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Tribal Engagement and the Heavy History of Counterinsurgency Light

Hannah Gurman

For months now, James Gant has been dreaming of returning to Afghanistan, where he served for nearly four years since 2003 as a Special Forces officer for the U.S. Army. “I feel like I was born there. The greatest days of my entire life were spent in the Pesch Valley and Musa Qalay and with the great Sitting Bull.”¹ In a short time, Gant’s dream will come true. Although the army originally ordered him to Iraq, where Gant served from 2006-2007, it has now re-written his orders. Soon, he will return to Afghanistan to re-unite with Sitting Bull and pursue an alternative strategy to defeat the Taliban.

Gant first met Sitting Bull in April 2003, when he and his team of nine soldiers, mostly Special Forces officers, were deployed to the Konar Province of Afghanistan on orders to “kill and capture anti-coalition members.” After successfully fighting off an attack in the first months of their deployment, they made their way over to the village of Mangwel, where they met the tribal doctor who agreed to introduce Gant and his team to the tribal elder. When they sat down, Sitting Bull, whose real name is Malik Noorafzhal, asked Gant why none of the other US forces passing through his village had ever stopped to talk to him. It was the beginning of Gant’s self-described “journey of discovery” through which he and his team threw their fate in with Sitting Bull’s tribe, fighting and negotiating alongside them to resolve decades-long land disputes between local tribes and build their capacity to defend themselves from the Taliban.²

Gant has received much praise in the military for his work with the Afghan tribes. One senior military officer dubbed him “Lawrence of Afghanistan” after the larger-than-life British officer who fought alongside Arab tribes in their rebellion against the Ottoman empire.³ The similarity is evident in a personal photo of Gant in Afghanistan, in which he is wearing a long black robe and headdress, looking straight into the camera with a serious gaze and a strong sense of purpose.⁴ While the analogy to Lawrence was originally intended to underscore the incredible promise of Gant’s vision and influence, it unwittingly reveals the links between Gant and the darker side of the history of counterinsurgency.

¹ Major Jim Gant, *One Tribe at a Time* (Los Angeles: Nine Sisters Imports, Inc., 2009), 9, online at <http://agora.stevenpressfield.com/2009/10/one-tribe-at-a-time-4-the-full-document-at-last/>.

² Gant, *One Tribe at a Time*, 16-17, 5.

³ Ann Scott Tyson, “Jim Gant, the Green Beret who could win the war in Afghanistan,” *Washington Post*, Jan. 17, 2010, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/01/15/AR2010011502203.html>.

⁴ Gant, *One Tribe at a Time*, 29.

Like T.E. Lawrence in Arabia, Gant has emphasized the tribes as part of an alternative strategy for winning the war in Afghanistan. This strategy stems from a simple and increasingly common premise that the current policy of building up the national government in Afghanistan isn't working. Despite its promises, the Karzai administration has failed to protect the people, especially in the rural areas, where most of the population lives and where the insurgency is located. Rather than Afghan, the people in these areas have historically identified themselves according to tribal and sub-tribal affiliations and have governed themselves through the tribal system. As long as the national government continues to ignore the security and material needs of the tribes, Gant argue, the U.S. needs to step in and help the tribes to help themselves. "We must work first and forever with the tribes for they are the most important military, political, and cultural unit in that country."⁵ This strategy is called tribal engagement. And while Gant concedes there are many reasons not to adopt it, he insists it is our only hope of winning: "*Nothing else will work.*"⁶

Despite or perhaps because of his relatively low status in the military hierarchy, Gant has become something of a celebrity among those responsible for shaping and executing counterinsurgency in Afghanistan. Gant first synthesized his vision in a paper, entitled "One Tribe at a Time," published on the internet last October. It was widely circulated within the military, pentagon, and congress. Since then, Gant has met with all of the top military brass, including General Petraeus, who called Gant's paper "very impressive" and McChrystal, who distributed "One Tribe at a Time" to all of the commanders in Afghanistan.⁷

Recent developments in Afghanistan have elevated the potential importance of alternative strategies like Gant's. Since the beginning of 2010, the number of civilian and coalition casualties in Afghanistan has accelerated sharply. Last month, U.S. casualties reach the one-thousand mark and NATO reported that coalition forces killed at least 90 civilians between January and April, up seventy-six percent from last year.⁸

The situation on the diplomatic front is equally troubling to senior policymakers. Karzai's visit to Washington in May was intended to patch up a relationship that has been increasingly strained since last year's fraudulent elections. While the U.S. has not abandoned its commitment to a national "top down" approach in Afghanistan, recent remarks by senior military and pentagon officials suggest the growing importance of "bottom-up" approaches that emphasize village, district, and provincial government.⁹

And then there is the matter of time and resources. As the clock ticks closer and closer to mid 2011 (the deadline for Obama's phased troop withdrawal), Defense Secretary Robert Gates has been dropping hints that the U.S. plans to retract from a full-scale counterinsurgency strategy.

⁵ Gant, *One Tribe at a Time*, 5.

⁶ Gant, *One Tribe at a Time*, 44.

⁷ Ruhullah Khapalwak and David Rohde, "A Look at America's New Hope: The Afghan Tribes," *New York Times*, Jan. 29, 2010, <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/01/31/weekinreview/13rohde.html>.

⁸ "Civilian Casualties Rising in Afghanistan," *Reuters*, May 12, 2010, <http://www.reuters.com/article/idUSTRE64B66T20100512>.

⁹ Karen de Young, "Afghanistan's Karzai arrives in Washington for visit intended to ease tensions," *Washington Post*, May 11, 2010, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2010/05/10/AR2010051004782.html>.

Echoing Gates' article in the latest issue of *Foreign Affairs*, Joseph Collins of the Pentagon-funded National Defense University, invoked a new kind of counterinsurgency. Rather than employ the military on a large scale, it will use "the indigenous people and a handful of Americans." Commentators have dubbed this idea "counterinsurgency light."¹⁰ Gant's tribal engagement model, in which small teams of between three and twelve soldiers and civilians partner up with a tribe, fits many of the requirements of counterinsurgency light. Gant himself has referred to tribal engagement as a "light footprint approach," that "will not only work," but will also "help to ease the need for larger and larger numbers of US soldiers being deployed to Afghanistan."¹¹

Counterinsurgency light promises a possible alternative to a politically unpopular "cut and run" policy. This strategy doesn't just entail scaling down the number of U.S. troops in Afghanistan, but also building up relationships between American advisors and the Afghan people based on mutual trust and responsibility. This ideal is actually central to the Army's current counterinsurgency doctrine, which emphasizes the importance of partnering with the Afghans so that they can be the agents of their country's security and well-being. Yet, the U.S. experience thus far in Afghanistan reflects the problem of building up the Afghans' capacity to protect themselves with little understanding of Afghan politics and culture and through a national structure that most Afghans perceive as foreign. "The more an alien force tries to change the way tribes live, the more the tribes resist," argues Gant in "One Tribe at a Time." Tribal engagement thus aims to help Afghans help themselves in a way that is consistent with their culture and with an emphasis on mutual trust and respect for the existing power structure. Gant refers to this goal as having "influence without authority."¹²

Gant's relationship with Sitting Bull is thus offered as a model of the principles of mutual trust and respect on which tribal engagement relies. Describing their first conversation, Gant writes:

"I could feel that he and I were very comfortable with one another soon after we began talking. I spent a lot of time just listening. I spoke only when I thought I understood what had been said. My questions mostly pertained to things he had said, to ensure that I had an understanding of what he was intending to say."¹³

Such intimate cross-cultural friendships may be uncommon in the context of counterinsurgency, but they are not as atypical as critics might believe. They are also not as unproblematic as supporters of tribal engagement would have it. The experiences of another American counterinsurgency hero, General Edward Lansdale, provide an illuminating lens through which to consider the issue of friendship in the context of counterinsurgency. Lansdale, an Air Force officer and covert CIA agent, had a similarly close relationship with both Philippine president Ramon Magsaysay and South Vietnam's president, Ngo Dinh Diem. Lansdale, who helped defeat the communist (Huk) insurgency in the Philippines in the early 1950s and tried to do the

¹⁰ Nancy Youssef, "Pentagon rethinking value of major counterinsurgencies" *McClatchy*, May 12, 2010, <http://www.mcclatchydc.com/2010/05/12/94058/pentagon-rethinking-value-of-major.html>.

¹¹ Gant, *One Tribe at a Time*, 9. One blogger calls tribal engagement "quick, relatively low-resource (dollars, American troops and equipment) approach to toppling the Taliban." Greyhawk, "Tribal Engagement Afghanistan," *The Mudville Gazette*, April 17, 2010, <http://www.mudvillegazette.com/033556.html>.

¹² Gant, *One Tribe at a Time*, 15-16.

¹³ Gant, *One Tribe at a Time*, 17.

same in Vietnam afterward, spent many quiet hours playing the harmonica, engaging in philosophical discussions, and drinking tea with Magsaysay and Diem. His relationship with Magsaysay was particularly intimate and his descriptions remarkably evocative of Gant and *Sitting Bull*: “We were so close that we thought and spoke of each other as ‘brother,’ wrote Lansdale. “Our relationship was so deeply personal and involved shared risks to such an extent that I find it extremely difficult to discuss with anyone who wasn’t there at the time.”¹⁴

Despite Lansdale’s idyllic description, this relationship never existed entirely outside of the context of geopolitical power. In one instance, when Magsaysay gave a speech written by a Filipino, instead of an American advisor, Lansdale hit him so hard, he knocked him out. Later, Lansdale would play down the incident, saying that it had just been a case of two “brothers” who were so close that they had forgotten protocol. The first time Lansdale met Diem, he slipped him a memo entitled “Notes on How to be a Prime Minister of Vietnam.” When asked about the memo, Lansdale said, “These were Vietnamese views that I tried to pass along to him.” Later, Lansdale would edit the Vietnamese constitution to make it more like the American document and rid it of any pesky Vietnamese archaisms.¹⁵

Lansdale’s conflation of mutual friendship and lop-sided power in his relationships with Magsaysay and Diem says much about the unacknowledged colonial underpinnings of the U.S. intervention in the Philippines and Vietnam. It also points to the colonial basis of the theory and practice of counterinsurgency that, thanks to Petraeus, has become the guiding U.S. doctrine in Iraq and Afghanistan. Written in 2006, the Army’s Counterinsurgency Field Manual re-introduces counterinsurgency doctrine of the Kennedy era—when Lansdale was at the height of his influence. The most incisive critics of the “new” counterinsurgency have underscored its historical and conceptual grounding in colonial ideology and practice. As Colonel and West Point professor Gian Gentile argued at a recent conference on counterinsurgency in Ft. Leavenworth, Kansas, current counterinsurgency doctrine is based on the colonial doctrine of the 1950s and 1960s, when England and France were in the last throes of their battles against national liberation movements in Kenya, Vietnam, Algeria, and elsewhere.¹⁶ The 2006 Counterinsurgency Field Manual is filled with anecdotes and lessons from imperial officers in these wars as well as from earlier imperial heroes like T.E. Lawrence.

Without acknowledging the colonial underpinnings of counterinsurgency, Gant nonetheless rejects some of the more blatantly colonial aspects of the current counterinsurgency strategy in Afghanistan. This much is clear in his demand that the coalition work through existing social structures rather than impose a national framework on the tribes. Gant is also sensitive to the dangers of the U.S. being seen as an imperial power, which is one reason why he argues that tribal engagement should be led by indigenous forces, with the US in advise and assist roles. Underscoring the importance of giving the initiative to the Afghan people, Gant argues that

¹⁴ Lansdale, quoted in Jonathan Nashel, *Edward Lansdale’s Cold War* (Boston: University of Massachusetts Press, 2008), 31.

¹⁵ Nashel, 32, 56-57.

¹⁶ Gian Gentile, “Another Perspective on COIN in Afghanistan,” May 11, 2010, Presentation, COIN Symposium: Counterinsurgency Operations in Afghanistan, COIN Center, Ft. Leavenworth, KS.

especially in Afghanistan, which has been the object of imperial desire for centuries, “A lead US role can be interpreted by the population as occupation.”¹⁷

Yet, can this or any form of counterinsurgency light actually transcend the colonial trappings of counterinsurgency theory and practice? If we take “One Tribe at a Time” as the potential roadmap to this end, then the answer, quite simply, is no. Despite Gant’s attempt to distinguish tribal engagement from the flawed strategy currently being followed by the U.S. in Afghanistan, this particular form of counterinsurgency reflects many of the blind spots, unwitting forms of dominance over the local population, and the colonial premises of the strategy it seeks to replace.

More than anything, Gant and other proponents of tribal engagement fault the current strategy for failing to understand the socio-political structures and culture of the Afghan people. This is a common quip of counterinsurgency heroes. But it is also subject to critique. T.E. Lawrence’s native dress and Lansdale’s familiarity with Asian astrology were not just reflections of their immersion into the native culture. They were also reflections of a desire to escape their western bourgeois existence that manifested as an orientalist romance of non-western culture. Lawrence would write, “The Arabs appealed to my imagination. It is the old, old civilization clear of household gods, and half the trappings which ours hasten to assume.”¹⁸ Gant’s characterization of the Pashtun, the majority tribe and culture in Afghanistan, evokes a similar romance with a simpler past.

As with Lawrence and Lansdale, this romance often simplifies and distorts the actual history and socio-political context of the culture they claim to know so well. If those stressing the central government approach are guilty of projecting the idea of the nation-state onto Afghanistan, then Gant is arguably guilty of projecting an ill-understood category of the tribe onto a more messy reality. Many scholars of Afghan history and politics argue that Gant’s basic claim that Afghan society is fundamentally tribal is too simple. It goes against evidence that neither the Afghan population nor the Taliban identify themselves or make political choices primarily on the basis of tribal affiliation.¹⁹ This is not the first time the West has “discovered” tribes and their potential value in counterinsurgency. In fact, in his memoir, *Seven Pillars of Wisdom*, Lawrence wrote of “building a ladder of tribes to the objective.” Counterinsurgency expert and advisor to the US government, David Kilcullen, recently recalled this wisdom when he analyzed the importance of tribal engagement in Iraq.²⁰ Counterinsurgency doctrine is replete with analogies across space and time. Thus, the tribal engagement strategy in Afghanistan is based in part on an analogy to Iraq, and more specifically to Anbar province, where local Sunni tribes turned against the insurgency.

The moniker of Sitting Bull applied to a Pashtun tribal elder epitomizes Gant’s particularly ahistorical and acontextual sense of tribes. Gant’s romantic rendition of Noorafzhal as a noble

¹⁷ Gant, *One Tribe at a Time*, 29.

¹⁸ Lawrence, quoted in Irving Howe, “T.E. Lawrence: The Problem of Heroism,” *Hudson Review* (Autumn 1962): 36-37.

¹⁹ Joshua Faust, “Tribe and prejudice: America's 'new hope' in Afghanistan,” *The National*, Feb. 11, 2010, <http://www.thenational.ae/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20100211/REVIEW/702119988>.

²⁰ David Kilcullen, “Anatomy of a Tribal Revolt,” *Small Wars Journal*, Aug. 29, 2007, <http://smallwarsjournal.com/blog/2007/08/anatomy-of-a-tribal-revolt/>.

Native American is just one aspect of the larger romance Gant has of the Pashtun warrior, who he describes in paradoxical terms as extremely loyal and apt to turn against you at a moment's notice: "I love the people and the rich history of Afghanistan," he writes. "They will give you their last bite of food in the morning and then try to kill you in the evening." As Lieutenant Colonel John Malevich of the Counterinsurgency Center has pointed out, Gant's description of the Pashtun tribal warrior brings to mind Rousseau's idealization of the "noble savage." U.S. counterinsurgency warriors unwittingly emulate their Pashtun counterparts when they preach the need to show the Afghans that you are both their "best friend" and "worst enemy."²¹

In line with many Western advocates of counterinsurgency in Afghanistan, Gant's admiration of Pashtun culture is threaded through with orientalist claims about native intuition. "You damn well better know yourself," Gant tells the Special Forces officers he trains, "because they know you. The Afghan people have a knack for looking straight through deception and incompetence."²² These claims are typical of the lay anthropology that marks colonial culture and counterinsurgency doctrine and that has long been a part of the U.S. military establishment. In a 1963 briefing paper to Defense Secretary Robert McNamara, Lansdale wrote that the Vietnamese people "have that unique Asian radar, quick to read your inner personality—whether you genuinely like them or [are] merely putting on an act. Condescension, even minor, weakens influence."²³ In addition to elevating the Afghan people, Gant idealizes Afghan tribal politics, referring to it as a "natural democracy," thus brushing aside and minimizing questions about women and human rights. Here again, there is an uncanny similarity to Lansdale, who also drew parallels between his natives and American democracy, characterizing the American revolutionaries and the Vietnamese people as "kindred souls."²⁴

What is most striking, admittedly moving, and also problematic in Gant's romantic narrative is his deep personal love for Sitting Bull and his tribe. In "One Tribe at a Time," Gant recalls many afternoons playing with the children in the village, eating with the tribal elders, and visiting with the women. One photo shows him kneeling behind a young boy and wrapping his arms around him in a warm, avuncular embrace. "Their families became our families." "In short," he writes, "they loved us and we loved them." In his presentation at the Counterinsurgency Symposium, Gant was almost tearful when he spoke about his imminent reunion with Sitting Bull. "First," he said, "we're going to cry together." Like T.E. Lawrence and Lansdale, who were always itching to return "home," Gant has spent the past year dreaming of returning to Sitting Bull and his home in Afghanistan.²⁵

However much T.E. Lawrence and Lansdale loved Arabia, the Philippines, or Vietnam, it is difficult to argue that their actions actually had a positive effect on the people there. T.E. Lawrence helped the Arab tribes free themselves from the yoke of the Ottoman empire only to

²¹ Gant, *One Tribe at a Time*, 9; John Malevich, "It's the Tribes, That's Stupid," *Small Wars Journal*, March 12, 2010, <http://smallwarsjournal.com/blog/2010/03/its-the-tribes-thats-stupid>; Christian Cabaniss, "USMC and COIN in Afghanistan," May 12, 2010, Presentation, COIN Symposium: Counterinsurgency Operations in Afghanistan, COIN Center, Ft. Leavenworth, KS.

²² Gant, *One Tribe at a Time*, 14.

²³ Lansdale, quoted in Nashel, 146.

²⁴ Gant, *One Tribe at a Time*, 15; Lansdale, quoted in Nashel, 110.

²⁵ Gant, *One Tribe at a Time*, 20, 22; Gant, "AFPAK Hands/Tribal Engagement," Presentation, May 12, 2010, COIN Symposium: Counterinsurgency Operations in Afghanistan, COIN Center, Ft. Leavenworth, KS.

see the region divided up between England and France afterwards. Lansdale's success in the Philippines paved the way for a series of corrupt pro-American leaders whose anti-democratic policies kept a majority of the Filipino populace in abject poverty. The Diem regime in Vietnam was similarly opposed to real social reform. When it failed to achieve legitimacy with the people, the U.S. supported the coup that removed him and escalated its intervention in the region, leaving at least four million Vietnamese soldiers and civilians dead.

It is too soon to tell whether and how Major Gant will influence the outcome of the war in Afghanistan. A few lone critics have pointed out the potentially negative fallout of the "light footprint" his team has already left in Konar province. Despite his idealization of the tribes *writ large*, Gant threw his lot in with just one tribe, thereby picking sides in a complex web of tribal competition and, in some cases, serious antagonisms. When Gant committed his team to helping Sitting Bull's tribe reclaim land that had been usurped by a nearby tribe, he risked creating even more unrest and violence in the region. Gant claims the dispute was resolved—but he hasn't disclosed exactly how—whether through combat, negotiations, or both. Moreover, he has yet to acknowledge that he inserted the U.S. into tribal politics that may have little if anything to do with the war against the Taliban and Al-Qaeda. More recent experiments with tribal engagement have born this problem out. In March, a land dispute between two sub-tribes of the Shinwari tribe left at least 13 Afghans dead. The conflict has stirred accusations of government favoritism for one of the sub-tribes and left the survivors in both more interested in their rivalry than in fulfilling their promise to fight the Taliban.²⁶

While this experiment in tribal engagement is new for the Americans in Afghanistan, it isn't altogether new in Afghanistan. The British tried this approach at the end of the nineteenth century, but it was premised on a 100-year colonial occupation that the British army failed to achieve. Gant's plan, which calls for a small group of American soldiers who "feel the calling" to set up small outposts in which they will live amongst the Afghan tribes for years on end, would effectively create a miniature version of such an occupation. Gant's caption below a photo of an American flag flying above a clay hut against the backdrop of the mountains reads like an advertisement for such a colony: "Someday you too could fly an American flag outside your firebase, as we did at ours here in Asadabad."²⁷ But of course Gant would never call it a colony or acknowledge the possibility of the colonized rising against the colonizers.

Despite Afghanistan's reputation as the "graveyard of empires," Gant naively assumes not just that the tribes and America are kindred spirits, but also that the tribal interest is and will remain synonymous with the U.S. national interest. If this were really the case, why would there need to be a permanent outpost of American soldiers in these tribes? This abstract question raises a more immediate one concerning the interests of Sitting Bull and that of the United States. What will happen if Sitting Bull rejects the agenda Gant plans to bring with him back to Afghanistan? More broadly, what will happen if Sitting Bull's tribe or any other tribe refuses to accept the terms of the American intervention in his territory?

²⁶ Alissa Rubin, "Afghan Tribal Rivalries Bedevil a U.S. Plan," *New York Times*, March 11, 2010, <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/03/12/world/asia/12afghan.html>.

²⁷ Gant, *One Tribe at a Time*, 42.

So far, the counterinsurgency strategy follows the no neutral principle that if you are not with us, you are against us. When it comes to Sitting Bull, this premise clearly makes Gant uncomfortable. If Sitting Bull rejects his plan, he says, he will “call the whole tribal engagement thing off” and get on the next plane out of Afghanistan.²⁸ Gant does not want to get in the way of Sitting Bull’s ability to shape his own destiny and that of his tribe.

The problem is that, under the terms of the current U.S. occupation, Sitting Bull’s destiny and that of the entire Afghan population has become inextricably linked to American power. The U.S. invaded Afghanistan to root out Al Qaeda and prevent the Taliban from providing sanctuary in its midst. While few openly admit it, the “hearts and minds” approach has always been bound up in geopolitical power relations that play out in the individual relationships between American advisors and the military and civilian leaders in the sites of insurgency. The concept of partnering euphemizes this power dynamic, but even at the level of language, this cover-up often cannot hold. The common switch back and forth between the language of partnering and advising and the language of mentoring and protecting reveals the deep and ongoing link between counterinsurgency and colonialism. Bound up in this web of political domination is the ever-looming threat of physical violence. The coalition would rather achieve its goals through a “hearts and minds” approach, but, as recent civilian casualty rates attest, it can and will continue to use guns and drones as well.

As Gant and other advocates of counterinsurgency have argued, “It’s all about relationships.”²⁹ Yet, in the context of counterinsurgency, the relationship between the coalition forces and the Afghan people is far from clear. General McChrystal’s recent comment that, “This fight is for the Afghan people, it’s not with the Afghan people. It’s to protect the Afghan people” does little to clarify things and actually raises more questions than it answers. What is the difference between fighting “for” and “with” the Afghan people? And why didn’t he mention the protection of the American people? After all, isn’t the whole operation premised on that principle? If counterinsurgency is really a humanitarian mission, we should just dissolve the U.S. army and hand the whole thing over to the UN or the Peace Corps. This confusion over American power in counterinsurgency gives new support to Walter Lippmann’s claim that American imperialism is “largely unconscious.”³⁰

Gant’s tribal engagement is just one of the latest attempts to revise and rework the inherently contradictory and colonial doctrine of counterinsurgency through which empires and imperial soldiers seek to equate their own interests with those of foreign populations. Just as counterinsurgency light does not escape the fundamental contradictions of the basic doctrine, it is unlikely that any amount of tweaking or re-working of the counterinsurgency doctrine will. As T.E Lawrence wrote and knew too well, “All the revision in the world will not save a bad first draft: for the architecture of the thing comes, or fails to come, in the first conception, and the

²⁸ Gant, “AFPAK Hands/Tribal Engagement”

²⁹ Gant, *One Tribe at a Time*, 51; Gary Anderson, “Building Professional and Personal Relationships in Counterinsurgency Environments,” *Small Wars Journal*, May 13, 2010, <http://smallwarsjournal.com/blog/2010/05/building-professional-and-pers/>.

³⁰ Interview: McChrystal Says Solution In Afghanistan Is Developing Governance,” Radio Free Europe, June 30, 2009, http://www.rferl.org/content/Interview_US_Commander_In_Afghanistan_Says_Real_Solution_Is_Developing_Governance/1765881.html; Lippmann, quoted in Ronald Steel, *Walter Lippmann and the American Century* (Boston: Little Brown, 1980), 237.

revision only affects the detail and ornament, alas!"³¹ In this context, any serious attempt to address the self-delusions and negative impact of the current U.S. strategy in Afghanistan will have to consider turning counterinsurgency light into counterinsurgency zero.

Hannah Gurman is an assistant professor at New York University's Gallatin School and is in the early stages of a larger research project in an attempt to (re)institutionalize counterinsurgency in the U.S. military and foreign policy establishment.

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³¹ T. E. Lawrence to Bruce Rogers, 20 August 1931, T.E. Lawrence Studies Association, http://www.telawrencestudies.org/telawrencestudies/writings_and_criticism/the_odyssey_wilson.htm.