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BALTIMORE COUNCIL ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS (BCFA)
Cordially Invite You to an Address by



Michael O'Hanlon
Director of Research, Foreign Policy Program
Specialist in U.S. Defense Policy
The Brookings Institution

DATE/TIME: Tuesday, January 31, 2023 6:00 PM at the World Trade Center

TITLE OF TALK: **Military History for the Modern Strategist: America's Major Wars Since 1861**

Michael O'Hanlon takes a deep look at America's conflicts from the Civil War to Afghanistan in a new book that's packed with wisdom and full of candor.

Some observations will sound familiar, for example: every war is unpredictable; it matters who's in charge, and the biggest risk in war is over-confidence.

But all his judgments are worth hearing. Korea "showed more vividly than any other experience in American history how quickly a magnificent military can deteriorate." Korea also showed how deterrence fails if it isn't credibly backed by the threat of the use of force.

Vietnam was a "colossal failure," the clearest defeat the U.S. has experienced, because it was fighting not just communism but "super-charged nationalism" and one of the most competent guerrilla movements in history.

As for Afghanistan: The best chance to have avoided calamity was to have built a stronger Afghan state in the "golden window" of 2002-2005, just after the American invasion, when the country was quiet and the threat was modest.

Here's the grand irony. America's wars since 1945 "have not gone so well." Yet, we must be doing something right, for "there has never been a comparable sustained period of long term great-power peace and the spread of democracy and prosperity as in the course of world history since 1945."

Michael O'Hanlon is the director of research in Foreign policy at the Brookings Institution in Washington, where he specializes in U.S. defense strategy, the use of military force and American

national security policy. He is also an adjunct professor at Columbia, Georgetown and George Washington Universities and serves on the Defense Board at the U.S. Department of Defense.

He received his BS and MS degrees in the physical sciences at Princeton and later a Ph.D. in public affairs and international relations from Princeton's Woodrow Wilson School. He is a Peace Corps Veteran (Republic of Congo), was an analyst at the Congressional Budget Office and worked at the institute for Defense Analysis before joining Brookings. He also served as a member of the external advisory board at the Central Intelligence Agency. He has written or edited over 20 books and written several hundred op-eds and articles in the country's foremost journals and newspapers. His topics have covered security in Eastern Europe, land warfare, nuclear disarmament, Korea, NATO in Kosovo, technological exchange and the future of warfare and U.S.-China relations.

Dr O'Hanlon is a good friend of the Baltimore Council, having appeared at least four times in the past 20 years.

Please join us for what promises to be a fascinating discussion. We invite members to a reception starting at 5 pm. The main presentation begins at 6 pm, with Q&A to follow. For those who cannot attend in person, we'll have a Zoom live feed.

If you plan to attend **IN-PERSON**, please RSVP to programs@bcfausa.org to register.

The webinar will be recorded and available for later viewing on the BCFA YouTube web site: <https://www.youtube.com/user/BCFA2150>

A heads' up for the coming event:

- Jan. 31: Michael O'Hanlon (Brookings Institution): on the lessons of America's wars at home and abroad.
- Feb. 28: Robert Kagan (Brookings Institution): the collapse of world order in the 20 th Century
- March 14: Trita Parsi (Quincy Institute for Responsible Statecraft): Ending Endless Wars

Details to follow.

We look forward to seeing you.

Baltimore Council on Foreign Affairs