

Modern War: Counter-Insurgency as Malpractice

By Edward N. Luttwak

Modern armed forces are still structured for large-scale war, but advanced societies whose small families have no expendable male children have a very low tolerance for casualties—even supposedly warlike Americans gravely count casualties in Iraq that in three years have yet to reach 3,000, fewer than were lost in many a single battle day of past wars. That refusal of the blood that is needed to fuel battles fortunately diminishes the likelihood that advanced societies would deliberately set out to fight one another, (*pas d'enfant, pas de guerre*) unless it can be believed that a war would be entirely or very largely aerial and naval, for such equipment-intensive forces could indeed be employed with few casualties. Such wars, however, are difficult to imagine except when islands are involved, as in a China-Taiwan war, which is very improbable for its own reasons. Air and naval forces can certainly be employed advantageously against any less advanced enemy incautious enough to rely on a conventional defense conducted by regular forces, but in that context as well there must be severe doubts about the continued usefulness of the ground forces of advanced countries intolerant of casualties. Having blockaded the enemy easily enough, having successfully bombed all the right nodal points to shut down electrical, transportation, and communications' networks, having executed enough air strikes to interrupt runways, destroy sheltered and unsheltered aircraft, ballistic missiles, nuclear installations if any, sink warships and rout any mechanized forces deployed in the open, as the US did with Iraq in 1991 and partly in 2003, and as it could do with Iran, no real role would remain

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for the ground forces except to dislodge the enemy from any territory he had occupied, or to occupy his own. That, however, is bound to cost casualties that might not be tolerated, and to provoke an insurgency.

If that happens, naval forces cannot do much because insurgencies rarely have an important maritime dimension (the Sri Lanka case is an exception) while riverine operations are usually minor. Air forces can have surveillance and transport roles, but insurgents very rarely present targets of sufficient stability and sufficient contrast to be identified, designated and effectively attacked from the air. That leaves almost everything to the ground forces, and when the advanced attack the less advanced, these forces will have large advantages in firepower, mobility and operational coherence. But they will also have no visible enemy to fight, so that the normal operational methods and tactics of conventional warfare cannot be applied. True, there are the alternative methods and tactics of counterinsurgency warfare, but do they actually work? Insurgents do not always win, actually they usually lose. But their defeats can rarely be attributed to counterinsurgency warfare, as opposed to other and quite means as we shall see

The Theory of Counter-insurgency Warfare

Two American generals of exceptional intelligence who distinguished themselves in Iraq, James N Mattis of the Marine Corps and David H Petraeus of the Army, each now in charge of the training and doctrine command of his own service, have recently circulated the text of a new “counter-insurgency” field manual, (FM 3-24 Draft) which they propose for official use

Its doctrines emerges from the chapter titles. After a first chapter of definitions which any military manual must have—their most elemental function is to provide a common language, the battlefield is no place for semantic debate—in the second and first substantive chapter, “Integrating Civil and Military Activities”, the essentially political nature of the struggle against insurgents is duly recognized and strongly emphasized. That is hardly an original discovery as the two generals and their staffs would be the first to recognize, yet it still necessary to affirm what should be obvious, because amidst the frustrations of fighting the mostly invisible enemy, it is hard to resist the tempting delusion that some clever new tactics, or even some clever new technology can defeat the insurgents.

Much more questionable is the proposition that follows, which is presented as self-evident, that a necessary if not sufficient condition of victory is to provide what the insurgents cannot: basic public services, physical reconstruction, the hope of economic development and social amelioration. The hidden assumption is that there is only one kind of politics in this world, in which popular support is important or even decisive, and that it can be won by providing better government.

The extraordinary persistence of dictatorships as diverse in style as the regimes of Cuba, Libya, North Korea and Syria shows that government needs no popular support when it has obedience.

As for better government, that is certainly wanted in France, Norway or the United States but obviously not in Afghanistan or Iraq, where many people prefer indigenous and religion oppression to the freedoms offered by foreign invaders.

The very word guerilla, which is now refers only to a tactic, was first used to describe the ferocious insurgency of the illiterate Spanish poor against their would-be liberators, under the leadership of their traditional oppressors. On July 6, 1808, King Joseph of Spain presented a draft constitution that for the first time in Spain's history offered an independent judiciary, freedom of the press, and the abolition of the remaining feudal privileges of the aristocracy and of the church. At that time, Abbeys, Monasteries and Bishops still owned every building and every piece of land in 3,148 towns and villages, which were inhabited by some of Europe's most wretched tenants. Yet the Spanish peasantry did not rise to demand the immediate implementation of the new constitution that would liberate them, and allow them to keep their harvests for themselves. Instead, they obeyed the priests who summoned them to fight against the ungodly innovations of the foreign invader. For Joseph was the brother of Napoleon Bonaparte, placed on the Spanish throne by French troops. That was all that mattered to most Spaniards—not what was proposed but by whom.

Actually, by then the French should have known better. In 1799 the same thing had happened in Naples, whose liberals, supported by the French, were massacred by the very peasants and plebeians they wanted to emancipate, mustered into a militia of the "Holy Faith" (Santa Fede) by Cardinal Fabrizio Ruffo, coincidentally a member of Calabria's largest land-owning family, who lead his men forward on horseback. Ruffo easily persuaded his followers that all promises of material betterment were irrelevant, because the real aim of the French and the liberals was to destroy the Catholic religion in the service of Satan. Spain's clergy did the same, and their illiterate followers could not know that the very first clause of Joseph's draft constitution had not only recognized the Roman Apostolic Catholic church but stated that it was the only one allowed in Spain.

The same kind of politics are now in evidence in Afghanistan and Iraq, including the ineffectual enshrinement of Islam in the new Iraqi constitution, and the emergence of clerical warlords as ready to use violence as Cardinal Ruffo. Since the invasion in 2003, both Shiite and Sunni clerics have been repeating over and over again that the Americans and their "Christian" allies are in Iraq to destroy Islam in its cultural heartland as well as to steal the country's oil. The clerics dismiss all talk of democracy and human rights by the invaders as mere hypocrisy—except for women's rights, which the clerics say are only propagandized to persuade Iraqi daughters and wives to dishonor their families, by imitating the shameless nakedness and impertinence of Western women.

The vast majority of Afghans and Iraqis, assiduous mosque-goers, illiterates or at best semi-literate, naturally believe their religious leaders. The alternative would be to believe what for them is entirely unbelievable—

that foreigners are unselfishly expending blood and money to help them. They themselves would never invade a foreign country except to loot it, as Iraq invaded Kuwait making Saddam Hussein genuinely popular as troops brought back their loot, from automobiles to gold jewelry stolen while searching houses. In Iraq, as many opinion polls and countless incidents demonstrate, the Americans and their allies are widely considered to be the worst of invaders, who came to rob Muslim Iraqis not only of their territory and oil, but also of their religion and even their family honor. Many Muslims around the world believe as much, even in Turkey, whose most successful recent film depicted an American and Jewish military doctor who was operating on Iraqis not to save their lives but to remove their kidneys, which he was sending back to the US for transplantation, for his personal profit of course (he was Jewish after all). It is the same in Afghanistan, where the American imposed quota of women parliamentarians has not only caused widespread resentment but has cost the lives of several, including a member of parliament killed by her husband after she had dishonored the family and scandalized the local mullahs by contradicting a man in public—in the course of a televised parliamentary debate.

In other words, “Integrating Civil and Military Activities” to improve local conditions need not gain public support—and even if did, it does not automatically follow that it would be decisive, or even important.

Next comes a very long section on “Intelligence in Counterinsurgency” which reflects the crucial predicament of counterinsurgency warfare: the unseen enemy, who can choose when to emerge from civilian cover to launch his attacks, and increasingly can attack by remote control, reducing his exposure or not being exposed at all. Everywhere outgunned, and in Iraq if not Afghanistan outnumbered as well, the insurgents would be easily defeated if their invisibility could be stripped away. That much is obvious. But the authors then automatically assume that it is an Intelligence problem to identify the insurgents among the population, another very questionable proposition as we shall see, because it really is a political problem which always has a political solution, however unpalatable that may be.

In any case proceeding on their premise, the detailed headings that follow point to different ways of overcoming the invisibility of the insurgents, by using all possible Intelligence source, methods and assets. There is “Intelligence Characteristics in Counterinsurgency” which points to the need to have rather different skills and talents when the targets are extremely “low contrast” insurgents, as opposed to airfields or warships; then there is “Predeployment planning and Intelligence Preparation of the Battlefield” that recognizes and emphasizes the specificity of counterinsurgency as to time, place, population, culture and more, as opposed to general-purpose Intelligence preparations for regular war. For example, it is useful to have trained Arabic-speaking interrogators if an Arab-speaking country is invaded, and at a less elementary level, it is useful to have some cultural instruction before trying to analyze the behavior of the locals.

After that comes “Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance Operations” on the different ways of using regular forces with their regular platforms and sensors to find the elusive insurgents, which may or may not work but which certainly entails such things as the use of ultra-sophisticated and very expensive F-15s and F-18s with the most advanced

sensors to detect and track the man, the boy and the donkey who may or may not be transporting an “improvised explosive device” to its intended emplacement.

Then comes the delicate subject of “Counterintelligence and Counter-reconnaissance”. The second of these is straightforward enough: before attacking a target, it is usually essential to observe it in order to plan the action, and with a bit of luck such observers can be spotted by alert defenders. Often the best way of protecting potential targets is to anticipate attacks against them by counter-surveillance (or “counter-reconnaissance”), to then pre-empt or ambush the attackers.

What is delicate is the “Counterintelligence” part, which points to the likelihood of insurgent penetrations of the local forces that are supposedly fighting the insurgency—the friends and allies in need that are being provided with training, weapons and money. There are always penetrations, even in the best of military forces as well as Intelligence services, but there is a difference in scale between the consequences of a traitor or two, and wholesale enlistments to serve the enemy cause (or the inadvertent recruitment of enemies into the ranks). For example, it must be universally recognized by now that in Iraq many if not most of the Shiites in the army and police are actually under the orders of one of the Shiite militias, including the “Mahdi army” that occasionally launches surprise attacks on American or British forces. Equally, many of the Kurds who are paid by the government or by the Americans directly are in the service of either Barazani or Talebani, who trade under the labels of the Kurdish Democratic Party (KDP) and the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK). Far more dangerously, the Sunnis in the army and police who have been recruited, trained, equipped and salaried to fight the Sunni insurgents are just as likely to help the insurgency, or even to be insurgents themselves, on temporary detachment to the government forces so to speak. That is the only way that Sunnis whose families live among the Sunni population can both receive a salary and also keep their families alive. But again that is really a political problem, which has an unpalatable solution that is certainly more reliable than “Counterintelligence” could ever be.

Next there is “Intelligence Collaboration and Fusion”, which refers to the sharing and integration of Intelligence, which comes in separate channels from different services, branches and individual sources but which is needed by subjects. That is true of regular war operations as well, but is more critical when the targets are almost always unstable, elusive and low-contrast even if identifiable at all, as they rarely are.

After that, there are more predictable chapters on “Designing Counter intelligence Operations” executing them, and developing “Host Nation” security forces, whose relative brevity underlines the emphasis the authors place on Intelligence operations. Recent scandals readily explain the need for an entire chapter on “Leadership and Ethics for Counterinsurgency”, and the following chapter on “Building and Sustaining Capability for Counterinsurgency Logistics” also reflects the unhappy experience of Iraq.

Ammunition supply, usually the biggest item along with fuel in regular operations is no problem at all because very little ammunition is expended, yet logistics are still a big problem in Iraq because needed items

cannot simply be trucked from A to B without a high risk of destructive attacks by insurgents, hi-jacking by militias in need of supplies, highway robbery or opportunistic looting by ordinary civilians (there are many natural predators in the population, probably because of the high proportion of ex-nomads and their direct descendants, for whom the razzia is still an honorable and manly tradition). Truck convoys can be more secure if rather less efficient, but their safety depends on the quality of their escorts, which are necessarily very scarce and expensive if they are US troops (the British near the seaport as is their wont are more easily supplied), less scarce but even more expensive if they are security contractors, and very cheap but extremely unreliable if they are Iraqi soldiers or police. The end result is that very often hyper-expensive helicopter hours are used to carry even low-value, non-urgent supplies instead of trucks, which is one reason why the occupation costs so much even though very little ordnance is being expended.

Incidentally, in spite of all the advances of “jointness”, when the US Air Force tried to help out the Army (... and dissuade it from acquiring its own intra-theater fixed-wing aircraft) by providing a regular shuttle service of C-130 turboprop transports between Kuwait and different bases in Iraq reserved for Army use, the aircraft ended up carrying mostly “sailboat fuel”, i.e., they flew empty because it was easier for Army formations to use their own organic helicopters and smaller fixed-wing aircraft than to “interface” with the Air Force.

Two more things can be noted about the new field manual before turning to the peculiar politics of insurgency and counterinsurgency. There is an Appendix to the chapter on the “Intelligence Preparation of the Battlefield” which further emphasizes its importance and includes a section on “Linguistic Support”. That is a sad story indeed, when the astonishing linguistic incapacity of US military forces and Intelligence organizations is contrasted with the abundance of American civilians who speak all known foreign languages, and the brilliant record of foreign language education in the US Army and Navy, which used to produce as many good Chinese and Japanese speakers as they wanted by selecting for natural aptitude in the recruit pool; giving them a year of intensive courses, eight hours a day, six days a week; and quickly sending away those who failed to keep up with their classes. Nothing prevents doing the same for Arabic, Persian and, say, Azeri now, except for an unwillingness to invest in the future, and probably a lack of disciplined volunteers who are willing to learn a language eight hours a day, six days a week for a whole year or more. A final point about FM 3-24 Draft. It ends with a list of suggested readings, and the first book on the list is *Small Wars: A Tactical Handbook for Imperial Soldiers* (1890) by Charles E. Calwell.

The previous counterinsurgency Field Manual 07-22, also had such a list, and its first book was *The Battle of the Casbah: Terrorism and Counter-Terrorism in Algeria, 1955-1957* by Paul Aussaresses. Is it therefore that counterinsurgency doctrine has been evolving backwards, from the doubts of the 1950s back to the certitudes of 1890? That is no accusation, because alas, as will be argued in what follows, one needs to go back even further to find convincing models of success in defeating insurgents by military means.

Counter-insurgency in Practice: Iraq

Formidable against enemies assembled in conveniently targetable massed formations, the armed forces of the most advanced countries and certainly of the United States, are least effective in fighting insurgents. That was demonstrated in Vietnam in many different ways over many years, even while the occasional North Vietnamese regular unit that ventured to fight conventionally was efficiently destroyed.

The same two-part proposition is unnecessarily being proven all over again in Iraq, damaging the reputation of the United States for wisdom and strength, misusing fine soldiers, wasting vast amounts of money on skillful but ineffectual air and ground operations, inflicting added suffering on Iraqis at large, and taking the lives of young Americans whose sacrifice, one fears, will be deemed futile.

There is no mystery about the first part of the proposition. Because of their abundant resources and all-round competence, morale, discipline, and skills, the armed forces of the United States on the largest scale, and of other advanced countries on their scale, can usually generate much more firepower than their antagonists. These days, moreover, they can do so with routine precision because of sensors that reveal targets even in poor visibility, platforms and weapons that can reach targets at any planetary range, accurate guidance and homing devices, and command and communication networks that combine all those abilities.

Up to a point, the second part of the proposition is merely the logical consequence of the first: faced with especially superior firepower, insurgents strive to be especially elusive—more so than if they were facing less formidable regular forces—and as targets diminish, so does the value of firepower.

But there is much more to it than that. Specifically, there is the matter of politics, on both sides, the politics that—necessarily—is insufficiently present in FM 3-24 Draft.

Unless they confine their operations to thoroughly deserted areas where there is no one to observe them, insurgents must have at least the passive cooperation of local inhabitants. Whether they fail to report the insurgents to the authorities out of sympathy for their cause, or in terror of their vengeance, is entirely irrelevant. In either case, the insurgents are in control of the population around them, and not the authorities. That essentially political advantage is enough to allow motivated insurgents to overcome all manner of tactical weaknesses in combat skills and weapons.

As in so many previous cases, in a manner abundantly familiar from previous insurgencies, that is now happening in Iraq, where insurgents live

very safely in Sunni-Arab city districts, towns and villages, emerging to place bombs or launch attacks when it suits them, before resuming innocuous civilian identities once again.

Local insurgents may indeed pass unobserved to their neighbors when inactive, but not when they take up weapons and gather for

operations, while the foreign volunteers among them necessarily attract attention even when they carry no weapons because of their distinct speech and manner. Many of the local inhabitants certainly know who the insurgents are and where they keep their stores of explosives and weapons, but they are not telling. That is why US Army and Marine patrols cannot find insurgents unless they choose to reveal themselves by engaging in direct combat, which of course they rarely do, and only when they think that they have a great advantage. The mostly futile patrols therefore expose soldiers to the mines, remote-controlled side explosives, snipers and mortar bombs that inflict daily casualties.

Naturally, every form of technical intelligence and every possible sensor is being employed to supplant the lack of very elementary but indispensable human intelligence, including synthetic-aperture radars aboard big four-engine aircraft and the infra-red and video sensors of the latest targeting pods on two-seat heavyweight jet fighters. The expense of these flights alone is huge, amounting to hundreds of millions of dollars a month, but the results are very meager. The aim was to gather immediately actionable imagery especially at night, showing for example insurgents placing side-bombs alongside US patrol routes, or approaching oil pipelines bearing explosives. Failing that, it was at least hoped that possible insurgent activities would be detected for further investigation, for example people furtively bringing things to isolated buildings at night. But in practice unless they carry recognizable weapons, it is simply impossible to differentiate between insurgents and innocent people going about their peaceful business. In the meantime, very elaborate equipment that is very costly to operate and which is very effective in identifying armored vehicles, bunkers, missile launchers and any other readily recognizable target of classic form is still being employed every day in futile attempts to detect deliveries of a few dollars of food, or the emplacement of readily improvised explosive devices. This too is an aspect of the structural unsuitability of modern armed forces to fight elusive enemies that present no stable targets.

The essentially political advantage of the insurgents in commanding at least the silence of the local population, cannot be overcome by technical means no matter how advanced. Nor can the better operational methods and tactics advocated in FM 3-24 Draft be of much help. So few of the insurgents ever engage in direct combat, so much of the insurgency takes covert forms, ranging from the infiltration of the government to bombings, sabotage and assassinations, that the tactical defeats inflicted on the insurgents—including the killing of their top leaders and heroes—have no perceptible impact on the volume of the violence, and of its political consequences.

In Iraq, as noted there is supposed to be a far better way of finding insurgents than patrols driving about, or sensors howsoever sophisticated: the Iraqi police and Army. Their recruitment, training, equipment and upkeep, itself a very costly enterprise in both money and blood, is also yielding meager results because the politics of the situation are again central, and again unfavorable.

It is easy to recruit local auxiliaries in any poor country, and in Iraq too as well as any number of Shiites and Kurds, Sunni Arabs also can

readily be recruited—in recent decades that is how many of them made a living, by exploiting their privileged access as Sunnis and Arabs to prized military and police salaries. Other jobs were much less desirable because they required work, and now in any case they are very scarce. But while they are willing to wear the uniforms and accept training up to a point, Sunni Arabs are naturally disinclined to help capture or kill insurgents who are fighting to restore the Sunni-Arab ascendancy over Iraq. Besides, their families would be in deadly peril if they were suspected of loyalty to their government, and by extension to the Americans. Some of those policemen and soldiers know much about the insurgents and where exactly they might be found, but are still of no help in finding them, because they are insurgents themselves, as noted above. Even if specifically ordered into action on those rare occasions in which there is overt combat, most Sunni-Arab policemen and soldiers will not fight the insurgents; if they cannot simply stand back quietly, they are apt to desert, usually with their weapons. As for Army and police units manned mostly by Shiite Arabs or Kurds, they are not actively disloyal but they cannot gather information on the insurgents either. Sunni Arab civilians will not confide in them any more than in Americans, and perhaps less, because sooner or later the Americans will leave Iraq but the Kurds and Shiite will not, and are therefore the greater enemy.

The adverse political terrain of counter-insurgency is simply a given in Iraq as everywhere else, for if insurgents do not receive, or cannot forcibly exact at least the passive collaboration of the population at large, they normally cannot survive at all.

The Easy and Reliable Way of Defeating all Insurgencies Everywhere

Perfectly ordinary regular armed forces, with no counterinsurgency doctrine or training whatever have in the past regularly defeated insurgents, by using a number of well-proven methods. It is enough to consider them to see why the armed forces of the United States or of any other advanced and/or democratic country cannot possibly use them.

The simple starting point is that insurgents are not the only ones who can intimidate civilians at large, or terrorize them if it comes to that.

For instance, whenever insurgents are believed to present in a fairly circumscribed locality such as a village, small town or distinct city district—a very common occurrence in Iraq at present as in other insurgency

situations—the local notables can be compelled to surrender them to the authorities, under the threat of escalating punishments, all the way to mass executions.

Used by many others before and since, this was standard operating procedure for the German armed forces in the Second World War, and very

effective it was too in containing resistance movements with very few troops. As against all the dramatic films and books that describe the heroic achievements of the resistance all over occupied Europe, military historians have documented the tranquillity which the German occupiers mostly enjoyed, and the normality of collaboration not merely by notorious “collaborators” such as the incautious French poet or the failed Norwegian politician, but by vast numbers of ordinary people, Polish railwaymen for example secured the entire sustenance of the German eastern front. As for the daring resistance attacks that feature in the films, they did happen but not often, and not because of any lack of bravery in fighting the routinely formidable Germans, but because of the terrible punishments they inflicted on the population, routinely killing many for each German killed.

Occupiers can thus be successful without need of any counterinsurgency methods or tactics if they are willing to out-terrorize the insurgents, so that the fear of their reprisals outweighs either the desire to help the insurgents if any, or their own threats. The Germans also established secure and economical forms of occupation by exploiting isolated resistance attacks to achieve much broader demonstration effects. Lone German despatch riders were easily toppled by tensed wires or otherwise intercepted and killed, but then troops would arrive on the scene to burn or demolish the buildings round about if any, or the nearest village in lieu, seizing and killing anyone who aroused suspicion, or just happened to be there. After that, after word of the terrible deeds duly spread and was duly exaggerated as often as not, German despatch riders could safely continue on their way, until reaching some other and uninstructed part of the world where the sequence would have to be repeated.

In Vietnam at war likewise, the Viet Cong and North Vietnamese were skilled in using terror to secure their pervasive territorial control, and very ready to use any amount of violence against civilians, from countless individual assassinations to mass executions, as in Hue in 1968. The Communist cause had its enthusiasts, “fellow travelers” and opportunistic followers, but Vietnamese who were none of the above, and not outright enemies to be killed, were compelled to collaborate actively or passively by the threat of the violence so liberally used.

That is exactly what the insurgents in Iraq are now doing and that is no coincidence because it must be the same in all insurgencies. Locals who are not sympathetic to begin with, who cannot be recruited to the cause, are compelled to collaborate just the same by the fear of violence against themselves or their families, readily reinforced by the demonstrative killing of those who insist in refusing to help the resistance: neutrality is not an allowed option.

By contrast, the capacity of American armed forces to inflict collective punishments does not extend much beyond curfews and other such restrictions, inconvenient to be sure and perhaps sufficient to impose real hardship, but obviously insufficient to out-terrorize insurgents. Needless to say, this is not a political limitation that Americans would ever want their armed forces to overcome, but it does leave the insurgents in control of the population—the real “terrain” of any insurgency.

To be sure, the ordinary administrative functions of government can also be employed against the insurgents, less compellingly perhaps but

without need of violence. Insurgents everywhere seek to prohibit any form of collaboration or contact with the authorities, but they cannot normally prevent civilians from entering government offices to apply for obligatory licenses, permits, travel documents and such. That provides venues for intelligence officers on site to ask applicants to provide information on the insurgents, in exchange for the approval of their requests and perhaps other rewards. This effective and straightforward method has been widely used, and there is no ethical or legal reason why it should not be used by the armed forces of the United States as well. But it does require the apparatus of military government, complete with administrative services for civilians. During and after the Second World War, after very detailed preparations, the US Army and Navy governed the American zone of Germany, all of Japan and parts of Italy. Initially US officers were themselves the administrators, with such assistance from local officials as they chose to re-employ. Since then, however, the United States has eschewed the role of the Occupier, preferring in both Vietnam long ago and now in Iraq to leave government to the locals, while assuming the rather awkward role of a disproportionately powerful ally with combat forces in place and provider of military assistance, but not of everyday civil administration.

That reflects another kind of politics, manifest in the ambivalence of a United States government that is willing to fight wars, that is willing to start wars because of future projected threats, that is willing to conquer territory or even entire countries, and yet is unwilling to govern what it conquers, even for a few years.

That is why for all the real talent manifest in the writing of FM 3-24 Draft, its prescriptions are in the end of little use or none. All its best methods, all its clever tactics, all the prudent preparations, all the treasure and blood that the United States has been willing to expend, cannot overcome the crippling ambivalence of occupiers who refuse to govern, and their principled and inevitable refusal to out-terrorize the insurgents, the necessary and sufficient condition of a tranquil occupation.