

# Let's Build an Army to Win *All* Wars

## POINT < COUNTERPOINT

By G I A N P . G E N T I L E

**T**he U.S. Army officer corps has not seriously debated the content of the many doctrinal field manuals (FM) published over the past 2 years (for example, FM 3–24, *Counterinsurgency*, FM 3–0, *Operations*, and FM 3–07, *Stability Operations and Support Operations*). Though these manuals have been successfully pushed through the bureaucratic lines of the Army's senior leadership, few other officers raised questions about the wisdom of employing American military power to build nations where none exist or where an American military presence is not wanted. Instead, the Army has been steamrolled by a process that proposes its use as an instrument of nationbuilding in the most unstable parts of the world. Nationbuilding, rather than fighting, has become the core function of the U.S. Army.

The Army under the Petraeus Doctrine “is entering into an era in which armed conflict will be protracted, ambiguous, and continuous—with the application of force becoming a lesser part of the soldier's repertoire.”<sup>1</sup> The implication of this doctrine is that the Army should be transformed into a light infantry-based constabulary force designed to police the world's endless numbers of unstable areas. The concept rests on the assumption that the much-

touted “surge” in Iraq was a successful feat of arms, an assertion that despite the claims of punditry supporters in the press has yet to be proven. The war in Iraq is not yet over.

### Fighting Is Not Priority

The Army's new and most important doctrinal manuals confirm that fighting as a core competency has been eclipsed in importance and primacy by the function of nationbuilding. This does not mean that in these manuals the ability of the Army to fight is not necessary, only that it is a subordinate function to the capability to do such things as establish local governance, conduct information operations, build economies and service infrastructure, and provide security, all of which are elements of building a nation. Yet by placing nationbuilding as its core competency over fighting, our Army is beginning to lose its way, and we court strategic peril as a result.

Juxtaposing an older version of the Army's operational doctrine with its current doctrine can shed light on this problem. In providing a definition for what commanders should strive for in the application of operational art, the Army's 1986 version of FM 100–5, *Operations*, noted that “[o]perational art thus involves fundamental decisions about when and where to fight and whether to accept

or decline battle.” The recently released current version of FM 3–0 states that, for the commander, operational art involves “knowing when and if simultaneous combinations [of offense, defense, and stability operations] are appropriate and feasible.”

The differences between these two statements are striking. They illustrate the gulf that separates the organizing principles of their respective doctrine. In the 1986 version of FM 100–5, the organizing principle is to *fight*, pure and simple. Yet in the current version of FM 3–0, the organizing principle is not necessarily to fight (although fighting would clearly be a part of offense, defense, and possibly even in stability operations) but to *combine* the different types of operations. As a concept for higher level Army planners, the notion of “combining” different types of operations in the field to accomplish objectives might be satisfactory. However, as an organizing principle for the Army writ large, how does the notion of combining different types of operations guide the force? When I was a second lieutenant in Germany in 1987, I read FM 100–5. When I read it, if nothing

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M1A1 Main Battle Tanks engage targets during Exercise Bright Star, Egypt

U.S. Army (Jose M. Hernandez)

else I understood how my tank platoon fit into the larger picture of Army operations. But today, with the new doctrine, that singular focus is gone and replaced by a fuzzy notion of combining different types of operations. If a rifle company commander sits down and reads the Army's high-profile doctrinal manuals, he learns to be an occupier, a policeman, and an administrator—but not a fighter.

In the Army's current operational field manual, there are no maps, no arrows, and no symbols representing friend and foe, only a loose collection of blocks, squares, and figures representing fuzzy conceptual notions of different types of operations and suggestions of how to combine them. This observation may seem simplistic and trivial to some, but it does point to the larger problem of the Army's shift away from fighting as its organizing principle. The key assumption that underpins the Petraeus Doctrine is that the threat most likely to face American ground forces will be little more robust and capable than a lightly armed insurgent on the model seen in Iraq.

The result is that the Army has constructed a concept of the future security environment that precludes fighting as the Army's core function and has instead replaced it with nationbuilding. This action is not simply dangerous; it potentially neglects key

#### GEN Petraeus discusses surge with Iraqi army general



U.S. Army (L. Eric Jewell)

aspects of U.S. national security. Worst of all, this approach ignores the requirement to objectively and accurately answer the questions that must drive thinking, organizing, and modernizing inside the Army: What is the strategic purpose for which American ground combat forces will be required to deploy and fight? Whom and where do they fight? How should they fight? What are the joint operational concepts driving change in the way American ground forces fight?

*if a rifle company commander reads the Army's high-profile doctrinal manuals, he learns to be an occupier, a policeman, and an administrator—but not a fighter*

The Army's senior officer in charge of writing its doctrine, Lieutenant General William Caldwell, recently noted that "the future is not one of major battles and engagements fought by armies on battlefields devoid of population; instead, the course of conflict will be decided by forces operating among the people of the world."<sup>2</sup> The newly released Army doctrine for stability operations, written under General Caldwell's supervision, embraces missions and tasks that can only be described as building a nation.

Retired Army lieutenant colonel John Nagl, author of *Learning to Eat Soup with a Knife*, is so cocksure of the efficacy of Army combat power that he believes it will have the ability not only to dominate land warfare in general but also to "change entire societies." Reminiscent of Thomas Barnett's Pentagon blueprint argument of building new societies

on the Western model where they do not currently exist in the proverbial Third World is Nagl's concept for reorienting the long-term strategic mission of American ground forces.

The real question, in view of America's ongoing military experience in Iraq and Afghanistan, is whether the Army should be prepared to conduct stability operations, nationbuilding, counterinsurgency, and related operations for more than very brief periods. Experience to date both indicates the

limitations of American military capability to reshape other people's societies and governments and points to the limits of American military and economic resources in the conduct of these operations.

Currently, the Army is directed by Deputy Secretary of Defense Gordon England's Department of Defense (DOD) Directive 3000.05, "Military Support for Stability, Security, Transition, and Reconstruction Operations," which places stability operations on an equal level with offense and defense. Naturally and rightly we will comply. But the directive does at least present the appearance of a coda for the propagated notions of success in Iraq and Afghanistan. This directive, again viewed as coda, also reinforces the perception in some quarters of the Army that the advocates of the Petraeus Doctrine are a small cluster of true believers rather than military intellectuals ready to debate the issues in an objective and open forum.<sup>3</sup>

Granted, stability missions will come from the President and Secretary of Defense, and we must be prepared to execute, but in a world of limited resources, both strategy and military policy dictate that hard choices must be made in terms of how we train and organize. The choice should be to build an army on the organizing principle of fighting. From there should flow the ability to step in other directions to perform such missions as nationbuilding, as well as irregular and counterinsurgency warfare. Instead, we have our organizing principles inverted.

The Army officer corps needs to explore this issue beyond the narrow bureaucratic lines of its doctrinal production process and external influences. It needs to have a debate concern-

ing future missions and structures on the scale of the debates inside the Army between 1976 and 1982. During those years, there were at least 110 articles published in *Military Review* that fundamentally questioned the Service's operational doctrine that became known as Active Defense. This cutting and wide-ranging criticism did not just hover around the edges of the Active Defense doctrine but cut right to its core by challenging its assumptions, historical premises, and theories. One emblematic article from *Military Review* criticizing the new doctrine of the time argued that the U.S. Army "is currently pursuing a general warfare doctrine which is bankrupt—it will not work in practice." The value of this widespread criticism of the Active Defense doctrine was that it spurred a reevaluation of the doctrine that ultimately produced the 1986 version of FM 100–5, known as AirLand Battle. Aside from a handful of critical articles by firebrand writers such as Ralph Peters and Edward Luttwak, not much has been written that fundamentally questions current Army doctrine and where it is going. It is time to start.<sup>4</sup>

### Mired in Dogma

A certain group of defense thinkers dominating the Army's current intellectual climate appears to be advocating short-term expediencies rather than longer term strategic goals. They have published and spoken widely over the past 2 years and have been given a leading role in crafting current doctrine. From them one might infer that the Army has reached a synthesis in a dialectical process that has produced such manuals as FM 3–24, FM 3–0, and FM 3–07. And for these thinkers, there is no reason to go back into the dialectic; there is no reason to inject an antithesis into the process because we are at intellectual endstate. Nagl has argued as much in a recent opinion article where he stated that the Army, after 5 long and difficult years of "learning" in Iraq, has finally reached a "consensus" on how to do counterinsurgency.<sup>5</sup>

Nagl fabricates this notion of consensus and synthesis in a recent review essay about historian Brian Linn's important new intellectual history of the Army, *The Echo of Battle*. In the review, Nagl takes Linn's taxonomy of Army thinking over the years of Heroes, Managers, and Guardians and laments that the Army has failed to appreciate the need to be able to fight irregular and counterinsurgency warfare, and that it has cost the Nation greatly. But he ends the review on a positive note, suggesting that perhaps the Army has finally worked itself through this dialectic and reached a synthesis of nationbuilding. How else can one square Nagl's breathtaking statement of the Army being able to "change entire societies" if he did not see the intellectual dialectic within the Army coming to fruition and reaching its endstate?<sup>6</sup>

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**17<sup>th</sup> Fires Brigade Soldiers fire M198 155mm howitzer during combined live fire exercise**



U.S. Army (Lucas T. Swihart)

The Army's problem is more than just an academic debate. The intellectual climate inside the Service bears an uncomfortable similarity to the climate inside the British and French armies of the interwar period when doctrinal thinking conformed to preconceived ideas that sprang from political expediency and misinterpreted military experience. In most troubling ways, the thinking of those who would commit the Nation's ground forces to future missions on the Iraq model is producing a stultifying effect on the Army to the point where officers are mired in yet another form of military dogmatism, unable to think objectively about the present or the future of U.S. national security.

FM 3-24 (along with FM 3-0 and FM 3-07, which derive their organizing principles from it) has transfixed the Army. The manual has become the Army's Svengali. Rather than simple Service doctrine for how to do counterinsurgency, it has morphed into a Weltanschauung of sorts, dictating how the Army should perceive and respond to security problems around the world. The manual dictates that any instability problem producing an insurgency must be dealt with by establishing government legitimacy within that unstable country.<sup>7</sup> To establish government stability, a range of other things must happen as well: security for the population, building economies, creating essential services infrastructure, training local security forces, and so forth. In short, FM 3-24 has become code for nationbuilding.

From that basic concept is derived a standard operational and tactical approach: place

large numbers of American combat Soldiers on the ground, disperse them throughout the population to protect them, and from there security will be established and the process of nationbuilding can go forward. This concept dominates our Army. The pages of *Military Review*, which reflects the observations and experiences of the field Army fighting in Afghanistan and Iraq, show the dogmatism that the Service has come to. Now when a problem of insurgency presents itself, our only option is to send in combat brigades to "protect the people."

Former combat brigade commander in Afghanistan Colonel Michael Coss, who recently wrote in *Military Review* about his experience conducting counterinsurgency operations there, betrays the deep-seated dogmatism on counterinsurgency that has infiltrated the Army. When discussing the importance of the people in a counterinsurgency operation, Coss notes that the population is "the center of gravity in any insurgency."<sup>8</sup> Why must this always be the case? From a theoretical and historical standpoint, it certainly does not have to be. Moreover, from a creative operational standpoint, when trying to discover what a center of gravity might be, it does not have to be—and should not always be—the people. If it is, then we have already predetermined what our response will be: many boots on the ground marching to the exact beats of FM3-24, FM 3-0, FM 3-07, and their collective organizing principle of nationbuilding. Carl von Clausewitz teaches that a center of gravity is something to be discovered. The Army's new way of thinking has in effect

done the discovering for us, and we are left to blindly obey.

Former Marine officer and decorated Iraq combat veteran Nathaniel Fick, who currently is an analyst at a think tank in Washington, DC, noted in an opinion article that "every aspect of sound counterinsurgency strategy revolves around bolstering the government's legitimacy. When ordinary people lose their faith in their government, then they also lose faith in the foreigners who prop it up."<sup>9</sup> These two sentences are clear examples of how a certain theory of counterinsurgency warfare—developed in the 1950s and 1960s by such thinkers as the French army officer David Galula and British officer Sir Robert Thompson and based on government legitimacy and population security—has become the oracle for our current intellectual climate on military and foreign policy.<sup>10</sup> Why do we privilege this theory over others? Do we really believe that our world is closer to the counter-Maoist worldview of Galula and Thompson than perhaps to the imperial worldview of the British army officer C.E. Callwell of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century? We have detached this historically contingent theoretical approach to counterinsurgency from its contextual moorings and plotted it in the present as an action template for the future. We like to imagine that we think historically, but we have become the purveyors of ahistoricism.

So our current counterinsurgency, operational, and stability doctrines have moved well beyond simple Army doctrine and become the organizing principle for the Army and, more subtly, the shaper of an American foreign policy premised on intervention into unstable areas



LTG Odierno meets with Ninewa Province governor and local sheikhs in Tal Afar

U.S. Army (Curt Cashour)



Army Corps of Engineers district commander tours new sewage pumping station in Baghdad

U.S. Army (Brian D. Lehnhardt)

around the world with American ground forces as the primary engine for bringing about stability. The way ahead in Afghanistan seems clear, at least as the Army's intellectual climate dictates: existential nationbuilding. Another Army officer who has recently returned from battalion-level command in Afghanistan, Colonel Christopher Kolenda, tells us in a recently published opinion piece that the "way to win" in Afghanistan is to essentially build a new Afghanistan nation.<sup>11</sup>

However, sometimes the best approach to dealing with a problem of insurgency is not necessarily a focus on the people per se, but on the insurgent enemy. This does not mean, as many uniformed critics like to assert, that the enemy-centric approach means scorching the earth of a country by killing innocent civilians to get at the insurgents. Yet that is the usual criticism when we consider problems of insurgencies in ways other than protraction and focusing on populations, both of which demand the substantial involvement of American combat troops. Thus, when problems of insurgencies and other sources of instability present themselves to American military planners, the only option seemingly available is large numbers of American combat boots on the ground protect-

command, but it is not firing its rockets, and one can only conclude that those core competencies have atrophied.

Army combat brigades preparing for deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan at Fort Irwin, California, and Fort Polk, Louisiana, only prepare for counterinsurgency operations. Instead of spending time at battalion and brigade levels training to fight a like enemy, they instead focus on how to rebuild villages and talk in culturally sensitive ways to local nationals. Is this kind of training important for combat outfits preparing to deploy to real world counterinsurgency operations? Of course it is—and that is what they should be doing. But the Army should acknowledge what General Casey has been telling us: that we are out of balance and at some point need to get back into shape to conduct operations at the higher end of the conflict spectrum.

Arguing for rebuilding the Army's capacity for conventional operations does not mean taking the Service back to 1986 in order to recreate the old Soviet Union so we can prepare to fight World War II all over again in the Fulda Gap. Such accusations have become the standard—and wrongheaded—critique that purveyors

necessarily transferrable to another. One may be able to argue that combat platoons and companies can easily shift from counterinsurgency to conventional fighting. However, that same argument does not hold true for higher level organizations such as divisions and corps, which for the last 6 years have been conducting node-based operations. When was the last time an Army combat brigade or higher level organization at either of the training centers or in actual combat conducted a sustained ground campaign against an enemy organized along military lines and fights?<sup>15</sup>

History shows that when states focus their armies on doing nothing but counterinsurgency and world constabulary missions to the exclusion of preparing for conventional warfare, strategic failure can result.

In summer 2006 in southern Lebanon, the Israeli army suffered a significant battlefield defeat at the hands of Hizballah, who fought with conventional tactics centered on small infantry squads using machineguns, mortars, and antitank missiles. Israeli scholar Avi Kober and Army historian Matt Matthews have shown that the Israeli army's conventional fighting skills had atrophied due to many years of doing almost nothing but counterinsurgency operations in the Palestinian territories.<sup>16</sup>

The British army after World War I chose to mostly forget about fighting conventional wars and instead concentrated on building an imperial constabulary army to police its empire. In 1940, however, as the German army raced across France to the English Channel, the British army alongside the French was defeated by the Germans, who had spent their interwar years preparing for large-scale battles. The British barely missed strategic catastrophe by escaping back across the English Channel to England through the French port of Dunkirk.

And the future of war is not only counterinsurgencies such as Iraq and Afghanistan. One can imagine a range of possibilities that cover the full spectrum of war and conflict. A movement to gain contact with Iranian forces inside Iran by an American ground combat brigade seems plausible. A range of possibilities exist in Korea, from a collapse of North Korea requiring the South's occupation with American support to a higher level of intensity with some fighting as the North collapses, possibly drawing in American conventional combat forces. These are just two examples of possible scenarios where the Army will need to be able to fight on multiple levels of the conflict spectrum.

The Russian army attack into the breakaway Georgian province of South Ossetia

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ing the people from the insurgents. This is why the Army has become dogmatic.

#### **Atrophied Fighting Skills**

Not only has the Service's intellectual climate become rigid, but also its operational capability to conduct high-intensity fighting operations other than counterinsurgency has atrophied over the past 6 years. Consider an important white paper written by three Army colonels, all former combat brigade commanders in Iraq, to Army Chief of Staff General George Casey. In the paper, entitled "The King and I," these colonels rightly lament the atrophied capabilities of the Army's artillery branch to perform its basic warfighting function: firing its guns en masse against enemy targets. As the authors point out, 6-plus years of counterinsurgency operations have forced artillery units to carry out missions in Iraq and Afghanistan other than their core function.<sup>12</sup> For example, Army Lieutenant Colonel Paul Yingling's rocket artillery battalion is currently performing detainee operations in Iraq. Granted, it is doing critical missions for the

of counterinsurgency dogma like to throw at anybody who argues for a renewed focus on conventional capabilities. The Army does need to transform from its antiquated Cold War structure toward one that can deal with the security challenges of the new millennium and one focused primarily on fighting as its core competency.<sup>13</sup>

Many counterinsurgency experts claim that the Army will always be able to do higher intensity combat operations because that is, as they say, what the Service has always been good at. For these folks, since the Army has always been good at conventional operations, it is axiomatic that it always will be—that conventional warfighting capabilities will remain a constant. Historian and retired Army colonel Pete Mansoor, for example, accepts the premise that the Army's conventional capabilities remain "preeminent" in the world. He then argues for a strong focus on counterinsurgency and irregular types of operations.<sup>14</sup> Combat experience in Iraq and Afghanistan is often cited to argue that the Army, even though it is focused heavily on counterinsurgency, can easily step back into the conventional warfighting mode. Yet combat experience in one kind of war is not

should ring like a fire alarm to those who believe the future of war and conflict will only be “decided by forces operating among the people of the world” and not by armies fighting “major battles and engagements.”<sup>17</sup> Images of Georgian infantry moving under fire and columns of Russian tanks on the attack show that the days of like armies fighting each other on battlefields are far from over.

### Getting the Past Right

The U.S. Army must do what it takes to win the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. It must also be prepared to conduct stability operations and other forms of irregular warfare. But in looking toward the future with a close eye on events in Georgia, the recent past of Israel in southern Lebanon, and history, the Army must soon refocus itself toward conventional warfighting skills with the knowledge that, if called on, it can more easily shift to nationbuilding and counterinsurgency as it has done in Iraq. The Army's conduct of counterinsurgency and nationbuilding in Iraq, beginning in the spring of 2003, shows this to be the case.

The Army's lightning advance to Baghdad in spring 2003 in only a few weeks happened because it was a conventionally minded army trained for fighting. If it had focused the majority of its time and resources prior to the Iraq War on counterinsurgency and nationbuilding, it is reasonable to assume that the march to Baghdad would have been much more costly in American lives and

treasure and could have turned out much differently.

An Army that was trained to fight (potentially against the Soviet Union) in the 1980s, and retained in the 1990s, easily and quickly transitioned to counterinsurgency and nationbuilding operations in Iraq in summer 2003. This goes against current thinking by many DOD officials who claim that because the Service did not prepare for counterinsurgency prior to the Iraq War, it had to be rescued by the surge of troops under General Petraeus in February 2007.

Nagl argues that the Army's focus on winning only the “short campaigns” to topple Saddam resulted in a triumph “without victory as stubborn insurgents stymied America's conventional military power.” For Nagl, because the Army had not prepared for counterinsurgency operations prior to Iraq, it fumbled at it for the first 4 years until the 2007 surge.

This is not true, at least according to the recently released Army history of the Iraq War, *On Point II*. In fact, according to this history, the Army quickly transitioned out of the conventional fighting mode into the successful conduct of “full-spectrum” counterinsurgency and nationbuilding operations by the end of 2003. Only about 6 months into its counterinsurgency campaign, despite the fact that it did not have a formalized counterinsurgency doctrine, the Army across the board was carrying out “best practices”

in counterinsurgency operations. But even good counterinsurgency tactics, practiced by proficient combat outfits, cannot compensate for flawed strategies and policies.<sup>18</sup>

The same argument can be made for the Army's performance in Vietnam. Contrary to what has become conventional historical thinking, the Army did not lose the Vietnam War because it did not have a counterinsurgency doctrine prior to the war or because it did not understand how to do counterinsurgency.<sup>19</sup> Army General William Westmoreland understood classic counterinsurgency theory in 1965 and practiced it with a reasonable strategy to maintain the efficacy of the South Vietnamese government.

Westmoreland was not, as his critics like to argue, trying to fight World War II all over again in the jungles of Vietnam. Current scholarship supports this claim.<sup>20</sup> The Army and the Nation lost the war for reasons having less to do with tactics than with the will, perseverance, cohesion, indigenous support, and sheer determination of the other side, coupled with the absence of any of those things on the American side.

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Man displays inked finger after voting in Iraq's first official democratic elections at polling site secured by Iraqi army, December 2005



U.S. Army (Ronald R. Gaerte)

Yet the counterinsurgency and stability operations experts in the Army continue to bludgeon us with the historical “lessons learned” cudgel. They tell us that we failed in Iraq from 2003 until 2007 (but were rescued by the surge in 2007) because we did not learn the lessons of the past that provide clear templates for victory in counterinsurgencies and irregular war. In a recent interview on National Public Radio, General Caldwell told the story of the Army conducting military occupations over many years and failing to learn and retain lessons each time. His implicit point was that if the Army had paid attention to these lessons learned and formalized them into doctrine, the first 3 years of the war in Iraq might have turned out differently.<sup>21</sup>

And that same “lessons learned” cudgel is used to beat the Army down the continued path of focusing itself primarily on stability operations, counterinsurgency, and nationbuilding. Since

synthesis and consensus have been achieved in the mind of the true believers, any questioning and probing of it is met with stiff resistance and outright rejection. In this sense, anti-intellectualism is alive and well in parts of the Army and the American defense establishment.

### Strategy Is about Choices

Good strategy and sound military policy are premised on making choices and establishing priorities. Stephen Biddle and Jeffrey Friedman point that simple fact out in an important essay that analyzes the 2006 Israeli-Lebanon war.<sup>22</sup> They argue that the war will be a critical case study for the U.S. Army in how it organizes itself for the future while fighting the ongoing wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. For Biddle and Friedman, hard choices must be made for a future security environment that they argue will be neither simply one of irregular wars against a stealthy guerrilla enemy fought “amongst” the people, nor, as they rightly state, one of a Cold War reincarnated, involving only higher end conventional warfare.

So choice is an important quality in strategy and in military and foreign policies. The choice for American foreign policy has already been made for the country: American military intervention in unstable portions of the world. This is a supreme problem for the American polity since the issue has not been debated and decided with involvement by the American people and their elected representatives in Congress.<sup>23</sup>

And down one level within the Army, it seems that for now choices have already been made for us, too. We are organizing ourselves around the principle of nationbuilding rather than fighting. For defense thinkers such as Nagl, that principle has turned into a synthetic consensus. To repeat, how else can one explain his most profound and deeply troubling statement that the Army, in the future, will have the capability to “change entire societies”? In this sense, the caricature of Nagl as a “crusader” seems correct.<sup>24</sup>

The world has seen firsthand what happens when American combat power tries to change societies from the barrel of a gun. Such arguments—elegant when conducted in doctrine, opinion articles, and academic journals—lose their prettiness and instead become mired in the blood and guts of the reality of mean streets and roads in foreign lands. If the U.S. Army is directed to ride down those roads and streets by the President, then of course we will go and do our damndest to win. But we should

be able to fight when we get there. If not, then most of the blood and guts will be ours. **JFQ**

### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Andrew J. Bacevich, “The Petraeus Doctrine,” *The Atlantic*, October 2008, available at <[www.theatlantic.com/doc/200810/petraeus-doctrine](http://www.theatlantic.com/doc/200810/petraeus-doctrine)>.

<sup>2</sup> William B. Caldwell IV and Steven M. Leonard, “Field Manual 3–07, Stability Operations: Upshifting the Engine of Change,” *Military Review* (July–August 2008).

<sup>3</sup> See, for example, Peter R. Mansoor’s dismissive and somewhat condescending critique of the author’s writings in “Misreading the History of the Iraq War,” available at <<http://smallwarsjournal.com/blog/2008/03/misreading-the-history-of-the/>>.

<sup>4</sup> See John Romjue, *From Active Defense to Airland Battle: The Development of Army Doctrine, 1973–1986* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command, Historical Monograph Series, 1984). For critiques of FM 3–24, see Ralph Peters, “Dishonest Doctrine: A Selective Use of History Taints the COIN Manual,” *Armed Forces Journal* (December 2007); Edward Luttwak, “Dead End: Counterinsurgency Warfare as Military Malpractice,” *Harpers* (February 2007); and Michael Vlahos, “Fighting Identity: Why We Are Losing Our Wars,” *Military Review* (November–December 2007).

<sup>5</sup> John A. Nagl and Adam Scher, “How to Smooth the Transition in Iraq,” *Christian Science Monitor*, October 6, 2008.

<sup>6</sup> John A. Nagl, “Unprepared,” *RUSI Journal* 153, no. 2 (April 2008).

<sup>7</sup> Field Manual (FM) 3–24, *Counterinsurgency* (Washington, DC: Department of the Army, December 15, 2006).

<sup>8</sup> Michael A. Coss, “Operation Mountain Lion: CJTF 76 in Afghanistan, Spring 2006,” *Military Review* (January–February 2008). Emphasis added.

<sup>9</sup> Nathaniel Fick and Vikram J. Singh, “Winning the Battle, Losing the Faith,” *International Herald Tribune*, October 6, 2008.

<sup>10</sup> For the influence of David Galula and Robert Thompson on FM 3–24, see Stathis N. Kalyvas, “The New U.S. Army/Marine Corps Counterinsurgency Field Manual as Political Science and Political Praxis,” in *Perspective on Politics* 6, no. 2 (June 2008).

<sup>11</sup> Christopher Kolenda, “How to Win in Afghanistan,” *Weekly Standard*, October 13, 2008.

<sup>12</sup> Sean McFarland, Michael Shields, and Jeffrey Snow, “The King and I: The Impending Crisis in Field Artillery’s Ability to Provide Fire Support to Maneuver Commanders,” U.S. Army White Paper, n.d., available at <[www.npr.org/documents/2008/may/artillerywhitepaper.pdf](http://www.npr.org/documents/2008/may/artillerywhitepaper.pdf)>.

<sup>13</sup> On Army transformation from its Cold War structure to one relevant for future security threats, see Douglas A. MacGregor, *Transformation under Fire: Revolutionizing How America Fights* (Westport, CT: Praeger Press, 2003).

<sup>14</sup> Peter R. Mansoor, *Baghdad at Sunrise: A Brigade Commander’s War in Iraq* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008).

<sup>15</sup> To see how Army combat brigades only train on counterinsurgency at the training centers, see Dennis Steele, “NTC: Between Hollywood and Hell,” *Army Magazine* (July 2008).

<sup>16</sup> Matt M. Matthews, *We Were Caught Unprepared: The 2006 Hezbollah-Israeli War*, Long War Series Occasional Paper 26 (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Combat Studies Institute Press, 2008); Avi Kober, “The Israeli Defense Forces in the Second Lebanon War: Why the Poor Performance,” *Journal of Strategic Studies* 31 (February 2008).

<sup>17</sup> Caldwell and Leonard.

<sup>18</sup> Donald P. Wright and Timothy R. Reese, *On Point II: Transition to the New Campaign: The United States Army in Operation Iraqi Freedom, May 2003–January 2005* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Combat Studies Institute Press, 2008).

<sup>19</sup> For the standard argument that the Army could have won in Vietnam if it had learned and applied classic counterinsurgency techniques, see John A. Nagl, *Learning to Eat Soup with a Knife: Counterinsurgency Lessons from Malaya and Vietnam* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005); and Lewis Sorley, *A Better War: The Unexamined Victories and Final Tragedy of America’s Last Years in Vietnam* (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1999). Also see Andrew Krepinevich, *The Army and Vietnam* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986).

<sup>20</sup> The best examples of this corrective scholarship are Andrew Birtle, *U.S. Army Counterinsurgency and Contingency Operations Doctrine, 1942–1976* (Washington, DC: U.S. Army Center of Military History, 2006); Dale Andrade, “Westmoreland Was Right: Learning the Wrong Lessons from the Vietnam War,” *Small Wars and Insurgencies* 19, no. 2 (June 2008); and Andrew Birtle, “PROVN, Westmoreland, and the Historians: A Reappraisal,” *Journal of Military History* 72 (October 2008).

<sup>21</sup> John A. Nagl and Brian Burton, “Learning as We Go: The US Army Adapts to Counterinsurgency in Iraq, July 2004–December 2006,” *Small Wars and Insurgencies* 19, no. 3 (September 2008); Robert Cassidy, *Counterinsurgency and the Global War on Terror: Military Culture and Irregular War* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2006); and William B. Caldwell IV, “New Army Field Manual Is Road Map to Stabilization,” interview by J.J. Sutherland, National Public Radio, October 12, 2008, available at <[www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=95460480](http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=95460480)>. For a corrective to the surge-triumph narrative, see Gian P. Gentile, “A (Slightly) Better War: A Narrative and Its Defects,” *World Affairs* (Summer 2008).

<sup>22</sup> Stephen Biddle and Jeffrey A. Friedman, *The 2006 Lebanon Campaign and the Future of Warfare: Implications for Army and Defense Policy* (Carlisle Barracks, PA: U.S. Army War College, Strategic Studies Institute, September 2008).

<sup>23</sup> Bacevich.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.