

## THE US ARMY/MARINE CORPS COUNTERINSURGENCY FIELD MANUAL

Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007  
418 pages, \$US15.00 (softcover)  
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Reviewed by Lieutenant-Colonel P.J. Williams

**W**ith all due respect to doctrinaires among the readership of this *Journal*, Canadian Forces Publications (CFPs) are not normally the kind of 'literature' one curls up with on long winter evenings. Nor do they generally become the subject of book reviews.

However, this book, a US Army/Marine Corps Field Manual, is different. It has sparked debate in two consecutive issues of another august forum, *Foreign Affairs*, in its November/December 2007 and January/February 2008 issues. The officer who led the writing team in preparing the book, General David Petraeus, now commands US and Multinational Forces in Iraq, and so he is getting the unique opportunity to put into practice what he has preached, as it were. The Canadian Forces (CF) is currently engaged in a counterinsurgency (COIN) conflict in Afghanistan, the very type of operation described herein. For all these reasons, this unique book cannot be ignored.

The book grew out of an Information Operations Conference held in 2005 at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. The writing team included a military core, and it underwent subsequent review by journalists, human rights advocates, academics, and others – a truly full-spectrum audience. Notwithstanding the diverse range of contributing authors, a draft of the manual was produced in just two months from inception.

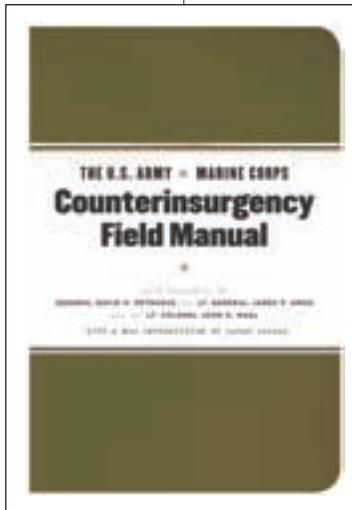
The authors go to great pains to point out that Counterinsurgency Operations (COIN) are different from other types of operations: the primacy of political considerations, which drives the need for cooperation between civilian and military players at all levels, is a lesson the CF has certainly taken on board. Secondly, there is the importance of non-kinetics being arguably more decisive than its kinetic partner – a lesson not as easily taught to those in uniform. Throughout the manual, the importance

of the counterinsurgent being able to *Learn and Adapt* is stressed as being a vital element of success. Indeed, the authors go so far as to state the five overarching requirements of success (largely based upon the so-called 'inkspot theory' of COIN) as follows:

- Military and Host Nation (HN) forces and the HN Government must work together in developing a COIN strategy;
- HN and other COIN forces must secure the population within key areas. The book makes reference to the concept of 'population control,' a technique successfully employed by the British in their successful COIN campaign in Malaya in the 1950s;
- Operations should be initiated from the HN Government areas of strength against areas under insurgent control;
- Regaining control of insurgent areas requires the HN Government to expand operations to secure and support the population; and
- Information Operations is key to shaping perceptions and discrediting the insurgents.

The book follows some of the conventions of other military manuals (numbered paragraphs, unemotional text, and so on), but similarities with other analogous publications largely end at that point. The book draws upon historical examples from numerous conflicts, not all of which are necessarily favourable to the US or its allies, and also provides lists of best practices. It is organized into eight chapters as follows:

- Insurgency and Counterinsurgency;
- Unity of Effort: Integrating Civilian and Military Activities;
- Intelligence in Counterinsurgency (the longest chapter);
- Designing Counterinsurgency Campaigns and Operations;
- Executing Counterinsurgency Operations;
- Developing Host-National Security Forces;
- Leadership and Ethics for Counterinsurgency; and
- Sustainment.



## BOOK REVIEWS

For those who wish to skim the work, a short summary is provided at the end of each chapter. In addition, there are five annexes that outline guides for action, social network analysis, linguistic support, legal considerations, and use of airpower. For those wishing to delve further into this field of study, there is an extensive annotated bibliography of both open source material and other military publications, the latter all being American sources.

At the outset, I stated that this book might not be best used as nighttime reading. For one thing, I found its style and content so engrossing that it would not put me to sleep. Instead, it should be hotly debated in Messes throughout the country, and also in discussions with our Whole of Government (WoG) partners, as Canada learns how best to operate in such an environment. Proceeds from the sale of the book are directed toward the Fisher House Foundation, a private-public partnership

that supports the families of injured US (and Canadian) soldiers, and who are treated at the US Military Hospital in Ramstein, Germany. For this reason alone, the book is well worth buying. I also submit that if you're not reading it, the enemy very likely is doing so.

In the 1980s, the publication of another US Army Field Manual (FM 100-5, *Operations*), laid the foundation, some maintain, for the concept of Manoeuvre Warfare in Western NATO forces. While this book has been long awaited within military circles, it is hoped that it will stir as much debate among contemporary forces, ultimately leading to operational successes by our troops and those of our partners. It is highly recommended.

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### ENDURING THE FREEDOM: A ROGUE HISTORIAN IN AFGHANISTAN

by Sean M. Maloney

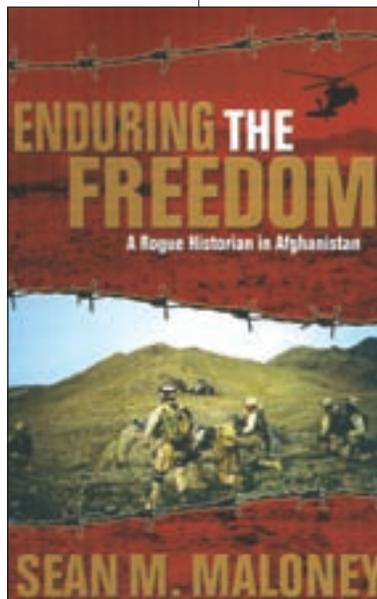
Washington, DC: Potomac Books, 2005

336 pages, \$US27.50

ISBN 1-57488-953-2

Reviewed by Chief Warrant  
Officer J.W. (Bill) Dalke

Afghanistan is a topic that figures prominently each day in every form of Canadian news. News providers attempt to deliver concise depictions of events to Canadians seeking an understanding of the environment in which Canadian soldiers currently serve with such distinction. In *Enduring the Freedom: A Rogue Historian in Afghanistan*, Doctor Sean Maloney delivers a clear and concise explanation of the historical development of the situation in Afghanistan, and then brings the reader along as he accompanies troops on operations conducted there in 2003. All this is delivered, not only with detailed accuracy, but also with a writing style that



incorporates wit and humour. Far from being simply a dry compilation of facts, this book is an engrossing, entertaining, and informative read. Perhaps even more importantly, it is written by a Canadian with particularly relevant experience (drawn from time spent as an 8<sup>th</sup> Canadian Hussars junior officer, and also as a historian for the Canadian Army during the Cold War and in the Balkans). This experience shines throughout the book, and Maloney applies it in order to explain and to give context to events as they unfold.

The introduction to the book details Maloney's reaction to the events of 9/11 as they occurred, and the process by which he quickly determined that Osama bin Laden and Al Qaeda were responsible for the attacks. The book is divided into five parts. Part I is entitled, *Why We Fight*, and it serves as an excellent historical explanation of events leading up to the Afghanistan intervention of 2001. Maloney's ability to simplify the frequently very complex details is remarkable. This section alone would serve as an ideal primer for any soldier deploying to the region, or to every Canadian seeking to make sense of the events that led to Canada's involvement.