universities. While maintaining their public personalities as esteemed professors, they have been quietly helping the Department of Defense with -- with what? They are "not free to answer."

The first aim of this study is to assemble some of the story of this classified work. An especially significant contribution of Jason to the Vietnam War was revealed in the Pentagon Papers. In a 1966 report, a Jason group drew up general outlines for a system of sensors, communications links, aircraft, mines and bombs intended to stop transport of soldiers and supplies into South Vietnam. This system, adapted and expanded by the Pentagon, has become what is now known as the

automated battlefield. It has made possible the policy of minimizing American casualties while continuing to devastate Indochina and its people through technological warfare; it has made possible Nixon's plan to prosecute the war indefinitely or until he can achieve "peace with honor;" it is being readied for other, future wars.

Thus, everyone concerned with anti-democratic forces in our society should be vitally interested in the nature of Jason and its activities. In this report, we present the best information available to us on this important issue.

In addition to tracing the consequences of this one Jason project, we will give a few indications, from the meager unclassified material available, of the wide range of Jason's still-secret work.

The second chapter summarizes rather fully several Jason members' own account of their own experiences and attitude in this work. The bulk of this chapter is based on personal interviews conducted in 1972.

Finally, we offer an analysis of the issues raised, and suggest some proposals for action.

While this report focuses on the activities of the Jason group, Jason is by no means an isolated or unique phenomena. This case-study of Jason serves to illustrate the nature of relationships which exist generally between elite academic scientists and government, military and business agencies. These relationships facilitate the routine implementation of policy decisions of sweeping social consequences without the knowledge or consent of the people or their elected representatives.





# Chapter 1.

## The Story Of Jason

### THE ORIGIN OF JASON

At the end of World War II many of the country's leading scientists, who had been involved in such war research as the atomic bomb and radar, left full-time government work and returned to the college campuses. The military, of course, did not want to lose all this valuable talent. In addition to its own "in-house" laboratories, the Defense Department sought to establish ongoing consulting liaison with first-rate scientists.

At first this service was obtained through the RAND corporation and some scientific advisory committees attached directly to the Pentagon; some scientists also consulted for industrial corporations working on defense contracts. The industrial consulting jobs paid extremely well, but the scientists involved felt that they were not close enough to the center of power to influence policy decisions. On the other hand, scientists in Washington often felt restricted by the particular government agency they consulted for and also found the government consulting fee scales to be very low. Therefore, the idea of a new, independent research and consulting organization arose: this was the Institute for Defense Analyses, IDA. Set up nominally as a private, non-profit corporation, IDA worked on the basis of contracts with the Pentagon for particular research problems of interest to the military. IDA could determine its own salary scales and it hoped to attract high calibre scientists with the promise of considerable "freedom" in their choice of problem to be

worked on. A group of the very brightest young scientists was recruited into a sub-group of IDA called Jason. The whole success of this enterprise depended upon establishing it as a mark of highest prestige to be invited into this elite group.



### INSTITUTE FOR DEFENSE ANALYSES JASON

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### IDA'S COLD-WAR IDEOLOGY

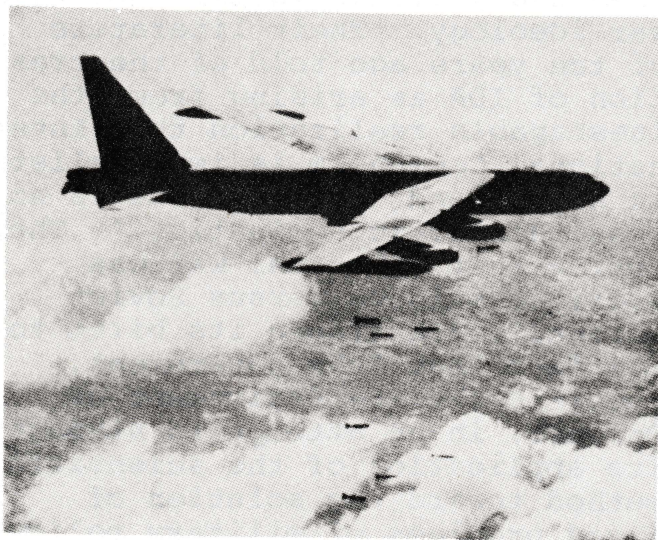
The original political-philosophical outlook of IDA and Jason was boldly stated in terms of cold-war ideology. Their literature of ten years ago told of the creation of IDA as arising from "the inescapable realization that International Communism is imperialistic in nature and that its goal is no less than world domination." Then, noting that "the real war was American science versus Soviet science", IDA traced its birth to the fact that "the government, specifically the Department of Defense, in an attempt to strengthen its application of the scientific method toward the solution of broad problems of military policy and strategy, sought some machinery by which it could reach more effectively into the reservoir of technological talent in the nation's scientific community."

### JASON AND THE "MCNAMARA FENCE"

The most detailed public account of Jason's contribution to the Vietnam War is contained in the Pentagon Papers: the 1966 Jason summer study which gave birth

to a new form of technological warfare, now known as the automated, or electronic, battlefield. The situation leading up to this report is as follows.

Even while campaigning for re-election on a "peace" platform in 1964, Lyndon Johnson was accepting plans from his military advisors for increased levels of fighting in Vietnam. Early in 1965 he launched the program of sustained bombing against North Vietnam: Operation Rolling Thunder. After more than a year of this campaign, there was a growing opposition to the war among the American public, and there was also disillusionment within some parts of the government over the failure of the bombing to achieve its military objectives.



Early in 1966, a clique of Harvard-MIT scientists with high level connections in Washington persuaded Defense Secretary Robert McNamara to sponsor a special study on "technical possibilities in relation to our military operations in Vietnam." With this prompting, McNamara formally requested the scientists to look into the feasibility of "a fence across the infiltration trails, warning systems, reconnaissance (especially night) methods, night vision devices, defoliation techniques and area denial weapons."

This special scientific study group was assembled under the auspices of the Jason Division of IDA; the group of 47 scientists represented "the cream of the scholarly community in technical fields"... "a group of America's most distinguished scientists, men who had helped the Government produce many of its most advanced technical weapons systems since the end of the Second World War, men who were not identified with the vocal academic criticism of the Administration's Vietnam policy." This Jason study group met during the summer of 1966, starting off with a series of briefings by high officials from the Pentagon, the Central Intelligence Agency, the State Department and the White House. They were given access to secret materials.

The Jason report, given to McNamara at the beginning of September, was in four parts: "1. The Effects of US Bombing in North Vietnam; 2. Viet Cong/North Vietnam Army Logistics and Manpower; 3. An Air Supported Anti-Infiltration Barrier; and 4. Summary of Results, Conclusions and Recommendations." This report was regarded as particularly "sensitive" and the only persons to receive copies, outside of McNamara, were General Wheeler and Mr. Rostow. The writers of the Pentagon Papers evaluated this Jason report as exerting "a powerful and perhaps decisive influence in McNamara's mind," concerning future US policies in Vietnam.

As the New York Times's presentation of the Pentagon Papers summarizes--

"Their [the Jason Summer Study's] report evaluating the results of the Rolling Thunder campaign began:

"'As of July 1966, the U.S. bombing of North Vietnam had had no measurable direct effect on