

# THIRD WORLD Quarterly

**SPECIAL ISSUE: Volume 28 Number 2 2007**

## SELECTION OF ARTICLES

**The Long War: insurgency, counter-insurgency and collapsing states**  
*Mark T Berger & Douglas A Borer*

**From Collapsing States to Neo-trusteeship: the limits to solving the problem of 'precarious statehood' in the 21st century**  
*Richard Caplan*

**Engaging or Withdrawing? Winning or Losing? the contradictions of counter-insurgency policy in Afghanistan and Iraq**  
*Andrea M Lopez*

**The Battle for Iraq: Islamic insurgencies in comparative perspective**  
*Glenn E Robinson*

**Less is More: the problematic future of irregular warfare in an era of collapsing states**  
*Hy S Rothstein*

**Things Come Together: symbolic violence and guerrilla mobilisation**  
*Gordon H McCormick & Frank R Giordano*

**Things Fall Apart: the endgame dynamics of internal wars**  
*Gordon H McCormick, Steven B Horton & Lauren A Harrison*

**The Misleading Problem of Failed States: a 'socio-geography' of terrorism in the post 9/11 world**  
*Anna Simons & David Tucker*

**The Insurgency of Global Empire and the Counter-insurgency of Local Resistance: new world order in an era of civilian provisional authority**  
*Timothy W Luke*

**The Last Empire? From nation-building compulsion to nation-wrecking futility and beyond**  
*Radhika Desai*

**All Roads Lead to and from Iraq: the Long War and the transformation of the nation-state system**  
*Douglas A Borer & Mark T Berger*

## THE LONG WAR - Insurgency, Counter- Insurgency and Collapsing States

### Guest Editors

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**Single Issue Price: US\$40/ £25 - see reverse for details.**

While the Cold War was characterized by the expansion and consolidation of nation-states against the backdrop of USA-Soviet superpower rivalry and the emergence of the Three Worlds of development, one of the key characteristics of the post-Cold War era, in which the USA has emerged to unrivalled global hegemony, is the growing number of collapsing or collapsed states mired in conflict or civil war. The USA has compounded state failure in polities such as Iraq as a result of its use of military force to overthrow regimes in the context of the Global War on Terror (GWOT) or what is also increasingly referred to as the 'Long War'. The Long War is often represented as a 'new' era in warfare and U.S. geopolitics. However, the assumption here is that the Long War is new in important respects, but it also bears many similarities to the Cold War. A key similarity between the Cold War and the Long War is the way in which insurgency and counterinsurgency are seen primarily in the context of inter-state rivalry in which the critical local or regional dynamics of revolution and counter-revolution are neglected. In this context American policy-makers and their allies have again erroneously applied a 'grand strategy' that suits the imperatives of conventional military and geo-political thinking rather than engaging with what are a much more variegated array of problems facing the changing global order.

The contributors to this special issue approach this overall theme from a variety of perspectives in an effort to shed light on the history and future of insurgency, counterinsurgency and collapsing states in the context of the Long War.

### TWQ - setting the agenda

**Editor: Shahid Qadir, Royal Holloway, University of London, UK**

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