

NATIONAL PRESS CLUB

**“COUNTERINSURGENCY IN MODERN WARFARE”:
A DISCUSSION BY SENIOR MILITARY SCHOLARS***

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ROBERT MURRAY: Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen. Welcome to this discussion today on counterinsurgency and the new book, *Counterinsurgency in Modern Warfare*. My name is Robert Murray. I'm the president and CEO of CNA. For those of you who don't know CNA, CNA is a non-profit research and analysis organization that was founded in World War II to bring scientists to the war effort. And those scientists hung around for quite a while and we've continued to this day.

We now work across the government: many government agencies, many issues, and at all levels of government – federal, state, local. But a major part of our work is in the national security area. We analyze and help solve public problems of whatever kind and we try very hard to get close to the people, to the data, and to the problem. One example of closeness is that we send analysts out to the field to work with operational commanders in combat areas or other operational areas to try to help them with analysis. And we've been doing that since World War II and we're doing that recently with – on counterinsurgency since the Vietnam War period.

Carter Malkasian, who with Daniel Marston edited this splendid book, is an example of one of our CNA analysts who's been deployed with the services, particularly with the Marines in al Anbar, in Iraq, and then with the PRTs in Afghanistan for a considerable period. But there are actually a large number of folks at CNA that do that.

Carter now leads our work in counterinsurgency. So we're very pleased and proud of what Carter and Daniel have done with this book. This book, published by Osprey, our co-hosts for this event, is really a splendid example of contributing to the dialogue and the discussion of counterinsurgency, the history of counterinsurgency. It's a primer for the history of counterinsurgency.

We're hoping that we'll go beyond the history today in this dialogue and talk also about some of the challenges of today and tomorrow. And with that in mind, we're very lucky to have such a distinguished panel and led by Dr. David Kilcullen. Dr. Kilcullen, as you probably know, is the special advisor to Secretary Condi Rice and before that was advising General Petraeus and before that was advising the coalition forces in Afghanistan and was himself a serving officer in the Australian army where he was both a student and a practitioner of counterinsurgency. So he brings a great deal of experience and leadership to this conversation today and we're very lucky and I'm very honored to introduce him. So Dr. Kilcullen –

DAVID KILCULLEN: Well, I'm chairing this rather than speaking to the book directly so I'm not going to take up very much time before handing over to the guys to talk. I just want to point out, you have in your packet, I think, some information about their bios and that shows you how they bring a variety of backgrounds to what's going to be talked about today. But I want to also point out some similarities and I think the key similarity between these three guys is the fact that they all combine first-hand, hands-on

field experience of the practical realities of this kind of operation with detailed research background and analytical acumen.

Carter is in charge of the stability and development program, as Bob said, at CNA and has done some very interesting research over a number of years in both Iraq and Afghanistan. But I think the last time I saw you, Carter, you were covered in dirt with a three-day growth wearing body armor in the back of a Humvee in the Kunar Valley back in March. So he cleans up very well, if nothing else. (Laughter.)

And, of course, John commanded for a year in Iraq and has just completed command of an armored battalion out at Fort Riley, Kansas, I think the only armored battalion in the Army without any tanks?

JOHN NAGL: And without any weapons!

(Laughter.)

MR. KILCULLEN: – responsible for training advisors for Iraq and Afghanistan. And you are, what, six weeks out of the Army now?

MR. NAGL: Almost.

MR. KILCULLEN: So your hair is still growing out, I assume. And Dan and I overlapped in Iraq in 2007. And Dan spent most of 2007 traipsing around Southern Iraq producing some pretty iconoclastic analyses of how people were working on the ground. So we're very much looking forward to what he has to say. Carter, I think we might start with you. Is that okay with you? You look surprised.

CARTER MALKASIAN: I thought John was going to go first, but I'm happy to go.

MR. KILCULLEN: John can go first if he wants to. Why don't we go – (laughter)? You stitched that up very nicely. So, John, over to you.

MR. NAGL: Thanks, Dave. I'd like to start off, if I can, by thanking everybody for coming today, an extraordinary amount of talent and experience in this room; Brigadier General Nicholson from the United States Marine Corps who played a large role in some of the things we're going to talk about today; and many, many others. And I'd particularly like to welcome the young cadets who are here in the room who have volunteered to serve their nation knowing that they will be going to war and enormous respect for the decision that you've made, to serve our country and the peace-loving peoples of the world at this critical time.

I'm going to talk today a little bit about the process by which we've learned counterinsurgency in Iraq and Afghanistan: where we started from, where we've gotten to, and how much further we have to go. And it pains me to say that when an insurgency

began in Iraq in the late summer of 2003, my army was unprepared to fight it. The American Army of 2003 was organized, designed, trained, and equipped to defeat another conventional army. Indeed, it had no peer in that arena. But it was unprepared for an enemy who understood that it couldn't hope to defeat the U.S. army in conventional, face-to-face combat and therefore chose to wage war against us from the shadows.

The story of how the Army found itself less than ready to fight an insurgency goes back to the Army's refusal to internalize and build upon the lessons of Vietnam. And that's what the chapter in Carter and Daniel's book I wrote about is about. The Vietnam hangover resulted in American unwillingness to think about and prepare for future counterinsurgency campaigns, a failure that led to a 40-year gap in comprehensive American counterinsurgency doctrine and contributed to the American military's lack of preparedness for fighting insurgencies in Afghanistan and Iraq after the September 11 attacks.

Former vice chief of staff of the Army, General Jack Keane noted that, "In Iraq, we put an Army on the battlefield that I had been a part of for 37 years. It doesn't have any doctrine nor was it educated and trained to deal with an insurgency." After the Vietnam War, we purged ourselves of everything that had to do with irregular warfare or insurgency because it had to do with how we lost that war. In hindsight, that was a bad decision. In fact, I would say it's not unfair to say that in 2003, most U.S. army officers knew more about the American Civil War than they did about counterinsurgency.

The Army focused on winning short campaigns to topple unfriendly governments without considering the more difficult tasks required to rebuild friendly ones. Thus stunningly successful invasions of Afghanistan in 2001 and of Iraq in early 2003 were triumphs without victory as stubborn insurgents stymied America's conventional military power.

The Army of 2003 did not have a common understanding of the problems inherent in any counterinsurgency campaign as it had not studied such battles, digested their lessons, and debated ways to achieve success in counterinsurgency campaigns. I think this book goes a long way and I hope it's adopted at the Command and Staff College at the Army War College, at the National War College because it looks at a number of counterinsurgency campaigns and it helps us think about what principles apply across all of them and how we have to take – it's the same song. Some of the words are the same, but it has to be played in a different tune depending on the particular characteristics of the particular mosaic of the counterinsurgency campaign you're in.

So we hadn't done all of that thinking, I don't think, as an army, prior to 2003. And, as a result, we didn't have all of the equipment we needed to protect our soldiers against time-honored insurgent tactics like roadside bombs. We hadn't trained our soldiers that the key to success in counterinsurgency is protecting the population, nor had we empowered them with all of the political, diplomatic, and linguistic skills they needed to accomplish that objective.

Although there are many reasons why the Army was unprepared for the insurgencies in Iraq and Afghanistan, among the most important was the lack of current counterinsurgency doctrine when the campaigns began. Doctrine is enormously important to the American army. It codifies both how the institution thinks about its role in the world and how it accomplishes that role on the battlefield. Doctrine drives decisions on how the Army should be organized, what missions it should train to accomplish, and what equipment it needs.

When then-Lieutenant General David Petraeus became the commander of the Army's Combined Arms Center at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, in late 2005, he and his Marine Corps counterpart, Lieutenant General James Mattis, my boss in al Anbar in 2004, decided to remedy that particular part of the problem. They worked together based on their shared understanding of the conduct of counterinsurgency and of the urgent need to reform their services to make them more capable of conducting this most difficult type of war.

One of the tools they chose to drive change in the Army and the Marine Corps was a new Army-Marine Corps counterinsurgency doctrine. And those who don't think it's remarkable that the Army and the Marine Corps got together to put this product together haven't worked very closely with those two institutions.

General Petraeus, in a stroke of sheer brilliance, asked his old West Point classmate, Con [Conrad] Crane, to be the lead man on the project that became FM 3-24. And Con's role in this project has been underreported and underappreciated – Dr. Sepp, how are you, sir? – we're honored by the presence of Dr. Gunner Sepp who played such a big role in helping the Army understand counterinsurgency early on and is continuing to work that in particular with special operations forces.

Con called on the expertise of many of the people in this room, including Dr. Sepp, many Army and Marine Corps veterans with the campaigns in Iraq and Afghanistan. And Con turned the manual in a year. It was widely reviewed, including by jihadi websites and by *The New York Times*. (Laughter.) And I know there are people in the room who probably don't think there's that much difference between those two. (Laughter.) I'll hear about that later. Copies of the manual have reportedly been found in Taliban training camps in Pakistan.

And I'd like to talk a little bit about the impact of the doctrine and of the shared understanding that it engendered. In Vietnam, I argue that the Army did not learn and apply the principles of counterinsurgency in time. We didn't get it figured out until the American people had already lost faith in the war effort. This time, the learning process has happened much more quickly. And a driver of that change, as well as a beneficiary of it, was FM 3-24. The book was designed both to help the Army and Marine Corps prepare for the next counterinsurgency campaign and was also designed to make substantive contributions to our ongoing efforts in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Obviously, its ability to do so increased substantially when General Petraeus was selected to take command of Multinational Forces in Iraq a month after its publication. He was provided with additional troops to assist him in a new mission: protecting the Iraqi population. With his deputy and now his successor, Lieutenant General Ray Odierno, Petraeus implemented the strategy by pushing American soldiers in Baghdad out of the big forward-operating bases that had isolated them from the Iraqi people, placing them instead in joint security stations with Iraqi soldiers and police.

Petraeus also took full advantage of the opportunity presented to him when the Sunni tribes of al Anbar attacked al Qaeda in a turnaround that would change the tide of the course of the war. General Petraeus has, of course, since been confirmed as the Central Command commander with responsibility for the counterinsurgency campaign in Afghanistan as well as Iraq. And I think it can be safely assumed that he will apply many of the lessons learned from Iraq to what has until recently been a forgotten war.

Those lessons are myriad; and I know Carter and Daniel are going to talk to a lot of them, but I hope I can be forgiven for mentioning one that is particularly near and dear to my heart. Foreign powers cannot win counterinsurgency campaigns, but they can enable and empower host-nation governments to do so. Among the most important tools they have to accomplish this task is the use of combat advisors. In Vietnam, the advisory mission was not taken seriously by the Army until it was too late. P. Dawkins called the fight to improve the capability of South Vietnamese forces “the other war” in his doctoral dissertation.

After a slow start, we have gradually improved both the selection of our advisors and the way we prepare them for their critical mission. General Casey’s recent decision to centrally select transition team leaders with the same board that selects battalion and brigades commanders is a particularly important step in this direction, but there is still a long way to go as we build the military we need to win the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Perhaps the single most pressing need is for a larger Afghan national army and police force and additional American and allied advisors to help them fight our common enemies. In Vietnam, the American military learned how to conduct counterinsurgency, but not until the American people had already lost faith in the effort. The learning process has happened much faster in this war, aided by enormously talented sergeants and young officers who have been listened to by their bosses. The Army and Marine Corps have become true learning organizations and for that accomplishment as much as for the hard fighting they’ve done in two wars, they have my sincere admiration.

Now we must ensure that the lessons of counterinsurgency, purchased at such high price in Vietnam and repurchased in Iraq and Afghanistan, become a permanent part of the Army cannon, institutionalized in everything from doctrine to force structure. Whether we like it or not, there will be more counterinsurgency campaigns in our future and we owe it to our soldiers and Marines never to be unprepared again.

MR. KILCULLEN: Carter?

MR. MALKASIAN: Thank you, John. That was great. CNA has allowed me the opportunity to do some work in Iraq and to do some work in Afghanistan. That's allowed me to look at the two conflicts and to be able to compare them to some extent. And I'm sure there are other people in the room who have had the same opportunity. Afghanistan, from my perspective, looks a lot more stable, even today, than the Iraq I knew in 2006. So while the situation is deteriorating, it doesn't seem as bad as Iraq was.

Furthermore, I think that the instability that does exist can be quelled through improved counterinsurgency. And that's not to say that the men on the ground are doing counterinsurgency poorly. It's merely to say that some changes in strategy and in operations can probably bring us many steps forward.

However, even when I look today at counterinsurgency in Afghanistan and look at the strategy, it doesn't seem as developed as the strategies we had in Iraq even in 2006. And I'd like to focus in this talk on one aspect of that strategy, which is how much we are using police and other community self-defense forces to improve our position there.

The lessons of Iraq have not fully been transferred over to Afghanistan to learn how to do this the right way. Conventional wisdom in Iraq is that the tide turned with the surge. The tide turned with the addition of forces and with improved counterinsurgency practices. And I certainly ascribe to that conventional wisdom. One element of that was the Sunni police and other community self-defense forces that stood up to fight al Qaeda and to turn against al Qaeda in Iraq. And by community self-defense forces, I mean the whole alphabet soup of Sons of Iraq, awakening councils, concerned local councils, paramilitary security forces. The Sunnis were turned from working with the insurgency to stand up and provide protection to their neighborhoods and to keep out al Qaeda in Iraq.

To play on the words of Hanna Batatu, a famous historian of Iraq, the revolt of the old Sunni classes against al Qaeda's revolutionary movement is what we saw happen in 2006 and 2007. Scholars, military officers, and even captured al Qaeda documents show this to be true. One al Qaeda document captured in 2007 said, "The renegades and Americans started launching their attacks to destroy us. We lost cities and afterwards villages and the desert became a dangerous refuge. We got away from people and found ourselves in a desert wasteland."

Yet even before 2007, when the real damage was being done to AQI, the effectiveness of local forces could be seen. When I was in Anbar in 2006, in August of 2006, I had policemen tell me that they were going to crush al Qaeda underneath their heels, and they made the requisite turning movement with their foot. And this was more than mere rhetoric. They endured suicide car bombs. They endured direct assaults. They endured assassinations of their key leaders to keep on fighting in cities like Ramadi, al Qaim, and Fallujah.

The thing that made them more effective than anything else, though, was their ability to collect intelligence, their ability to be tied into the local community and to get information that others could not. Looking at what the police, the community self-defense force were doing in Anbar as early as late 2006, you could see that they were capturing and killing twice as many insurgents per policeman as their counterpart was in the Iraqi army.

Another colleague of mine, Jonathan Schroden did a study which showed that the Iraqi police in 2007 were initiating more engagements than either the coalition or the Iraqi army, which suggests that they were better at ambushing, better at detaining people, better at getting out there and getting at the enemy. One of my favorite quotes from my time in Anbar is what an Iraqi policeman told an advisor and that advisor relayed it to me, which was, "What makes an insurgent's heart turn cold is to see an Iraqi policeman in uniform. It is as if he has been stabbed in the chest with a cold knife."

So how did we do this? How did we manage to help build the police? And I certainly wouldn't suggest it was our doing alone that made this happen. In fact, I might argue that the – what the Iraqis had to do, what the Sunnis wanted to do played an even bigger role. Well, the one thing, as is well known, is we tried to form these groups under leaderships of sheiks, imams, and former insurgent leaders, tried to find who these leaders were, tried to work with them, tried to understand their problems to get them to work with us more.

And General Nicholson, who is sitting in the first row, was leading that effort in Fallujah in 2006 and early 2007. Besides just talking to sheiks, we empowered them with money in return for cooperation. And this was critical. It's not just that we paid the policemen; it's that projects were conducted around the areas where sheiks lived and were contracted to sheiks' tribesmen. What does this give them? It gives them the ability to influence the population.

This means that all of those local tribes and all of these local men that were turning to al Qaeda before because al Qaeda had money, now worked with the sheiks. So that empowered them; that changed things. The best illustration of this is Captain Travis Patriquin's ingenious PowerPoint brief, which shows step-by-step how it happens. He certainly was able to encapsulate it in pictures better than I was ever able to encapsulate it in words.

Other means were used as well, and some of these are a little bit less savory: turning an eye to black-market activity that's occurring. Many of these sheiks that we worked with were doing black-market activity at the same time. And the Iraqi government and our own forces turned a blind eye to what was happening there. And why did that happen? Because if you didn't allow them to make money, al Qaeda would have money and al Qaeda would out-bid them for the support of the people. It might not be something that we'd like to happen, but, in a difficult situation, some difficult means are necessary.

What else was done? I'd like to point to something that doesn't get as much coverage in the press, although there has been some: counter-intimidation measures. You hear in the press all the time about how we do high-value targeting. You hear it from ourselves, from our own military force, how we do high-value targeting, go after the insurgent leaders, try to decapitate their command-and-control structure.

Well, the insurgents do the same thing to us. They do the same thing to the forces that are working with us. They try to find out who that imam is, who that sheik is, and they try to kill them. And this has been shown repeatedly when AQI in 2005 and 2006 would just decimate tribal movements trying to do anything against them.

So how did we try to counter that? Well, we allowed sheiks to have protective details, allowed them to have some force that would protect themselves. We tried to form police forces and local forces under tribal lines so when the police got done going to work every day, they'd go home to areas where other tribes lived – I'm sorry, where their own tribesmen lived. So they'd have someone watching their back and, together, they would be stronger.

Publicize the successes of the police. Use the IO as much as possible to say, hey, they won a victory here and try to get that information out. And develop the capability to rapidly respond to attacks on the police. I don't want to be critical of what had happened in the years before, but I think in late 2006 and into 2007, a lot more emphasis was placed on getting to the police if they were in trouble and getting to them quickly. It can't be an hour; we need to get there in minutes because otherwise they could be overrun by that time.

Now, the idea of building forces like this, obviously, has a lot of potential negative side effects and a great many concerns were voiced about why one would want to form these forces, concerns such as, the sheiks would become de facto war lords, that democracy would be undermined, that certain tribes would become too powerful and oppress the others, that there would be human rights abuses, or that sectarian fighting would actually escalate between the Shi'a and the Sunni and push the country further into civil war.

Some of these happened. Elected officials do lack power today compared to the tribal leaders that have been put into position. Tribes have clashed with elected leaders at times, not usually with violence, but in words and in ways that makes cooperation much more difficult. And the sectarian lines have been formalized in places like Baghdad.

But the coalition forces took actions, especially in Anbar, to prevent the worst from coming to pass – I should rephrase that: took action starting in Anbar and that passed on to other places; facilitating meetings with the government to try to make sure the tribes and the police forces were tied into the government, having the police forces in Anbar paid by the government and not paid separately; trying to resolve disputes between elected and unelected leaders; building walls in certain places to separate Sunni and Shi'a militias; encouraging larger tribes to share power. So if you have an area where there is

one very dominant tribe and you have several others, yes, you have to work with the dominant tribe, but don't work with them exclusively and upset the smaller tribes because that then creates more fighting.

And in some cases, police chiefs and leaders had to be removed. In some cases, they took actions that were harmful to the population. Sometimes the population complained and then sometimes battalion commanders had to make the difficult choice of removing people – and that did happen. So we have – I know people use the term “a model” – we have something that happened in Anbar and something that moved forward to successful fruition in the rest of Iraq.

What's happening in Afghanistan? Well, in Afghanistan, there's much less attention to the police, and criticisms of the Afghan national police abound. They cooperate with insurgents, they surrender outposts, they tax people. Indeed, in some provinces, it's not uncommon for less than 60 percent of the assigned men to report to duty.

However, there are counter examples. In Kunar province, where I spent time, five different police forces in five different districts would go and fight the insurgents when projects were attacked, when bridges were attacked, when roads were attacked, they would respond. The people in the tribes would come out of their houses to support them. You may have a recent article in the Wall Street Journal that talks about Lieutenant Colonel Chris Kolenda, who's done an excellent job with counterinsurgency. The police force in his area got intel about a cache deep in the mountains. They marched for 16 hours to get there. They stood there overnight getting shot at until soldiers could arrive to relieve them in place. They were not happy by that time, but they did the work.

What's the point of this? The ANP there – the Afghan national police – have potential, a potential that is not being exploited. The Afghan government and our own coalition forces have directed that the ANP should not exceed 82,000 people. Even combined with the ANA that's projected to be 86,000 people, that's not enough to secure a population of 33 million. Amir Abdurahman in 1890 had roughly the same number of men to protect a population of only 5 million. Afghanistan is a dangerous and difficult country. We're probably going to need more police to maintain stability there.

There's a process in place called the DIAG process. That process prohibits militias or people arming themselves on the streets. It tries to get the guns off the streets. Now, this process hasn't been fully implemented and it was certainly laudable to be conducted in 2003 and 2005. But today, when the situation is much more difficult, it probably deserves to have a second look taken at it.

Without any direction to develop police, Coalition force units on the ground in Afghanistan have not tried to build them and have not taken the kind of actions that were taken inside of Iraq. Asking the elders to supply men to the police or to keep up their police forces is discouraged formally. Afghanistan is awash in CERP projects yet very few of those CERP projects stipulate that, in return for this project, this community is

going to keep its police force up to what its manning is supposed to be. Very few require that the police must perform against the insurgents in the area. These kinds of things should be stipulations of projects. There are few efforts to counter intimidation and, of course, as Dr. Nagl pointed out, advisors are needed, are greatly needed, advisors that are with the police 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Advisors that are there are trying to do what they can, but the effort is not sufficient currently.

Some moves have been made in the right direction; Second Battalion, Seventh Marine Regiment is out there right now in Southern Iraq – I'm sorry, in Southern Afghanistan – and they've been divided up to work with the police and they are doing a good job. But that is not enough. We need to press to expand police force beyond 82,000. Yes, there are dangers in warlords and there are dangers that could occur by pressing this, but they can be mitigated.

Finally, Afghanistan is not the same as Iraq and I don't mean to imply that. However, I do believe there are enough similarities that we can say that building police forces and building up other local community self-defense forces will be helpful. Some elders already express interest.

One other thing I would point to is that this is not a unique example from Iraq. Using police is something one might even say is a common requirement for effective counterinsurgency. We can point to multiple cases where this has been necessary. So we shouldn't be afraid to push for it a little bit harder in Afghanistan. An easy and cost-effective measure for fighting insurgency is at our fingertips, something that is cheaper for us than putting down more men into the country or having to sacrifice more of our men, not that we won't have to do that as well.

MR. KILCULLEN: Thanks, Carter. Dan?

DANIEL MARSTON: I'd like to just quickly add to a point that John made about the learning process of the U.S. Army, the U.S. Marine Corps. As an American working in the British system for the last five years and watching them sit in '03, and act as if they were the best in COIN in the world to a point where they've been embarrassed by their performance in Southern Iraq, and looking at the lessons in Afghanistan, there is a lot of envy from the U.K. right now looking at the processes that the U.S. army and the U.S. Marine Corps have gone through in the last few years to get to where they are.

The British are open to that realization. They were close to humiliation in Southern Iraq and you can say they might just have been able to turn it around in the last few months, but the point is that the learning institution process is key, hence why I was part of the education process in theater and out of theater. The irony was, I have gone to Iraq since '06 and Afghanistan this year and I used to brief on the history of COIN. And some officers would look at me and say, did we really do that? (Laughter.)

Anyway, there has been a learning process for the British. They are catching up. I'm not saying they're going to lead anytime soon, but they are definitely catching up.

They have humility, which is important in warfare, and Helmand province has proven that. But there have been issues in both Southern Iraq as well as Afghanistan that have outside the military's remit.

I'm going to try to look at Helmand province very quickly, in 10 minutes. The operational name for the British is Herrick. Please don't ask me what it means. I don't think many people in the British army know what it means. But the point is, the situation in Southern Afghanistan, or Regional Command south, has been perceived by many to be deteriorating quite rapidly. The irony is that it's probably a little bit better than it was in '06, but there are many issues that still haven't been touched upon that we need to get into. Carter and John have touched upon it. Advisors are key, ANP, potentially local auxiliaries, et cetera, are all very important things that commanders are willing to discuss, but higher-level decision-making is still missing.

The British, along with the Canadians and others, have been heavily criticized for the prosecution of the war in the south, but I'm going to try to show you that the British position in '06 is different than it is today because they've been learning and they have actually made mistakes and they've realized those mistakes and moved on. But I just want to say, this is not official, although I still work for the MOD on detachment to ANU, I am speaking from my own observations, from – I've had the honor to be with and speak with various brigades and brigadiers all the way down to platoon commanders that I taught. So it's just observations. So please do not quote me as an MOD official; I am not speaking as an MOD official today.

Quick notes on the Helmand province itself – it's a very desolate place. The Helmand River is called the "green zone." That's where the chief agricultural center of the province rests. The population lives between Garmser in the south where the Marines are today, 24 MEU, to the north towards Kajaki Dam and two major towns, Musa Qaleh and Nowzad to the west. The vast majority of the population, which is only 740,000 people in the province, lives in that belt. This is really in theory the focus of effort that needs to be done in Helmand, although there have been various brigadiers have carried out different campaigns to go after supplies and other things.

But it's also the most heavily mined province in Afghanistan, from the Soviet experience. And it's also politically difficult because it's one of the main narcotic provinces in terms of heroine. The vast majority of the heroine is coming out of Helmand.

In April '06, the 16th Air Assault Brigade was sent in by Her Majesty's government, and the Ministry of Defence. But there was a problem with the initial mission. They both, sadly – senior officials in MOD, and Her Majesty's government, failed to stipulate what was needed was a COIN campaign. They didn't call it that. They told the British people it was going to be a peace-support operation dealing with counter-narcotics and reconstruction. But many people within the taskforce recognized it was going to be COIN, full blown-on COIN – clear, hold, build, and a lot of clearing, and

we're talking 500,000 rounds in one battalion – 3 PARA [3rd Battalion, The Parachute Regiment]. Heavy fighting.

But sadly the government didn't actually state that specifically, and it caused a lot of issues when the British public were watching 3 PARA at Sangin holding onto dear life destroying the Taliban. This frame of the mission was primarily a matter of political expediency because if you talk about a counterinsurgency campaign, you're talking 20, 30 years, and nobody is really going to talk about that, potentially, if you're talking about just peace support and counter-narcotics. But it showed a lack of understanding and historical knowledge of COIN on both part of the military as well as the civilian and the leadership.

It's getting better, but there was a major problem in '06 with that. As one practitioner recalled, quote, "The taskforce was initially directed to conduct peace support operations to set security conditions required, to foster economic development and improve governments. However, the taskforce quickly found itself conducting near-continuous combat operations in the war-fighting phase of a complex counterinsurgency campaign," end quote.

Once on the ground, and having identified a need for a COIN strategy, chiefly within 3 PARA – the Third Battalion the parachute regiment battle group, they started to think small. They were thinking about setting up a forward operating base, and dealing with the town of Gereshk, which is on route one, and having the provincial reconstruction team put in Lashkar Gah to the south, and potentially you could say the oil spot process will begin.

You have to remember that although it looks like a brigade, and we think a brigade is maybe three battalions, this brigade had one battalion of infantry; that was it. But there was a lot of pressure from ISAF as well as the Afghan government to get the British troops out and about to the district centers to have a presence. So while commanders potentially were thinking small oil spot process, they started to divvy platoons and companies and ship them all around the province to district centers: Nowzad, Musa Qaleh, and all of these other places, but then the Taliban strategy came into the fore. They wanted to destroy a platoon house to show the British people that they could destroy a platoon house, and potentially that means the British will go home – some of the most sustained fighting since World War II erupted, and the British air assets and other things were minimal compared to what the Americans had, and let's just say that this strategy almost destroyed the 16th air assault. They just held on in places like Sangin.

The problem was nobody had envisioned a full-blown counterinsurgency campaign, and so when 3 PARA were calling for more reinforcements, the situation was so bad that the companies were detached from battalions back in the U.K., and Cyprus and shipped out to help out. That's how bad it got.

Minimal manpower. The commando – as the Third Commander Brigade was taking over in Herrick 5. They were questioning the fact that these district centers were all over the place and that they should pull back. There was a lot of discussion about pulling back, but the fear was, if you pull back, the Taliban would be seen as winning.

They made a decision at the end of Herrick 4 [October 2006] to pull back from Musa Qaleh. That was then perceived to be a partial victory for the Taliban as the tribal elders tried to hold out against the Taliban but the Taliban took over in February of 2007, and it became, you could say, a small Fallujah for the northern part of Helmand.

So over the course of the other Herricks, there was an attempt to try to look at this and how do we deal with Musa Qaleh. The Americans were quite upset with the British approach. General Richards and McNeill later would have issues about why they made that decision. But the problem was they had no manpower to hold all of those positions. They didn't have the resources to hold out. So it was sadly a political decision to push them out and a political decision in the end had to pull them back. But it was seen as a victory for the Taliban.

But in December 2007, over 4,000 troops were brought in: British, American, and Afghan, and they took it back. Musa Qaleh has now been secured again. But the only reason why they've been able to do that is that as each brigade has gone out, they have been reinforced by more and more battalions of infantry, and the infantry battalions, as we know, are key in these kinds of campaigns.

I'll give you an example – 16th Air Assault is there today, and they have five infantry battle groups instead of one. So your ability to force yourself out and to actually gain ground is key.

So with the greater troop numbers in place, the British have been able to maintain those platoons in the company bases, in the Kajaki Dam region, Sangin, Nowzad, Gereshk, Lashkar Gah, Garmser, and reestablish a presence in Musa Qaleh to protect the Afghan government district centers. They have also established forward operating bases of various locations to support the troops. The British have also carried out strike operations stretching around a reconnaissance squadron, a taskforce, of what they called MOGs, Maneuver Outreach and Mobile Operations Groups – they continue the maneuver aspects of warfare, which is key for some people – which focus on intercepting supplies and personnel coming from in and outside the Afghan development zone. And the Afghan development zone was between Lashkar Gah and Gereshk and has now trying to be expanded up to Sangin in the north – as well as gathering intelligence from the local population. Their plan was to maintain a permanent U.K. and Afghan presence within the district centers, carrying out patrols and attacks to destroy the presence of the Taliban.

As one senior practitioner stated, quote, “The places of the population of Helmand are our center of gravity. In short, unless we retain and gain, and win consent of the population within Helmand, we'll lose the COIN campaign. We will clear, hold, build where we can and disrupt and interject and defeat where we cannot.” And they are

incredibly happy with the fact that the 24 MEU is now in Garmser to help reinforce their effort.

But overall, the British approach to the COIN campaign in Helmand has been more effective than Iraq, but there are still issues. Many commanders recognize that there had been many mistakes made in southern Iraq and they did not wish to repeat those. As an officer noted, many lessons learned are not new. Common things from previous U.K. COIN campaigns and conflicts were all evident in operations conducted in Helmand. The key lesson is that we ignore previous experience of such campaigns of those who are our allies at our peril, and they've been looking very heavily into the American approach.

But the point is right now, the British are actually much better at this kind of campaign than they were two years ago. They're looking at the history of the Pashtuns; they used to recruit Pashtuns for a variety of military services within the old empire. They're looking at how to work with clearing and holding, and looking at the issues with the other government departments, Foreign and Commonwealth Office in DFID, the USAID equivalent. But the British operations in Helmand are a microcosm of the ongoing issues that have plagued both NATO and the U.S., in their attempt to pacify the Pashtun belts of RC East and South.

The British military, along with the relevant departments from Her Majesty's government, have been on a steep learning curve over the last three years. Like us, the British have encountered major problems with a comprehensive approach or interagency approach. They have seen improvements, small improvements with better planning security, but issues remain regarding force protection, numbers of people, and allocation of monies. They have minimal amount of money compared to the American BCTs in the north.

In particular, the fact that members of other government departments are all volunteers continues to present problems of both quantity and quality of personnel. Many British commanders have indicated an interest in the new U.S. approach, known as the civilian response teams. Commanders have noted that there are already retired soldiers, NCOs, and officers who will be interested in returning to the war zone in a different capacity.

But much work remains to be done on the mentoring of the Afghan national security forces. To give an example, coming back to some of the points that John was talking about and, of course, Carter was talking about, is in the first deployment on Herrick 4, the third battalion of the 205 corps of the Afghan national army was, in theory, to be trained by elements of the British brigade. The British were so stretched that they took one battery from their artillery regiment to be the training team. They hadn't been properly trained for it; they were looking for manuals, they couldn't find it. But this regiment was also providing fire support through all the fighting at Sangin and in other locations. The high command recognized it made a mistake. They finally have now brought in an infantry battalion in each Herrick, starting with the 45 Commando, to be

the training team. So they've been embedded across the actual Afghan battalion itself and doing a much better job than they were doing in Iraq, although recent time in Iraq has gotten much better.

There is one topic of significance that was touched upon by Carter as well, and that's the ANP. Categorically, all commanders and reports highlight the major issues with the ANP and their lack of support from the local population. Many commanders feel that such outfits and resources are needed to reform and rebuild the ANP. Some commanders have also noted the need for local auxiliaries, raised from the Pashtuns in the area who would be trained and led by coalition forces to help try to hold the cleared areas. While the efforts of the 2/7 Marines in training ANP have been commended, many fear that there would not be enough back-filling to keep the process going. But we're also talking about a paramilitary police force, not a police force like New York or Washington or Boston, and there's still a bit of confusion about that from some commanders.

Another problem that remains is the British military and other government department agencies have been accused of focusing only on Helmand, and failing to look into other areas of RC South, including the Canadian taskforce area as well as RC East, for ideas or lessons to take and pass along with their own planning. There have been numerous references that Helmand is this Helmandshire; that, you know, you don't need to look anywhere else. This is a really bad way to go about it. There are lots of great lessons coming from RC East that have all gone through unofficial channels.

There's a need to look over the horizon, to link up the efforts in the -- provinces within the Pashtun belt to learn from, rather than repeat, the same mistakes with the people that we're trying to win over to the Afghan government. The British Army has gone through considerable growing pains in Helmand, as well as MND Southeast, learning invaluable lessons, trying to adapt practices, training, and education to produce better results. It's an ongoing process; they know that it will still -- that there is still a great deal of work to be done in Helmand. And if the enemy is always adapting, so we must always adapt as well. I'll just leave it at that.

MR. KILCULLEN: Thanks, guys. What I'd thought I'd do now is just spend a few minutes, if you like, asking the first set of questions and give you an opportunity to answer those while we gather some questions from the floor, and then throw it open.

The first question that I want to put to you all to think about, as kind of a philosophical question, and it's the question that I think a lot of us are worrying about in the policy community: Is counterinsurgency a strategy? Is it an operational art form or a type of technique, or is it just, in fact, a set of tactics? Which of course begs the question, can good counterinsurgency technique compensate for bad strategy? So I'd like you guys to think about that.

And then I'm going to direct these to each of you in turn, but I don't mind if you want to jump on someone else's question as well. John -- great comments, thank you --

the army that went to Iraq, of course, was not the army that you wrote about in your book about Vietnam and indeed, not the army that you wrote about in the chapter that's included here, which is also about Vietnam. Dr. Janine Davidson wrote several years ago, in her dissertation that the 1990s experience of peacekeeping operations and stabilization ops actually influenced doctrinal development very significantly in the U.S. Army, between the periods of Vietnam and the start of the Iraq War. How would you react to that? Do you think that's a valid way to look at the issue? And what does it mean, in terms of – if you like, updating your analysis to think about operational learning in Iraq?

The second question is a little bit more political. You paint a very before-and-after picture; you know, it's what some people have described as the counterinsurgency narrative. And you could say there was a B.C. and an A.D. in Iraq; you know, B.C. meaning before COIN, A.D., after Dave. (Laughter.) But other people have questioned that narrative the sort of Old Testament and New Testament version with you guys as the messiah. (Laughter.) You know, some people have said it wasn't actually that bad in '05, '06. Other people have said well, we were kind of already doing that stuff, and other people have said well, it wasn't really counterinsurgency that made the difference and in fact, what we're doing here is we're elevating a set of tactics and putting them in the place of strategy. So I guess I'd be interested in your reaction to that.

And then, the final question for you is, you know, the manual was produced in 2006. How do you see it being used on the ground since then, in the last two years? And do you think that we'll see some significant changes when the next version comes out? So if you need more questions, I can ask more. But that's probably enough for now.

MR. NAGL: That's good, thanks.

MR. KILCULLEN: Carter, again, a little bit politically incorrect, of course, but as we all know, the Germans originally had responsibility for police capability inside Afghanistan. And there was a feeling, after several years, that results weren't being produced or certainly weren't being produced fast enough to deal with the change in the environment. And of course, this isn't to criticize the Germans, but it's to recognize that the whole coalition going into Afghanistan in 2001 thought of the campaign as a reconstruction on nation-building activity. And over time, as the insurgency developed, the alliance had, I believe, some difficulty in reorienting itself to the change in conditions on the ground, away from just a straight reconstruction problem to more of a counterinsurgency problem.

Of course, then, after the Germans lost responsibility for the police capability building, it was given to the State Department, who lacked capacity, lacked funding, lacked an ability in communications to get out onto the ground, couldn't get out and do the job. And so it passed most of the tasking across to contractors, which again, that effort faulted. And it was only in 2006, when CSTCA – or whatever that acronym stands for, Combined Security Transition Command Afghanistan – finally took responsibility

for the police capability, that is, U.S. military, not a coalition command nor an interagency effort, did we start to see some improvements in police capability.

So I guess what I'm asking is what does that tell us about coalition counterinsurgency and interagency counterinsurgency, is it, in fact, doable or do we just end up falling back on military guys training police. And then, what are the implications of that for policing capability?

And then, one final other sort of update question for you is, obviously, we now have the focused district development program going on inside Afghanistan, which has brought, I think, mixed results. And, Dan, you might want to comment on this as well, where some areas have seen some very significant improvement in police capacity; others have had some problems implementing FDD. So if you'd like to update us on how that's going?

And then finally, Dan, you sort of took my first question out of my mouth. You know, the British has a reputation of being good at counterinsurgency, and then in 2003, 2004, there was lots of fairly snide criticism of the United States by British commanders saying that Americans didn't understand counterinsurgency, we were taking too kinetic an approach, look at us we're out on the street, soft caps, and everyone loves us. And as you remember, Brigadier Nigel Aylwin-Foster wrote a fairly sharp article in the Military Review in 2005 making those points. How do British commanders feel about their performance on the ground now?

You see them a fair bit. I think it would be fair to say that in 2006, the British army was defeated in the field in southern Iraq. They may well have come back from that since then, but only by a process, I think, of recognizing that perhaps they weren't where they thought they were in 2003. And of course, we could list Musa Qaleh, the Kajaki Dam, a variety of other incidents in Afghanistan. Again, this is not to criticize the British army because we've been there in exactly the same spot; the question is how do you think the learning process differed? And what are the key lessons?

And then a final question for you, a lot of this discussion that was held originally at the start of the war focused on two campaigns, Malaya and Northern Ireland, which were both seen as examples of how to do it correctly. Of course, John Messenger wrote a book a few years ago where he pointed out that, in fact, Malaya was a bit of an outlier, that general British counterinsurgency since the Second World War was very different.

But Professor Erin Simpson, who is at the U.S. Marine Corps Staff College, has also pointed out that actually there's a fundamental difference between conducting counterinsurgency in your own country or in a colony versus conducting counterinsurgency in somebody else's country, that the requirements are very different. And therefore, perhaps a Northern Ireland model just was never particularly applicable to Iraq. You could sort of caricature a British approach in Northern Ireland as you can hit us, you can keep hitting us, but we're not going to hit back and we're never leaving, so

you may as well give up. And that eventually worked in Northern Ireland, but of course when you're a foreigner, everyone knows you're leaving, so it doesn't necessarily apply.

So again, from your very unique position of being an American embedded with the British military, I'd be interested in hearing your comments on that. Why don't I give you an opportunity just let all of you answer those questions briefly? And then we'll throw the floor open and then see where other people want to take it.

MR. NAGL: We'll be done early next week. (Laughter.) So Dave's lead-off question is what I'd like to frame my answer around, and the question was can good tactics make up for bad strategy? And the answer is clearly no. And I really think this is what we've seen in Iraq, so the strategy of 2005, 2006 was correctly to hand over to, ultimately was, to hand over control of Iraq to the Iraqis. That ultimately has to be the exit strategy in any counterinsurgency campaign, but the conditions have to be set for that to happen. Violence has to be at a manageable level, and most importantly perhaps, the institutions of government to which you're handing over responsibility have to be able to carry that weight.

And in 2005, the Iraqi security forces were not able. The Iraqi ministries were not able to handle the load that we were attempting to put upon them. The Sunni insurgency remained virulent and al Qaeda remained very strong. And so the strategy was incorrect for the conditions at that time. There were a number of units who performed counterinsurgency very, very well, I think, as the course of the war progressed, but their individual efforts were not linked up together into a comprehensive strategy. So the whole was less than the sum of its parts.

And so what General Petraeus did, I think, had great advantages. The Marines, in particular the Marines, some Army guys had a role as well out in al Anbar, after years of patient working with the Sunnis managed to bring the Sunnis on board and turn the Sunnis against al Qaeda. Al Qaeda helped as well; it never hurts to have a stupid enemy. Al Qaeda in Iraq overreached and did some fairly horrific things that turned the Sunnis against them. And Petraeus had that wonderful advantage to take opportunity of, the opportunity to take advantage of.

He also had as his instrument an Army that had by and large learned counterinsurgency over the preceding several years. So an awful lot of folks came to Iraq, weren't sure what they were doing despite the peacekeeping experience of the '90s, which was not internalized, was not institutionalized and standardized across the forces. We didn't train it widely. We trained it as if we were only going to do peacekeeping in Bosnia and then when we got back, we got to get back to the real business of soldiering, which is of course fighting tanks on the plains of Central Europe, even if we have to invent an enemy, train it, and equip it with tanks to give us somebody to fight against.

So the forces that Petraeus had to use were better able to perform counterinsurgency. We revised our training program. And as a result, I think, we've had the advantage of a strategy that was correct for the time in place, that is providing

security to the population first. I now think we are nearing a situation in Iraq, and I'm going there on Friday to get a firsthand look at this, but I believe, where we can again focus on transitioning control back to the Iraqis, which is ultimately going to be our exit strategy, beat my dead horse one more time. Advisors are going to be increasingly important in that in Iraq as we go forward. Just as we don't have enough in Afghanistan, we're going to need even more in Iraq to pursue that exit strategy.

MR. KILCULLEN: Thanks, John. Steal a response, Carter?

MR. MALKASIAN: So, can coalition forces effectively build police together? Well, doubtless it will be more difficult than when you have one United States force doing it; however, certainly when they were developed in Iraq, it wasn't as if it was a centralized activity there. What was really happening was bottom-up. Brigades and other units on the ground were starting to develop these forces and starting to make them work. So I do not think that the fact that there's a coalition force inside of Afghanistan is going to prevent this from occurring.

I think the important thing that needs to happen is that battalions on the ground, brigades on the ground, special forces units need to be deeply involved in building up these police forces and finding the people to work with, empowering them, and growing them into something. Now, what is needed at the top, and that is starting to develop today, is a centralized organization for training, equipping, and paying them. There needs to be coordination between the coalition forces and the Afghan government to make sure that the Afghan government is supporting what is happening. And I don't think the Afghan government is necessarily going to be against these kinds of movements. I already know of plenty of district sub-governors and governors who think that more police are needed. So with proper coordination, you can get their support for this kind of activity.

In terms of focus district development, so what is focus district development? Earlier in 2007, there was a decision made that instead of having the training teams that we have try to focus everywhere within a province. So we don't have many people and there's a decent number of police, and there's lots of districts, instead of trying to have them cover everything at the same time, go to each district for a month, try to focus things as much as you possibly can and do training there. And so it's gotten a lot of good press that there has been development. And I don't think it's a bad initiative, but I think we can all agree that is a step that doesn't quite reach up to having people there 24 hours a day, seven days a week. It's still partial coverage. So they're trying to do things better, but it's not going to be enough.

MR. KILCULLEN: Thanks. Dan?

MR. MARSTON: I'll try to quickly answer to some of the points. Aylwin-Foster's article, many senior British officers feel that an American needs to write an article to embarrass the British in some ways. No, they're open to it. They're definitely open to it.

MR. KILCULLEN: I just did that actually.

(Laughter.)

MR. MARSTON: There have been major problems with their pre-deployment training. There were a lot of problems with their education. The British, very interestingly come back to John's point about education, the staff college had one day for counterinsurgency for majors. The RMA Sandhurst lieutenant's course was a bit of a joke, bit of a video here and there. We changed it from within, bottom-up, because we had platoon commanders who knew more than the generals on the ground.

So it's happened from within. They've been embarrassed and they're changing from within, but it still, like any institution, it takes time, but it takes embarrassment to get to that point.

You have to remember, in 2006 the 20 brigade, who was in MND southeast, knew what needed to be done in Basra: clear-hold-build. There were quite a few commanders, I won't say who they were, who were very open about slowly starting to clear the city and make sure it's linked to the previous deployments, because we know the previous deployments were never really properly linked.

But there was no political will to do it, because this is the height of Herrick Four in Afghanistan. Afghanistan became the good war; Iraq became the bad war, but we all realize we're shipping in the same kids to both locations. And the last thing we needed, to be defeated in Basra as such. So there's some semblance of some – but the honor of the army was at stake, and it was very internal. I'll just leave it at that.

The last thing about historical case studies Malaya and Northern Ireland, the number of times you have some smartass Brit will tell you about Malaya, but not really know the true lessons of Malaya and how actually brutal it was at times is quite high. There are some key lessons from Malaya that the British are starting to realize that work here, and that was role of indigenous people and indigenous forces, something they completely forgot about. And they have the history up through Dhofar with the Firqat system and other systems, and they're looking at it.

So there's actually a two – and I'll add on from Erin's point – there are two tiers of British COIN post-World War II. One is the British army approach, which you could say is kind of heavy-handed, to the other one, the guys who served in the Indian army who were the guys who were the architects of Malaya, like Briggs and others, who worked with indigenous people, who understood indigenous people. That is coming back into the army. The man who is a mentor right now in southern Iraq, Brigadier Richard Iron, served in the sultan of Oman's army. Things are changing. People are recognizing that, and the number of platoon commanders, company commanders, who would love to command a company of Pashtuns is quite high in the British army right now because they're recognizing their history, but it takes time.

But Northern Ireland, you have to also be fairly careful about. Northern Ireland was a very bad situation in the '70s, and we must remember Operation Motorman in 1972, when the British stormed the no-go areas of Belfast and Derry. They expected to kill quite a few civilians, but PIRA decided not to fight on the day. What they saw at Fallujah, in a different way they saw the Motorman, in some ways it could have been a Fallujah in 1972. So we have to be even careful about Northern Ireland. A lot of the experience from Northern Ireland, when the guys were running around with their berets on in 2003 were company commanders who had the nice 1990s behind their backs, not the bloody '70s and not the tough '80s, but they had amnesia. I'll just leave it at that.

MR. KILCULLEN: Thanks, Dan. What we'll do now is throw the floor open. I'm going to ask people to state their affiliation and their name before asking a question. (Cross talk.) And I think we have mikes – why don't we start over at this side and work around for the people with the mikes? Up in the front?

Q: Trudy Rubin from the *Philadelphia Inquirer*. John, you might be able to answer this question better when you come back, but I'd like to ask you now, when you look at Iraq and there's a situation where success has created a psychology amongst a large part of the population that they want occupation over, how do you factor that in to COIN doctrine? Do you think that institutions there are strong enough to handle at this point a faster withdrawal than people might have envisioned even a few months ago? And just one other question, if somebody could speak to what's the relevance of COIN doctrine to the FATA and how do we help implement it if we can't go in there?

MR. NAGL: I'll take the first one, Trudy. It is never a pleasant thing to be occupied. That was one of the lessons I really took away from a very friendly experience I had. I was stationed in Germany from '93 to '95, and we drove German tanks through the streets of these beautiful German villages, and there, as General Petraeus says, every occupation has a half-life. And you've got to be conscious of the fact that having military forces in your country is going to create antibodies. So how can we minimize that?

And my answer is by increasing the growth rate of domestic security forces, host nation security forces, putting an Iraqi face on every operation, diminishing over time, and it appears that we're going to be able to do this faster than I ever would have thought possible, increasingly put Iraqi security forces in the lead, but they're going to require American advisors for, I believe, a number of years still to come. And as we draw down American units and no longer have American units practicing counterinsurgency directly, increasingly the Iraqi units are doing this.

So my XO Major Matt Moore, great officer now promotable, trained the advisors with me at Fort Riley and then volunteered to go on a team. And he went on a team and he's training an Iraqi T-72 battalion, an extraordinary experience for an armor officer. And Matt says, hey these guys are pretty good. They have a hard time keeping them running, but so did we, but one of his jobs is one of the jobs of an advisor is to ensure

human rights standards are being followed. And so Matt's responsibility is to check in the prisons. And he went in and checked in the prison and they had three detainees. And these guys were JAM, they were Jaysh al Mahdi. And Matt hadn't heard about an operation to get them, and so he asked, where did you come from?

And the guy said, oh, we surrendered. All our friends are dead or captured or have fled. We can no longer be effective. And to become rehabilitated, to be able to operate in Iraqi society here, we have to go through the being in prison process, an extraordinary sign of what we've accomplished, what has been accomplished, largely by the Iraqis with our help. But the interesting thing is they turned themselves in not to Americans, but to the Iraqi Army because they believed that they would be treated fairly and respectfully and not be abused. So the Iraqi security forces, the Iraqi ministries have come a long way, are continuing to progress. They are going to need our help for a long time, in particular, with the air power, with logistics, with training, with a lot of the things that Americans do very, very well, but we still have a long way to go.

MR. KILCULLEN: Carter, you were living within sniper rifle range of the FATA until about six months ago? You want to comment on the FATA question?

MR. MALKASIAN: I'll say a few things, and maybe Dan can add a little bit about it on the Pashtuns. When I was in Kunar, there were a lot of road construction projects going on in Kunar province. And Kunar is where there was just this big attack in Waygul Valley, very near to Nuristan. And we used to talk about, okay, we're going to go ahead and build this road, and we have no coalition forces there. How are we going to get support of the population? How are going to get people to work with us? How are we going to get them to turn against the insurgents that are there?

We would agree, yeah, this is going to be a very difficult problem. And a lot of people would have a lot of enthusiasm for it, and I'd say, well, we can try our hand at this and it sounds like a very interesting thing to do, but it's going to be tough because we don't have forces on the ground. And without forces on the ground, a lot of the standard things in counterinsurgency doctrine are much difficult to implement. And I see this situation in the FATA as, of course, largely the same because we won't have substantial forces on the ground; that means you're not going to be able to protect the people against intimidation. It means you're not going to be able to prevent large groups of insurgents moving into an area and just taking over a village. So the basic things that we provide with outposts and patrolling won't be available to you there, and that makes it much more difficult.

Now, that does not mean an effective counterinsurgency is impossible, it just means that it's more difficult. There'll have to be a very much increased emphasis on training the Pakistani army for them to get in there. The role that we would want to play with our forces to patrol will have to be taken over by the Pakistani army or other more conventional units within inside of Pakistan. There will have to be an emphasis on high-value targeting to damage the insurgency as much as possible.

And there is going to need to be an emphasis on money because just like in Iraq. Just like we saw in Iraq in 2006, what you see happening is al Qaeda, Taliban, other groups destabilizing the traditional tribal system, undermining tribal elders that exist there using religion as a means to divide tribes. You're going to need to use money to re-empower the elders that live there and to create greater cohesion between the Pashtuns and give them a greater ability to win over their own forces. This is going to be a long-term problem to be looking at.

It will take careful working with the Pashtuns. Pashtuns will work with us at one time and work against us at another. We'll have to be willing to trade allies from time to time, but we can certainly, with a good strategy and by doing some of the things that I outlined, or at least I think some of the things I outlined, constrain what al Qaeda is doing in the area, constrain the Taliban there, and enable ourselves to limit the threat to the United States and we'll be able to protect Afghanistan. I don't know if you want to add anything, Dan?

MR. MARSTON: The only thing I would add, is something that commanders in Helmand, but also other commanders have noticed, is that we need to reinforce the tribal structures, that they need to offset the power of the at least hardcore Taliban, if you want to call them that. That will potentially, if you start building up security forces and protection of these kind of forces, you start to separate potential Pashtuns coming from the other side of the border.

Now, I'd just like to say something up front, the Pashtuns on one side of the border and the Pashtuns on the other side of the border, there is no border to them. It is their fight. So when we hear about foreign fighters, you have to take that with a bit of a grain of salt at times. If we start to dry up potential reasons why the Pashtuns from the FATA are coming over to fight with their Pashtun brothers and look at the local grievances and the issues within those Pashtun provinces, you can potentially start to dry it up. Then, the FATA needs to be dealt with by Pakistan obviously, but we have to slowly turn off the trickle, which is a big trickle right now of support coming from those Pashtuns on the side.

The last thing Pakistan wants is the Pashtuns on their side of the border have no war in Afghanistan because they'll turn their attention back on Pakistan, as usual. So there's a long-term, high-level strategy needed and, David Kilcullen and his teams at the higher level need to work out a lot of negotiation about local power versus Karzai's government, and provincial leaders and all those other things. There's a whole, large strategy that still has to be worked out. We're talking long term, and there's a lot of history lessons there.

The British made many mistakes on the frontier since the 1860s, but there are actually some good lessons there to be learned, and one was local levies. They might be fighting you one day, but the next day they're fighting with you. The enemy of today could be the ally tomorrow, could be the enemy the next day. Keep them paid.

MR. KILCULLEN: I'm going to take on from the center here and then come back to you guys. Yeah?

Q: This is for Dr. Marston. Peter Spiegel with the *Los Angeles Times*. You seem uniquely qualified to talk a bit about the bilateral U.K.-U.S. relationship right now. As David mentioned, I did quite a bit of embedding both in Iraq and Afghanistan with the Brits in the early sort of '04-'05 time period. And you even, it was not just commanders, it was lower-level officers snidely saying we can do these things better than the Americans can. My sense is there's a lot of resentment on the part of the U.S. that built up over that time.

And now you hear a lot of talk that, hey, the Marines showed up in southern Helmand and they have done in a couple months what the Brits couldn't do in a couple years. The same thing happened after the Maliki operation in Basra and Maysan. They showed up and said, well, the Iraqi troops did things the Brits couldn't do. They turned up and there was Jaysh al Mahdi there. It was caches everywhere. There seems to be a bit of sniping going back and forth, clearly the most important of allies, the closest of allies, but the mill-to-mill relationship doesn't seem particularly good from an outsider. Can you talk a little bit about where that relationship stands right now?

MR. MARSTON: Okay, again let me – how can I do this without any trouble – (laughter) – okay –

MR. KILCULLEN: Throw him under the bus.

MR. MARSTON: Yes, there was a lot of resentment, I mean, because I've gone up north to Baghdad. I worked at the COIN center of excellence and trained BCTs and RCTs coming through as well, presenting on the issues in Basra and showing why the Basra operation was as bad as it was. And it was interesting because a lot of commanders said, right, so it wasn't just the fighting ability of the British Army. No, the British were capable, but there just wasn't the political will to see some of the campaign through. That helped relations somewhat. They saw that the paras, the light infantry etc, they could fight, but if the gloves are off, then you can't do what you want to do.

There was a lot of tension, even just recently. Basra was really bad when I was up in November and then when I was back out in December, January, and February, but it only just started to turn and some people were still very skeptical about the British. They were still saying, well, will they really embed this time? Will they really do the right thing? The British were given 10 div and they did poorly and they gave them to the Australians who did a little better.

MR. KILCULLEN: Worse, I would say.

(Laughter.)

MR. MARSTON: Fourteen div was a different prospect. The British decided to do the right thing and embed differently. And so far they seem to be doing okay. Tension in Afghanistan, yes, the Marines have done pretty good work in Garmser, yeah, but the British really haven't been down in Garmser outside of a MOG so they're going to have a quick impact in Garmser, but if you only have so many troops, you can only go so many places.

I would say that the British did incredible work in Sangin, now Sangin is quiet. If you look at any footage from Sangin in '06 and '07, it was hell. And I lost one of my cadets there. Things are getting better because the British are recognizing that they made mistakes and that they were arrogant and that they need to learn from the Marines. The cross-pollination between commanders on different levels is a lot of unofficial things, but a lot of things are being done. I don't think you're going to run into too many – oh, to give you an example.

One British general stood up in front of his brigade, and we're having a big COIN study day where I dragged them through their painful history, which they always love hearing from an American, and he stood up and he pulled out the US COIN field manual. And he raised it and he said, this is the manual we're going to work with in Afghanistan. And I said, sir, it's about 80 percent British. And he said, yes, but most of my guys wouldn't read a British manual now. They would read an American manual, so that's what we're going to do. But that was – the envy is there, but I think it's going to take some time, for especially British commanders in Iraq to be seen to be doing the right things by commanders in the north, who have seen the good work in al Anbar and other places.

But the frustrating – I'm not going to go into details, but the frustration since '06 when I've been with commanders, to see how bad they were doing things and that the Americans turned it around was incredible. There was a lot of upset, and honor was a problem in the army.

MR. KILCULLEN: Dave?

Q: (Off mike) – warfare, I'm going to ask this question related to my night job with the Small Wars Journal. I'm not going to ask you to take a side on this debate, but I'd like some perspective on two debates that have made their way across the trade journals and now are creeping into the main stream media, specifically on whether – two kind of questions about these debates – not just perspective, but truly, are these debates serious or is this just kind of airing the laundry out to get things settled? Or do we have a serious debate along two lines that can very well affect our ability to – let's say not in the gate, but the core movement with NATO deploying, one that's the air power hard point in the debate, and also the full spectrum versus deploying COIN-centric capability? And I'll open that up to anyone who would like to address that.

MR. NAGL: The – and I think Major General Dunlap is here, who I should have recognized earlier from the Air Force – this question of air power in COIN and the seven-

page, now four-page, air power appendix in FM 3-24, I would point out that there is no sea power appendix in FM 3-24, and the Navy hasn't said a damn thing.

So – and I have not gone through any of the airpower journals, or airpower – actually that's not true. I read through your irregular warfare book, but there are very few ground appendices to Air Force doctrinal manual. So I would say that the fact that the Army and Marine Corps added an airpower appendix at all is an indication of how important we think airpower is in counterinsurgency, that it has to be used carefully and that it has to be used in a way that accomplishes the primary objective of protecting the population and gaining support of the population. And as with any other use of force or any other instrument of national power, you have to calibrate that as precisely as you possibly can.

And the single – and I've been very fortunate in two wars, every time an airplane has gone overhead, I didn't need to look up. I knew it was American. I never had to worry about attack from the air. We absolutely expect that, we as ground guys expect that from our Air Force and from our Navy and our Marine winged brethren. And I think we can continue to do that. However, the question is, is there more power airpower can do? Can we use airpower more effectively in a counterinsurgency campaign? And obviously, there's more we can do, I think, in intelligence surveillance and reconnaissance. Also critically, we talked a lot about advisory efforts up here building the Iraqi and the Afghan air forces; that's a generational project, all right?

And we literally don't have in our inventory, to my knowledge, the platforms that the Iraqis and the Afghans need to be able to maintain, that they will be able so that at some point, when the last American ground advisor has gone, I'm afraid we're still going to have American battalions in Iraq and Afghanistan guarding air bases, because we won't have the Iraqi and the Afghan air forces at the point they need to be. So that's a point where we didn't focus enough, I don't think, in FM 3-24 and air power in a place where I think we could do even more good.

MR. KILCULLEN: What about the full spectrum capability – is this little problem that we're having in Iraq and Afghanistan, you know, today's problem and gone tomorrow? Or is this actually the face of future warfare that we're looking at?

MR. MALKASIAN: It's always hard to project into the future exactly what warfare is going to look like. I think if you look at the history of war since 1945, it's fairly clear that every decade, we've had to fight – deal with one kind of insurgency or another. So the idea that it's going to disappear entirely, that doesn't really pass the sniff test. However, there also is the chance that we might have to face an opponent with greater capabilities, or even just an opponent that can do what Hezbollah did inside of Lebanon.

And I don't think anyone at this table is going to argue the United States should get rid of its ability to conduct combined-arms warfare, that it should get rid of its ability to conduct air strikes against a country, or to not have a navy that can dominate the seas. I

think everyone agrees that that's important. So to me, the argument really is simply about how many forces do you want to commit to being specialized in one form of warfare or another.

And in my opinion, the bulk of forces can probably be expected to adapt. The bulk of infantry battalions and regiments and brigades can be expected that they are going to have to adapt from one force to another, because we're not going to have an army for counterinsurgency and an army for regular warfare. However, that doesn't mean that we don't need certain capabilities developed more, like an advisory corps. And I don't personally see how developing an advisory corps is going to destroy our ability to conduct armored warfare. In other words, it's not going to destroy our armored divisions. And perhaps some degree of change will be necessary in those areas; but I don't think it's going to destroy the capabilities the United States has.

MR. NAGL: Could I ask Daniel just to talk briefly about the fact that the Brits, as I understand it, have just designated some military occupational specialties in reconstruction and rebuilding to try to improve their capability to do this?

MR. MARSTON: Yeah, General Dannatt (sp) has pushed for specialized – similar to the civilian organizations that the Americans are discussing or have been discussing for a number of years. But to come back to the earlier point, the British in – I believe – '04 were thinking about this that you would actually divide the army up into counterinsurgency forces and then high-intensity forces. You know, take the Seventh Armor Brigade, make them all tanks and make them happy. Everybody in the army screamed and said, no way, because we won't have the forces that we need for any given campaign. And we're going to be taking from those other forces anyway.

But the British army today, even when it was training up, when a brigade is earmarked, they are doing a lot more COIN education, a lot more other things. But they're still doing full-spectrum ops. Seventh Armoured Brigade still has some time out in Canada with their Challenger tanks and warriors because you never know. There might be a day when a young platoon commander or squadron commander has to deal with something very ugly that was unforeseen.

So the British army went through this debate a number of years ago and they have steered well clear of it. They want full spectrum. It is not just because they want their tanks. They recognize that you're going to have to be capable. Though you have to remember, the British also had many problems with Northern Ireland deployments that when the Falklands kicked off, they only had a small reserve to go south. You know, the British Army of the Rhine was not touched. It was the commandos and the paras who went south. Thank God they could fight just like infantry, if nothing else, so they learned their lesson a long time ago.

MR. KILCULLEN: We've got a couple questions over here? Yeah, down in the front here.

Q: Warren Strobel with McClatchy Newspapers. This question is directed at least initially to Carter. You know, there is a growing sort of public consensus that we need to send more combat forces to Afghanistan. People talk about one combat brigade, two combat brigades. And I just want to ask you flatly, is that the right prescription at least in the public debate? Is there too much focus on troop levels and I want to focus on some of the things that you were talking about, particularly police training.

MR. MALKASIAN: It is the right strategy. More forces are needed inside of Afghanistan. I would say specifically they are needed in the south. There may be some need for the east, but the priority is in the south. How many forces? I'm not exactly sure how many that would be; but I would say at least one full brigade is needed: a full brigade, three battalions – needs to be down there conducting counterinsurgency operations to stunt the ability of the Taliban to get into the populated areas. And with more forces, you will be able to do a lot more down there.

Is this part of the debate getting too much attention? Yes, it probably is getting too much attention and being seen as the only element of counterinsurgency there, when there are several other things that need to happen. I've talked a whole lot about police. There's also questions about how the reconstruction effort should be directed. There's questions about the border that need to be addressed. There's questions about the chain of command and the command and control structure that exists there, if it should continue to be divided between different countries and without clear lines of authority going down from top to bottom. These are all important questions that need to be addressed. But should we put more forces in there? Yes.

MR. KILCULLEN: In the center here?

Q: Mike Markowitz from CNA. This is mostly a question for Dr. Nagl. I'd like to ask about the role of Special Forces in counterinsurgency because it seems in the 40 years of amnesia after Vietnam; the guys who didn't forget were Special Forces, particularly Army Special Forces.

MR. NAGL: And in fact, the Special Forces kept the flame of counterinsurgency alive created in Vietnam – in a lot of ways, over the objections of the conventional Army – through the personal intervention of President Kennedy to create the special forces. And they have played really two roles in Iraq, which is the theater I'm more familiar with. They've done some of their traditional mission of foreign internal defense, that is training and advising host nation security forces, raising them, training them. In particular, they focused on training and raising special forces, Iraqi special forces. They've done great work there. But they've also focused very heavily on direct action.

And I think obviously we don't have enough special forces. The 2006 quadrennial defense review identified that need. And one of the results of that was to add another special forces battalion group. Much needed, hard to create special forces quickly. But also we have not done a good job, I don't think, as an army of gathering from the special forces their knowledge of foreign internal defense and training and

advising host nation security forces. And so, an awful lot of that burden has fallen on conventional forces. And I would like to see a better interlinking of special forces with conventional forces on that training and advising mission, which I believe is absolutely critical in Iraq and in Afghanistan and will be increasingly important as years go by.

MR. KILCULLEN: Okay, last question. Derek?

Q: Thank you. This is a question for Dr. Nagl. I'm wondering if there's been insufficient attention given to the capabilities brought in with the surge, those five brigades and the intelligence capabilities that were brought in to enable the synchronization between the counterterrorism soft-operations high-end and the conventional operations that went around the belts of Baghdad into other sectors of the country that were driven by detailed intelligence preparation of the battle space, good operational understanding of the environment so that you could then leverage with all those enablers brought in by those brigades and apply those tactics in the COIN manual under a strategy that would support all the lines of operation so that you could enable success. And the ISF surge, I think, was probably supported to great degree by the capabilities with all these brigades that could then partner with all the different Iraqi units.

You mentioned going after the Shi'a forces. There was a whole other dynamic that occurred with the aggressive attention focused on Shi'a militias in 2007, going after malign influences and ministries and building ministerial capacity. All of these were enabled by the surge in the synchronization between conventional, soft, as well as then other enablers that came in. And I'm just wondering if you could address that.

MR. NAGL: Derek, I don't think I can address it anywhere near as well as you just did. Derek was one of the – probably the lead implementer and integrator of those assets. And in conventional warfare, the hard part is killing your enemy. In unconventional warfare, the hard part is finding them. And the folks who do the hard math of figuring out who the bad guys are and doing the social network analysis and figuring out who talks to who and doing that with intelligence assets and with conventional forces on the ground and the extraordinary decision we've continued to make.

David Galula in his classic *Counterinsurgency Warfare Theory and Practice* says the first step in conducting a counterinsurgency is you cordon it off. And the second step is you do a census. You create a census so you know who lives where. And you figure out who is connected with who. That's something we still haven't done in either of the two counterinsurgency campaigns, in Iraq or in Afghanistan. It's the second step to victory in a counterinsurgency campaign. So we've done it piecemeal; we've done it ad hoc.

We've got to do a better job of integrating intelligence. Derek talked about some of the ways we do that. One of the advantages the Brits had in Malaya was that they had a network of people who had gone native who had deep roots in the society and who

knew everybody. That's something we haven't had, either in Iraq or in Afghanistan through serendipity in a lot of ways, sending Marines back to Anbar over and over and over. They developed the personal relationships that are the key to success in counterinsurgency.

But we have to devote additional resources – additional thinking to using our resources as intelligently as we possibly can. We do need more boots on the ground in Afghanistan. But we also need to apply force more effectively. And the most effective forces in counterinsurgency are host nation forces, not the forces that come in from abroad.

MR. KILCULLEN: All right. Well, we're unfortunately out of time. I want to ask everyone to show your appreciation to these guys for turning up and for the very detailed commentary. (Applause.) I don't know if – Carter, do you want to say anything as a CNA rep or are we done?

MR. MALKASIAN: Thank you everyone for coming.

(END)