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BY WILLIAM S. LIND****On War #152**

## Latin Beat

By William S. Lind

[The views expressed in this article are those of Mr. Lind, writing in his personal capacity. They do not reflect the opinions or policy positions of the Free Congress Foundation, its officers, board or employees, or those of Kettle Creek Corporation.]

Time and again, I find it necessary to remind myself and readers of this column that Fourth Generation war includes much more than the eternal conflict between Christendom (what's left of it) and Islam. It is war on many fronts, and the southern front, Latin America, has recently witnessed several interesting developments.

In Venezuela, ex-paratrooper President Hugo Chavez recently ordered his military to make study of Fourth Generation war its top priority. More details I do not know, but I suspect the intention here is probably defensive. Chavez says he fears American military intervention in Venezuela, which may or may not be a pose (it seems that in every army, the Airborne is a magnet for the worst and the dumbest). Chavez, and everyone else in the world, has learned from Iraq how to fight the American military. Making the Hammes mistake, Chavez may understand 4GW as just a new term for insurgency, and his directive to his commanders may amount to little more than preparing an insurgency-based defense against Uncle Sam. If others know more details about the Venezuelan situation, I would be happy to hear them.

More interesting from a 4GW standpoint are events in Bolivia, where *Indianismo* took over the government with the election of Evo Morales as President. Evo Morales also represents the coca farmers, and he has already begun to dismantle the American-financed and American-run program to discourage the growing of coca.

Both his Indian background and his connection with the coca farmers give Morales an interesting option, the option of waging offensive Fourth Generation war. Fourth Generation war is above all a contest for legitimacy. In much of Latin America, the state's legitimacy is already shaky. The collaboration of some Latin governments with the American government in programs such as eradicating coca fields through aerial spraying reduces their legitimacy further. Helping a rich country destroy poor farmers' crops in your own country almost guarantees you win the Order of Quisling, First Class (the medal shows two Norwegian lions rampant, holding an inverted chamber pot).

Morales can present himself, not only within Bolivia but well beyond its borders, as a champion of the Indians and the coca growers. Both are potentially a powerful base, and the coca growers are part of a larger system, the drug trade, that is already waging war against the hated gringos. What would be the effects, both on local states such as Peru and on American interests in the region, if Indians outside Bolivia started to look on Morales as their legitimate leader, without regard to state boundaries? Morales's first, unofficial, Indian inauguration as President, which was roughly modeled on the coronation of an Inca, suggests he may perceive this potential.

Similarly, how may coca farmers in countries such as Columbia regard the President of another country in the region who helps coca growers instead of cooperating in poisoning their crops? Might they too see him as their leader, without regard for national boundaries? Might they be willing to follow him rather than their own state's leaders, including in a confrontation with America?

Fourth Generation offensives seek not to violate state borders but to transcend them and render them irrelevant. Governments of other states are bypassed rather than confronted, much the way Third Generation infiltration tactics bypass enemy strong points. Both the dispossessed Indians and the besieged coca farmers of portions of Latin America offer Evo Morales fertile soil for a Fourth Generation offensive. It just might happen that Bolivia's long-desired corridor to the sea runs not through northern Chile but from Cusco to Callao.

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## On War #151

### The Long War

By William S. Lind

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Every four years, the Pentagon releases its Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR), more accurately the Quadrennial Defense Rubberstamp. Usually, it offers the same, more of the same or less of the same. That is true of this QDR as well, with one interesting exception. Perhaps uniquely in the annals of strategic planning, this QDR promises strategic failure *a priori*. It puts that promise right up front, in its first sentence, which reads, "The United States is a nation engaged in what will be a long war."

Long wars are usually strategic disasters for winners as well as losers, because they leave all parties exhausted. If they work to anyone's advantage, it tends to be the weaker party's, because its alternative is rapid defeat. The Rumsfeld Pentagon certainly does not see the United States as the weaker party in its "Global War on Terrorism." So why has it adopted a long war strategy, or more accurately lack of strategy, unless one sees national exhaustion as a plus?

The answer is a common strategic blunder, but again one that is seldom seen up front; it normally arises as a war continues longer and proves more difficult than expected. The blunder is maximalist objectives. In a speech announcing the QDR, Secretary Rumsfeld said, speaking of our Fourth Generation opponents,

Compelled by a militant ideology that celebrates murder and suicide, with no territory to defend, with little to lose, they will either succeed in changing our way of life or we will succeed in changing theirs.

It would be difficult for war objectives to be stated in more maximalist terms. Either they will succeed in turning us into Taliban-style Muslims or we will turn them into happy consumers in globalism's Brave New World. Since most Americans would rather be dead than Talibs and most pious Moslems would rather perish than lose their souls to Brave New World, Mr. Rumsfeld has proclaimed a war of mutual annihilation. That will indeed be another Thirty Years' War, with little chance of a renewed Westphalian order as the outcome.

It is easy enough to define alternate, less ambitious objectives that might avoid the strategic disaster of a long war. We might say that our objective is to be left alone in our part of the globe, to enjoy peace, prosperity and an ordered liberty at home, while we left Islamics alone in their traditional territories. Sadly, from the Pentagon's perspective, such a strategy would fail the pork test: it would not guarantee to keep the money flowing, which is what QDRs are ultimately about.

Here, the new QDR reverts to type. After a few ritual bows to non-state opponents, it calls for more of the same: more Second Generation weapons systems, of ever-increasing complexity and cost. According to a story in the February 4 *Washington Times*, we are even to be blessed with a new penetrating bomber, which is about as useful for Fourth Generation war as squadron of pre-dreadnoughts.

But it seems that in its blatant disconnect between programs and reality, the Rumsfeld Pentagon may this time have overplayed its hand. The same *Washington Times* story reports that the Chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, Congressman Duncan Hunter, called it like it is. "It appears that the QDR has become a budget-driven exercise, which limits its utility to Congress," he said. The HASC has been holding hearings on genuine alternatives (I testified at one last fall, on Fourth Generation war), in a process that "will provide us with a more complete picture of America's national security needs." In other words, the Congress, or at least the House, may refuse to rubber stamp the QDR.

To anyone familiar with the Hill, this is nothing short of a revolution. The Pentagon stopped taking the authorizing committees seriously years ago, and with reason. They had become backwaters, seldom asking serious questions. The real action shifted to

the appropriations committees, where the money gets doled out.

But the House and Senate Armed Services Committees have serious powers, if they once again choose to exercise them. Chairman Hunter's response to the QDR suggests that the HASC may do just that. If it happens, not only might the relevance of many weapons programs come into question, so might Mr. Rumsfeld's demand for maximalist objectives in a permanent war for permanent peace.

## On War #150

### The Next Act

By William S. Lind

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Wars, most wars at least, run not evenly but in fits and starts, settling down into sputtering Sitzkrieg for long intervals, then suddenly shooting out wildly in wholly unpredicted directions. The war in Iraq has fallen into a set pattern for long enough that we should be expecting something new. I can identify three factors – there may be more – which could lead to some dramatic changes, soon.

- Osama bin Laden's latest message. Most observers, including the White House, seem to have missed its significance. In it, bin Laden offered us a truce (an offer we should have accepted, if only to attempt to seize the moral high ground). The Koran requires Moslems to offer such a truce before they attack. The fact that bin Laden himself made the offer, after a long silence, suggests al Qaeda attaches high importance to it.

Why? My guess is because they plan a major new attack in the U.S. soon. I would be surprised if the plan were for something smaller than 9/11, because that could send the message that al Qaeda's capabilities had diminished. Could this be "the big one," the suitcase nuke that most counter-terrorism experts expect somewhere, sometime? That would certainly justify, perhaps require, a truce offer from Osama himself. Of course, al Qaeda's plan may fail, and it may be for an action less powerful than setting off a nuke on American soil. But the fact that Osama made a truce offer should have set off alarm bells in Washington. So far, from what I can see, it hasn't.

- In Iraq, Shiite country is turning nasty. The Brits are finding themselves up against Shiite militias around Basra. Muqtada al Sadr has made it clear he is spoiling for another go at the Americans, saying his militia would respond to any attack on Iran. In Baghdad, the Shiites who run things are finding American interference increasingly inconvenient. We are now talking to at least some Sunni insurgents, as we should be, but that means our utility to the Shiites as unpaid Hessians is diminishing. Put it all together and it suggests the improbable Yankee-Shiite honeymoon may soon end. When it does, our lines of supply and communication through southern Iraq to Kuwait will be up for grabs.
- We are moving towards war with Iran. Our diplomatic efforts on the question of Iranian nuclear research and reprocessing are obviously designed to fail, in order to clear the boards for military action. It will probably come in the form of Israeli air strikes on Iran, which, as the Iranians well know, cannot be carried out without American approval and support.

In Israel, it was Sharon who repeatedly refused the Israeli generals' requests for air strikes; he is now out of the picture. His replacement, Olmert, is weak. The victory of Hamas in the Palestinian elections gave Olmert's main opponent, Likud's Netanyahu, a big boost. How could Olmert best show the Israeli electorate he is as tough as Netanyahu? Obviously, by hitting Iran before Israel's elections in late March.

In Washington, the same brilliant crowd who said invading Iraq would be a cakewalk is still in power. While a few prominent neo-cons have left the limelight, others remain highly influential behind the scenes. For them, the question is not whether to attack Iran (and Syria), but when. Their answer will be the same as Israel's.

Washington will assume Iran will respond with some air and missile strikes of its own. Those may occur, but Iran has far more effective ways of replying. It can shut down its own oil exports and, with mining and naval action, those of Kuwait and the Gulf

States as well. It can ramp up the guerilla wars both in Iraq and in Afghanistan.

It could also do something that would come as a total surprise to Washington and cross the Iran-Iraq border with four to six divisions, simply rolling up the American army of occupation in Iraq. Syria might well join in, knowing that it is only a question of time before it is attacked anyway. We have no field army in Iraq at this point; our troops are dispersed fighting insurgents. A couple dozen Scuds on the Green Zone would decapitate our leadership (possibly to our benefit). Yes, our air power would be a problem, but only until the Iranians got in close. Bad weather could provide enough cover for that. So could the Iranian and Syrian air forces, so long as they were willing to expend themselves. Our Air Force can be counted on to fight the air battle first.

As I said, when a war has been stuck in a rut for a long time, thoughtful observers should expect some dramatic change or changes. Any one of these possibilities would deliver that; together, they could give us a whole different situation, one in which our current slow defeat would accelerate sharply.

Beware the ides of March.

## On War #149

### The Ugly

By William S. Lind

[The views expressed in this article are those of Mr. Lind, writing in his personal capacity. They do not reflect the opinions or policy positions of the Free Congress Foundation, its officers, board or employees, or those of Kettle Creek Corporation.]

Dr. Antulio J. Echevarria, II is a Director at the Strategic Studies Institute, the U.S. Army War College's think tank, and the author of an excellent book, *After Clausewitz: German Military Thinkers before the Great War*. It was therefore both a surprise and a disappointment to find that his recent paper, *Fourth-Generation War and Other Myths*, is really, really ugly. Far from being a sober, scholarly appraisal, it is a rant, a screed, a red herring seemingly written to convince people not to think about 4GW at all. It is built from a series of straw men, so many that in the end it amounts to a straw giant.

The first straw man is its definition of Fourth Generation war and of the other three generations, which is taken not from the 1989 *Marine Corps Gazette* article that first laid out the framework but from Tom Hammes's work. As I noted in [On War #147](#), Hammes gets quite a bit wrong. In particular, he is wrong that Fourth Generation war is merely insurgency. Yet it is on that straw man that Echevarria's paper bases its critique.

The straw men then follow one after another like Guardsmen changing the watch. To pick just one example, from pages 4-5,

*the architects of 4GW ... have asserted that U.S. military capabilities are "designed to operate within a nation-state framework and have great difficulties outside of it." As history shows, the U.S. military actually seems to have handled World War II and the Cold War, two relatively recent global conflicts, both of which required it to operate within transnational alliances, quite well."*

Huh? World War II and the Cold War were, of course, fought within the nation-state framework; the alliances Echevarria refers to were alliances of states.

This example illustrates a common problem with Echevarria's straw men. Not only do they reflect misunderstandings of Fourth Generation theory, the misunderstandings are so obvious that they appear deliberate. Not only does his paper muddy the water, it seems intended to do so.

Perhaps the worst case of this is the paper's attempt to twist Martin van Creveld's critique of Clausewitz's trinity of army, government and people into something else by talking about a different trinity within Clausewitz's work (there are a number of them).

Echevarria ends up saying the trinity of army, government and people "has, in fact, never existed except as a misunderstanding" of Clausewitz, when in fact it runs through his whole book. This is bait-and-switch on a grand scale.

Nor does Echevarria's paper ever discuss the heart of Fourth Generation war, the crisis of legitimacy of the state. In this, he

makes the same error Barnett falls into, but at least Barnett is not purporting to write a critique of what the Fourth Generation theorists have said. How can you write a critique of something and ignore its central point, the cause of the state's loss of its monopoly on war?

Instead, Echevarria's paper attacks Fourth Generation theory for **not** adopting the nonsense of "net-centric warfare" and the RMA, which he somehow sees as a logical extension of the first three generations, as he initially misdefined them. Of course, like all good theory, the theory of the Four Generations is based on observation, not Cartesian exegesis.

The fundamental question Echevarria's paper raises is, how could a respected academic who has authored a terrific book on military theory write something so misleading? Part of the answer may be that the SSI is associated with the Army War College, which is a temple to Clausewitz. Now, I happen to think a good deal of the old Prussian myself. But as John Boyd used to say, we have learned a few things since his time. One of them is that the trinity of army, government and people does not hold true for all wars in all times and places.

But the sheer ugliness of Echevarria's paper raises another suspicion. Was he put to writing a rejection of Fourth Generation war by the U.S. Army, and had to come up with something? If so, it would not be the first time the Army has adopted this tactic: Harry Summer's book on the Vietnam war and Huba Wass de Czege's early public opposition to maneuver warfare are previous examples. Nor would it be the first occasion when the Army has rejected an idea on the "not invented here" principle.

I do not know whether Echevarria's paper is a put-up job. But if it does represent the U.S. Army's institutional position on Fourth Generation war, then the Army's slogan for the 21st Century should be, not an Army of One, but an Army of Dumb.

## On War #148

### The Bad

By William S. Lind

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Among the critics and reinterpreters of Fourth Generation war, the bad is most powerfully represented by Thomas Barnett's two books *The Pentagon's New Map* and *Blueprint for Action*. What Barnett advocates is bad in two senses: first, that it won't work, and second, that if it did work the result would be evil.

In both books, Barnett divides the world into two parts, the Functioning Core and the Non-Integrating Gap. This is parallel to what I call centers of order and centers or sources of disorder, and I agree that this will be the fundamental fault line of the 21st Century. Barnett's error is that he assumes the Functioning Core will be the stronger party, able to restore order in places where it has broken down. In fact, the forces of disorder will be stronger, because they are driven by a factor Barnett dismisses, the spreading crisis of legitimacy of the state. By ignoring Martin van Creveld's work on the rise and decline of the state, Barnett's books end up anchoring their foundations on sand.

Barnett's second error, manifested almost comically in *Blueprint for Action*, is that he thinks restoring the state in places where it has failed will be easy. According to a Washington Post review of *Blueprint for Action* by Joseph S. Nye, Jr., Barnett has a six-step plan to accomplish this: First, the U.N. Security Council acts as a grand jury to indict countries; second, the Core's biggest economies issue "'warrants' for the arrest of the offending party"; third, the United States leads a "warfighting coalition"; fourth, a Core-wide administrative force (with the United States providing 10 to 20 percent of its personnel) puts things back together with the help of the fifth element, a new International Reconstruction Fund; followed by a sixth step, criminal prosecution of the apprehended parties at the International Criminal Court in the Hague. "That's it, from A to Z," Barnett notes cheerfully.

A cynic might suggest that the United States can't even do this in New Orleans much less in foreign countries. In fact, as the FMFM 1-A, *Fourth Generation War*, argues strongly, even if an outside force does everything right, the probability of success in such endeavors remains low. Why? As Russell Kirk wrote, there is no surer way of making someone your enemy than to announce you will remake him in your image for his own good. To many of the world's peoples, what Barnett argues for in such blithe simplicity represents Hell, and they will fight it literally to their dying breath.

This brings us to the third problem with Barnett: what his books advocate does represent Hell, or at least Hell's first cousin, Brave New World. He would create an inescapable new world order that bears a remarkable resemblance to the one Aldous Huxley described in his short novel *Brave New World*, published in the 1930s – a "soft totalitarianism" where the first rule is, "you must be happy." Happiness, in turn, is a product of endless materialism, consumerism, sensual pleasure and psychological conditioning. If that sounds like a good description of American popular culture, it is exactly that culture Barnett proposes to force down the throat of every person on earth, with the U.S. military serving as the instrument of coercion.

What Barnett's books end up revealing is the combination of moral blindness and international political hubris that characterizes the whole quest for American world empire, a quest initiated by the neo-cons. Like the (other?) neo-cons, Barnett sees the world and its cultures in Jacobin terms, as a combination of Rousseau's natural goodness of man and Newtonian clockwork mechanism. Just twist a few dials here, throw a couple of levers there and presto!, Switzerlands spring up from Ouagadougou to the Hindu Kush.

It's piffle, pure and all too simple. Unfortunately, it is dangerous piffle, both in the evil that would result if it worked and the catastrophes that will come when it doesn't. Real Fourth Generation theory counsels caution, prudence and a clear grasp on the limits of American power in a world where the state itself is in decline.

Regrettably, in the uneducated and nostrum-hungry powerhouse that is Washington, Barnett's piffle is just the sort of patent medicine that sells. The more widely it sells, the more Iraqs America will have to endure. At present, it looks as if the next Iraq is spelled Iran. It's as good a place as any for Barnett's thesis to expire from sheer lightness of being.

## On War #147

### [Critics of the Fourth Generation: the Good, the Bad and the Ugly](#)

By William S. Lind

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Not surprisingly, the spread of the intellectual framework I call the Four Generations of Modern War has brought forth a host of reinterpreters and critics. Some have added valuable insights, while others have just muddied the waters. In the next On War columns, I will take a look at the work of three commentators who represent three different categories: the good, the bad and the ugly.

The good are represented by Colonel Tom Hammes, USMC retired, author of *The Sling and the Stone*. I have known Tom Hammes for many years, and he was a major contributor to the Marine Corps' intellectual renaissance of the 1980s and early '90s. *The Sling and the Stone* offers some excellent descriptions of Fourth Generation war, and it also contributes a very important insight to Fourth Generation theory, namely that speed in the OODA Loop may be less important than accuracy of observation and orientation. Exactly how the OODA Loop works in Fourth Generation conflicts remains an open question; it is possible that Fourth Generation forces can out-cycle state armed forces not by being faster, but by moving so slowly that they are unobservable.

However, there are also some key points where *The Sling and the Stone* misunderstands Fourth Generation war. One is found in the book's assertion that 4GW is just insurgency. This is much too narrow a definition, and it risks misleading us if we take it to mean that we need only re-discover old counter-insurgency techniques in order to prevail against Fourth Generation opponents. At the core of 4GW is a crisis of legitimacy of the state, and counter-insurgency cannot address that crisis; indeed, when the counter-insurgency is led by foreign troops, it only makes the local state's crisis of legitimacy worse.

As Martin van Creveld has said, what changes in Fourth Generation war is not merely how war is fought, but who fights and what they fight for. *The Sling and the Stone* does not seem to grasp that these are larger changes than the shift from conventional war to insurgency.

Another error in *The Sling and the Stone* is its assertion that Fourth Generation war is aimed at breaking the will of an opposing state's decision-makers. In fact, what 4GW forces actually do is something much more powerful: they pull opposing states apart at the moral level.

The issue of "will" derives from a common myth concerning how states make decisions about war or peace. The myth supposes that at some point, a state's decision-makers in effect sit down around a big table and "go over the numbers," as if they were deciding on a hydro-electric project. If the numbers don't add up, they decide it is time to make peace.

Historians long ago recognized that official decisions, including for war or peace, are vastly more complex events in which non-rational factors play decisive roles. In fact, modern decision theory recognizes not only that decisions made by governments do not follow a "rational" business model, neither do most business decisions. Non-rational, often irrational, considerations dominate both.

What Fourth Generation opponents actually do to a state is not play mind-games with the state's leaders, but use the power of weakness to bring the opposing state's whole population to regard the war as an abomination. Paradoxically, the more the state is successful in winning on the battlefield by turning its immense, hi-tech firepower on guys in bathrobes who are armed only with rusty World War II rifles, the more it becomes disgusted with itself. The weaker the Fourth Generation enemy is physically, the stronger he is morally. And the moral level is decisive.

Despite these not insignificant misunderstandings, *The Sling and the Stone* still represents a good contribution to our developing understanding of Fourth Generation war. There is still a great deal about 4GW that no one yet comprehends, and I am sure Tom Hammes will continue to play a positive role in figuring the whole business out.

As we will see in my next two columns, there are others whose work would lead us down a blind alley.

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[Archive of On War](#)

## **On War #146**

[Conversation with der Allerhoechste](#)

By William S. Lind

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As usual, on New Year's Day I placed a call over my 1918 telephone to my reporting senior, Kaiser Wilhelm II. I needed his wise guidance for another year in this mortal thicket, and it was also a convenient time to offer my felicitations for his coming birthday on January 27. It took me a while to get patched through, as His Majesty was at the Berlin Schloss rather than his usual residence in Potsdam. He didn't used to care much for Berlin, and I was surprised to find him in so jovial a mood.

"Ach, you should have been here today, Herr Generalfeldmarschall. Count Zeppelin flew in in his latest airship, LS 10,000. What a sight she made circling over Berlin! She holds 16,000,000 cubic feet of hydrogen! I awarded him the Black Eagle."

"Please give the good Graf my heartiest congratulations," I replied. "He invented the only type of aircraft worth flying in. But I'm just slightly surprised to find you're still using hydrogen rather than helium."

"Once you're immortal, what's the difference?" His Majesty replied.

"Good point," I said. "Was it Graf Zeppelin's visit that drew you to Berlin?"

"Oh, I'm here quite a lot now. The heavenly Berlin is a far nicer place than the version you've got down there."

"Better weather, I take it?"

"That and the fact that there are no Socialists."

"Your Majesty, I would as always be grateful for your perspective. How does our situation look from up there?"

"All too familiar," the Kaiser said. "Your President Bush – we call him Woodrow II at our *tabagiecollegia* – has found what Nicky, Georgie, old Franz Josef and I also discovered, that it is easier to get into a war than get out of one. The difference is that none of us wanted war in 1914 and he did want a war with Iraq."

"What advice would you give President Bush if you could meet with him?" I enquired.

"Now there's a thought," the Kaiser said, laughing. "I would be the Ghost of Wars Lost Past. Well, what I said to the Reichstag in 1888 comes to mind:

To foist on Germany the suffering of war, even a victorious one, when it was not necessary, I could not reconcile with the duties I have taken on as Emperor of the German people and my Christian beliefs."

"Contrary to Allied propaganda, Your Majesty was often derided within Germany as the 'Peace Emperor,'" I reminded him.

"Indeed," responded His Majesty. "As one of my recent biographers, and one of the few fair ones, Giles MacDonough, wrote of the year 1909, 'Every time Germany had drawn back from the brink of war in the previous twenty-one years, it had been under the influence of William.' Your Colonel House, after a meeting with me, wrote to President Wilson in April, 1915, 'It is clear to me that the Kaiser did not want war and did not actually expect it.' That is accurate."

"Unfortunately, *Hoheit*, America is already in a war. What should President Bush do now?" I asked.

"Here's what I wrote to Tsar Nicholas after it was clear he was losing the war with Japan," the Kaiser replied:

Is it compatible with the responsibility of a Ruler to continue to force a whole nation against its declared will to send its sons to be killed by hetacombs only for his sake? Only for his way of conception of national honour? After the people by their behavior have clearly shown their disapproval of a continuance of a war? Will not in time to come the life and blood of all uselessly sacrificed thousands be laid at the ruler's door? . . .

"Would Your Majesty do me the favor of sharing his thoughts on the larger world situation?" I asked, knowing Kaiser Wilhelm was seldom shy of sharing his thoughts on anything.

"While your world looks very different on the surface from Europe before 1914, I think there is a larger similarity," His Majesty said. "Your international order, like the one I faced, is inherently unstable. Unfortunately, like us, your statesmen understand this intellectually but act as if it were not the case. They, like us, do not understand the risks they are running when they make bold moves. America's ill-considered commitment to Taiwan is one example. It is very much like Russia's commitment to Serbia; the tail can easily wag the dog. America needs to handle its relationship with a rising China the way Britain handled hers with a rising United States instead of the idiotic way she dealt with a rising Germany. What I wrote just before World War I applies now to you: 'The British should be clear about this: war with Germany will mean the loss of India! And their position in the world with it.' That's just what happened."

"Indeed it did," I replied. "The British Empire now consists of St. Helena and the Falkland Islands. So Your Majesty's advice to our statesmen would be?"

"When you are walking on eggs, walk softly. And now I am afraid I must run. The court theater is putting on a performance of one of my favourite works, *The Merry Wives of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha*, and I don't want to miss a bit of it. I think I'll wear my uniform as a British Admiral of the Fleet, just in case Jackie Fisher's there. Until next year, *Hoch der Mittelmaechte!*"

"*Hoch der Mittelmaechte!*" I replied as the Kaiser rang off. Someday, I thought, if I play my role well as the U.S. Marine Corp's Liman von Sanders, perhaps I'll walk the deck of a *Mackensen* with His Majesty. In the meantime, it's a new year and the Turks are waiting at my door.

## On War #145

### Two False Options

By William S. Lind

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policy positions of the Free Congress Foundation, its officers, board or employees, or those of Kettle Creek Corporation.]

In his address to the American people last Sunday evening, President George W. Bush said, "Yet now there are only two options before our country: victory or defeat." As usual, Mr. Bush is wrong.

Victory is not an option, and it never was. The strategic objectives the Bush administration set for this war – a peaceful, democratic Iraq that would be an American ally, a friend of Israel, a source of unlimited oil and of basing rights for large American forces – were never attainable, no matter what we did. Strategies invented in Fairyland cannot be implemented in the real world. Pity the military that is ordered to try.

Defeat is an option. In my last column I described one way that could occur, an Israeli and/or American attack on Iran that leads Iraqi Shiites to join the Sunni jihad and cut our lines of supply and retreat through southern Iraq. There are additional scenarios that could lead to a dramatic American defeat, a defeat we could not disguise to anyone, not even ourselves. Presumably, this is not an option we wish to select.

The most promising options, of which the President of the United States seems to be unaware, are those which end the war and bring American troops home without an outright American defeat. This is how most limited wars end, with some sort of compromise peace, official or unofficial.

I have discussed two such options in previous columns. One is a request from the Iraqi government that we leave, which would give us a golden bridge out. Another is to cut a deal with nationalist and Baathist elements of the Sunni insurgency, a deal where we would stop fighting them and provide them some political support while they clean up al Qaeda.

Two recent stories in the *Washington Times* suggest the second option may now be within reach. On Sunday, December 18, the paper reported that precisely these Sunni resistance groups had enforced an election truce, allowing Sunnis to vote. More,

The truce resulted from weeks of negotiations between U.S. officials and insurgents that have been recently labeled by President Bush as "rejectionists." . .

The willingness of U.S. officials to talk directly with many, if not most, insurgents marked a huge change from American thinking at the outset of the war.

Hurray for those "U.S. officials!" Here at last is some genuine good news from Iraq.

The *Washington Times* story on Monday, December 19, was even more promising:

Influential political and religious figures within the leadership of Iraq's minority Sunnis are displaying sharp divisions on how to end what they all agree is an unacceptable U.S. occupation of Iraq. . .

The increasingly prevalent view is that the United States is not only part of the problem, but that it can become part of the solution. That perspective was explained by an influential religious sheik (Abed al-Latif Hemaiym), who has in the past been close to dictator Saddam Hussein. . .

"The time has come to solve the problem between us and the Americans, and through the minimum cost," said the soft-spoken sheik. . .

"There is a historical opportunity to get out of this bloodshed and reach peace. We can reach peace [only] through dialogue," he said.

He pointed out that Sunnis had suffered severely in the two years of conflict since armed insurgency began, noting, "We are the main losers, then the Americans, while the main winners are the Iranians."

That summary of the war's results is right on the money.

The question is whether Washington will grasp this opportunity before it fades away. It means halting our war against the Baathists and nationalists, in what would be an acceptance of local defeat. But it opens the door to a potential strategic victory against our real enemies, Islamic non-state forces such as al Qaeda. If, subsequent to an American deal with the Baathists, they

root al Qaeda out of Iraq, it will be a greater win for us than if we defeated al Qaeda ourselves, because it will have been beaten by fellow Arabs and Moslems. That strikes directly at al Qaeda's legitimacy.

If the Bush administration means what Mr. Bush said, that the only choices are victory or defeat, then it will let this heaven-sent opportunity pass. We will continue to pursue unattainable victory until we are totally defeated. Let us hope the President's speech was just the usual eyewash for domestic consumption, and somewhere adults are working for the negotiated settlement we so desperately need and which now may be within reach.

Note: To end the year with what I hope may be a bit of Christmas good cheer, I am happy to report that a number of captains at the Marine Corps' Amphibious Warfare School at Quantico have organized seminars to help improve the draft of FMFM 1-A, *Fourth Generation War* (available on the [www.d-n-i.net](http://www.d-n-i.net) website) and also to draft both training and tactics manuals for 4GW. We hope to have the latter drafts available by the end of the academic year.

## On War #144

### The Fine Art of Withdrawal

By William S. Lind

[The views expressed in this article are those of Mr. Lind, writing in his personal capacity. They do not reflect the opinions or policy positions of the Free Congress Foundation, its officers, board or employees, or those of Kettle Creek Corporation.]

The main question about the war in Iraq was never whether it would go well or go badly. The question was whether it would go bad fast or go bad slowly. So far, it has gone bad slowly, which was always the greater probability. But the possibility remains that it could go bad fast. The greatest likelihood may be during that most delicate of military arts, the withdrawal.

At least behind closed doors, a consensus is emerging in Washington that America will leave Iraq in 2006. Whether the White House will accept that consensus or resist it is yet to be seen, but the result will be the same either way. At this point, the Bush administration has about as much credibility on Capitol Hill as Napoleon had in Paris after Waterloo. On the House side particularly, where every seat is up next November, the watchword is *saue qui peut*. As Dr. Johnson said, being about to be hanged concentrates the mind wonderfully.

A Rumsfeld OSD that assumed the war would be easy may also assume a withdrawal will be easy. History offers a note of caution. In war, getting in is often simpler and safer than getting out. Martin van Creveld recently warned that America's withdrawal from Iraq could prove messy, for Americans as well as Iraqis. Xenophon's *Anabasis* might serve as a useful if not entirely encouraging preview. The 10,000 did make it back to Greece, most of them anyway, but few enjoyed the journey.

What scenarios should our planners and policy-makers consider? As the best case, logic suggests that Iraq's December elections might be seen by Iraq's "key man," Shiite Ayatollah Sistani, as the turning point. A new, Shiite-dominated government will probably be elected to a four-year term. What better move for him than to issue a fatwa saying that it's time for the Americans to leave? His Shiites are getting restive at the American presence, he has to compete for his leadership role with firebrand Muqtada al-Sadr, and as the man who kicked the foreign occupiers out, he could reach across Iraq's central divide to offer a deal to the Sunnis, perhaps restoring a real Iraqi state. In the face of a Sistani fatwa, Iraq's government would almost certainly have to ask the American troops to leave.

Our response should be, "Hallelujah!" This would give us the golden bridge we need, a way out where we could claim with at least some credibility that we were not beaten. It would also probably mean a relatively safe and orderly exit. The Bush administration has said we would leave if the Iraqis asked us to, and the new U.N. resolution under which our presence in Iraq is authorized requires us to do so. If the White House resisted, it would get trampled into the dirt on Capitol Hill by elephants and donkeys alike.

As the worst case, we should envision what might happen if Israel or the U.S. or both attack Iran. Israel has recently indicated that unless international efforts to secure Iran's nuclear program succeed, an Israeli military action is likely sometime next year. Iran has said publicly that it will regard an Israeli attack as an attack by America also. If Iran's influence in Shiite southern Iraq is as great as reports suggest it is, the obvious Iranian response would be to blow up the magazine by attacking the American lines of supply – and withdrawal – that come up from Kuwait. Add a Shiite insurgency to that of the Sunnis, and an American

withdrawal could start to look like Napoleon's retreat from Moscow, with sand substituting for snow.

There are of course a wide range of possibilities between these two extremes. An American withdrawal might lead to a truce with nationalist elements of the Iraqi resistance; they would have succeeded in their objective and would have no need to continue fighting us. Jihadi elements, however, might redouble their efforts, both to humiliate the Americans and to prevent the emergence of a real Iraqi state. In Shiite country, a lot of young men might think it's now or never if they want a piece of the glory of having fought the world's greatest superpower. Muqtada al-Sadr might turn his Mahdi Army loose on us again, as part of his bid for power in a post-American Iraq.

As I wrote in an earlier column, the question of how we withdraw from Iraq should be at the top of the Grossgeneralstab's planning tasks. If the same kinds of optimistic assumptions that guided our invasion of Iraq also shape our plans for withdrawal, we could find ourselves in what one old Pentagon planner used to call "a fine kettle of fish."

## On War #143

### Questionable Assumptions

By William S. Lind

[The views expressed in this article are those of Mr. Lind, writing in his personal capacity. They do not reflect the opinions or policy positions of the Free Congress Foundation, its officers, board or employees, or those of Kettle Creek Corporation.]

At the end of November, the Bush administration issued a 35-page document titled, "National Strategy for Victory in Iraq." The new white paper does not represent a change of strategy: it says at the outset, "The following document articulates the broad strategy the President set forth in 2003 . . ." But it does offer an authoritative statement of the administration's position and is thus worth careful consideration.

Like most official documents, it spreads a small amount of substance over a large number of pages. But if we want to analyze it from a military perspective, the key is to be found on page 18, under the subhead, "The Security Track in Detail." There, it says, "The security track is based on *six core* assumptions (emphasis in original)." Why is this key? Because if core assumptions are wrong, everything that follows from them is likely to be wrong, too.

Let's take a look at each:

- First, the terrorists, Saddamists, and rejectionists do not have the manpower or firepower to achieve a military victory over the Coalition and Iraqi Security Forces. They can win only if we surrender.

This reduces "military victory" to childish simplicity, effectively defining it as winning a game of King of the Hill. That is not how guerilla war works. Nor does it end in anyone's formal surrender. In order to achieve eventual military victory, all the guerillas have to do is continue the fight, which means finding ways to hit us without exposing themselves to annihilation. So far, they have proven rather good at doing that.

- Second, our own political will is steadfast and will allow America to keep troops in Iraq - - to fight terrorists while training and mentoring Iraqi forces - - until the mission is done, increasing or decreasing troop levels only as conditions warrant.

Here, the reality gap could not be more evident. America's political will to support an apparently endless war in Iraq is in free-fall, both on Capitol Hill and among the public.

- Third, progress on the political front will improve the intelligence picture by helping distinguish those who can be won over to support the new Iraqi state from the terrorists and insurgents who must either be killed or captured, detained and prosecuted.

This fails on at least three counts. First, "progress on the political front" so far amounts to creating a Kurdish-Shiite government bitterly hostile to Iraq's Sunnis, which is hardly likely to lead Sunnis to provide U.S. forces with better intelligence. Second, our own intelligence operation remains marginal at best in grasping the complexities of Iraqi society. And third, such intelligence is only useful if we use it to try to split the Baathist insurgents from the jihadis, while the white paper suggests we will continue to

lump them together as enemies we must fight.

- Fourth, the training, equipping, and mentoring of Iraqi Security Forces will produce an army and police force capable of independently providing security and maintaining public order in Iraq.

What the administration calls the Iraqi army and police force is largely Kurdish and Shiite militiamen who are taking government paychecks and wearing government uniforms. Their loyalty is not to the Iraqi government we have established but to the leaders of their militias, and their purpose is not to uphold a state but to wage a civil war against Iraqi Sunnis, in revenge for what the Sunnis did to them under Saddam. Most of the Iraqi state security apparatus is a fiction, because it is not under the actual control of the state.

- Fifth, regional meddling and infiltrations can be contained and/or neutralized.

The information I am getting suggests that Iranian meddling and infiltration in Iraq is massive and growing, and is also encouraged and facilitated by many of the Shiite elements in the Iraqi government. The Persian camel has not just his nose but his hump already in the tent. Many of my sources suggest that a lot of the insurgency we attribute to Sunnis is actually Iranian-supported if not Iranian-controlled.

- Sixth, while we can help, assist, and train, Iraqis will ultimately be the ones to eliminate their security threats over the long term.

Not only does this ignore the fact that most of those security threats are made up of Iraqis, it misses the all-important fact that whatever we "help, assist, and train" automatically loses its legitimacy because of our involvement. Indeed, nowhere does the white paper come to grips with this central problem, namely that as an invader and occupier, we cannot confer legitimacy on anything. On the contrary, we have the reverse Midas touch; when it comes to legitimacy, that all-important factor in Fourth Generation war, anything we touch turns to crap.

There is an old military saying that "assume" makes an ass of you and me. In this case, the Bush administration has explicitly based its "security track" in Iraq on six assumptions, not one of which is self-evident. If we accept those assumptions, what would that make us?

## **On War #142**

### [Operational IEDs](#)

By William S. Lind

[The views expressed in this article are those of Mr. Lind, writing in his personal capacity. They do not reflect the opinions or policy positions of the Free Congress Foundation, its officers, board or employees, or those of Kettle Creek Corporation.]

One of the most difficult challenges in Fourth Generation military theory is the problem Fourth Generation war poses for operational art. Put simply, 4GW is hard to operationalize. Operational art is not a thing, but a linkage: the connection between the tactical and strategic levels of war. In Second Generation, firepower/attrition warfare, operational art is reduced merely to accumulating tactical victories. The presumption, often unwarranted, is that at some point you hit the magic number where the enemy surrenders. In Third Generation, maneuver warfare, operational art is the art of breaking the enemy's strategic "hinges" with the fewest possible tactical engagements. It thus provides the basis for deciding where and when to fight, and equally important, where and when not to fight. The principal operational weapon is surprise combined with speed, i.e. unexpected maneuver, usually with mechanized forces, deep into the enemy's rear.

The question of what operational art means in Fourth Generation war remains open. I don't know of any general answer. The problem is that the enemy's strategic hinges, or centers of gravity, tend to be intangible: how do you use tactical engagements or operational maneuver to strike targets such as family or clan honor, gang loyalties, ideological convictions or belief in a particular god? After World War II, the most operationally competent armies in the world were the Red Army and the IDF. Yet both lost Fourth Generation wars, the Soviets in Afghanistan and the Israelis in Lebanon, because they could not figure out how to act operationally against 4GW enemies. Reduced to fighting an endless series of strategically meaningless tactical

engagements, both were forced to withdraw. The U.S. military now finds itself in the same situation in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Unfortunately, it appears our Fourth Generation opponents have figured out a way to act operationally against us. I touched on this in an earlier column, but as I thought more about it, I decided that what is happening deserves fuller consideration. What our opponents are doing is brilliantly simple. By relying mostly on IEDs to attack us, they have created a situation where our troops have no one to shoot back at. That, in turn, ramps up the troops' frustration level to the point where two things happen: our morale collapses and our troops take their frustration out on the local population. Both results have strategic significance, and at least the potential of being strategically decisive, the first because it affects American home front morale and the second because it drives the local population to identify with the insurgents instead of the government we are trying to support.

An article in the November 23 *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, "Morale of GIs in the Iraq suffers as months drag on, casualties mount," well describes the first result of war by IED:

"Morale is a roller coaster," said Lt. Rusten Currie, who has spent 10 months in Iraq. "We were all idealistic to begin with, wanting to find Osama bin Laden and (Abu Musab al-) Zarqawi and bring them to justice - - whatever that means. Now we just want to go home."

Maj. Gen. Rick Lynch, a spokesman for Multinational Force Iraq, says tensions are understandable when troops are attacked with remotely detonated explosives and there's no way to fight back.

"Soldiers can indeed get frustrated because they're not looking at an enemy who's looking back at them," Lynch said.

The second operational effect, getting U.S. troops to take out their frustration on the local population, was illustrated in what an officer whose unit recently came back from Iraq said to me. "We were hit 3000 times and in only fifteen of those attacks did we have anyone to shoot back at," he told me. He quoted another officer in the battalion who had gone out on patrol many times as saying, "We are worse than the SS in the way we are treating these people," meaning Iraqi civilians. This is a classic result of "the war of the flea:" as morale collapses, so does discipline, and poorly disciplined troops often treat local civilians badly.

Like the tank in Third Generation war, the IED is proving to be not merely a tactical but an operational weapon in the Fourth Generation. In Iraq, British troops are reacting by employing IEDs of their own to try to push local factions into fighting each other. That too, if it works, might play at the operational level.

But the broader challenge Fourth Generation war poses to state militaries at the operational level will remain. As I said, I don't know what the answer is. But I do know the importance of the question. Until we have an answer, state armed forces will face great difficulty turning their tactical advantages into strategic success against 4GW enemies.

## **On War #141**

### [It Ain't Fair](#)

By William S. Lind

[The views expressed in this article are those of Mr. Lind, writing in his personal capacity. They do not reflect the opinions or policy positions of the Free Congress Foundation, its officers, board or employees, or those of Kettle Creek Corporation.]

The suicide bombings in Jordan recently carried out by al Qaeda in Iraq seem to have blown back on the jihadis. According to Western press reports, almost all those killed were Moslems, including a Palestinian wedding party. Outrage among Jordanians has compelled al Qaeda to issue a quasi-apology, saying the wedding party was not its target. Had al-Zarqawi been a tad more clever, he might have apologized for the "collateral damage."

A column in the October 12 International *Herald Tribune* by professor of Islamic Studies Bernard Haykel suggests that a rift is opening up among jihadis over the tactic of suicide bombing. Haykel writes,

In fact, growing splits among jihadis are beginning to undermine the theological and legal justifications for suicide bombing. . . There are strong indications from jihadi Web sites and online

journals, confirmed by conversations I have had while doing research among Salafis, or scriptural literalists, that the suicide attacks are turning many Muslims against the jihadis altogether. . .

If we look at this practice from a Fourth Generation picture, what do we see? On the surface, it looks as if Islamic non-state elements are making a major blunder. Fourth Generation war theory, drawing from John Boyd, argues that the moral level of war is the most powerful, the physical level is the weakest and the mental level lies somewhere in between. It would seem obvious that when Islamic elements set off bombs that kill other Islamics, they work against themselves at the moral level. To some degree, this is certainly the case. Bombings such as those in Jordan do turn some Moslems against al Qaeda in other similar groups.

We might try here to reason by analogy. When the United States drops bombs from aircraft or otherwise dumps firepower on Iraqi cities, towns and farms, it alienates the population further. As the FMFM 1-A argues, success for an outside, occupying power requires de-escalation, not escalation of violence.

But here is where the picture grows murky. The fact is, both sides don't get to operate by the same rules in 4GW. While the very strength of the intervening power means it must be careful how it applies its strength, that is much less true of the weaker forces opposing it. This is an aspect of what Martin van Creveld calls the power of weakness. Viewed from the moral level, a weak force can get away with tactics that damn its vastly stronger enemy. Its weakness itself tends to justify whatever it does.

Suicide bombing is itself a tactic of the weak (which does not mean it is ineffective.). The United States bombs from aircraft, where the pilot operates in complete safety against 4GW opponents, with rare exceptions. At the moral level, that safety works against us, not for us. In contrast, the fact that 4GW fighters often have to give their lives to place their bombs works for them. Their combination of physical weakness and apparent heroism leads civilians from their own culture to excuse them much, including "collateral damage" they would never excuse if the bomb came from an American F-18.

Does this mean that al Qaeda and its many clones can ignore the deaths and injuries they cause among fellow Islamics? No. They have to be careful not to go too far, as al Qaeda clearly did in Jordan. But they can still get away with a great deal we could not get away with. The same rules do not apply to all, and much stricter, more disadvantageous rules apply to us than to them. Is that fair? Of course not. But who ever said there was anything fair about war?

## On War #140

### Militant Tricks

By William S. Lind

[The views expressed in this article are those of Mr. Lind, writing in his personal capacity. They do not reflect the opinions or policy positions of the Free Congress Foundation, its officers, board or employees, or those of Kettle Creek Corporation.]

*Militant Tricks: Battlefield Ruses of the Islamic Insurgent* is the title of John Poole's latest book. Poole, a former Marine NCO and officer, is America's best writer on small unit tactics and techniques. His first book, *The Last Hundred Yards*, should be in every fire team, squad and platoon leader's pack. More recently, he has written a series of books that attempt to explain the Eastern, indirect way of war to Western audiences. *Militant Tricks* is the most recent work in that series.

This is really three books in one, and all of them are good. The first book is a detailed description of how our opponents in Iraq and Afghanistan fight. Here Poole's subtitle, *Battlefield Ruses of the Islamic Insurgent*, sums up his offering. Unlike Western forces, which seek a head-on clash, Eastern warfare relies on tricks. Nothing is what it seems to be. Poole writes,

The military heritage of Asia Minor is quite different from that of France, Britain, and America. In Asia Minor, loose encirclements and tiny probes are more common than mass assaults. There, one can often win by running away... Like the Chinese, southwest Asian insurgents practice the "False Face and Art of Delay." First, they show the Westerner what they want him to see. Then, they wait for him to make the first, incorrect move. Finally, they secretly launch a maneuver that he would not choose under similar circumstances.

Poole lays this way of fighting out in detail in Part II of his book. Using the ancient Chinese book *36 Stratagems of Deception* as his framework (I do not share Poole's view that Chinese thought directly influenced our current opponents, but the framework is

still useful), he provides exactly the sort of material our soldiers and Marines need in Iraq and Afghanistan if they are to understand their enemies. Here is a sample from one stratagem, "Feign Lack of Military Ability:"

Irrational behavior normally generates a sound or motion signature. But one can unobtrusively feign tactical ignorance. Literally this stratagem says, "Feign foolishness instead of madness."

Most U.S. and British troops have come to see all Muslim insurgents as tactically inept. They don't yet realize that their foe intentionally places poorly trained martyrdom volunteers in their path. With little strategic value, those volunteers are considered expendable. It is their handlers — the enemy recruiters/trainers/advisors — who must be stopped. Many are Iranian special operators and as tactically proficient as their U.S. counterparts. Their "throwaway" personnel have accomplished two things: (1) fooling the Coalition as to the real source and sophistication of the insurgency, (2) facilitating the handler's escape.

In addition to this useful discussion, *Militant Tricks* offers two other important themes. One is Poole's view (and mine) that we are losing both in Iraq and in Afghanistan. Until Washington and America's senior field commanders face up to this fact, no improvement is to be expected, because there will be no incentive to change.

Poole's third theme is how we can win in both places. Here, I think he is over-optimistic. Even if we do adopt his recommendations, I think we will do so too late. But what he writes is valuable for what may still be achieved, namely avoiding outright and obvious defeat.

Poole's diagnosis differs from the common one, because he does not see the Sunni insurgency as the core problem. Rather, he believes the main actor is Shiite Hezbollah, working hand-in-hand with Iran. If he is correct, the door might be open to the deal with the Baathist insurgents I believe America needs in order to leave Iraq.

On the tactical level, Poole agrees with virtually every other expert on counter-insurgency that the key to success (however defined) is a variant of the Vietnam war CAP program, where our troops defended the local population instead of bombing it. Poole writes,

While the Vietnam war may not have had a happy ending, it did produce some very effective ways to handle guerilla activity. One of the most farsighted – and strictly of U.S. Marine Corps design and implementation – was the Combined Action Platoon (CAP). Lone Marine squads were stationed in scores of villages to help local residents organize their own defenses. There is an urban equivalent to the CAP concept that would work in a neighborhood setting. If the Muslim militant has widely dispersed throughout Iraqi society, must not the occupying force do likewise to beat him?

Regardless of the outcome in Iraq and Afghanistan, America will face other wars against Islamic militants, though a correct grand strategy would work to avoid such conflicts. If people at the top will give John Poole's work the attention it is rightly receiving from those at the battalion level and below, we would have a better chance of winning them.

## **On War #139**

### [C'est la Guerre](#)

By William S. Lind

[Editor's note: We agonized over this commentary but decided to post it because Mr. Lind's thoughts on the meanings of the French riots deserve consideration. Readers should keep in mind that Mr. Lind often dramatizes his conclusions, which are (it cannot be repeated too often) strictly his own.]

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War has broken out in France, Fourth Generation war to be precise. It has been underway for some years, quietly, disguised by calling it crime. Now, with 3000 cars and dozens of buildings burned, rail and bus services disrupted and the police overwhelmed, even the French are calling it what it is. "There is a civil war underway in Clichy-sous-Bois at the moment," said

Michel Thooris of the CFTC, a French police union. "We can no longer withstand this situation on our own. My colleagues have neither the equipment nor the . . . training for street fighting."

France has a long history of civil wars. But this civil war is unique. Showing how radically the Fourth Generation changes things, it is a civil war against a foreign invader. Mark Steyn wrote in the November 6 *Chicago Sun-Times*, As Thursday's edition of the Guardian reported in London: "French youths fired at police and burned over 300 cars last night as towns around Paris experienced their worst night of violence in a week of urban unrest."

"French youths," huh? You mean Pierre and Jacques and Marcel and Alphonse? Granted that most of the "youths" are technically citizens of the French Republic, it doesn't take much time in les banlieus of Paris to discover that the rioters do not think of their primary identity as "French": They're young men from North Africa growing ever more estranged from the broader community with each passing year and wedded ever more intensely to an assertive Muslim identity . . .

Here we find ourselves peering over the crater of the Fourth Generation volcano directly into its heart, the transfer of primary loyalties away from the state. In this case, the new loyalty is to Islam. And for Islam, thousands, perhaps millions, of "Frenchmen" are willing, even eager, to fight.

Despite the fact that France is one of the most wonderful places on earth to enjoy what Russell Kirk called "the unbought grace of life," it is tempting to snicker. The French Establishment, steeped in the pernicious doctrines of the French Revolution and richly sauced with the cultural Marxism of "Political Correctness," has for decades invited the war it now faces. It led the way in welcoming Islamic immigrants into Europe. Even now, its spokesmen pretend the problem is just "lack of opportunity" and, above all, "*le racism*," that most heinous of PC sins. As France burns, its pathetic Prime Minister, Dominique de Villepin, wrings his hands and spews culturally Marxist drivel. "Let's avoid stigmatizing areas," he said. "Let's fight all discrimination with firmness and avoid confusing a disruptive minority with the vast majority of youngsters who want to integrate into society and succeed."

Monsieur de Villepin's words and attitude represent a Maginot Line of the mind. And France's young Moslems are turning that line as boldly and successfully as did Guderian's Panzers in 1940. Cowering behind intellectual fortifications built by Sartre, Camus, Foucault and so many other French enemies of Western civilization, the French Establishment will be - - has already been - - beaten, crushed. Not only can it not defend France, it cannot even admit that France has been invaded.

We should not gloat. France, and the rest of Europe, still represent the heart and homeland of our culture. The fact that Islamic invasion by immigration has reversed the verdict of the Battle of Tours is a catastrophe for us all.

What is to be done? The answer is not to be sought in calling in the army to support the overwhelmed French police, though that is probably necessary. Rather, France (and Europe) needs a new politics. It needs a politics purged of cultural Marxism, a politics that can recognize the difference between what and who is French or not French, Western or not Western, legal niceties of citizenship without allegiance aside. It needs a politics that can say to immigrant communities, "accept our Western culture or get out." In effect, France needs to arm the gendarmes who now confront Islamic jihadis in France's own cities and streets with a ham sandwich in one hand and a one-way plane ticket in the other.

A few of us, Americans and Frenchmen, know the new politics France needs is really an old, old politics. Its faith is in Christ the King, not cultural Marxism. Its banner is golden lilies on Bourbon white, not the hideous tricolor of revolution. Its song is "O Richard, O mon Roi," not the Marseillaise, that dirge of laundrywomen. If France is to be saved from the immigrant armies of Islam, it will be by Frenchmen who wear the white cockade. Somewhere in the Vendée, perhaps a rooster is crowing.

**On War #138**  
**November 4, 2005**

[Exit Strategy](#)

By William S. Lind

[The views expressed in this article are those of Mr. Lind, writing in his personal capacity. They do not reflect the opinions or

policy positions of the Free Congress Foundation, its officers, board or employees, or those of Kettle Creek Corporation.]

One day late in the Vietnam war, a Senator called his defense staffer into his office. Like too many Senators (though neither of the two I worked for), the distinguished legislator depended entirely upon his staff but treated them like peons. Although the end of the day had come and gone, the Senator snarled at his hapless staffer, "I want to give a speech on the Floor tomorrow morning on the Vietnam war. You can stay here tonight and write it."

The next morning, the Senator found the text of his speech on his desk, neatly typed and bound. Without bothering to look it over, he took it to the Floor of the Senate where, with the voice if not the mind of Cicero, he shared it with the world. About half way through, he read a page that concluded with the words, "I will now offer my five-point plan for ending the Vietnam war." Turning the page, he found an unexpected message from his despised staffer: "You're on your own now, you SOB. I quit."

Like the Senator, I think it is time I offered my own exit strategy for Iraq. Everyone in Washington except those in the Bushbunker knows we need an exit strategy; few have offered one. While I have had a bit more time to consider my proposal than did the Senator in the story (which was current during my early days on Senate staff), I am sure my proposal will have holes in it. Nonetheless, it may help move the discussion along, from whether to get out of Iraq to how to get out.

Please note that I am not talking about how to win the Iraq war. The war was lost from before the first bomb fell, because the strategic objectives were never attainable no matter what we did. Further blunders, from de-Baathification and sending the Iraqi Army home through mistreating the civilian population, have moved us from mere failure to incipient disaster. The question, rather, is how we might get out without our defeat being so obvious as to be undeniable.

So here is my proposal:

First, announce that we will leave Iraq soon, and completely. Not one American base or soldier will remain on Iraqi soil. The spin should be, "We came only to remove Saddam from power, and we have accomplished that mission. Iraq now has a constitution and an elected government; we have no reason to remain."

Second, open negotiations to set a date by which we will be gone. The formal negotiations will be with the Iraqi government. Behind the scenes, we will have to set a deadline for achieving an agreement, failing which we will announce a withdrawal unilaterally.

Governments established by foreign powers may be reluctant to see foreign troops leave.

The critical (and secret) negotiations, however, will not be with Iraq's puppet government, but with the Sunnis. Here, what we need is what is sometimes called a "diplomatic revolution." Instead of siding with the Kurds and Shiites against the Sunnis, we need to offer the Sunnis an alliance. The terms would be roughly these:

1. We will set and adhere to a date for complete withdrawal;
2. We will cease all attacks on the Sunni resistance, as part of a mutual cease-fire; and
3. We will use such political influence as we retain with Iraq's Shiite-Kurdish condominium to protect and advance the Sunnis' interests.

In return, the Sunnis will:

1. Enforce a cease-fire in the Sunni provinces, and
2. Clean up al Qaeda in Iraq. If they need and want our help to do that, we will help. I doubt they will need any assistance from us, beyond stopping our attacks in Sunni areas, and I doubt even more they will want it, since it would de-legitimize them.

Third, while we will cease our useless "sweeps" and other clearly offensive actions, we will also quietly institute the "ink-blot strategy" in some mixed Sunni-Shiite-Kurdish areas. While the ink-blot strategy (like the CAP program in Vietnam) represents a strategic offensive, which allows us to keep pressure on the Sunnis to make a deal, it requires de-escalation on the tactical

level, so as not to alienate the local population. That should help reduce both Sunni and American casualties while negotiations proceed.

As I have noted in previous columns, a problem in Fourth Generation conflicts is finding someone with whom to negotiate, someone who can deliver once a deal is made. Here, events in Iraq may have given us an opportunity. According to the October 27 *Christian Science Monitor*, Iraq's key Sunni political parties have formed a new coalition. That coalition is, to quote the *Monitor*, "Islamist, vehemently anti-American, opposed to foreign troops, and discreetly pro-insurgency." I think it is safe to add that it is closely tied to the Baathist elements of the insurgency, which are both a large part of the resistance and strongly opposed to al Qaeda.

All those characteristics make it a credible negotiating partner. Negotiations with Sunni Quislings serve no purpose, because the Quislings can't deliver what we need, a quieting down of the fighting while we get out. There is good reason to think the new Sunni coalition could deliver that. In turn, we could deliver what they need, which is political support vis-à-vis the Shiites and Kurds.

Could it work? Maybe; in such business, there are no guarantees. Would the new Sunni coalition talk with us about a deal along these lines? It's worth a try. Would the Bush administration make such an attempt? Aye, there's the rub. The Bushbunker may be so detached from reality that it still thinks we can win this war militarily.

If that is the case, then it is time for America's senior military leaders, the Chief and Members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, to have a little talk with the President. Another Vietnam war story, a true one, is how the JCS failed to give President Johnson the advice he needed though did not want, namely that the military had done all that it could and it was time to seek a political solution.

So that's my exit strategy. If someone else comes up with a better one, I will be happy to defer to it. But the time is past for arguing whether we need an exit strategy; the discussion should be about what that strategy might be. "Staying the course" in a lost war is not a strategy at all; it is merely a recipe for disaster.

**On War #137**  
**October 27, 2005**

[True Confessions](#)

By William S. Lind

[The views expressed in this article are those of Mr. Lind, writing in his personal capacity. They do not reflect the opinions or policy positions of the Free Congress Foundation, its officers, board or employees, or those of Kettle Creek Corporation.]

On October 19, 2005, the American Secretary of State, aka the Tea Lady, did something extraordinary for the Bush administration. She told the truth. According to the October 20 *Washington Times*, in testimony to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Miss Rice said

that it was always the Bush administration's intent to redesign the Middle East after the September 11 attacks, which exposed a "deep malignancy growing" in the region, and that the Iraq was part of that plan.

Well. There we have it. It's now official: Saddam's eternally elusive Weapons of Mass Destruction were just eyewash. The decision to invade Iraq came first, and the various contrived justifications came after. Those Iraqi WMDs were as real as Polish attacks on Germany in 1939, and as cynical. The cynicism is, if anything, ever more brazen: Herr Ribbentrop never testified to the Reichstag that "Polish aggression" was just a set-up, even if everyone knew.

Does it matter? To the American press and people, apparently not. Miss Rice's official confirmation of everyone's suspicions got virtually no coverage. After all, the NFL season has started.

But in other respects, I think it does matter. It matters, first, because it reveals this administration's utter cynicism, a cynicism born of the neo-cons, who seldom met a lie they didn't like. In effect, Miss Rice testified, "Yea, we lied. So what?"

Well, beyond 2,000 dead and 15,000 wounded [DNI editor's note: US casualties only], so cavalier an attitude toward the truth

suggests the lies have probably continued. As they have: the administration routinely engages in (illegal) domestic propaganda, puffing anything it can call a "success" in Iraq while classifying or otherwise burying the bad news. The latest example is the spin on the Iraqi constitutional referendum. The Bushies are hailing it an "another victory of democracy," when in fact the outcome could not have been worse. The Sunnis pulled out all their stops and still lost, telling them the system is stacked so heavily against them they have no political future. Where ballots fail, bullets still offer promise.

Another reason the WMD lie matters is that the real reason the administration invaded Iraq, "to redesign the Middle East," reveals (officially) a truly breathtaking hubris, coupled to a monumental ignorance of the region in question. Redesign the Middle East? What do the Bushies think it is, a Chevrolet?

At it happens, the war in Iraq is redesigning the Middle East, but not exactly in a planned fashion. Just as the calling of the Estates General in 1789 opened the door to the French Revolution, so the American destruction of the Iraqi state has opened the door to a broader collapse of the state system in that region, an outcome the administration is now pushing in Syria as well. Osama, sitting in his cave, no doubt continues to thank Allah for President George W. Bush.

Finally, the official revelation, in Congressional testimony no less, that the Bush administration's motto is "Lies R US" will matter politically, as the American people begin to come to grips with the fact of a lost war. That may happen by the elections of 2006; it will certainly happen by 2008. It is safe to say that the public will not be happy, and the realization that they were lied into the lost war won't make them any happier. As Republican Members of Congress are beginning to realize, the blowback may be of historic proportions. Anyone seen any Whigs lately? (The fact that the Democrats continue to offer a profile in cowardice on the war might even open the door to a serious third party, God willing. There have to be some real, small-r republicans out there still.)

And so Wilsonianism will come full circle. Wilson lied America into World War I, with fables of German soldiers bayoneting Belgian babies. The result was Lenin, Hitler and World War II. But the experience did give America a lesson in minding her own business and, for a time, a foreign policy for Americans (first). This time, Wilsonianism will give us a vastly disordered Middle East, the greatest Islamic victory since the fall of Constantinople, and oil prices that might make the Trabant America's best-selling car. Will it also give us, again, a foreign policy for Americans, as Senator Robert A. Taft put it? We can hope; we can hope.

**On War #136**  
**October 20, 2005**

[Sichelschnitt](#)

By William S. Lind

[The views expressed in this article are those of Mr. Lind, writing in his personal capacity. They do not reflect the opinions or policy positions of the Free Congress Foundation, its officers, board or employees, or those of Kettle Creek Corporation.]

Life occasionally offers a chance to make a boyhood dream come true, and I did just that a couple of weeks ago when I joined the Quarterhorse, 1st Squadron, 4th Cavalry Regiment, to follow General Heinz Guderian's XIX Panzer Corps' attack through the Ardennes to Sedan in 1940. Guderian's memoirs, *Panzer Leader*, were a big influence on me when I read them as a kid, and he was at his best in the 1940 campaign against France. To follow in his footsteps (and Hermann Balck's) was a rare honor.

This was also the best staff ride I have ever been on. Too many are junkets. What made the difference is that the Quarterhorse's outstanding commander, Lt. Col. Chris Kolenda, led his officers to do their homework. All participants had to read Bob Dougherty's superb book, *The Breaking Point*, on the battle of Sedan in 1940 (it is one of the books in the canon). They could then see how the individual events we observed in the staff ride fit into the larger picture, and what that picture (from both the German and French perspectives) means for us today. The Quarterhorse shows how good a U.S. Army unit can be when it combines the usual American physical courage and technical proficiency with a (sadly) less common interest in ideas.

So what did we learn from the staff ride? For me, the biggest lesson was the relationship between operational results and tactical risk. The German attack through the Ardennes, called *Sichelschnitt* or sickle-cut, promised to be decisive operationally. But until I actually saw the terrain I did not realize how risky it was tactically. While parts of the Ardennes are rolling, relatively open country, some of the sections through which XIX Panzer Corps had to pass were extremely constrained. They gave the

French and Belgians repeated opportunities to turn Guderian's Panzers into a world-class traffic jam. When one Belgian company did not get orders to withdraw, its resistance caused the Germans serious problems. But such resistance occurred only by accident; French doctrine called for delay, not defense, so the French threw opportunity after opportunity away. The French were defeated as much by their own doctrine as by the Germans, a point of some relevance since U.S. Army doctrine today remains largely French, especially in its focus on synchronization.

One of the mysteries of the 1940 campaign, as I read about it, was the rapid fall of the new, powerful Belgian fort of Eben Emael. As we walked through its kilometers of tunnels, a Cav officer solved the mystery: "It's a blind giant," he said. The fort had only a handful of small vision cupolas, which the Germans quickly took out with shaped charges. Why was it so designed? Because it was a "system of systems," dependent on others to tell it what was going on. When that information did not come, its situation was hopeless.

The critical point in the campaign was the crossing of the Meuse river at Sedan. There, over and over, we saw the central difference between a Second and a Third Generation army. The Germans, focused outward, cooperated laterally and took initiative at every level to get the result the situation required, while the French, focused inward, could act only in response to orders from higher headquarters. The fact that the German senior commanders were all forward at the decisive points enabled them to see the real situation quickly and act on it.

In contrast, we visited the very comfortable, landscaped bunker that was the headquarters of the French 55th Division, well to the rear of the fighting. As we reflected on that headquarters' isolation, I asked one of the Cav officers if a modern U.S. Army division's command element could fit in the same bunker. The answer was no, by a large margin; in the size and complexity of our headquarters, we have out-Frenched the French.

Our staff ride ended at the heights of Stonne, south of Sedan. Again, until I saw terrain, I did not appreciate how commanding it was. Here, what we learned dispelled one of the myths of the 1940 campaign, that the French did not fight. Stonne was captured and recaptured some seventeen times in one day, in actions where the French fought bitterly and the Germans, especially the Grossdeutschland Regiment, took heavy casualties. At one point, a single French Char B heavy tank entered the village, destroyed thirteen German tanks and then left, intact, despite taking 140 hits. That illustrated both the French superiority in equipment and the rarity of French initiative and cooperation. A bit more of both and the battle for the heights at Stonne could have gone the other way, which might have kept even Hürrying Heinz from turning west toward the English Channel and operational victory.

I am deeply grateful to the Quarterhorse for inviting me along a truly model staff ride. I also appreciate the opportunity to spend some time with officers of the caliber of Lt. Col. Kolenda and Captains Jay Pieri and Jim Egan. They illustrate the enormous potential inherent in the U.S. Army if we can ever shift the institution's practices from the Second to the Third Generation.

**On War #135**  
**September 23, 2005**

[Important Distinctions](#)

By William S. Lind

[The views expressed in this article are those of Mr. Lind, writing in his personal capacity. They do not reflect the opinions or policy positions of the Free Congress Foundation, its officers, board or employees, or those of Kettle Creek Corporation.]

Georgie Ann Geyer, who may be America's most perceptive international affairs columnist, wrote in the Saturday, September 17 *Washington Times* about a recent Washington conference concerning the mess in the Middle East. That could, of course, have been a conference topic back as far as the First Triumvirate, when an earlier Crassus lost his head in the Land Between the Rivers. We can only hope we are not as close to the loss of the republic itself as Rome was by that time.

In her column, Miss Geyer quoted at length the remarks of former Ambassador Charles W. Freeman, Jr., who represented the United States in Riyadh during the First Gulf War.

"The Anglo-American invasion of Iraq cost my country thousands of lives, eroded the American

military and destroyed the Iraqi state ... It has generated at least three different insurgencies and, by some estimates, multiplied our enemies 10 times. Look at the resurgent Taliban in Afghanistan — Iraq is becoming the cause of the very problems it was supposed to control . . . ”

Moreover, he said, we have gotten mired down in Iraq in "fourth-generation warfare," simply warfare between wildly asymmetric forces, such as the formal and structured American military against the footloose insurgents or guerrillas. "What fourth-generation warfare has as its dominant character is its objective being to influence the mind of the leader, i.e. the U.S., and to convince the leader that his objectives are unattainable by at least reasonable amounts of force," he continued. "This kind of warfare is one that we've never won."

Ambassador Freeman is correct in his description of the consequences of America's invasion of Iraq. It is America's Syracuse Expedition. Just as Sparta was happy to see Athens waste its strength against a meaningless opponent, Syracuse, so al Qaeda regards our war in Iraq as a gift from Allah. Far from wanting to drive us out of Iraq (or Afghanistan), it prays we stay in both places indefinitely, our military bleeding from the death of one thousand cuts.

But in his remarks on Fourth Generation war, the ambassador seems to have fallen into two common misconceptions. Fourth Generation war is asymmetrical, but it is asymmetrical on a much broader scale than simply the pitting of a conventional army against guerillas. The larger asymmetry is political. Fourth Generation war pits a state, or alliance of states, against a shifting mass of opponents of wildly varying motives and goals. Among the problems that presents is that the state has no one to talk to about making peace. Who does Mr. Kissinger sit down with in Paris this time?

Nor does Fourth Generation war have as its objective the mind of the leader on the other side. Rather, what it does is pull its enemy apart on the moral level, fracturing his society. We see that clearly today in Israel, where the fractures may soon reach the point where the political process cannot bridge them.

That in turn is a warning for the U.S., and it is one both Ambassador Freeman and Georgie Anne Geyer pick up on:

Then Ambassador Freeman ... came to the core of the problem. The "party adversary system" in America has broken down. "Patriotism" is confused with accepting whatever policy the government lays down. There is no national discussion on the war at all. More telling was the lack of debate even in Congress over the war: "This is not," he averred strongly, "just a political problem; it is a systemic breakdown in America."

That is just what Fourth Generation opponents strive for, a systemic breakdown in their state adversary. The danger sign in America is not a hot national debate over the war in Iraq and its course, but precisely the absence of such a debate — which, as former Senator Gary Hart has pointed out, is largely due to a lack of courage on the part of the Democrats. Far from ensuring a united nation, what such a lack of debate and absence of alternatives makes probable is a bitter fracturing of the American body politic once the loss of the war becomes evident to the public. The public will feel itself betrayed, not merely by one political party, but by the whole political system.

The *primum mobile* of Fourth Generation war is a crisis of legitimacy of the state. If the absence of a loyal opposition and alternative courses of action further delegitimizes the American state in the eye of the public, the forces of the Fourth Generation will have won a victory of far greater proportions than anything that could happen on the ground in Iraq. The Soviet Union's defeat in Afghanistan played a central role in the collapse of the Soviet state. Could the American defeat in Iraq have similar consequences here? The chance is far greater than Washington elites can imagine.

Note: The next *On War* column will not appear until the week of October 16, as I will be in Europe. For part of the time, I will be re-tracing General Heinz Guderian's route through the Ardennes to Sedan with XIX Panzer Corps in 1940. This will be a staff ride with some officers and NCOs from a U.S. Army Cav Squadron stationed in Germany. As recently as the First Gulf War, the study of this brilliant armor campaign would have been preparation for future war. Now, it's history.

**On War #134**  
**September 15, 2005**

[Blunders and Opportunities](#)

By William S. Lind

[The views expressed in this article are those of Mr. Lind, writing in his personal capacity. They do not reflect the opinions or policy positions of the Free Congress Foundation, its officers, board or employees, or those of Kettle Creek Corporation.]

As the chorus saying "sweeps are useless" grows, inside as well as outside the military, the U.S. military in Iraq continues its sweeps. The latest Iraqi city to get swept is Tal Afar. Predictably, the Iraqi guerillas did what they should and got out, escaping through exactly the sort of tunnel system John Poole describes in his excellent books. We stand holding an empty bag, in a city whose population we have thoroughly alienated.

This time, though, there was a difference. The American Commando Supremo made sure the "Iraqi Army" took the lead. What that actually meant was that the invasion of Tal Afar, a city populated by Turkmen, was led by Kurdish *pesh merga* militiamen. The September 13 [Washington Post](#) reports,

As in the past several days, Iraqi soldiers drawn primarily from the Kurdish *pesh merga* militia led the operation ...

Just after 7 a.m., they streamed into the adjoining neighborhoods of Hassan Koy and Uruba, taking every military-age man into custody at a makeshift pen established by U.S. forces ...

U.S. commanders have praised the performance of the Kurdish forces during the operation, while privately expressing concern that their tactics sometimes verge on being heavy-handed. The *pesh merga* supports Kurdish rebels fighting the government of neighboring Turkey ...

Hello? Did anyone in the higher ranks of the U.S. military ever hear the term "cultural intelligence?" Using Kurds against a Turkish city is like turning Hutus loose on Tutsis or the IRA on Orangemen. We can now add a Kurd vs. Turkmen civil war to the one already underway between Iraq's Sunnis and Shiites.

Nor does the damage stop at the Iraqi border. I would bet dinars to dollars that the Kurdish assault on Tal Afar has been the front page story in every newspaper in Turkey for days. Worse, the whole Turkish population has seen the U.S. military hold the Kurds' coat for them while they kick the crap out of fellow Turks. The *Post* reported that, "Some of the American soldiers taunted the detainees by asking them, 'Can you say Abu Ghraib?'" So much for winning at the moral level.

Fortunately, war is often a contest in blunders, and the other side has made one too, also at the moral level. As Iraqi Sunnis register in droves to vote against the new draft constitution, al-Qa'ida in Iraq announced that it would target anyone who takes part in the voting.

Here once again is a golden opportunity for us to do the one thing that might allow us to avoid total defeat in Iraq, namely split the Ba'athist resistance from the Islamic resistance. The Ba'ath is still strong enough among the Sunnis that it could probably clean up al-Qa'ida in short order. At present, unfortunately, our policies push the two together, despite the fact that they hate each other's guts.

We need a deal with the Ba'ath, and the Ba'ath might be open to a deal with us. They need us to stop targeting them while they go after al-Qa'ida, and they need our help on the political level (the draft constitution outlaws them).

Can anyone in Washington or Baghdad's Emerald City see this opportunity? Are we talking with the Ba'athist resistance? Or is both our political and military leadership so locked in to a failed strategy that opportunities for political maneuver are meaningless?

Perhaps Clausewitz's most central point is that war and politics are always intermixed. We cannot win the war in Iraq. But just as war may come when politics fails, so politics must take the lead when a war is being lost. It is time to open negotiations with some of our Sunni opponents, and al-Qa'ida's blunder gives us the opening we need.

Note: I spent yesterday in a series of meetings with the Marine Corps at Quantico, at both the school and headquarters level, and came away with a strong impression that Marines are moving to re-establish the intellectual ascendancy they enjoyed from the late 1970s through the early 1990s. The Corps lost the bubble in the mid-90s when it shifted its focus to programs and budgets. It now appears to grasp that [Fourth Generation war](#) is dominated by ideas, not equipment. The talent is clearly there, if the Corps' senior leadership will act

to turn it loose. I think that may soon happen. If it does, the results could make a real difference, not only for the Marine Corps but for the country.

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**On War #133**  
**September 8, 2005**

[In Defense of His Majesty](#)

By William S. Lind

[The views expressed in this article are those of Mr. Lind, writing in his personal capacity. They do not reflect the opinions or policy positions of the Free Congress Foundation, its officers, board or employees, or those of Kettle Creek Corporation.]

As regular readers in this column know, my reporting senior and lawful sovereign is His Imperial Majesty Kaiser Wilhelm II. When I finally report in to that great *Oberste Heeresleitung* in the sky, I expect to do so as the Kaiser's last soldier.

Why? Well, beyond *Bestimmung*, the unhappy fact is that Western civilization's last chance of survival was probably a victory by the Central Powers in World War I. Their defeat let all the poisons of the French Revolution loose unchecked, which is the main reason that we now live in a moral and cultural cesspool.

History has not been kind to Kaiser Wilhelm, unfairly in my view (an assessment in which Martin van Creveld agrees with me). He may have been the brightest chief of state in early 20th century Europe. His chief fault was yielding too often to his advisors, when he in fact was right. Once he saw where events were headed in the summer of 1914, he desperately sought to avert war. I have seen the actual last telegram he sent to the Tsar (interestingly, it is in English). When war came, he wanted Germany to remain on the defensive in the west, abandoning the Schlieffen Plan, and take the offensive in the east, against Russia. Such a course would have kept England out of the war and almost certainly resulted in a German victory. His Chief of the General Staff, von Moltke the less, told him it could not be done (the plans were in the file). After the war, in exile in Holland, his response to the terms of the Versailles Treaty was prophetic; he said, "The war to end wars has given us a peace to end peace." He was an implacable opponent of Hitler and the Nazis. When the Second World War came, Churchill, who has always admired the Kaiser, offered him refuge in England.

As a loyal subject of His Majesty, I was somewhat hurt to receive from a reader the impious question, "How can (you) think it is possible to esteem too little a dolt who ignited a naval arms race with the world's predominant sea power merely because he wanted to dress up as an admiral?" Well. Such lese *majesté* from someone who signs himself, "Fahnrich, *Königlich-Bayerische Befreiungsarmee*?" I suppose that's what you get from a people who are drinking beer by ten o'clock in the morning.

Germany's decision to build a great navy was a strategic error of the first rank. It put her in opposition to her historic ally, Britain, to the point where it drove the British into alliance with their traditional enemies, France and Russia. But the Kaiser was not solely responsible for this blunder. Navalism had become a vast force in German public opinion. Nor did he need a navy of his own to play admiral, since he was already an admiral in the British, Swedish and Norwegian navies. As in Washington today, there was no shortage of admirals' uniforms, though real admirals were and are another matter.

The navalist idea which swept the world in the Kaiser's time – that history turned on the outcome of great sea battles – came largely from one book: Alfred Thayer Mahan's *The Influence of Sea Power Upon History* (America, too, now has a head of state who read a book). I first read Mahan in my teens, and to a teenager he speaks very convincingly. An adult reading gives a different impression. Despite the fact that Mahan is still worshipped by the United States Navy, which continues to build a fleet suitable for a great sea battle against Imperial Japan, his work is piffle when compared to Britain's truly outstanding naval theorist, Sir Julian Corbett. While Corbett fully recognized the importance of seapower, he also understood that its most powerful influence was indirect.

Great sea battles were only a small part of a much more complex picture.

What does all this history say to our present time? It points out that simplistic ideas, like "democratic capitalism" and the "end of history," can become intellectual fads that sweep important national capitals, with incalculable and often unfortunate results. Domestic lobbies can ride such fads to wealth and power, as they did navalism. But the complex realities of policy and grand

strategy cannot be fit to such Procrustean beds. Those realities eventually triumph over the fad, and at a price.

The Kaiser payed the price of navalism in 1918. What price will America's leaders pay for the fad of neo-conservatism? They, and we, are fated to find out.

**On War #132**  
**September 1, 2005**

[War and Rumors of Wars](#)

By William S. Lind

[The views expressed in this article are those of Mr. Lind, writing in his personal capacity. They do not reflect the opinions or policy positions of the Free Congress Foundation, its officers, board or employees, or those of Kettle Creek Corporation.]

In On War #130, I raised the question of why we are doing sweeps in Iraq when the history of counter-insurgency tells us sweeps don't work. I was motivated to write that column by the death of fourteen Marines in one Amtrack during a sweep conducted by 3/25, Cleveland's Marine Reserve unit.

The previous day, 3/25 had lost six men, two sniper teams, under circumstances that were unclear. I recently received information on that incident that raises a very important question, a question with strategic, not merely tactical significance. I was told (not by anyone in 3/25) that the six Marines were ambushed and killed by the Iraqi troops they were attached to.

Let me say up front that I cannot confirm this report. Because I cannot confirm it, I am using it not to make a point but to raise some questions. The questions are, did this happen? If it did, why were the American people not told? And – this is the question with strategic importance – how often is this happening in Iraq today?

The reason the question has strategic meaning is that the Bush administration's strategy, if it can be called that, for avoiding outright defeat in Iraq is to build up the Iraqi armed forces and police until the war can be turned over to them. If those same Iraqi forces are attacking American troops on a fairly frequent basis, that is a significant piece of evidence the strategy is not working.

History suggests that it was never very likely to work. Over and over, invaders have tried to raise proxy armies to do much of the fighting for them. Only a minority of the troops Napoleon used to invade Russia were French; most were coerced from reluctant "allies" the French had previously defeated, like Prussia. Not surprisingly, as soon as it could get away with it, the Prussian corps went over to the Russians.

World War II offers a similar lesson. Hundreds of thousands of Russians taken prisoner by the Wehrmacht changed sides. Many were absorbed into regular German units as Hiwis, "willing helpers." Others formed a whole separate pro-German Russian Army under a Russian general, Vlasov. As a friend in Washington recently said, compared to "our" Iraqi forces, the Vlasov Army looked pretty good. But like most such forces, when faced with real combat, it and the Hilfswillige melted away.

Of course, there is also our own experience in Vietnam. Remember "Vietnamization?" It reflected the same strategy the Bush administration is now following: build up the armed forces of a friendly local government and let them do the fighting. Some ARVN units did fight. But the Vietnamese on the other side had a whole lot more motivation. As Saigon is now Ho Chi Minh City, will Baghdad one day be Sadr City or, worse, Osama City? I seem to see the Clio nodding "yes."

If the American public is to assess whether or not we are succeeding in Iraq, it needs to be told when Americans are attacked by the "friendly" Iraqi government forces they are working with. Again, I cannot confirm that this happened to the six snipers from 3/25. But if it did happen and the public was not told, the Bush administration will have been caught in yet another lie. That, too, has strategic significance in a war we were lied into in the first place. If a strategy initially based on lies must rely on more lies for its continuation, it is probably not pointed toward success.

Other evidence already suggests that our attempt to create our own Iraqi armed forces is not working. The police do an excellent job of disappearing whenever the insurgents show up. Most of the latest Iraqi Army recruits are (Kurdish) Pesh Merga or Shiite militiamen who are putting on different uniforms while maintaining their old loyalties. The insurgents have infiltrated everywhere: Recently, U.S. forces have begun disbanding – sometimes forcibly – the Iraqi National Guard we previously created

because it has been so thoroughly penetrated.

If, on top of this, our troops in Iraq are being attacked frequently by Iraqi government troops, and this information is deliberately being withheld from the American people, the crystal ball has turned black. So, President Rove, just what did happen to those six snipers from 3/25?

### **On War #131**

**August 24, 2005**

#### [Some Responses](#)

By William S. Lind

[The views expressed in this article are those of Mr. Lind, writing in his personal capacity. They do not reflect the opinions or policy positions of the Free Congress Foundation, its officers, board or employees, or those of Kettle Creek Corporation.]

My two columns on the idea of a national militia as the best response to the Fourth Generation threat generated some responses that are worth thinking about. We will take a look at some of them here.

Let me first clarify one point: the militia we are talking about is a public, not a private militia. It is funded by government, and it reports to government (it is adcon to Congress and, unless mobilized, opcon to the county sheriff). Our working group thought it was important to keep the militia away from the federal executive branch as much as possible, because the executive branch will try either to destroy it or to turn it into a tool for Big Brother. But this militia is not just a bunch of guys running around in the woods. It is a state armed service, just like the four we now have — the Army, the Navy, the Marine Corps and the Coast Guard.

Now, some responses:

- Myke asks, "I assume that by reporting to Congress he means that the militias would become tools of their particular representatives . . . Isn't this the very sign of state collapse that van Creveld warned us of?" Our working group never envisioned the militia reporting to their local Congressman. Unless mobilized, it would report to the county sheriff; if mobilized, to a state governor or a CINC. As to whether it might contribute to the decline of the state, that depends on what kind of state we envision. The militia does represent decentralization away from Washington. But I think America's current over-centralization is itself a factor in the state's crisis of legitimacy. Both here and generally, it seems to me that decentralization and citizen involvement may help restore legitimacy to the state.
- Two readers, Marion and Herbert, asked whether the Swiss militia model might be relevant. The answer is clearly yes. Switzerland's defense has been based on a militia for a very long time, and it has enabled Switzerland to preserve its neutrality, maintain its liberties and decentralized political system (real power lies at the cantonal, not the federal level of government) and keep its defense expenditures down. The Swiss militia is an ideal basis for defending Switzerland from 4GW. In fact, Switzerland already has an arrangement other countries will need to move to in a 4GW world: the regular armed services support the militia, instead of the other way around.
- Keith asks, "Is Mr. Lind expecting the militia force he refers to, to replace existing 'standing armies?' . . . I could not imagine such a force being suitably equipped (or trained) for expeditionary warfare . . . how can we do without modern, professional armed forces?" Our working group, and some though not all others at Col. Wylly's conference, saw the current armed forces as "legacy" forces. They represent a way of war that is passing, war between states. As we see in Iraq and Afghanistan, they do not succeed very well in Fourth Generation wars. We thought the first-line militia companies we envision would be better suited to 4GW, in large part because they would be trained to de-escalate confrontations, rather than call in F-18s to drop 2000 pound bombs in urban neighborhoods. The winding down of the legacy forces would come gradually, but the combination of their vast cost and declining utility means they are passing into history.
- Dee noted that not all urban areas have sheriffs. If the militia there reported to the mayor, directly or through the police chief, they could become dangerously politicized. I agree. Does anyone know how many places lack sheriffs?

- Thomas noted that in addition to the example of volunteer fire departments, we can point to three other militia-type organizations already in existence: the Civil Air Patrol, the Coast Guard Auxiliary and some state militias that remain separate from the National Guard. Karl pointed out that 10 U.S.C. 330 already provides legal authorization for an "Unorganized Militia" and a "Select Militia." He notes, "This Code is still in effect, just ignored. . . ." Nathan adds that since 1988, many counties have had "Local Emergency Planning Committees." He adds, "The LEPCs could, by working with the sheriff (most do, closely, anyway today) be the coordinating catalyst to transform or spin off the militia companies."

These are all useful questions or ideas. The militia concept still needs a lot of work if it is to become viable. And the larger question still remains: is a militia the best answer to the question of what kind of state armed service America needs to defend against Fourth Generation threats?

The difference between the people who wrote responses to my columns and Washington is that the former are thinking about that question.

**On War #130**  
**August 18, 2005**

[Getting Swept](#)

By William S. Lind

[The views expressed in this article are those of Mr. Lind, writing in his personal capacity. They do not reflect the opinions or policy positions of the Free Congress Foundation, its officers, board or employees, or those of Kettle Creek Corporation.]

The past couple weeks have been a hard time here in my home town of Cleveland, Ohio. Third Battalion, 25th Marines, a reserve unit headquartered just ten minutes from my house, lost 20 guys in two days in Iraq. It was a kick in the stomach for the whole city.

Those Marines were our neighbors and sometimes our friends. The battalion commander of 3/25 is an old friend of mine, from his days as a captain. Last winter, before they deployed, I held a seminar on Fourth Generation war for him and some of his officers and staff NCOs. The FMFM 1-A was barely in draft form then, but I did get them a pre-publication copy of John Poole's *Tactics of the Crescent Moon*. It is probably the best thing out there on the Islamic way of war. I hope it helped. Like everyone in Cleveland, I am frustrated that there is so little we can do for our own guys over there.

There is one thing I can do, and that is use this column to raise a question: why are units such as 3/25 being used to conduct sweeps? It was on a sweep that the 14 Marines were killed when their Amtrack was hit. The battalion took a similar hit last May in another sweep.

I am not criticizing 3/25 here. The policy of conducting sweeps is set at a level far above battalion. Maybe these things are decided in the Emerald City in Baghdad, maybe in Washington. In either case, it is in some vast headquarters where everything is reduced to PowerPoint briefs and spoon-fed to generals who know more about promotion politics than they do about war.

Why do I say that? Because anyone who knows anything about counter-insurgency warfare knows that sweeps don't work. In a sweep, a conventional military unit, designed to fight other units like itself, is sent into bad guy country. It is not going to stay there; it's just passing through. Inevitably, the insurgents know for days if not weeks beforehand when and where it is coming. Most of the bad guys simply leave. Enough stay behind to set some ambushes and plant mines and booby-traps. The unit doing the sweep comes through like ducks in a shooting gallery. It gets hit, sometimes hard. Maybe it picks up a few insurgent weapons dumps. Typically, it rounds up any young men it finds as "possible insurgents" (units like 3/25 now report that they find no young men on their sweeps – no surprise). Then it leaves. The insurgents come back. Nothing has changed, except places like Cleveland hold a lot of military funerals. In the end, it's us that gets swept.

So why do we keep doing it? Beyond the facts that many of our generals are military idiots and more are politicians in uniform (do I hear Lincoln up there sighing?), the standard answer is that we don't have enough troops in Iraq to occupy the place. That is true. But instead of wasting the troops we do have by conducting sweeps, why don't we adopt the "ink-blot strategy" where we can? Deriving from British experience in Malaya and what American Special Forces and Marines did in the early stages of the

Vietnam war (and it was working when we abandoned it), the ink-blot strategy uses however many troops we've got to come into an area and stay. They move right into the towns and villages. They live with the local people. They provide long-term security, so local people can work with us without getting their throats cut three days later once we've gone.

No, we do not have enough troops to do this in all of Sunni Iraq. But we can start with part of it. Yes, that will give the insurgents a free hand elsewhere, for a time. But sweeps don't change that fact; they only change the appearance, which may be what is wanted for briefings back in Washington but means nothing on the ground. Over time, our ink-blot can slowly expand, as areas become genuinely secure and can be turned over to someone else (probably local militias willing to take American dollars).

The root problem here is one I have pointed to many times before: the seeming inability of the American military's higher echelons to learn. The officers and men of units like 3/25 learn and adapt quickly. But our vast, overstaffed and underled headquarters seem to live on another planet. They don't learn from the experiences of others, through history, and they also don't learn from the experience of 3/25 and other similar units. They just keep ordering the same failed tactics, like sweeps or dropping bombs on populated towns and cities, over and over again. I'm not a psychologist, but I believe that is a traditional symptom of neurosis.

Yet on another level their behavior is rational. American generals become senior commanders by pleasing politicians. They please politicians by telling them what they want to hear. The Bush administration wants to be told that what we are doing is working, so that is what the generals tell them. And it's so much easier to tell someone else that it's working if you believe it yourself. It all makes perfect sense — in a closed-system fantasy-land that has no relationship whatever to the war units like 3/25 are fighting.

If the people of Cleveland and other places like Cleveland ever figure out what's really going on, there's going to be hell to pay. Anger is a short step from grief.

**On War #129**  
**August 10, 2005**

[Modern Warfare Symposium, continued](#)

By William S. Lind

[The views expressed in this article are those of Mr. Lind, writing in his personal capacity. They do not reflect the opinions or policy positions of the Free Congress Foundation, its officers, board or employees, or those of Kettle Creek Corporation.]

This column continues [#128](#), on the results of Colonel Mike Wylly's Modern War Symposium, and specifically the discussion of what a state armed service designed for Fourth Generation war might look like. Since our number one goal should be to prevent 4GW attacks on American soil, our working group at the Symposium concluded such a service should be a militia.

The militia would be organized into three levels of types of companies. The first would be deployable world-wide, when our country had to respond to some event overseas. We anticipate that many of its members would be cops, as is true now of some Reserve and National Guard units, which means it would have a natural inclination toward de-escalating situations. This is what the FMFM 1-A, *Fourth Generation War*, suggests is the key to success in many 4GW situations.

The second type of militia company would be deployable nationwide. It would be equipped with fewer weapons than first-line companies, and would be called up to maintain domestic order and control our borders. The third-line companies would be something entirely new. They would not be armed at all. Rather, they would contain people with skills needed to restore basic services after a 4GW attack. For example, these companies would have a lot of old guys who know how to make things like water treatment plants and banks work without computers, since one obvious target of 4GW warriors will be our computer systems. All militia units, but especially the third-line companies, would have networks of civilian experts they could plug into immediately for any knowledge or skills they needed.

As is traditional with militia, no company could be called up for more than 90 days. When called up, they would be paid by whatever level of government called them up. Of course, they would perform their most important 4GW function, neighborhood watch, all the time, not just when mobilized.

We tried in our discussions to identify and find remedies to typical militia weaknesses. One weakness seen often in militia history is that units degenerate into mere social clubs. To prevent this, all companies would participate in annual play-offs in the form of free-play exercises against other companies. The winner would advance to the next level. Our hope is that these competitions would become big deals in communities across America, spurring the militiamen on to greater efforts.

Another typical militia weakness is doctrinal stagnation. To counter this, the militia would have its own General Staff, made up of the kind of "military dinks" who have been into military history and war games since they were kids. The General Staff would oversee doctrine, training and the regular round of free-play exercises. It would not vet individual militia members, since this would create centralization, but it would have the power to dissolve companies that performed poorly, became social clubs or got taken over by MS-13 and the like.

All recruitment would be voluntary. Volunteers could choose what type of company they wanted to join, level one, two or three, depending on their interests and skills. Companies could refuse any volunteer. Volunteers for first-line companies would provide their own gear, including personal weapons; crew-served weapons would be provided by the General Staff, which would also provide training funds. Second-line companies would be given basic gear, including light weapons. Third-line companies would bring their own tools. We thought carefully about where funding was to come from, because regardless of formal chains-of-command, real control goes to whoever provides the money.

This thought led to one last innovation: the militia's General Staff would report to Congress, not the Executive Branch, except for those units which were mobilized, where the General Staff would report to the mobilizing authority (often a state governor) Congress will be generous to local militia units, because they will be made up of voters. But that was not our motive. Rather, we feared that if the militia came under the Executive Branch, it would promptly move to destroy it because it hates anything that does not give more power to Big Brother. All a President would have to do is turn the militia over to the Pentagon or DHS; either would delight in putting the knife into something that was bottom-up instead of top-down. That's exactly what the Bush Justice Department did to the country's most promising community policing program, the Police Corps.

Unfortunately, the Modern War Symposium broke up before each working group made a final presentation, so I cannot report on what the other groups did (lesson: three days is the maximum length for a conference; everyone leaves on the fourth). But I think we did make some progress on the question of what a state armed force intended for 4GW might look like. If the militia idea is on the right track, it would reinforce rather than undermine the qualities of a true republic. That in turn means it could strike directly at the origin of 4GW, the state's crisis of legitimacy. Of course, it also means that everyone in Washington will see it as a threat, because Washington is united in its pursuit of the national security state and the total power it offers to the center. And that, in turn, is at least part of the origin of the state's legitimacy crisis.

Like the original, I suspect this Gordian knot may end up getting cut rather than unraveled.

**On War #128**  
**August 2, 2005**

[Modern Warfare Symposium](#)

[The views expressed in this article are those of Mr. Lind, writing in his personal capacity. They do not reflect the opinions or policy positions of the Free Congress Foundation, its officers, board or employees, or those of Kettle Creek Corporation.]

[DNI Editor's note: I was a participant in Mr. Lind's working group, which included about a quarter of the symposium.]

I spent last week in Pittsfield, Maine, at a symposium on modern war called by Colonel Mike Wyly, USMC retired. Col. Wyly was one of the heroes of the maneuver warfare movement in the Marine Corps in the 1970s and 80s, and when he suggests it's time for a new effort, people listen. My hope was that we might make some progress on Fourth Generation war theory, and while I am not sure we accomplished that, we did gain some ground on one important question: what might a state armed service designed for 4GW look like?

To address that question, we first had to answer another one: what would such a force's mission be? Not being neo-Trotskyites, we derived our answer within the framework of a defensive grand strategy. The new service's (and it should be a new armed service) primary mission would be to prevent outbreaks of Fourth Generation war on American soil. The focus must be on

prevention, not “first response,” because if we are forced into a response mode the enemy has already won. And, the new service must be oriented not only to preventing imported 4GW, like that we saw on 9/11, but also the home-grown variety such as London just experienced.

But—and here was the kicker—the new service has to keep us safe without pushing America further toward Big Brother, the all-powerful, centralized, national security state represented by the Department of Homeland Security, the “Patriot Act” and much else coming out of Washington.

So what should this new 4GW armed service be? The answer of our working group at the symposium was, “a militia.”

The militia was the basis of America’s defense through most of our history as a republic. More, there are two contemporary models. One is volunteer fire departments, which small town and rural America depend on and which almost always perform well. The other is community policing, where cops walk the same beat in the same neighborhood for a long time, long enough to understand the neighborhood and prevent crimes instead of just responding to them. Neither volunteer fire departments nor community police serve as control mechanisms for the federal government. They respond to their local communities, not to Washington.

The new militia’s most important function would be neighborhood watch. The only way to prevent 4GW attacks is to find out about them before they happen, and that means the militia, like community police, must know what is happening in their neighborhoods. But again, we don’t want to feed Big Brother. Almost all of what the militia knows should remain on the local level.

How can we make this happen? Our working group decided the militia should normally report to the county sheriff, a local, elected official who has a lot of independence. Sheriffs’ powers, defined over centuries in common law, allow them to tell the feds to stick it. Nor are they under the thumb of local or state politicians. If they violate citizens’ rights, they can be unelected real fast. The militia, we also decided, would not have powers of arrest unless deputized. A separation of powers between the militia and law enforcement would also help maintain citizens’ rights.

Another danger we wanted to avoid was allowing the First Generation culture of order, still characteristic of America’s Second Generation armed forces, to carry over to the new service. Like Third Generation militaries, the militia must be outward focused, prize initiative over obedience and depend on self-discipline, not imposed discipline. We therefore determined that there should be very little in the way of formal ranks or commands and no saluting, drill, uniforms (at least none required) etc. The largest unit would be the company, with an elected captain. The captain’s duties would be mostly administrative, and sub-units could elect adjutants to handle their paperwork if they wanted to. The militiamen would be free to choose leaders on a task basis, picking whoever they thought was best qualified depending on what they had to do. Yes, this means trusting ordinary citizens to show some common sense. Republics do that; if they can’t or won’t, they are no longer republics.

Another characteristic of our anti-4GW militia is that unless mobilized, the militiamen would not be paid. Instead of pay, they would collect points toward retirement benefits and—we thought this could kill two birds with one stone—they would receive health insurance for themselves and their families. Instead of health coverage just becoming another “entitlement,” citizens who did something for their country would find their country doing something for them. We thought long-term benefits like pensions and health insurance would also help recruit the kind of people the militia needs, solid citizens capable of delayed gratification.

Next week’s column will continue this report on the results of Colonel Wyly’s symposium, including the militia. And no, the fact that we met in Maine did not lead us to consider using moose as crew-served weapons carriers.

**On War #127**  
**July 27, 2005**

[The Duke of Alba](#)

[The views expressed in this article are those of Mr. Lind, writing in his personal capacity. They do not reflect the opinions or

policy positions of the Free Congress Foundation, its officers, board or employees, or those of Kettle Creek Corporation.]

In the sixteenth century, Europe was devastated by wars of religion, a fact which gives that unhappy time some relevance to our own. The foremost soldier and commander in sixteenth-century Europe was the Duke of Alba. An excellent new biography of the Duke by Henry Kamen offers some less than encouraging lessons.

In the 1560s, Spain faced a minor revolt in the Netherlands, which were then controlled by the Spanish crown. Hundreds of Catholic churches were sacked and desecrated by mobs of Calvinists. Philip II of Spain decided to send an army, commanded by the Duke of Alba — despite the fact that by Spring, 1567, the Netherlands' regent had put the rebellion down. In effect, Philip and Alba embarked on a “war of choice,” against the advice of both local authorities and many of Philip’s counselors.

The Duke of Alba’s arrival in Brussels on Friday, August 22, 1567, at the head of an army of 10,000 men — it was the first to follow the famous “Spanish Road” — created a problem where none existed. Henry Kamen writes,

The duke of Alba, observers guessed, was there to restore order, arrest dissidents and check the growth of heresy. But the situation, according to Margaret of Parma (the Regent), was under control, so why was an army needed? It was in any case the first time that heresy in another country had ever appeared to be a concern of the Spanish crown.

Once Alba got himself settled, he began arresting Flemish aristocrats, including some of those who had helped Margaret suppress the previous year’s rebellion. King Phillip wrote to Alba in November, 1567, “you have a free hand.” He did so despite some excellent advice from Friar Lorenzo de Villavicencio, who had lived in the Netherlands.

The situation, Villavicencio insisted to the king, could not be resolved with an army. Nor must force be used against the Netherlanders, for that would unite them all against Spain . . . ‘Don’t let Your Majesty be persuaded that the Flemings are beasts and drunks, for they are human beings and if not so now they will be so one day, standing together and in their own land and with neighbors who will help them; and even if they kill one of ours and we kill ten of theirs, in the end they will finish us.’ Spaniards could not be allowed to govern in the country, ‘for they neither know the language nor understand the laws and customs.’

Philip and Alba ignored this advice; Alba’s motto was “Hombres muertos no hazen guerra” — dead men make no war. His army did what armies do, kill people and break things, and the result was a string of local victories. By the summer of 1570, Kamen writes,

Alba felt he could congratulate himself on having achieved what no other general in history had ever achieved: the pacification of a whole province, “and without losing a single man, because I can assure you that in the two campaigns barely a hundred soldiers died.”

But that wasn’t the end of the story. The Dutch rebels adapted in a way the Spanish had never imagined: they based themselves where no Spanish troops could reach them, at sea. On April 1, 1572, the Sea Beggars, as the maritime rebels called themselves, seized the offshore port of Brill. On April 14, the Prince of Orange called on the Dutch people to revolt against “cruel bloodthirsty, foreign oppressors,” and they did. The resulting war would last for 80 years and result in Dutch independence and Spanish ruin. As to the Duke of Alba himself, and his policies in the Netherlands, the best summary was offered by his successor there, Luis de Requesens. As Henry Kamen quotes him,

All I know is that when he came to this post he found the disturbances in them settled and no territory lost, and everything so quiet and secure that he could wield the knife as he wished. And by the time he left all Holland and Zealand was in the power of the enemy, as well as a good part of Guelderland and Brabant, and all the opinion of these provinces, with the finances wholly ruined.

Whether this epitaph will apply equally well to America’s invasion of Iraq, time will tell. But it is all too possible that the Middle East will end up being America’s Netherlands. In any event, I somehow doubt that history will accept the Bush administration’s newspeak name for the invasion of Iraq, “Operation Iraqi Freedom.” Might “Operation Duke of Alba” be a more credible substitute?

**On War #125**  
**July 14, 2005**

Hunting for Cops

[The views expressed in this article are those of Mr. Lind, writing in his personal capacity. They do not reflect the opinions or policy positions of the Free Congress Foundation, its officers, board or employees, or those of Kettle Creek Corporation.

Until very recently, an article titled "Hunt for Cops" might have described a city's effort to recruit more police officers. Sadly, that was not the message of an article in the July 3, 2005 *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, my hometown newspaper.

Residents of the capital of the poor and chaotic Russian province of Dagestan have come to call it "the hunt for cops" — more than two years of bold and brutal attacks on police. . . 26 police officers have been killed in gun and bomb attacks this year alone . . .

What is true in Dagestan is also true in Iraq: Iraqi police are being hunted and killed in large numbers by the Iraqi resistance. As one commentator recently put it, it is safer to be a door-to-door Bible salesman in Peshawar than to wear a police uniform in Baghdad. And, it is happening in some American cities. Police officers are being killed — assassinated, really — not because they get in the way of some bank robber but because they are symbols of the state. A Fourth Generation fighter, usually a gang member, simply walks up to a police cruiser and shoots a cop.

It is easy to understand why Fourth Generation entities would go hunting for cops. The police are not only the first line of defense in the state's attempt to maintain order (remember that maintaining order was the state's original *raison d'être*), they are an irreplaceable line. If the police fail and the military has to be called in, the state has probably lost. Why? Because troops, who are trained for combat, not police work, usually act in ways that alienate the population they are supposed to protect. That in turn further undermines the legitimacy of the state, which is both the origin and the goal of Fourth Generation war. This dynamic is one of the principal reasons why the legitimacy of Iraq's American-installed government remains tenuous at best. It continues to depend on troops, many of them foreign, rather than being able to rely on police to create and maintain order.

It is less easy to see what police should do about Fourth Generation threats, to themselves and to the communities they are supposed to protect. Two approaches do not work. The first is brutality. The *Plain Dealer* article reports that

The roots of the hunt (for cops) reach back to fall 1998, when Dagestani authorities moved to fight back against growing criminality by forming a special police division to combat kidnapping. . .

The division was under pressure to show results, and its officers started employing torture regularly to squeeze confessions out of suspects, said an officer in the regional prosecutor's office who spoke on condition of anonymity.

A second approach that does not work is militarizing the police. This is a phenomenon which we already see too often in American police departments, where citizens increasingly face police officers in fatigues, helmets and body armor, armed with automatic weapons. Such units are needed, but they must remain largely invisible to the public. Why? Because their intimidating appearance separates the public from the police, while effective police work demands the closest possible relationship between the police and the public.

This points to what is probably the most effective approach police can use against Fourth Generation elements: community policing. Community policing relies on police officers who always work the same neighborhood, often on foot. They come to know that neighborhood intimately, including many of the people who live there. With the help of the people they protect, they can quickly see any abnormality and move to nip it in the bud. And, just as the cop protects the neighborhood, the neighborhood protects their cop. A close, working relationship between citizens and police faces any Fourth Generation fighter with a very difficult problem.

Cops, most of them anyway, understand this. Several years ago, I gave my standard Fourth Generation of Modern War talk to a police conference in Salt Lake City. Whereas maybe 10% of a military audience gets what I am saying, 90% of the cops got it. Unfortunately, American government, on all levels, does not get it. The Bush administration has effectively destroyed the best community policing program in the country, the Police Corps. State and local governments are happy to spend money to

militarize the police, but they regard community policing, which is labor-intensive, as inefficient. They remain content with the L.A. model, where police isolated in cruisers respond to calls. If the goal is to preserve order, by the time a call comes, it is too late. Order has already been undermined by an incident that community policing might have prevented.

When it comes to Fourth Generation war, an ounce of prevention is worth many pounds of cure.

**On War #124**  
**June 29, 2005**

[FMFM 1-A, Fourth Generation War, Is Now Available](#)

[The views expressed in this article are those of Mr. Lind, writing in his personal capacity. They do not reflect the opinions or policy positions of the Free Congress Foundation, its officers, board or employees, or those of Kettle Creek Corporation.

As regular readers of this column know, the Fourth Generation seminar I lead has been working for several years on a Fourth Generation war field manual. That manual, FMFM 1-A, is now available on [military.com](#), [DNI](#), [SFTT](#) and, in a slightly edited version, [On Point](#), the new website journal of U.S. Cavalry.

FMFM 1-A is modelled on the excellent field manuals issued by the U.S. Marine Corps when General Al Gray was Commandant, beginning with FMFM 1, *Warfighting*. Our seminar cannot write an official U.S. Marine Corps field manual, so FMFM 1-A is a manual of the Imperial and Royal Austro-Hungarian Marine Corps. This is an old literary device, dating back at least to Montesquieu's *Persian Letters* in the 18th century. Yes, it risks confusing the literal minded; I've always thought the litany should include the prayer, "From the literal minded, Good Lord deliver us."

The seminar decided to post FMFM 1-A as a draft. The reason is simple: we hope that the comments we get back on the various websites where the manual is posted will help us improve it. When the seminar reconvenes in the fall, we will carefully evaluate all comments and suggestions as we turn the draft into a definitive first edition. We want our effort to be an open process, open especially to those who are fighting 4GW in Iraq and Afghanistan. Two members of the seminar have fought in Iraq, one as a company commander and one as an assistant division commander; another is there now, and a fourth leaves in July for Afghanistan. But the more lessons from actual combat we can incorporate, the better the final edition of the manual will be.

I don't intend to summarize the FMFM 1-A here, since it is now available to anyone who wants to read it. But I do want to explain why we wrote it the way we did. While it necessarily deals with military theory, some of it quite complex, at its heart lies a story, the story of Operation David. Here, we drew on the model offered by the U.S. Marine Corps' *Command & Control* FMFM. When Captain John Schmitt brought me the original draft of *Command & Control*, back in the early 1990s, I said to him, "John, the book needs a story that illustrates the concepts the manual is trying to teach." John wrote a superb story, and ever since that FMFM came out, Marines have told me that they got much more out of the story than from the theoretical parts of the manual. I'm not sure our story is as good as the one John Schmitt wrote, but we have at least tried to do what he did. You can judge whether or not we succeeded.

In my own view, the portion of the FMFM 1-A that needs the most work is Chapter II, Fighting Fourth Generation War. I do not say that because the chapter includes little on techniques; in a Third Generation military, techniques, processes and procedures are never doctrine. Doctrine is how to think, not what to do. My concern is simply that this section could be better if we had more combat experience to draw on. Again, by offering a draft, we hope to elicit that experience and incorporate it in the final version. So if you don't like what we have written, don't just carp; contribute.

The Russians have an old saying, "Best is enemy of good enough." American Marines and soldiers in Iraq and Afghanistan need a guide of some sort for the new kind of war they find themselves facing. FMFM 1-A, *Fourth Generation War*, offers at least a starting point. If it proves helpful to those facing the IEDs, RPGs and mortars on a daily basis, that is all the reward the members of the seminar seek.

**On War #123**  
**June 29, 2005**

[Doing It Right](#)

[The views expressed in this article are those of Mr. Lind, writing in his personal capacity. They do not reflect the opinions or policy positions of the Free Congress Foundation, its officers, board or employees, or those of Kettle Creek Corporation.

An article in the June 23rd *Christian Science Monitor*, "A US patrol gains trust in Baghdad neighborhood," tells the story of an American unit that gets Fourth Generation war.

When the patrol (in Humvees) passes a busy street, Lieutenant Waters . . . tells his men to get out and start walking. As the foot patrol makes its way through the streets, an old Shiite woman in a black hejab invites Waters into her house. At the threshold, Waters politely waits.

"I don't want to track the dirt from the street into your house," he tells her. . .

Waters is trying to gain the trust of this tense district, where the US has previously been regarded with hatred and suspicion. . .

After long months in this sector of Baghdad, Waters's company has not killed anyone nor has it lost a single soldier.

"We are not killing machines; we are men," Waters explains. "I think if we can deal with the separation from our families, and not become hardhearted, we might just be able to leave here changed in a positive way."

"It's just like the Hippocratic oath," he says. "'First, do no harm.' "

What has enabled Lt. Waters and his unit of California National Guardsmen to get it right? Lt. Waters is a cop. Specifically, he is a sheriff from Sacramento. He is dealing with the people of Baghdad the same way he deals with the people back home, politely and with a genuine desire to help. His unit has not killed anyone because Lt. Waters knows cops succeed by de-escalating, not by escalating violence. Cops try very hard not to kill people. In fact, cops don't want to fight at all.

Just as having soldiers who want to fight is important in Second and Third Generation war, so not wanting to fight is key to success in the Fourth Generation. Any fight, whether won or lost, ultimately works against an outside power that is trying to damp down a Fourth Generation conflict. Fighting ramps up disorder, and Fourth Generation entities thrive on disorder. Disorder undermines the local government's legitimacy, because disorder proves that government cannot provide security. Fighting usually means that locals get killed, and when that happens, the relatives and friends of the casualties are then obliged to join the fight to get revenge. Violence escalates, when success requires de-escalation.

Again, cops know all this. Here we see another lesson for 4GW: Reserve and National Guard units are more valuable than regular troops. Why? Because they contain a lot of cops. Lt. Waters is not the only cop who has succeeded in Iraq. Other Guard and Reserve units have let their cops take the lead, working the same way they do back home to de-escalate violence and bring security. Like Lt. Waters, they have achieved some local successes.

In order to turn local successes into success on a larger scale, American policy needs to focus more broadly on de-escalation. Here again there is some tentative good news. According to the London Sunday *Times*, the U.S. is now negotiating with several of the Sunni insurgent groups. Tensions between Baathist elements of the Iraqi resistance and Islamist elements, especially those employing foreign fighters, have already escalated to the point of firefights between the two. We should be able to make deals with some of the Baathists.

The *Times* reported that the resistance leaders we are talking with have one main demand: that we set a date for leaving Iraq. One of the Iraqi negotiators was quoted as saying, "We told them it did not matter whether we are talking about one year or a five-year plan but that we insisted on having a timetable nonetheless." That is a demand the U.S. should be willing to meet. Not only would a set date for American withdrawal undermine much of the resistance, it would turn our opponents back on themselves by allowing the Baathists to focus on fighting the Islamists, assuming we are smart enough to let them do so. It would also help the American public see some end to a conflict with which it is understandable growing weary.

Fourth Generation theory says that to have any hope of victory, an outside force needs to de-escalate on every level. If other American units in Iraq could learn from cops like Lt. Waters how to de-escalate on the local, tactical level, and we could combine that with de-escalation on the strategic level through a deal with Baathist insurgents, we might still be able to avoid outright

defeat. Given the consequences of earlier errors such as disbanding the Iraqi army, that is as close to victory as we can now realistically hope to come.

**On War #122**  
**June 24, 2005**

[The Sun Also Rises](#)

[The views expressed in this article are those of Mr. Lind, writing in his personal capacity. They do not reflect the opinions or policy positions of the Free Congress Foundation, its officers, board or employees, or those of Kettle Creek Corporation.]

For the first time since 1942, Japan has resumed the strategic offensive. Since the beginning of the year, Japan has claimed the island of Takeshima, now occupied by South Korea; seized control of an area in the South China Sea also claimed by Beijing; and, most ominously, announced that Tokyo might intervene militarily to defend Taiwan. Taiwan was Japanese from 1895 to 1945, a fact that neither the Chinese nor the Taiwanese have forgotten; if they had to chose, many Taiwanese would rather be governed from Tokyo than from Beijing.

I do not know what has motivated the Japanese government to resume the strategic offensive. I do know it is a mistake. Japan's low-profile, defensive strategy has served her well for more than half a century. It is exactly the right strategy for a Fourth Generation 21st century, where survival will depend heavily on staying off other people's hit lists. As in the 1930s and early '40s, Japan shows an odd sense of timing.

The Takeshima issue offers an example. A divided Korea is very much in Japan's interest. By laying claim to what is now Korean territory, Japan brings South and North Korea together. In fact, North Korea missed an opportunity. Had Pyongyang said that in the face of any Japanese claims, the armed forces of both Koreas were one in defending Korean soil, it would have scored a propaganda triumph.

While a united Korea would be no danger to the United States, it would be perhaps the most dangerous state threat to Japan. Even today, South Korea's navy and air force are structured more for a war with Japan than for a conflict with North Korea. Any war with Japan, including an aggressive one, would be wildly popular with the Korean people. Asian memories run deep, and Japan's current military weakness offers an opportunity that may not last forever (although given Japan's demographics, it might).

Taking the offensive against China is an even greater blunder on Tokyo's part. Here, the danger is less Chinese aggression than internal Chinese dissolution and the regional instability that would result. Any humiliation of China by Japan damages the legitimacy of the Beijing government. A Chinese defeat by Japan and America in a crisis over Taiwan could well bring that government down. Contrary to neo-con blather, its likely successor would not be parliamentary democracy but a new "Period of Warring States" within China, which is to say Fourth Generation war throughout the most critical part of the Asian landmass. The resulting chaos would not be good for Japanese interests, especially if nukes started to fly. Putting a few on Japan would be an easy way for a Chinese contender to establish its patriotic credentials.

Predictably, the strategically imbecilic Bush administration is supporting Japan's new offensive posture. In reality, with its military forces tied down in the Middle East, the last thing America needs is a new source of crises in East Asia. The mix there is already volatile enough; adding a Japan on the strategic offensive is the equivalent of smoking in the powder magazine.

American interests require that both China and Japan follow defensive strategies – as indeed they require the United States to follow a defensive strategy. China wants to do exactly that, knowing that time is on her side. Only the Taiwan question is likely to push here to take the offensive, which means we should let that sleeping dog lie. As for Tokyo, I suspect the new Japanese offensive would collapse quickly if Washington quietly signaled its disapproval. Without American support, any rising of the Japanese sun will quickly prove a mirage made of hot air.

All that is required is a morsel of strategic sense in Washington. Alas, that horizon remains blank.

**On War #121**  
**June 21, 2005**

## The Other War

[The views expressed in this article are those of Mr. Lind, writing in his personal capacity. They do not reflect the opinions or policy positions of the Free Congress Foundation, its officers, board or employees, or those of Kettle Creek Corporation.]

In view of the steady stream of bad news from Iraq – five dead Marines in Saturday's paper, two more in Sunday's and four soldiers in Monday's, along with the Baathist element of the resistance so "weakened" it is now striking targets in Iran – it is easy to forget that we are fighting, and losing, not one Fourth Generation war but two. Five U.S. troops were killed in Afghanistan last week. On June 9, the *Washington Post* reported that

Insurgents linked to the former Taliban regime have set off a wave of violence in Afghanistan, launching a string of almost daily bombings and assassinations that have killed dozens of U.S. and Afghan military personnel and civilians in recent weeks . . . a virtual lockdown is in effect for many of the . . . roughly 3,000 international residents of Kabul . . .

As recently as April of this year, the senior U.S. commander in Afghanistan, Lt. Gen. David Barno, said he envisioned "most of (the Taliban) collapsing and rejoining the Afghan political and economic process" within a year. He seems to have projected the winter's quiescence as a trend, forgetting that Afghan wars always shut down in wintertime, as war did everywhere until the 19th century. Afghanistan is not so much Iraq Lite as Iraq Slow, the land that forgot time. Our defeat will come slowly. But it will come.

The reason we will lose is that our strategic objective is unrealistic. Neither America nor anyone can turn Afghanistan into a modern state, aka Brave New World. In attempting to do so, we have launched broadscale assaults on Afghanistan's rural economy and culture, guaranteeing that the Pashtun countryside will eventually turn against us. Afghan wars are decided in the countryside, not in Kabul.

The Pashtun countryside's economy depends on opium poppies. Columnist Arnaud de Borchgrave, an old Afghan hand, recently wrote that poppy cultivation generates 12 times more income than the same acreage planted in wheat. 400,000 acres now grow poppies.

Ministers or their deputies are on the take. Police cars carry opium through roadblocks . . . Former anti-Soviet guerillas, known as the mujahideen, now populate the national highway police, which give the smugglers total security on the main roads.

Opium is the Pashtun economy. Yet we are now waging a war against it, a war where every victory means impoverishing the rural population. A story in the March 25 *New York Times*, "Pentagon Sees Antidrug Effort in Afghanistan," reported that

On March 15 the American military in Afghanistan provided transportation and a security force for 6 D.E.A. officers and 36 Afghan narcotics policemen who raided three laboratories in Nangahar Province. . .

Under the new mission guidance, the Defense Department will provide "transportation, planning assistance, intelligence, targeting packages" to the counternarcotics mission, said one senior Pentagon official.

American troops will also stand by for "in-extremis support," the official said, particularly to defend D.E.A. and Afghan officers who come under attack . . .

Our assault on traditional Afghan culture is also guaranteed to unite the rural Pashtuns against us. A story in the May 10 *Christian Science Monitor* began,

A bearded man from the bazaar is whisked into a barber shop, where he's given a shave and a slick haircut. After a facial, he visits fashion boutiques.

In a few tightly edited minutes of television, the humble bricklayer is transformed into an Afghan metrosexual, complete with jeans, sweater, suede jacket and sunglasses.

This was on Kabul's new Tolo TV, which was established with a grant from U.S. A.I.D. The story goes on to note that "Modesty in male-female relations and respect for elders are two important parts of Afghan culture that Tolo is challenging." Not surprisingly, in March Afghanistan's senior Islamic council, the *ulema shura*, criticized such programs as "opposed to Islam and national values."

In consequence of these blunders, assailing rural Afghanistan's economy and its culture, de Borchgrave reports that "Britain's defense chiefs have advised Tony Blair 'a strategic failure' of the Afghan operation now threatens." That term is precisely accurate. Our failure is strategic, not tactical, and it can only be remedied by a change in strategic objective. Instead of trying to remake Afghanistan, we need to redefine our strategic objective to accept that country as it is, always has been and always will be: a poor, primitive and faction-ridden place, dependent on poppy cultivation and proud of its strict Islamic traditions.

In other words, we have to accept that the Afghanistan we have is as good as it is going to get. Once we do that, we open the door to a steady reduction in our presence there and the reduction of Afghan affairs to matters of local importance only. That, and only that, is a realistic strategic objective in Afghanistan.

**On War #120**  
**June 8 2005**

[Striking Back at the Empire](#)

[The views expressed in this article are those of Mr. Lind, writing in his personal capacity. They do not reflect the opinions or policy positions of the Free Congress Foundation, its officers, board or employees, or those of Kettle Creek Corporation.]

The recent votes in France and the Netherlands against the proposed constitution of the European Union are not merely political phenomena. They represent significant actions in the development of Fourth Generation war. Why? Because the root cause of Fourth Generation war is a crisis of legitimacy of the state, and the two referenda saw the French and Dutch people rebel against their elites' efforts to empty the state of its content.

Understanding what happened in these two votes requires a counterintuitive mindset. Normally, we would think of elites as representing the state and the common people rebelling against the state. That is not what happened here. On the contrary, the elites represent the destruction of the state and the French and Dutch people rebelled in defense of their historic, national states. In effect, the aristocracy was crying "Down with the king!" while the peasants shouted "Vive le roi!" (which happened quite frequently during both the French and Russian Revolutions).

Today's European political elites, like most of their counterparts elsewhere, do not give their primary allegiance to the state. Rather, their first loyalty goes to a New World Order that advocates world government (even the EU is just a way station on that journey), a globalized economy in which European and North American living standards are averaged with those of the Third World, and the general abolition of religions, customs and traditions in favor of a culture based on commercialism, materialism and sensual pleasure. Western elites, especially Europe's, add one more element: the ideology of cultural Marxism, the Marxism of the Frankfurt School, which says that the white race (especially males), the Christian religion and Western civilization are all evils that must be repressed and, in time, eradicated. In the 1930s, the British novelist Aldous Huxley wrote a book about that kind of future; he called it *Brave New World*.

The Western political elites began to transfer their allegiance away from the state after World War I, in response to the horrors the state created at places like Ypres, the Somme and Verdun. They intensified their new loyalty to the internationalist superstate after World War II, and began the slow, painstaking creation of actual superstates in the form of the United Nations, the World Court, the Common Market (now the European Union) and similar bodies. They expected that in time, the common people — the plebs, the *narod*, the *riah* — would follow the wise example of their betters and give their loyalty too to Brave New World.

But they were wrong. As the French and Dutch referenda showed, ordinary people would rather offer their loyalty to something real, their historic nation-state, than to an abstract scheme in which they rightly perceive totalitarian tendencies (a number of former Soviet dissidents are warning that the European Union looks increasingly like the Soviet Union). *Das Volk* prefers its own culture to the poison of "multiculturalism," its own neighbors to hordes of semi-barbaric immigrants and its own customs to regulations handed down by Gosplan bureaucrats in Brussels.

How will the Brave New World elites respond to this unenlightened effrontery on the part of the great unwashed? By realizing they made a mistake — the mistake of letting ordinary people have a say about their future. They will hem and haw for a bit, slow things down for a little while and then resume their previous course, this time making sure there are no referenda. Brave New World only holds elections when they offer voters no real choice other than more Brave New World.

And so the state's legitimacy will crumble further, and Fourth Generation war will spread, including in Europe. Denied the option of giving their loyalty to their historic state and its way of life, ordinary people will indeed transfer that loyalty, not to Brave New World but to a plethora of causes, ideologies, religions, regions, ethnic groups, tribes and gangs. And for these new loyalties, they will fight.

Like the French Bourbons, the Euroelites forget nothing and they learn nothing. The future does not belong to them.

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## **On War #119**

**June 1, 2005**

### [Wreck it and Run](#)

[The views expressed in this article are those of Mr. Lind, writing in his personal capacity. They do not reflect the opinions or policy positions of the Free Congress Foundation, its officers, board or employees, or those of Kettle Creek Corporation.]

Among the many unhappy developments in American industry in recent decades has been the advent of "wreck it and run" management. A small coterie of senior managers takes over a company and makes a brilliant show of short-term profits while actually driving the business into the ground. They bail out just before it crashes, cashing in their stock options as they go, and leave the employees, ordinary stockholders and customers holding an empty bag.

It is increasingly clear that under Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, the U.S. armed forces have also been taken over by "wreck it and run" management. When Rumsfeld leaves office, what will his successor inherit?

- A volunteer military without volunteers. The Army missed its active-duty recruiting goal in April by almost half. Guard and Reserve recruiting are collapsing. Retention will do the same as "stop loss" orders are lifted. The reason, obviously, is the war in Iraq. Parents don't want to be the first one on their block to have their kid come home in a box.
- The world's largest pile of wrecked and worn-out military equipment (maybe second-largest if we remember the old Soviet Navy). I'm talking about basic stuff here: trucks, Humvees, personnel carriers, crew-served weapons, etc. This is gear the Rumsfeld Pentagon hates to spend money on, because it does not represent "transformation" to the hi-tech, video-game warfare it wrongly sees as the future. So far, deploying units have made up their deficiencies by robbing units that are not deploying, often National Guard outfits. But that stock has about run out, and some of the stripped units are now facing deployment themselves, minus their gear.
- A military tied down in a strategically meaningless backwater, Iraq, to the point where it can't do much else. A perceptive reader of these columns recently wrote to me that "China has the luxury of the U.S. inflicting grievous wounds, economic and military, on itself from our commitment to spread 'democracy' . . . Although the Iraqi insurgents may have the limited purpose of ending an occupation, other global actors can sit back and watch us bleed ourselves slowly to, at least, a weakened state. From that point of view, the last thing these other actors wish to see is either a victory or a quick defeat. Instead, events are proceeding nicely as they are." Exactly correct, and those other actors include al Qaeda.
- Commitments to hundreds of billions of dollars worth of future weapons programs that are militarily as useful as Zeppelins but less fun to watch. If the Army had its Future Combat System, a semi-portable Maginot Line that will cost more than any Navy or Air Force program of equal uselessness, in Iraq or Afghanistan today, would it make any difference? No. Maybe FCS really stands for Funnels Cash System.
- A world wary of U.S. intentions and skeptical of any American claims about anything. In business, good will is considered a tangible asset. In true "wreck it and run" fashion, Rumsfeld & Co. have reduced the value of that asset to near zero. A recent survey of the German public found Russia was considered a better friend than the United States.

- Finally, the equivalent of an unfavorable ruling by a bankruptcy judge in the form of a lost war. We will be lucky if we can get out of Iraq with anything less than a total loss.

Earlier today, I attended the funeral and burial of one of America's real military heroes at Arlington cemetery. Colonel David Hackworth would not have sat silent, as our current senior military leadership sits, while "wreck it and run" civilian management drove America's armed forces into the ground. Rumsfeld & Co. will bear primary responsibility for the disaster, which will no doubt disturb them greatly as they enjoy their luxurious retirements. But our senior generals and admirals are the equivalent of the board of directors, and they would have some difficulty convincing Hack that they were just the piano players in the whorehouse. It would not surprise me if when the current crowd finds itself approaching the Pearly Gates, Hack has a few claymores waiting for them.

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## **On War #118**

**May 25, 2005**

### [Of Cabbages and Kings](#)

[The views expressed in this article are those of Mr. Lind, writing in his personal capacity. They do not reflect the opinions or policy positions of the Free Congress Foundation, its officers, board or employees, or those of Kettle Creek Corporation.]

Two weeks ago, a small, single-engine plane inadvertently strayed into the closed air space above Washington. The result was panic. Both the White House and the Capitol were evacuated, with police shouting "Run! Run!" at fleeing staffers and visitors. Senators and Congressmen abandoned in haste the floors of their respective Houses. Various RIPs (Really Important People) were escorted to their Fuehrerbunkers. F-16s came close to shooting the Cessna down.

The whole episode would have been funny if it weren't so sad. As an historian, I could think of nothing other than the behavior of an earlier profile in courage, the Persian king Darius, at the battle of Issus. As the Roman historian Arrian described it,

The moment the Persian left went to pieces under Alexander's attack and Darius, in his war chariot, saw that it was cut off, he incontinently fled—indeed, he led the race for safety ... dropping his shield and stripping off his mantle even leaving his bow in the war-chariot—he leapt upon a horse and rode for his life.

Not surprisingly, Darius's army was less than keen to fight to the death for its illustrious leader. As one British officer said, commenting on U.S. Marines' love of running for exercise, "We prefer our officers not to run. It can discourage the troops."

I suspect that more than a few of our soldiers and Marines in Iraq and Afghanistan, enjoying as they do a daily diet of IEDs, ambushes and mortarings, were less than amused at watching Washington flee from a flea. More importantly, what message does such easy panic send to the rest of the world? Osama bin Laden has whole armies trying to kill him, but as best I know he has shown no signs of fear. Here again we see the power of the moral level of war. In cultures less decadent than our own, few men are likely to identify with leaders who fill their pants at one tiny blip on a radar screen.

The episode also reveals what has become one of the main characteristics of America's "homeland defense:" a total inability to use common sense. We have already seen that in our airport security procedures, our de facto open borders immigration policy and the idiotic "Patriot Act." Here, it seems that no one was willing to act on the obvious, namely that if a small plane is approaching Washington, it is probably because the pilot got lost (which pilots do frequently). Why? Because to bureaucracies what is important is not external reality but covering your own backside politically. Putting on shows serves that purpose well, even if the shows make us look like both fools and cowards.

There was also a message to the American people in the Cessna affair, and from a Fourth Generation perspective it was not a helpful one. The message was that the safety of the New Class in Washington is far more important than the safety of other Americans. As the first really serious terrorist incident is likely to show, America remains ill-prepared either to prevent or to deal with the consequences of a "dirty bomb" or a suitcase nuke or an induced plague. Not only will ordinary people die in large numbers, it will be realized in retrospect that many of the deaths could have been avoided had the New Class cared about anyone other than itself. But, of course, it doesn't.

As I have said many times before, what lies at the heart of Fourth Generation war is a crisis of legitimacy of the state. In America, that crisis can only be intensified by any instance where the Washington elite draws a distinction between itself and the rest of the country. When the same people who have sent our kids to die in Iraq and left our borders wide open run in panic because of a Cessna, the American people get the message: Washington is "them," not "us." At some point, that gap may grow wide enough to swallow the state itself. Kings who become cabbages, like Darius, end up history's losers.

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**On War #117**  
**May 18, 2005**

[War with China?](#)

[The views expressed in this article are those of Mr. Lind, writing in his personal capacity. They do not reflect the opinions or policy positions of the Free Congress Foundation, its officers, board or employees, or those of Kettle Creek Corporation.]

I regard a war with China – hot or cold – as perhaps the greatest strategic blunder the United States could make, beyond those it has already made. The end result would be the same as that from the 20th century wars between Britain and Germany: it reduced both to second-rate powers. In the 21st century, the real victors would be the non-state forces of the Fourth Generation, who would fill the gap created by the reduction of both Chinese and American power.

Given my foreboding – in George W. Bush's Washington, it seems the rule is that any blunder we can make, we will make – I was struck by the title of Robert D. Kaplan's article in the June *Atlantic Monthly*, "How We Would Fight China." Kaplan has written some excellent material on the breakdown of the state and the rise of non-state elements.

Here, however, I think he gets it wrong. Kaplan sees the 21st century being defined by a new Cold War between China and the United States, rather than the clash between states and non-state forces. I believe this phenomenon will be far more century-shaping than any conflict between states.

While Kaplan writes about how the U.S. could use naval power – subtly – to contain a rising China, within the framework of a Bismarckian *Realpolitik* that accommodates everyone's interests, he recognizes the danger to all of a Cold War turning hot. He writes, "Only a similarly pragmatic approach (similar to Bismarck's) will allow us to accommodate China's inevitable re-emergence as a great power. The alternative will be to turn the earth of the twenty-first century into a battleground."

Regrettably, there are influential voices in Washington that want a war with China, the sooner the better. The most likely cause is Taiwan. Few in Washington understand why China is so adamant about Taiwan remaining officially part of China. The reason is China's history, throughout which her greatest threat has not been foreign invasion but internal division. China has often fractured, sometimes into many parts. Today, Beijing fears that if one province, Taiwan, achieves independence, others will follow. China will go to war, including with the United States, to prevent that from happening.

Correctly, Kaplan observes that China is not able to successfully fight a sea and air war with America:

China has committed itself to significant military spending, but its navy and air force will not be able to match ours for some decades. The Chinese are therefore not going to do us the favor of engaging in conventional air and naval battles, like those fought in the Pacific during World War II.

So how would China fight us? If we send some carrier battle groups to intervene in a war between China and Taiwan, I think China will do something Kaplan does not mention. She will go nuclear at sea from the outset.

When the Cold War ended, we found out that the Soviet Union planned to do exactly that (so much for Reagan Administration plans to send our carriers charging up to the Kola Peninsula). The Chinese might employ nuclear-armed anti-ship missiles and torpedoes, fired from submarines or surface ships, but I think her little surprise for us may be nastier. Kaplan briefly mentions that China "may eventually be able to lob missiles accurately at moving ships in the Pacific" from deep in Chinese territory. I think those missiles, ballistic missiles with nuclear warheads, may be ready now – perhaps with a bit of clandestine targeting assistance from a Russia whose sphere of influence the United States is aggressively invading.

The Chinese way of war is indirect. In most cases, that means China will engage us with "soft power," as she is already doing on multiple fronts. But in the case of American intervention in a Taiwan crisis, what if a Chinese ballistic missile popped a nuke say, 100 miles from an advancing American carrier battle group? No one gets hurt, but the message would be loud and clear: keep coming and you're toast.

If we kept coming anyway and the Chinese did nuke a carrier, we would immediately face an asymmetrical situation. How would we respond? By nuking a Chinese carrier? China doesn't have any. If we drop a nuke on Chinese territory, we have initiated a strategic nuclear exchange. Is Taiwan worth Seattle or L.A.?

The right answer, as Kaplan recognizes, is don't go to war with China. Perhaps if someone could talk to Karl Rove about the importance of the Chinese vote . . .

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## **On War #116**

**May 11, 2005**

### [The Reality Gap](#)

[The views expressed in this article are those of Mr. Lind, writing in his personal capacity. They do not reflect the opinions or policy positions of the Free Congress Foundation, its officers, board or employees, or those of Kettle Creek Corporation.

When people ask me what to read to find an historical parallel with America's situation today, I usually recommend J. H. Elliott's splendid history of Spain in the first half of the 17th century, *The Count-Duke of Olivares: A Statesman in an Age of Decline*. One of the features of the Spanish court in that period was its increasing disconnection with reality. At one point, Spain was trying to establish a Baltic fleet while the Dutch navy controlled the Straits of Gibraltar.

A similar reality gap leapt out at me from a story in the May 3 *Washington Post*, "Wars Strain U.S. Military Capability, Pentagon Reports." Were that the Pentagon's message, it would be a salutary one. But the real message was the opposite: no matter what happens, no one can defeat the American military. According to the *Post*,

The Defense Department acknowledged yesterday that the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan have stressed the U.S. military to a point where it is at higher risk of less swiftly and easily defeating potential foes, though officials maintained that U.S. forces could handle any military threat that presents itself ...

The officials said the United States would win any projected conflict across the globe, but the path to victory could be more complicated.

"There is no doubt of what the outcome is going to be," a top defense official said. "Risk to accomplish the task isn't even part of the discussion."

It isn't, but it certainly should be. The idea that the U.S. military cannot be defeated is disconnected from reality.

Let me put it plainly: the U.S. military can be beaten. Any military in history could be beaten, including the Spanish army of Olivares's day, which had not lost a battle in a century until it met the French at Rocroi. Sooner or later, we will march to our Rocroi, and probably sooner the way things are going.

Why? Because war is the province of chance. You cannot predict the outcome of a war just by counting up the stuff on either side and seeing who has more. Such "metrics" leave out strategy and stratagem, pre-emption and trickery, generalship and luck. They leave out John Boyd's all-important mental and moral levels. What better example could we have than the war in Iraq, which the Pentagon was sure was over the day we took Baghdad? Can these people learn nothing?

The *Post* article suggests the reality gap is even greater than it first appears. It quotes the Pentagon's classified annual risk assessment as saying "that the risk is increased but is trending lower"—as we prepare to attack Iran. It reports that the Army obtained less than 60% of the recruits it needed in April. Most strikingly, it says that so far in fiscal 2005, which is more than half over, the Army has trained only 7,800 new infantrymen. Fourth Generation war and urban warfare are above all infantry

warfare. My guess is that our opponents in Iraq alone have probably recruited 7,800 new fighters in this fiscal year.

Why do our senior military leaders put out this "we can't be beaten" bilge? Because they are chosen for their willingness to tell the politicians whatever they want to hear. A larger question is, why do the American press and public buy it? The answer, I fear, is "American exceptionalism"—the belief that history's laws do not apply to America. Unfortunately, American exceptionalism follows Spanish exceptionalism, French exceptionalism, Austrian exceptionalism, German exceptionalism and Soviet exceptionalism.

Reality tells us that the same rules apply to all. When a country adopts a wildly adventurist military policy, as we have done since the Cold War ended, it gets beaten. The U.S. military will eventually get beaten, too. If, as seems more and more likely, we expand the war in Iraq by attacking Iran, our Rocroi may be found somewhere between the Euphrates and the Tigris rivers.

## **On War #115**

**May 3, 2005**

### **Fool's Paradise**

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About a year ago, I had lunch with someone who then held a relatively high position in America's homeland security forces. During our conversation, I casually referred to "somebody setting off a suitcase nuke in an American city." He replied, "That will happen."

I therefore found striking the headline in this Sunday's *Washington Post*: "U.S. Sees Drop in Terrorist Threats." The first paragraph of the story went on to say,

Reports of credible terrorist threats against the United States are at their lowest level since the attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, according to U.S. intelligence officials and federal and state law enforcement authorities.

The intelligence community's daily threat assessment . . . currently lists, on average, 25 to 50 percent fewer threats against domestic targets than it typically did over the past two years, said one senior counterterrorism official.

What is going on here? Are we really safer, or is Washington living in a fool's paradise?

Three factors seem to have led to this new confidence in our homeland security. The first is real, the other two are delusions. The real factor is that our security forces may have gotten over the Chicken Little Syndrome, where any indicator sent them squawking in panic. As the *Post* story reports,

Counterterrorism officials said the atmosphere, particularly in the Washington area, also has calmed because they are less jittery and less inclined to warn the public about every vague, unsubstantiated threat. .

"People are more hesitant to pull the trigger, and now think, 'Let's wait a day or two' to investigate," said John Rollins, former chief of staff for DHS's intelligence unit . . .

This change is for the better. The Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) color-coded warnings had become a national joke.

Less good is the second factor: our Washington-based intelligence services are forgetting the threat of the "unknown unknown," terrorists who understand how our intel system works and know how to evade it. The *Post* reports that people outside Washington see this danger:

Several officials in urban areas that are considered prime targets, said they worried most about what law enforcement is not detecting. "I'm not so comforted" by the drop in intelligence warnings coming

out of Washington, said one senior U.S. intelligence official based elsewhere. "I'm concerned about what is going on under our radar scope. And I'm worried about the radar scope."

This concern is valid. It would not be difficult for our enemies to game our sometimes less-than-sophisticated intelligence process, and thus learn how to spoof or bypass it.

The third factor is an even greater worry: Americans seem incapable of grasping our enemies' concept of time. We are an impatient people; they are not. We want results fast; they please Allah by simply carrying on the struggle, leaving results in his hands. To Americans, "oldies" are ten years old; Osama bin Laden muses about the loss of Spain in the 15th century.

In his new book, *The Fourth Power*, which argues that America today has no grand strategy and needs one, former Senator Gary Hart hits this nail on the head:

The war in Iraq shortly led to guerilla operations against U.S. and UN presences but did not immediately stimulate retaliation against the U.S. homeland. It is necessary to recall, however, that al Qaeda documents captured in Afghanistan substantiate the connection between the stationing of American troops in Saudi Arabia following Gulf War I in 1991 and the wave of terrorist attacks that began with the first attack on the World Trade Center two years later. It will take some time before we know whether initiating a war against a major Arab state makes us safer or more in danger, more secure or less. Terrorists have proved to be patient.

Patient indeed, as you can be when you have, literally, all the time in the world.

It could be years before a suitcase nuke goes off in an American city. It may be several decades before America gets hits with a genetically engineered plague that kills millions or tens of millions of Americans. But so long as we continue pursuing an offensive grand strategy, the goal of which is world domination, it is only a question of when, not whether, such events will happen. The paradise of fools turns into the purgatory of fools' successors.

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**On War #114**  
**April 28, 2005**

[More on Gangs & Guerillas vs. the State](#)

[The views expressed in this article are those of Mr. Lind, writing in his personal capacity. They do not reflect the opinions or policy positions of the Free Congress Foundation, its officers, board or employees, or those of Kettle Creek Corporation.

A story in the April 26 *Washington Times*, "Drug smugglers, rebels join hands," by Carmen Gentile, offered an interesting illustration of the argument I made in my last column, that Fourth Generation entities may do everything they want to do within the framework of hollowed-out states. The article reports that

Brazilian drug traffickers have teamed up with Columbian rebels to smuggle narcotics through Paraguay, creating a lucrative new channel for distribution to the United States and Europe ...

Using a precisely orchestrated system of flights from the Columbian jungle, Marxists rebels from the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Columbia, or FARC, are shipping 40 to 60 tons of cocaine annually to farms in Paraguay owned by Brazilian drug lords, who then put the cocaine in cars and small trucks and drive them across the nearly unmonitored border into rural western Brazil ... in return for arms, dollars and Euros from Brazilian traffickers (for the FARC).

Of course, the states in question – Columbia, Paraguay and Brazil – would like to put a halt to this arrangement. But what can they do? If the United States cannot control its border along the Rio Grande, how can Brazil possibly keep drug traffickers from crossing its vastly longer land border, much of it through difficult country? Columbia is a hollow state, with the FARC, drug gangs and other non-state elements in effective control of much of its territory.

Paraguay illustrates another effective technique non-state forces use against armed forces of the state: taking them from within. The *Washington Times* article quotes the *U.S. State Department's 2005 International Narcotics Strategy Report* concerning "corruption and inefficiency" within the Paraguayan National Police, "who have been accused of protecting Brazilian narcotics traffickers." What a surprise! Given the profits involved in drug smuggling, how hard would it be to buy off some Paraguayan cops? Or all Paraguayan cops?

Meanwhile, drug smugglers and guerrilla forces like the FARC work together more easily than states do. The state system is old, creaky, formalistic and slow. Drug dealing and guerrilla warfare represent a free market, where deals happen fast. Several years ago, a Marine friend went down to Bolivia as part of the U.S. counter-drug effort. He observed that the drug traffickers went through Boyd Cycle or OODA Loop six times in the time it took us to go through it once. When I relayed that to Colonel Boyd, he said, "Then we're not even in the game."

Not surprisingly, the FARC and others find they can use the drug trade for political ends. The *Washington Times* piece noted,

But the (State Department) report did not mention FARC's recent cultivation of ties with leftist rebels in Paraguay ... Columbian Marxists infiltrating Paraguay beyond the drug trade made headlines in February when former presidential daughter Cecilia Cubas was found dead after being held captive for more than two months.

How long will it be before al Qaeda and other Islamic non-state forces make their own alliances with the drug gangs and people smugglers who are experts in getting across America's southern border? Or use the excellent distribution systems the drug gangs have throughout the United States to smuggle something with a bigger bang than the best cocaine?

Just as we see states coming together around the world against the non-state forces of the Fourth Generation, so those non-state forces will also come together in multi-faceted alliances. The difference is likely to be that they will do it faster and better. And, they will use states' preoccupation with the state system like a matador's cape, to dazzle and distract while they proceed with the real business of war.

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**On War #113**  
**April 21, 2005**

[MS-13 vs. Minutemen?](#)

[The views expressed in this article are those of Mr. Lind, writing in his personal capacity. They do not reflect the opinions or policy positions of the Free Congress Foundation, its officers, board or employees, or those of Kettle Creek Corporation.]

One of the more hopeful signs that some life remains in the American republic is the re-emergence of Minutemen. Today's Minutemen exist to defend us from wetbacks rather than lobsterbacks, but they are no less needed now than in the 1770s. With both political parties united in their desire to flood America with illegal immigrants, the efforts of the new Minutemen to defend our southern border are highly to be praised. Citizens acting when a corrupt government will not are signs of health in a republic; endless deference to government marks the replacement of citizens by mere subjects.

At the same time, Fourth Generation war theory cannot overlook the meaning of armed elements outside the control of the state operating on American territory. I refer here not to the Minutemen, most of whom are unarmed and whose role is to call in state forces, the Border Patrol, when they spot illegal immigrants. Rather, I am talking about a very real Fourth Generation threat, the Salvadoran gang MS-13, which reportedly has declared war on the Minutemen. According to a piece in the March 29 *Washington Times*,

The notorious crime syndicate Mara Salvatrucha is threatening Arizona's Project Minuteman and reportedly plans to teach it "a lesson" . . .

It is not hard to see why Mara Salvatrucha prefers the border status quo . . . The gang grew from Salvadoran refugees in California in the late 1980s into one of the largest criminal syndicates in North America, with as many as 20,000 members . . .

If a Fourth Generation entity, which MS-13 is, has grown powerful enough to undertake military action on American soil against citizens who are helping to protect our border, then 4GW is further advanced here than many will have recognized. So far, that has not happened, and Mara Salvatrucha's threat may be hot air. But if it does happen, it will be an act of war, strategic in nature: MS-13 needs an open border, the Minutemen threaten to close the border, so MS-13 attacks them. That is not just crime, it is war.

Yet if MS-13 does not attack the Minutemen, that too may be an act of war, and a highly sophisticated one. A common mistake that many analysts and commentators make is to think that Fourth Generation forces must replace the state or at least the government. A recent study issued by the Army War College's Strategic Studies Institute, *Street Gangs: The New Urban Insurgency* by Max. G. Manwaring, illustrates this error. It says right up front, on page 2,

Although gangs and insurgents differ in terms of original motives and modes of operation, this linkage (between gangs and insurgents) infers that street gangs are a mutated form of urban insurgency. That is, these nonstate actors must eventually seize political power to guarantee the freedom of action and the commercial environment they want.

I would argue that, on the contrary, many Fourth Generation actors, not just gangs, will deliberately not take over the government or overturn the form of the state because they will benefit greatly by operating within the state, below the radar of the state's armed forces. In effect, the hollowed-out sovereignty of the state is their best protection, especially against the armed forces of the United States or other outside powers. The current situation in Columbia provides an example. If the FARC or the drug lords took over the Columbian government, they would immediately make themselves subject to American attack or other action by the world community. Operating as they do, like viruses within the body of the state, they are protected by Columbia's sovereignty. And they are quite capable of dealing with whatever the Columbian government itself can throw at them.

Looking at an internal threat, MS-13 in the U.S., I think the same logic applies. If MS-13 attacks the Minutemen in an act of open war, it will work against its own objectives, especially profit, by making itself a much higher profile target for the forces of the state. It serves its own strategic interests best by keeping the lowest possible profile while simultaneously expanding its real power in the areas of direct concern to itself, such as the Hispanic immigrant community.

It would be interesting to be a fly on the wall in meetings of MS-13's leadership and hear if these arguments are actually being stated. I may overestimate their strategic sophistication. But if I am correct and they are debating these issues, that is not good news for the state in the old U.S.A. It would suggest that the state's enemies are thinking more clearly than is the state itself, with its suicidal insistence on open borders.

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**On War #112**  
**April 15, 2005**

[On Strategy](#)

[The views expressed in this article are those of Mr. Lind, writing in his personal capacity. They do not reflect the opinions or policy positions of the Free Congress Foundation, its officers, board or employees, or those of Kettle Creek Corporation.]

Last week, a group of Marines asked me to meet with them to discuss the question of what America's strategy should now be in Iraq. Rather than answer that issues that get at a more fundamental point: how to think about strategy itself.

There are two basic ways to design a strategy. The first is to set a single strategic objective which, if you attain it, is decisive. However, if you fail to attain it, you lose. A classic example of this type of strategy is Germany's Schlieffen Plan in World War I. The Schlieffen Plan sacrificed everything for one objective, getting behind Paris and encircling the French Army in a single vast *Kesselschlacht*. Graf von Schlieffen had no illusions about what failure meant. Shortly before his death, someone asked him what Germany should do if his plan did not work. He answered, "Make peace."

An alternative type of strategy is one where you have a series of objectives, one maximalist, but others that yield partial successes or at least avoid outright defeat. This is how strategy tended to work in eighteenth century wars. My recommendation to the Marines was that they attempt to devise a strategy of this second type for the U.S. in Iraq. That will not be easy, as early blunders have left us in a weak strategic position. But it may be important, because the current all-or-nothing strategy, where the only acceptable outcome is a "democratic" Iraq that is an American ally, is likely to leave us with nothing.

The next step is to consider means. I suggested to the Marines that we need to identify a much broader range of means than we seem to be employing at present, where we too often consider only the "kinetic approach."

Then comes the hard part: you need to relate your means to your new variety of ends in an intensive, iterative process where you carefully consider how means useful to one end may foreclose others. Indeed, you need to think about how one goal may foreclose other goals. This is a process far different from the sterile, mechanistic "Marine staff planning process." It is an ongoing, intense back-and-forth discussion of the sort Colonel John Boyd emphasized was critical to approaching any strategic problem.

As part of this process, you may need to consider what bold, trend-altering actions you could take if your present course is not carrying you to your goal. In Iraq, one example would be announcing a date by which the last American troops would be gone from the country. I favor that, because I think the general trend in Iraq is unfavorable to even our minimal goal, leaving behind a functioning state that is not openly hostile to American interests. But here too there is a danger: you can end up taking an action that does shift the trend of a war, but shifts it against you. A classic example is Germany's resumption of unrestricted submarine warfare in 1917.

My final suggestion to the Marines was that they think about our strategy in Iraq as a real-world problem, not simply as an exercise. It would be comforting to believe that in the Pentagon or at CENTCOM or in Baghdad's "Green Zone" the sort of strategic analysis I have described is going on. Sadly, I doubt that is the case. An administration that has made "loyalty" to the White House's maximalist objectives its most important test is not likely to encourage consideration of alternative strategies. When it becomes clear that we will not attain those maximalist objectives, there could be a sudden, desperate quest for some way out that leaves a few of our tail feathers intact. At that point, the thoughtful work of a small group of Marines might find an audience.

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## **On War #111**

**April 5, 2005**

### [Are Iraq's Insurgents Losing?](#)

[The views expressed in this article are those of Mr. Lind, writing in his personal capacity. They do not reflect the opinions or policy positions of the Free Congress Foundation, its officers, board or employees, or those of Kettle Creek Corporation.]

The last few weeks have seen a spate of press reports suggesting that Iraq's insurgency is on the ropes. A combination of the Iraqi elections and relentless U.S. military pressure has brought the resistance to the point of ineffectiveness if not disintegration. Larry Kudlow, writing in the *New Republic*, summed it up:

Depending on which official you ask, insurgent attacks have dropped by either a third or nearly half. The number of Americans killed in action has declined. Civilians have begun killing terrorists. Over the last week alone, U.S. forces have killed scores of insurgents in lopsided battles – in the latest, Iraqi forces spearheaded the offensive.

Is this actually what is happening in Iraq? From this remove, it is impossible to tell. Could it happen? Certainly. Wars do not move in straight lines, most of them anyway. The fortunes of war shift back and forth, favoring one party today, another tomorrow. Just as we have blundered, so have the insurgents. Just as we face vast obstacles, so do they. As I have said from the outset of this strategically disastrous war (America's Syracuse Expedition), I think it will end with an American failure if not outright defeat. But the path to that end is likely to have ups as well as downs, for all parties.

More importantly, I think Fourth Generation theory enables us to gain a better perspective on the current situation than we obtain from arguing who is ahead on points. From a Fourth Generation perspective, we need to remind ourselves that the terms we all use, myself included, such as "the insurgency" or "the resistance," are an inherently misleading shorthand. In Malaya or Algeria or Vietnam, one could speak of the opponent as a something. In Fourth Generation situations such as Iraq, one cannot. There is no single opponent. Rather, what we face is a vast array of armed elements operating outside the control of the state. They range from true insurgents, such as the Baathists, through kidnappers, gangs of robbers, hostile tribes, foreign mujaheddin seeking martyrdom and party or faction militias to men out to avenge their family's honor. The essence of the problem is not that they are fighting the American occupation – some are, some aren't – but that they are armed elements not controlled by the state. Their very existence undermines the state to the point where it becomes a fiction.

Looking at the other side of the coin, we see that the American challenge is not merely defeating an insurgency but re-creating an Iraqi state. Attaining that goal can be very far away even if "the insurgents" lose. If "the insurgency" were defeated tomorrow, remaining obstacles would still include a general breakdown of order in Iraqi society, mutual hatreds among Sunnis, Shiites and Kurds (one possible turn of events is that the Shiites and the Sunni "insurgents" might unite against the Kurds over Kirkuk), basic services such as power and water that don't work, a dead economy that leaves most Iraqis un- or under-employed and an unworkable political system imposed by foreigners (how did Bremer & Co. forget that in our political system, we require two-thirds majorities when we want to make any action almost impossible?). Looming over everything is the question of legitimacy: how can a state be legitimate when its government is a foreign creation propped up by foreign troops?

For America to win in Iraq, it has to leave behind a real state. Further, that state must not be an enemy to America. The chance of meeting just the second requirement is small, given the Iraqi people's resentment toward the occupation and the strongly Islamic character of any likely new regime. It is improbable that we will meet the first requirement either. We may leave behind us the form of a state – a capital, a parliament, a government, etc. – but in most of the country, the real power will remain where it is now, in the hands of armed elements operating outside the state. That is true whether we defeat "the insurgency" or not.

Contrary to what a number of writers on 4GW have said, Fourth Generation war is not merely a new name for insurgency or guerilla warfare. What is at stake in 4GW is not who rules the state, but the fate of the state itself.

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## **On War #110**

**April 1, 2005**

### [Lebanon Baloney](#)

[The views expressed in this article are those of Mr. Lind, writing in his personal capacity. They do not reflect the opinions or policy positions of the Free Congress Foundation, its officers, board or employees, or those of Kettle Creek Corporation.

On Tuesday, March 29, Syria informed the U.N. that it would withdraw all of its troops from Lebanon before that country holds elections later this spring. The neo-Jacobins are celebrating Syria's eviction from Lebanon as another great victory for democracy and the Rights of Man. But given what the removal of Syrian forces from Lebanon is likely to mean, they are slicing the baloney a bit thin. It is too easy to see through it.

As Washington now conveniently forgets, America and the rest of the world welcomed the entry of Syrian troops into Lebanon. Why? Because they came to put an end to Lebanon's 15-year civil war, which raged from 1975 to 1990. Now, the departure of those same troops has an excellent chance of reigniting that civil war. Already, three bombs have gone off in Christian neighborhoods. The "democratic" forces Washington is supporting are Christian-led; with the expulsion of Syria, they see a chance to re-establish Christian domination of Lebanese politics. Hezbollah will be willing to fight to prevent that from happening. As usual, the neo-cons are smoking in the powder magazine.

Here is where they have cut the Lebanon baloney too thin. The likelihood of a renewed Lebanese civil war is sufficiently great that no one can overlook it – including the neo-cons themselves. They are ignorant of the world, but not that ignorant. So the key question becomes this: why would the neo-cons and the Bush administration they dominate want a renewed Lebanese civil

war?

I suspect the answer is to be sought less in Washington than in Tel Aviv. The most effective of the non-state enemies Israel now faces is Hezbollah. Hezbollah drove Israel out of Lebanon. While it remains comparatively weak in the West Bank and Gaza, where Hamas has the lead, it is striving to build up its influence there. From Israel's perspective, what better way could there be to diminish Hezbollah's power than to embroil it in a new civil war in Lebanon?

The well-orchestrated demands for Syrian withdrawal from Lebanon appeared across the board, in Lebanon and internationally, immediately after the car bomb assassination of former Lebanese prime minister Rafik Hariri. Syria has been blamed for the assassination. But if we ask who benefited from it, the answer is Israel, not Syria. Could the whole thing have been a Mossad operation? The choreography of the anti-Syrian reaction, including Washington immediately jumping on board, suggests it could.

A renewed Lebanese civil war in turn fits into a larger Likud strategy, a strategy that leading Washington neo-cons helped draft. In essence, that strategy calls for destabilizing every existing Middle Eastern regime, on the grounds that Israel would then dominate the region as the only remaining stable country. The neo-cons camouflage the call for destabilization by dressing it up as "democracy" and "freedom," but even they know that democracy in the Middle East is about as likely as old Bessie, teets flailing, jumping over the moon. Plus, if any Moslem country in the region did hold a genuinely free election, Osama bin Laden would win it.

The irony here is that destabilizing existing Middle Eastern governments will not improve Israel's security. Quite the contrary, it will greatly benefit the non-state entities such as Hamas, Hezbollah and al Qaeda that are Israel's and America's far more dangerous opponents (if Lebanon does return to civil war, Hezbollah will win it). Those organizations do not seek to take over states, but to replace the state with a new caliphate that would unite all Moslems. Their immediate enemies are precisely the authoritarian governments in Syria and elsewhere that Israel and Washington are now trying to push over the brink. Destabilization is a "win-win" pact with the devil, an alliance of schlemiels and schlimazels in which both Israel and the U.S. are schlimazels, but we are the schlimazel's schlimazel. That's what you get when you combine neo-con advisors with an American President who, as Hitler said of General Keitel, has the mind of a hotel doorman.

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## **On War #109 March 22, 2005**

### [On Killing](#)

[The views expressed in this article are those of Mr. Lind, writing in his personal capacity. They do not reflect the opinions or policy positions of the Free Congress Foundation, its officers, board or employees, or those of Kettle Creek Corporation.

*On Killing* is the title of a book by my old friend Lt. Col. Dave Grossman, and it is a book that anyone who has any interest in war should read. Obviously, killing is a central aspect of war, the aspect that distinguishes war from almost all other human endeavors.

Nonetheless, I find myself forced to disagree with a commentary one Marine infantry officer recently sent to the Fourth Generation seminar after he read the draft of our FMFM 1-A, *Fourth Generation War*. He wrote, "First, as tactical guys, killing is still the essence of the business. I think any manual written for Marines needs to take this into account as the bottom line."

Again, killing always has been and is likely to remain a central aspect of war. But I would suggest that we should not define it as the "essence" or "bottom line" of war, especially Fourth Generation war. It seems to me that the bottom line needs to be, not killing, but winning.

If we define killing as our bottom line, then our understanding of war will lead us to kill, whether killing moves us toward or away from winning. One of the central points of our draft FMFM is that especially in 4GW, de-escalation, not escalation, is key to winning (the first of our seminar's members to return from Iraq, where he was a company commander, said his experience there strongly supported that point).

While escalation and killing are not identical – in many situations, you may need to do some careful, limited, targeted killing in

order to de-escalate – a bias toward killing could easily feed a tendency to escalate. (The officer who wrote to us added, “I do agree with the need for targeted killing – use a knife so to speak. This should be more the norm.”) Escalation, in turn, will almost always work in favor of our non-state enemies. In other words, at least in Fourth Generation war, winning and killing are likely to be in some tension with each other.

More, if we define killing as our bottom line, we fall back into Second Generation war with its inward focus. Third Generation “maneuver warfare” focuses outward, on the enemy, the situation and the result the situation requires. Defining killing as the “bottom line” is a form of inward focus, not in the sense of being one of the processes that are central to the Second Generation, but rather in seeing our ‘essence’ defined as “what we do.” From a maneuver warfare perspective, what we do must always be infinitely flexible, based only on what the situation requires in order for us to win. *Any* form of inward focus contradicts maneuver warfare doctrine and undermines the institutional culture a Third Generation military must sustain.

It is easy to see why soldiers and Marines, “as tactical guys,” would define killing as the bottom line. Even in Third Generation wars such as the German “Blitzkrieg” campaigns of World War II, that was true of the tactical level (with the modification that German infiltration tactics, which date to late World War I, worked to bypass and collapse the enemy rather than kill him even on the tactical level; many of the enemy ended up POWs rather than dead). But one of the characteristics of Fourth Generation war is the compression of levels; a single tactical action can also work directly on the strategic level. We cannot normalize killing on the tactical level if it works against us on the strategic level, as in 4GW it generally will. Nobody wants to be “liberated” by being killed.

I am grateful for this Marine officer having taken the time to read our manuscript and write to use in response. The discussion he generated is exactly what the Marine Corps and our country need if they are to succeed in grappling with the dragon of Fourth Generation war. Nobody has all the answers, or even most of the answers, at this point. The most we can try to do is get the questions right, and open debate is the only tool through which we can hope to accomplish even that much.

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**On War #108**  
**March 16, 2005**

[Where is Charles Martel?](#)

[The views expressed in this article are those of Mr. Lind, writing in his personal capacity. They do not reflect the opinions or policy positions of the Free Congress Foundation, its officers, board or employees, or those of Kettle Creek Corporation.

I spent last week in one of the few remaining bits of the real “Old Europe,” Europe before it was commercialized and Americanized, namely Portugal. The Portuguese deserve their reputation as the nicest people in Europe, and Lisbon is a delight for any true conservative, because it is a city that clings tenaciously to its past. Tiny, four-wheeled streetcars, built in the 1920s to an American design of about 1905, still clatter and clang through the twisting, narrow streets of the old Moorish quarter, the Alfama. Streetcars are a sign of high civilization, just as television is a sign of advancing barbarism.

I went to Lisbon for a NATO conference on defense of the Mediterranean, a vital topic at a time when Europe is again being overrun by invading Moslems. As I noted in my remarks to the conference, immigrants who do not acculturate are a greater danger than an invading army. The army eventually goes home, while the immigrants stay, permanently changing the cultural landscape. With 500,000 illegal immigrants now entering Europe each year from North Africa, Islam’s muftis in mufti are rapidly reversing the verdict of the Battle of Tours. Strategically, Islamic immigration is a far greater threat to Europe than Al Qaeda’s terrorism.

Looking around the room at the conference’s first session, my expectations of learning something new were not high. Most of the presenters were either diplomats or academics, two groups with well-earned reputations for taking a great many words to say little or nothing. That has always been true of diplomats, of course; saying nothing while speaking at length is exactly what they are paid to do. But I am astonished again and again at the degree to which academics have become vapid dispensers of commonplaces, ideas so banal and contentless that only other academics could give them serious attention. It seems the words “academic” and “intellectual” have become opposites.

To my surprise, the conference nonetheless proved valuable, not so much for the specifics of what was said as for its dynamics, and perhaps a small bit of hope for Christian Europe's future that emerged from those dynamics. The first dynamic was the degree to which all the Islamic spokesmen had the same message: any attempt by the West to defend itself from the hordes of Islam was a violation of "Political Correctness," aka the cultural Marxism of the Frankfurt School. All the usual PC bugaboos and hobgoblins were dragged out and paraded before us: "racism," "oppression," "discrimination," "fear of The Other" (my response to that one was that many vanished peoples could explain why fear of "The Other" was reasonable and prudent), even the latest PC coinage, "Islamophobia," of which I am certain we will be hearing a great deal more. It is, of course, all humbug, but it is humbug that has cowed Europeans for at least a generation.

I was not surprised to see Islamics use cultural Marxism as a weapon, any more than it surprises me to watch cultural Marxists use mass immigration as a weapon. Both have the same objective, the destruction of the Christian West, and the equivalent of a Ribbentrop-Molotov Pact between them makes sense. No matter that the cultural Marxists hate Allah as much as they hate J-hw-h or the Holy Trinity, or that the Islamic scimitar would quickly be put to the necks of the cultural Marxists; until the Christian West is dead and buried, each can use the other.

Here was the second, and more surprising, dynamic of the conference: a number of participants (not just myself, old Templar that I am) dared defy the rules of cultural Marxism and call upon the Christian West to defend itself. The Islamics' frantic waving of the "racism" and "discrimination" bugaboos did not entirely work. By the end of the conference, I thought the Islamics seemed beaten. It certainly did not go according to their plan, with the West groveling in the dirt and praising the "benefits" of Islamic immigration.

In a European context, such an outcome was, until very recently, impossible to imagine. But it seems that even in Europe, morally devastated as it was by the 20th Century's three Western civil wars, a spark of the will to live may still flicker. As growing portions of once-ordered European cities are turned into Third World hellholes by hundreds of thousands of immigrants bitterly opposed to European culture, a few people are daring to speak about what they see.

From a Fourth Generation perspective, the question is whether the European state system can stem the Islamic invasion. That state system is now embodied more in the European Union than in individual European states, and so far the EU has done little more than serve as the undertaker in the death of the West.

If the state system cannot defend Europe, non-state elements may rise to do so. From that perspective, perhaps the best last words of the conference were found on the wall of a building across the street from the conference hotel, in a graffito that said, "They've got the numbers, we've got the guns." It seems that Charles Martel is not entirely forgotten.

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**On War #107**  
**March 8, 2005**

[More Newspeak](#)

[The views expressed in this article are those of Mr. Lind, writing in his personal capacity. They do not reflect the opinions or policy positions of the Free Congress Foundation, its officers, board or employees, or those of Kettle Creek Corporation.

One of the classic signs of ideology at work is the redefinition of words to empty them of their meaning. An article by Greg Jaffe in the February 16 *Wall Street Journal*, "New Factor in Iraq: Irregular Brigades Fill Security Void," describes the rapid spread of militias in that unhappy place, which is probably now more accurately called Mesopotamia. The story is based largely on the work of one U.S. Marine Corps officer, Major Chris Wales, in tracking the new militias. But it also quotes Major Wales as saying, "We don't call them militias. Militias are ... illegal."

Well, that certainly solves the problem. A militia isn't a militia if we don't call it a militia. And we can't call it a militia, because we have decreed there shall be no militias in Iraq. King Canute, call your office.

Let me quickly add that I am not pointing a finger at Major Wales. In today's Marine Corps, a major is a minor, and any major who didn't use Newspeak (especially when talking to the press) would quickly find himself the MWR officer in Barstow.

Generals, it seems, can be a bit more frank. The March 2 *Washington Post*, reporting on General Abizaid's testimony to the Senate Armed Services Committee, had this to say:

Asked by lawmakers about irregular Iraqi militia springing up around the country, Abizaid said the help of such militia in providing security for the elections was "in some ways a good thing." In the long run, however, they should be incorporated with Iraqi government forces. "Ultimately .... it's destabilizing," he said

The proliferation of militias, growing dependence of the Iraqi government and the U.S. on those militias to fight Sunni insurgents and our obvious inability to control the militias all point to the bottom line of the war in Iraq: Iraq is not moving closer to becoming a state again, and it may be moving further away from doing so. Local, private armies, often for hire, are a classic sign that the state is weak or non-existent. If a state does not have a monopoly on organized violence, it is not a state. It cannot bring order. Such order as exists is local and is enforced by local military forces, which are militias whether or not Americans call them that.

The absence of a state breeds militias, and the militias are in turn both a sign and a cause of the absence of the state.

The proliferation of militias points to another fact about the war in Iraq: it is increasingly taking on the nature of a civil war. In the Fourth Generation stew of militias, gangs, groups of insurgents and so on, some fault lines seem to be emerging. The new militias are largely Shiite (the Kurds have an old and very capable militia, the Peshmerga), they are aligned loosely in support of Iraq's new Shiite-dominated government (but not controlled by that government) and their main purpose is to fight the insurgents, who are Sunnis. It is fairly clear where this script is heading.

Like the American destruction of Fallujah and the recent Iraqi elections, the rise and spread of Shiite militias devoted to fighting Sunni insurgents puts ever-greater pressure on Iraq's Sunnis to cast their lot with the insurgency. Shiite militias in particular leave them little choice; who else but the insurgents will protect them from Shiite militiamen? The situation in Germany during the Thirty Years' War may be an analogy: though many tried, few German princes could avoid casting their lots either with the Protestants or with the Catholics. Neutrality meant you became the victim of both.

So what is the U.S. to do, beyond not calling Iraqi militias "militias?" There is nothing we can do. The *Wall Street Journal* quotes Lt. Col. James Bullion, who works for General Petraeus, as saying, "There is no way we can stop the Iraqis from doing something they want to do. This is their country and their army now. We can't put that genie back in the bottle."

Better still is General Petraeus's own comment: "I want to get the hell out of here." Amen.

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## **On War #106** **March 1, 2005**

### [Turkish Delight](#)

[The views expressed in this article are those of Mr. Lind, writing in his personal capacity. They do not reflect the opinions or policy positions of the Free Congress Foundation, its officers, board or employees, or those of Kettle Creek Corporation.

The February 15 *Christian Science Monitor* describes a situation which, to anyone familiar with American-Turkish relations in the post-World War II period, is almost beyond imagining: an American attack on Turkey. According to the *Monitor's* story,

The year is 2007. After a clash with Turkish forces in northern Iraq, US troops stage a surprise attack. Reeling, Turkey turns to Russia and the European Union, who turn back the American onslaught.

This is the plot of "*Metal Storm*," one of the fastest-selling books in Turkish history. The book is clearly sold as fiction, but its premise has entered Turkey's public discourse in a way that sometimes seems to blur the line between fantasy and reality.

"The Foreign Ministry and General Staff are reading it keenly," Murat Yetkin, a columnist for the

Turkish daily newspaper Radikal, recently wrote. "All cabinet members also have it."

Here we see in dramatic fashion America's loss of the "Global War on Terrorism" at the moral level. By invading and occupying Iraq, a country that posed no threat to us, and threatening to do the same to other countries around the world, we have made America into a monster – even in Turkey, the country that has been our closest Islamic ally since the onset of the Cold War. So dramatically has America managed to reverse its post-9/11 moral ascendancy that not only can Turks imagine us attacking Turkey, they see Russia coming to their rescue! Russia has been Turkey's number one enemy for centuries.

It seems America has managed to bring about what historians call a "diplomatic revolution," a fundamental shift in alliances, by encouraging everyone else, ancient enemies included, to ally against herself. The *Monitor* goes on to report that

Egemen Bagis, a member of Turkey's ruling Justice and Development Party (AKP) and chairman of the Turkey-US friendship caucus in parliament, says the unpopular war in neighboring Iraq continues to fuel anti-American feelings.

"This public feeling, this public tension, is not any different from what is happening in other European countries or other Middle Eastern countries," Mr. Bagis says.

The Bush administration, one of whose 'droids reportedly recently said that "we make up our own reality," will take comfort in the fact that Turkey's government, like governments elsewhere, remains our humble and obliging servant. To observers who seek rather than shun reality, that is cold comfort. In today's world, public opinion is strategically more important, not less important, than the attitudes of governments. It is one of the many ironies in the jumble of contradictions that make up this administration's policies that the democracy it promotes would quickly worsen, not better, America's diplomatic position. We can bully or buy elites much more easily than we can do the same to world opinion.

The *Monitor* quotes an American diplomat, speaking of the situation in Turkey post-*Metal Storm*, saying "We're really pulling our hair out trying to figure how to deal with this." That unhappy diplomat now knows how it felt to work in the German Foreign Office before both World Wars. The task he faces goes beyond what diplomacy can hope to accomplish. So long as a powerful country is on the grand strategic offensive, demanding that everyone else in the world bow to its wishes and adopt its ideology or be subject to attack (Wilhelmine Germany did not actually go that far, though America's neo-cons now do), it will push everyone else into coalition against it. Just as Bismarck's successor Holstein could not imagine an alliance between republican France and Tsarist Russia, and watched it happen nonetheless, *Metal Storm* now portrays an equally unimaginable alliance between Turkey and Russia. Will that too come to pass? An American attack on another Middle Eastern country, which I think likely, may bring about many unimaginable alliances.

Russell Kirk, the grand old man of the post-war American conservative movement, put it best:

There is one sure way of making a deadly enemy, and that is to propose to anybody, "Submit yourself to me, and I will improve your condition by relieving you from the burden of your own image and by reconstituting your substance in my image."

Not only will that make an enemy of anybody, it will make an enemy of everybody.

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**On War #105**  
**February 23, 2005**

[Opportunity Knocks](#)

[The views expressed in this article are those of Mr. Lind, writing in his personal capacity. They do not reflect the opinions or policy positions of the Free Congress Foundation, its officers, board or employees, or those of Kettle Creek Corporation.

The February 15 *Washington Post* carried as a front-page story that most valuable of war reports, an in-depth look at our enemy in Iraq. It was the story of an insurgent named Abu Shaiba, who was killed on December 17 in Fallujah in a firefight with U.S. forces.

Abu Shaiba was not some kid high on Islamic fervor. He was 39 years old, a father of nine children. Why was he fighting us? Because on October 11, U.S. troops had shot and killed his 13-year old son. He came from a culture that demands revenge. Abu Shaiba sought death in Fallujah, and found it, because when he left the city to take his family to safety, other insurgents thought he had shown cowardice. His culture demanded that he die to prove he was no coward, so he did. To the degree the U.S. military regards opponents like Abu Shaiba with contempt, it makes a grave mistake.

What is most interesting about the *Post* piece is its suggestion that Abu Shaiba, and others like him, could be our allies instead of our enemies – providing we stop killing their children. Over and over, the Iraqis who are fighting us because we have occupied their country express their anger toward the foreign fighters who represent militant Islamic *jihad*.

After Abu Shaiba's death, his brother and friends spoke of divisions within their own ranks ... all of them said they had been betrayed by zealous Arab fighters from abroad ... They said Abu Shaiba especially disliked them, believing they had hijacked the insurgency, transforming Fallujah into a bastion of beheadings, summary executions, kidnappings and draconian justice...

Walid agreed: "He used to call them locusts, sweeping into an area and eating everything, green or dry ..."

Together, they went to get help to bury him (Abu Shaiba). On their way, they saw a dozen foreign fighters, some of whom they blamed for his death. Abu Gailan (Abu Shaiba's brother) said he raised his gun at the fighters, mostly Syrians and Saudis, and locked a round in the chamber.

"It was revenge for me and my brother," he said. "I intended to kill them."

"Your sisters are prostitutes!" Salam recalled Abu Gailan shouting. "Saadi is dead!" You betrayed him!" Salam and Walid restrained him...

"Fallujah became a shelter for them," he said. "We realized this too late..."

"His fight, Abu Gailan said, was with the Americans – "the occupation," as he put it. But at another point in the conversation, he said that if U.S. forces announced they would withdraw in a year or two, the insurgency would probably diminish.

Any G-2 worth his paycheck would hear opportunity knocking in this first-hand account of tensions between Iraqi nationalists and foreign Islamists. What if, instead of continuing to try to kill or capture anyone resisting us in Iraq, which only generates endlessly more enemies, we tried talking to some of them? What if we said to the Abu Shaibas and Abu Gailans, "We don't want to fight you. We don't intend to rule over you. This is your country, not ours. If you want to fight these foreign Islamists, we will stay out of your way. If you want us to, we will help you against them – with you making the decisions and giving the orders, not us. And if we have wronged any of you, by killing or injuring members of your family or destroying your property, we will pay compensation."

What if Washington were enlightened enough to add, "The last American soldier will leave your country soon, in two years or less. Why fight us when we are leaving anyway?"

*Time* magazine recently reported that U.S. representatives are now talking with representatives of some of the insurgents. Thank God. Splitting our opposition and working with as much of it as we can is the only possible light at the end of the Iraqi tunnel. That will not accomplish the single remaining strategic goal in Iraq, re-creating an Iraqi state – only Iraqis can do that, if anyone can – but at least it might offer us a way out with a few of our tailfeathers intact.

A number of Marine Corps officers contacted me after my recent column on the progress of the FMFM 1-A, *Fourth Generation War*, asking if they could get involved in helping write it (the answer is yes, to anyone who wants to help – it is an open process). One of them, an infantry major recently back from Iraq, said, "I'm where Colonel Mike Wyly was after Vietnam. I don't know what will work, but I know what we are doing now is not working."

The *Post's* story of the life and death of Abu Shaiba offers a way that might work. We should be fighting alongside the Abu Shaibas, not against them. A good first step would be to find Abu Shaiba's widow and children and offer them some help, as

testimony that the U.S. military honors brave opponents it would rather not have to fight.

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**On War #104**  
**February 15, 2005**

[Fin de Siecle](#)

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"In the early morning of Feb. 9, Tokyo informed Beijing's embassy here that the Senkaku Islands would be administered by the Japanese coast guard." In that small story in the *Christian Science Monitor* are some interesting portents.

Few other newspapers bothered to report what undoubtedly seemed to editors a trivial matter. It may in fact prove trivial. But possibly not. History is well larded with small events that had large consequences, as devotees of the War of Jenkins' Ear know. In this case, Japan told an increasingly nationalistic China to stuff it on a question, ownership of the tiny Senkakus and the possibly quite large oil and gas deposits around them, that has echoes in modern Chinese history. From the Meiji Restoration in Japan to the end of World War II, the Japanese frequently told the Chinese to stuff it. Then, there was nothing a weak China could do about it. Now, China is no longer weak.

China's present grand strategy is to avoid conflicts and build up her economic strength. She is happy to watch potential rivals dissipate their strength in wars while she drives their industry into the ground. The Chinese government takes a long view of history. But it is not only democracies that must pay attention to public opinion. If the Chinese people react strongly to Japan's unilateral move, things could get interesting.

A face-off between the Chinese and Japanese navies would have unpredictable results. On paper, the Chinese fleet is stronger, but it is more a collection of ships than a real navy. The Imperial Japanese Navy was a first-rate organization, but how much of its quality survives in the Japanese Maritime Self-Defense Force is unknown. Would the United States intervene in support of Japan? If it came to shooting, my guess would be yes. But at that point, the U.S. would have set itself up for a potential strategic disaster, because an obvious Chinese response would be to tell North Korea, "Go for it!" A North Korean nuke on Osaka would set Japanese ambitions back a mite, and an America trying to fight one war in Korea while already enmeshed in another in Iraq would give real meaning to the phrase, "imperial overreach."

To an historian, a crisis over the Senkakus would fit in a larger and not comforting pattern: the world before 1914. Then, an unstable European order blundered from crisis to crisis, just avoiding a general war in each, until some shots fired in Sarajevo brought down the whole house of cards and with it Western civilization. Today, we have the war in Iraq, the Israeli-Palestinian mess (the Balkans of our time?), the Balkans themselves, a threatened American attack on Iran, a resurgent FARC in Columbia and a North Korea that just declared itself a nuclear state. The *fin de siecle* feeling grows ever stronger; what small incident will it be this time that causes the house of cards to collapse, the house of cards that is a world of "unipolar" American dominance?

The tragedy here is that states continue to play the game of rivalry between states, paying no attention to the prime fact of a Fourth Generation world: when states fight each other, the likely winners will be non-state elements. Again, the analogy with 1914 is hard to avoid. Then, the ancient Houses of Hapsburg, Romanov and Hohenzollern remained focused on each other, thinking only in terms of which would triumph over its rivals. In fact, the events they allowed to be set in motion destroyed them all. The real victors were a guy named Ulyanov sitting in a café in Zurich and a transatlantic republic, the United States.

So it will be today when states fight other states, regardless of which state "wins" the formal conflict. We see that already in Iraq, where the American victory over the Iraqi state created a new and fertile field for Islamic non-state forces. China could easily come apart internally as a result of war; God knows what might emerge out of a Japan that again suffered nuclear attack, or the ruins of Korea. Nor is the internal stability of the United States guaranteed in the event of military defeat and strategic disaster. Thanks to the cultural Marxism of "Political Correctness" and "multiculturalism," we are no longer "one nation, under God, indivisible."

The 21st century will be a time for what Russell Kirk called "the politics of prudence." But prudence is seldom a cardinal virtue in national capitals, whether we are speaking of Tokyo, Pyongyang, Beijing – or Washington.

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### **On War #103**

**February 9, 2005**

#### **More Election Ju-ju**

By William S. Lind

[The views expressed in this article are those of Mr. Lind, writing in his personal capacity. They do not reflect the opinions or policy positions of the Free Congress Foundation, its officers, board or employees, or those of Kettle Creek Corporation.

Bands played, children sang, millions of Iraqis turned out to vote and the whole world hailed Iraq's election as an historic epiphany. Success in the voting process means that Iraq will emerge as a peaceful, democratic state. America has won its war.

Sorry, but I don't buy it.

The problem in Iraq is still exactly what it was before the election: there is no state. Elections alone do not create a state, as we saw not long ago in Afghanistan. An occupying American army can protect an election, but it cannot create a state.

Yes, millions voted. But the Kurds voted for an independent Kurdistan, the Shiites voted for a Shiite-controlled Islamic republic (if any outside power won the election, it was Iran, not the U.S.) and the Sunnis stayed home and cleaned their weapons, getting ready for the next round of war. The insurgents know that history is made not by majorities who vote but by minorities who fight. The prospect of a Shiite-run Iraq helps the Sunni insurgents more than it hurts them.

While the elections themselves did not re-create a state in Iraq, they may have opened a door to doing so – a narrow door, but one Iraq and the U.S. might pass through if both prove more adroit than they have in the past. The key to success – and success remains less likely than failure – is for both the new Iraqi government and Washington to understand that the critical issue is legitimacy. No Iraqi regime can retain legitimacy if it is seen as a creature of the United States.

In specific terms, what does that mean? Iraq's new government should take steps along the following lines:

- Refuse to move into Baghdad's infamous Green Zone, or anywhere else where it would depend on American troops for its security. A Shiite-dominated Iraqi government can be safe enough in Sadr City.
- Exclude Americans from all participation in writing Iraq's new constitution.
- Separate Iraq's new army and police from the Americans. If they need advisors, get them from some country other than the U.S. or Britain. Order the new army's equipment from Europe, Russia or China. Get rid of the American-style uniforms. Appearances are immensely important to the question of legitimacy.
- Order all American troops out of Fallujah so the local citizens can finally come home. Iraqis, not Americans, should rebuild the city. This would be an important message to the Sunnis.
- Sit down with as many of the insurgents as possible and try to cut a deal. Make it clear that Iraq's new government will eventually order the Americans out, and be willing to negotiate the timetable with the Sunni insurgents. So long as American troops are present, the insurgency will continue.
- Find as many issues as possible on which to disagree with the Americans, do so publicly and force the Americans to back down. The more often the new government stands up to the Americans, the greater its legitimacy will be.

For its part, Washington could help this process along. Quietly encourage the new Iraqi government to override us. Complain loudly about how it is disregarding our advice. Most importantly, stop saying that American policy is to "kill or capture" every Iraqi who dares resist us. Don't try to impose a military defeat on Iraq's Sunnis, forcing them to come crawling to us and beg

for mercy. That is never going to happen. Our goal should be peace, not victory. In much of Sunni Iraq, that means American troops should pull out. Quietly, we should also be talking to insurgent elements, trying to make deals.

Will any of this happen? As I have said before, Ayatollah Sistani seems like that rarest of men in today's world, a wise man. The Iraqi government he controls may take steps along these lines. Will Washington? Almost certainly not. Nor will our senior military leaders; they pride themselves on not being Machiavellian. But one silver lining is that genuine American anger toward the new Iraqi government is as useful as feigned anger. And our political and military leaders are both dumb enough to get angry at any real signs of Iraqi independence.

Actions along these lines could create chance – just a chance – of rebuilding a real Iraqi state. If so, Iraq's election might have marked a turning point. If not, all that will come out of them is an intensification of the civil war that is already under way in Iraq, plus a greater likelihood that war will spread beyond Iraq as Sunnis throughout the Arab world rally against a triumphant Shiism. That remains the more likely outcome.

## **On War #102**

**February 1, 2005**

### **Duce? Not To Us**

[The views expressed in this article are those of Mr. Lind, writing in his personal capacity. They do not reflect the opinions or policy positions of the Free Congress Foundation, its officers, board or employees, or those of Kettle Creek Corporation.

Serious conservatives, men such as Scott McConnell of *The American Conservative* and economist Paul Craig Roberts, along with such eminent libertarians as Justin Raimondo of *Antiwar.com* and Lew Rockwell, are raising a surprising question: do the war in Iraq and the Bush administration's desperate attempts to shore up support for that war have a whiff of fascism about them? In the February 14 issue of *TAC*, McConnell quotes his old history professor at Columbia, Fritz Stern, writing in *The New York Times*:

Now the word "freedom" has become a newly invoked justification of the occupation of a country that did not attack us, whose people have not greeted our soldiers as liberators...The world knows that all manner of traditional rights associated with freedom are threatened in our own country...the essential element of a democratic society – trust – has been weakened, as secrecy, mendacity and intimidation have become the hallmarks of this administration...Now "freedom" is being emptied of meaning and reduced to a slogan.

To these wise words, Scott McConnell adds his own:

I don't think there are yet real fascists in the administration, but there is certainly now a constituency for them – hungry to bomb foreigners and smash those Americans who might object. And when there are constituencies, leaders may not be far behind. They could be propelled into power by a populace ever more frustrated that the imperialist war it has supported – generally for the most banal of patriotic reasons – cannot possibly end in victory.

These voices, which should be heard thoughtfully, are pointing to a real danger. Yet I do not think that danger can rightly be labeled "fascism." Beyond the facts that W. as dictator suggests not so much Hitler or Mussolini as Charlie Chaplin and that the greatest threat to freedom in America is the left's ideology of cultural Marxism, there is a larger problem: the intellectual core of fascism itself.

Fascism is not merely dictatorship. The core idea of fascism is will as the highest virtue. Fascism sought to drop the whole Judeo-Christian content of Western culture and return to the values of the classical world, where power was the greatest good. (What astonished Greeks and Romans about Christianity was not that it had a Savior who died and rose from the dead; many eastern mystery cults claimed the same. What astonished them was that these Christians' God said, "I came not to be served, but to serve.") To fascists, the exercise of power, will, was the supreme moral act.

This was a serious error, because it turned an instrumental value, will, into a substantive value. In reality, will is good or evil depending upon what is willed. By attempting to turn will into a substantive value, fascism destroyed itself: will led to Mussolini's entry into World War II (had he remained neutral, like Franco, he would probably have survived Hitler's defeat), to

Hitler's offhand declaration of war on America (even after Pearl Harbor, Roosevelt would have had trouble getting an offensive declaration of war on Germany through Congress) and, ultimately, to the Holocaust: when the Nazis' original aim of expelling the Jews from Europe became impossible because there was no place to send them, will demanded a Final Solution.

Thankfully, America has a long way to go before "triumph of the will" could become the American creed. The Christians who make up George W. Bush's political base would gag well before reaching that point; they know their Bible better than that.

I would suggest that, instead of fascism, the danger now facing America is one of the many ills released from that Pandora's Box, the French Revolution: abstract nationalism. As Burke pointed out, conservative patriotism is very different from the abstract nationalism of "la Patrie." It is a concrete attachment to our own places: our own valleys or towns, our farms, hills or plains. It is local, it is real and it rightly sees Wal-mart as a far greater threat than tin-pot dictators in Third World countries.

Abstract nationalism, what Martin van Creveld calls "the state as an ideal" in his book *The Rise and Decline of the State*, has spread widely in America. As conservatives, we need to do a better job of explaining to our fellow citizens why that kind of nationalism is radical, not conservative. But van Creveld's book also points to the likely fate of such a nationalism: it will crumble after it fails in war.

In Europe, the state as an ideal died in World War I, in the mud at places like the Somme and Verdun. I suspect that the same thing is going to happen here after the American people have to confront the reality of America's defeat in Iraq. Bush's wild Wilsonianism is out of time; it is a ghost from an era long past, an illusion that is now sustained only by the public's trust that somehow, our troops' unquestionable valor in Iraq will bring victory. When it becomes clear to that public that valor alone is not enough, that a failed strategy brings defeat no matter how courageously soldiers and Marines may fight, the grand illusion will be followed by a profound bitterness and a turning inward. That turning inward could be a good thing for conservatives, if we can lead it toward a restoration of the American republic as a curative for the follies of empire.

There is one not unlikely event that could bring, if not fascism, then a nationalist statism that would destroy American liberty: a terrorist event that caused mass casualties, not the 3,000 dead of 9/11 but 30,000 dead or 300,000 dead. We will devote some thought to that possibility in a future column.