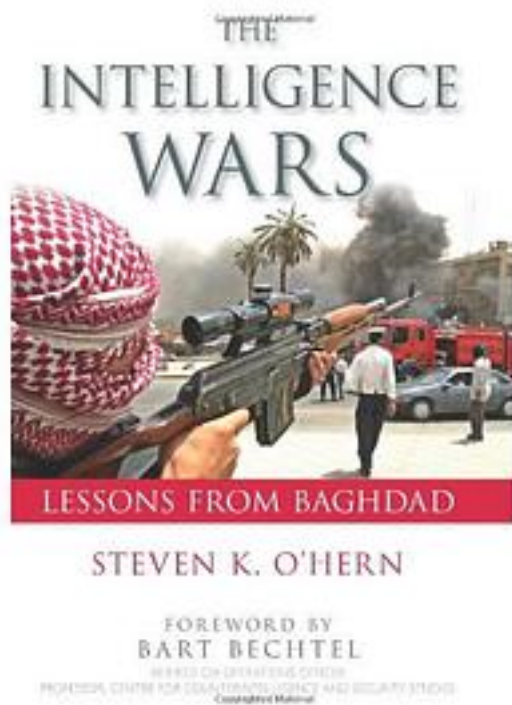


# Intelligence Wars



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Since the first heady months of the war in Iraq when President Bush celebrated aboard the USS Abraham Lincoln under a 'mission accomplished' sign, US forces have been bogged down in a frustrating war of attrition against a largely unseen insurgency that attacks with ambushes and roadside bombs. In this revealing insider's look at the US intelligence community's efforts to fight the insurgency, author Steven K O'Hern, who served in Iraq in 2005 as a senior intelligence officer, offers a critical assessment of our intelligence failures and suggests ways of improving our ability to fight an often elusive enemy. O'Hern criticises America's military leaders for being enamoured with high-technology solutions for all situations, including intelligence operations.

Essentially, we are still relying on an intelligence system that was designed to beat the Soviet army. But with no troop formations or supply depots to spot by satellite and no radio signals to intercept, insurgent tactics significantly reduce the US military's technological advantage. Using examples from human source operations conducted in Iraq, this book explains why human intelligence - not technology - is the key to defeating an insurgency and why the US is so poor at using what the military calls 'HUMINT'. O'Hern also cites internal structural problems that work against effective intelligence operations. The 'intelligence community' is actually a collection of organisations usually more interested in protecting turf than sharing information. The author gives examples of missed opportunities that resulted from information being caught in 'stovepipes' and red tape. He shows how front-line units and intelligence officers developed ways to work around the intelligence bureaucracy in order to succeed. Due to these problems and others, O'Hern notes that US intelligence has failed to spot emerging threats, such as Iran's involvement in Iraq. In conclusion, he cautions that these unresolved problems will continue to affect the United States in any future conflict against an insurgency

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