

# War Front to Store Front: Americans Rebuilding Trust and Hope in Nations Under Fire

*Paul Brinkley*

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**“A HEARTWARMING AND HEART-  
BREAKING PAGE-TURNER”**

—Admiral Michael G. Mullen, USN (ret.)  
17th Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff

## WAR FRONT TO STORE FRONT

AMERICANS REBUILDING  
TRUST AND HOPE  
IN NATIONS UNDER FIRE



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**Paul Brinkley : War Front to Store Front: Americans Rebuilding Trust and Hope in Nations Under Fire** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised War Front to Store Front: Americans Rebuilding Trust and Hope in Nations Under Fire:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. READ THIS BOOK!By R. Z. HallesonThis amazing memoir should be required reading for anyone going into foreign service or, especially, anyone going into government service or politics of any kind. It is the story of the Task Force for Business and Stability Operations (TFBSO) that was set up

during the George W. Bush administration and continued under the Obama administration. Its purpose was to support the military in Iraq by helping the civilian population to set up factories, banks, and businesses of all kinds to get their economic engine going again after being destroyed during the invasion by the United States, and thus helping to re-employ Iraqis to prevent their joining Al Qaeda. The effort was successful beyond all expectations, so TFBSO went on to work in Afghanistan getting the international private business community to partner with and invest in local businesses just as it had done in Iraq. It also worked in countries in Africa and was beginning work in Pakistan. It's hard to describe what these dedicated civilians working in TFBSO had to overcome in sustaining the work that they were doing. The bureaucratic behemoth in Washington put roadblocks in their way at every turn. Only through military leaders who could see the effect that TFBSO had on reducing violence in these countries was the task force (more than 800 individuals) able to continue as long as it did. It is simply incredible how ignorant politicians and Washington bureaucrats make decisions without knowing anything about the facts on the ground. Author, and TFBSO leader, Paul Brinkley names names in providing a history of the effort to reconstruct these countries post war. Each country is different from the others. Regions within the countries are different with different cultures. All this must be considered when bringing international businesses in to view the areas in which they might want to invest. This was a complex and extremely courageous venture all around. How this effort ended before its time is a tragedy beyond comprehension, but Brinkley doesn't leave us there. He provides solid suggestions for moving forward based on what TFBSO learned in its years of operation. If only someone will listen.... This book is a must-read. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. A clear and disturbing first hand account of an UNUSUAL INITIATIVE on the part of the SECDEV during wartime. By Roy Moore Paul Brinkley gives a clear and important insight into the workings of our non military participants during the conflict in Iraq and Afghanistan. Heading a small group of unusual and dedicated businessmen he was able to accomplish a valuable mission to restore industry and commerce to two war ravaged countries. A clear wake up call to those in government that have little knowledge and no motivation to restore a war ravaged country to some semblance of self sufficiency. A Must Read for those responsible for administering foreign aid. Hats off to SECDEF Rumsfeld for recognizing the need and getting the ball rolling. A special salute to Brinkley for a Job Well Done. An Important book that has been little noted. 1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Sandy By Customer I really enjoyed this book. It was an insightful look at the way the US should handle all our foreign affairs. We spend trillions of dollars in wars not to mention lives and do not understand why the rest of the world no longer has respect for the US. The principals he applies here would go far with gangs in the inner city as well. I was also impressed with the respect that he gave to our military. He had to have the patience of a saint to deal with the bureaucracy. I never could tell what his politics were for sure, but he certainly has Christian principals. He was non judgmental and fair with all decisions he made as well as his style of writing.

As the top-ranking official at the U.S. Department of Defense in charge of economic rebuilding, Brinkley and his organization of hundreds of business volunteers struggled against bureaucratic policies to revolutionize foreign aid by leveraging America's strength and its private sector. In doing so, his team demonstrated success in the midst of failure, and created hundreds of thousands of jobs in areas long written off by the civilian bureaucracy as hopeless. Reporting directly to Secretary of Defense Robert Gates, Brinkley spent five years overseeing economic improvement in Iraq and Afghanistan. The lessons learned in these two nations were soon extended into the war-torn nations of Pakistan, Rwanda, and Sudan. Brinkley, who worked under both the George W. Bush and Barack Obama Administrations, reveals why American foreign policy has left these nations in the Middle East and Africa disappointed, resentful, and suspicious of American intentions. Optimistic that America can deliver on its economic promise, Brinkley outlines the necessary changes in U.S. foreign policy if we want to rebuild and revitalize an economy under fire. This engaging account details: Fascinating insights of the inner workings of American government and its largest bureaucracy; the U.S. Department of Defense Vivid descriptions of a group of business leaders who sought to change how the Pentagon did business, and who wound up in a war zone, including a firsthand experience of a terrorist attack Detailed account of the American business model for foreign development that can improve the lives of war-ravaged citizens, at far less cost than existing military and foreign aid programs Insights into the transition of the Bush Administration to the Obama Administration, and its impact on foreign policy Inside details on the real business climate in Iraq, before and after Saddam Hussein, as well as its political landscape Detailed analysis of the future of Afghanistan, economically and politically, and how its democratic institutions struggle to gain a foothold Comprehensive map to connect Iraq, Afghanistan, and Pakistan to the global economy, creating opportunity and reducing anti-Americanism Thorough breakdown of lessons learned in the Middle East and U.S. efforts to translate them to African nations, including Rwanda and Sudan

Paul Brinkley helped engineer one of the few success stories in America's occupation of Iraq. He built on that success in Afghanistan and now has reflected on both experiences and in this intelligent, interesting, and important book. Fareed Zakaria's "America's military and civilian leaders

agreedash;our country's national security challenges and geopolitical objectives cannot be achieved by firepower or diplomacy alone. Economic progress, jobs, and opportunity are indispensable to winning the peace and securing our nation. Understanding this reality and driven by a passion to serve, Paul Brinkley and his colleagues took great personal, career, and financial risks to help a war-torn country build a modern economy. nbsp; nbsp; nbsp; ""Brinkley tells a compelling, page-turning story. But it's no fairy tale. Readers will share not only the vision and the importance of the cause, but also the many frustrations and roadblocks experienced along the way. This is an important bookdash;there is much here that inspires, but also many important lessons and insights that Americans and their government need to learn and heed."" mdash;Thomas J. Donohue, President CEO, U.S. Chamber of Commerce nbsp;