

Worthless Coin: Why the West Should Keep Studying Counterinsurgency

Description

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The US Army has lost interest in counterinsurgency training. Over the past year, the withdrawal from Afghanistan appears to have drawn a line under COIN's modern incarnation, while escalation in eastern Europe has focused policymakers' minds on the possibility of major combat operations against a near-peer adversary. As [US forces forward deploy](#) across Europe, bureaucrats are leveraging Ukraine to pitch [revolutionary training centers](#), doctrine rewrites, and advanced technology platforms, while commanders across NATO seek to fulfill the technocratic [vision of modern multidomain operations](#). COIN and irregular warfare more broadly is out of fashion.

The US military has been here before. In the wake of Vietnam, US military planners [purged](#) the Army's intellectual and organizational COIN capabilities with tragic ramifications for readiness and expertise as US forces went on to engage in a succession of insurgent-based conflicts in El Salvador, Colombia, Lebanon, and Somalia, to name a few, culminating in Afghanistan and Iraq.

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