Waiting for Godot in Iraq

F. J. Bing West

As the war in Iraq enters a period of uncertainty, a highly regarded former Assistant Secretary of Defense faces four challenges facing our military effort.

Developing a National Counterinsurgency Capability for the War on Terror

John Hillen, Ph.D.

The Assistant Secretary of State for Political-Military Affairs, Dr. Hillen calls for a COIN strategic framework that incorporates all the instruments of national power.

Using Occam’s Razor to Connect the Dots: The Ba’ath Party and the Insurgency in Tal Afar

Captain Travis Patriquin, U.S. Army

Long ago, Saddam Hussein positioned loyal Ba’athists in Tal Afar to neutralize political and ethnic enclaves, and they now support the insurgent forces in the city.

Commander’s Assessment: South Baghdad

Lieutenant Colonel Ross A. Brown U.S. Army

A former squadron commander discusses his unit’s year in Iraq and lists his 11 commandants for winning the COIN war in South Baghdad.

Thailand: Anatomy of a Counterinsurgency Victory

Thomas A. Marks, Ph.D.

For 30 plus years, the Thai government battled a communist insurgency. A noted COIN expert dissects why and how the government finally prevailed.

Mounted Vertical Maneuver: A Giant Leap Forward in Maneuver and Sustainment


Arguing for Mounted Vertical Maneuver, Swan and McMichael assert that the concept will provide versatile new options that will extend the reach and power of future joint force commanders.

Air Mechanization: An Expensive and Fragile Concept

Lieutenant Colonel John Gordon IV, Ph.D., U.S. Army, Retired;
Colonel David E. Johnson, Ph.D., U.S. Army, Retired; and Peter A. Wilson

Arguing against air-mechanization, authors Gordon, Johnson, and Wilson assert that the concept disregards relevant history, depends on questionable assumptions, and would involve massive spending.
WRITING CONTEST WINNERS

74  3d Place (COIN Competition)—Counterinsurgency Intelligence in a “Long War”: The British Experience in Northern Ireland
   Brian A. Jackson, Ph.D.
   As the British experience in Northern Ireland has shown, the successful counterinsurgent must diverge considerably from "classical intelligence" methods.

86  4th Place (COIN Competition)—The Paradox of Logistics in Insurgencies and Counterinsurgencies
   Lieutenant Colonel Marian E. Vlasak, U.S. Army
   Outgunned insurgents have long been adept at turning their superior opponents’ logistical systems into liabilities. Lessons learned from China and Vietnam could help enlighten today’s COIN thinkers.

STAND ALONE

96  Breaking the Tether of Fuel
   Naval Research Advisory Committee Future Fuels Study Panel
   More fuel-efficient vehicles and better fuel management can significantly extend the operational reach of Army and Marine Corps units. Here’s what the Marines are doing to get there.

101 Clausewitz’s Schwerpunkt: Mistranslated from German—Misunderstood in English
    Milan Vego, Ph.D.
    Army leaders should reexamine the center of gravity concept and consider adopting the German Army’s Schwerpunkt as a campaign planning tool.

INSIGHTS

110 Dealing with the Iraqi Populace: An Arab-American Soldier’s Perspective
    Sergeant Mounir Elkhamri, U.S. Army
    A Middle East military analyst, combat veteran, and fluent Arabic linguist tells us what problems concern Iraqis the most and how Soldiers should respond.

Classics Revisited

Book Reviews Contemporary readings for the professional