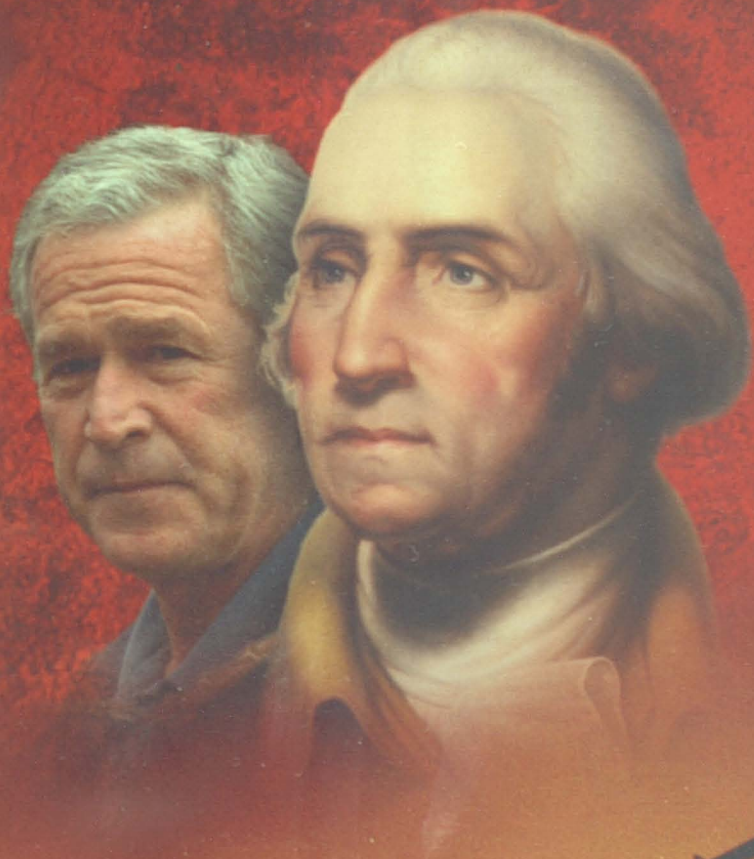


WASHINGTON'S WAR

FROM INDEPENDENCE TO IRAQ



MICHAEL ROSE

Foreword by Michael Howard



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In June 1775 George Washington commanded a band of rebels who were, in the eyes of the British, nothing more than a collection of 'vagrants, deserters and thieves'. Yet he led them in a revolutionary war against the British, which ended with American independence. He had succeeded in defeating the most powerful army in the world – not by engaging in conventional pitched battles, at which the British excelled, but by waging an insurgency campaign of ambush and indirect attacks on his enemy's supply routes. The British failed to recognize the true nature of the conflict, or the deep hostility of many colonists to the British Crown.

Today it is the USA that is the world's dominant superpower, and the Americans are in danger of making the same mistakes that the British made more than two hundred years ago. In 2003 they entered Iraq in the belief that the Iraqi people would welcome an invading power. In subsequent years they have found themselves fighting a widespread popular insurrection with an army trained for conventional warfare. Like George III, George Bush has discovered that sheer military power is not enough to defeat a well-organized insurgency at long distance.

As a former Director of UK Special Forces, and Commander of the United Nations Protection Force in Bosnia, Michael Rose is uniquely experienced in counter-insurgency warfare. In this hard-hitting book, he explains the principles of guerrilla warfare as revealed by the American War of Independence, and shows how they have been adopted by the insurgents in Iraq. He also shows how the British Army learned from its mistakes to become one of the world's most effective counter-insurgency forces; the US Army, by contrast, seems to have forgotten the lessons of their founding fathers.

Washington's War





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MICHAEL ROSE

Weidenfeld & Nicolson

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By the same author:

Fighting for Peace



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Contents

<i>Map list</i>	vi
<i>Foreword</i>	
by Professor Sir Michael Howard, OM, MC	vii
<i>Preface</i>	3
Introduction	9
Chapter One	32
Chapter Two	53
Chapter Three	90
Chapter Four	129
Chapter Five	155
Chapter Six	175
Conclusion	195
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	202
<i>Bibliography</i>	204
<i>Index</i>	206

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Foreword

by Professor Sir Michael Howard, OM, MC

Once upon a time there was a great nation that, after twenty-five years of conflict, emerged supreme over all its adversaries and prided itself on being the only global superpower. But its tranquillity was disturbed by a group of bloody-minded radicals in a remote corner of the world who resented its hegemony, denied the legitimacy of its rule, and rose in rebellion. The government believed that these trouble-makers could be easily dealt with by firm military action, and set out to do so.

Unfortunately, as Michael Rose points out in this account of the conflict, the government in question 'failed to develop a sufficiently coherent military strategy or even commit sufficient resources to winning the campaign'. Its ministers attempted, from a distance of 3,000 miles, to direct operations in a country, as a contemporary put it, 'of which they have so little knowledge as not to be able to distinguish between good and bad and interested advice'. They sent out too few troops in the first place and denied their generals' repeated requests to send out more. Such forces as they did send easily defeated the rebel forces in the open field, after which their commanders established themselves in comfortable headquarters to maintain the lifestyle to which they were accustomed at home, seldom venturing out to see what was happening in the field. Their troops,