

U.S. Central Command–directed, irregular warfare–themed exercise Eager Lion with U.S. Marines and Jordanian military focuses on missions U.S. forces and coalition partners might perform during global contingency operations (DOD/Richard Blumenstein)



Rapid Regeneration of Irregular Warfare Capacity

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There is widespread agreement among the public and in the foreign and defense communities that the United States should avoid “another Iraq” or “another Afghan-

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istan”—that is, another large-scale, long-term, and high-cost stability operation. President Barack Obama’s reluctance to put “boots on the ground” in Iraq is but the most recent example of this reaction against the high costs and questionable outcomes of the conflicts in those two countries. Former Defense Secretary Robert Gates may have been particularly blunt when he declared that anyone advising a future President

to pursue forcible regime change in the developing world “should have his head examined,” but the sentiment is widespread.¹

Worse than having to fight another Iraq or another Afghanistan, however, would be if the United States were yet again unprepared for such a contingency—as occurred when it divested itself of counterinsurgency capabilities after the policy community united against

“another Vietnam.” This article considers the challenge of maintaining readiness for large-scale irregular warfare (IW) contingencies when the national mood has so decisively turned against such operations.

The need to hedge against such a contingency is recognized in both the 2012 Defense Strategic Guidance and the 2014 Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR). Whereas both documents are widely interpreted as rejecting large-scale counterinsurgency and stability operations, they actually provide more nuanced guidance. Although U.S. forces will not be *sized* to conduct such operations, the QDR insists that “we will preserve the expertise gained during the past ten years of counterinsurgency and stability operations [and] protect the ability to regenerate capabilities that might be needed to meet future demands.”² It is less clear what this guidance means in practice. To sketch the outlines of such an “adaptability hedge,”³ we first review the history of large-scale IW operations to determine the timelines that intervening forces have historically needed to adapt to such contingencies, how quickly they have adapted in practice, and the costs of slow adaptation. Second, we examine the sorts of ground forces that are typically required for such operations and—using simple metrics—estimate the amount of time required to regenerate them. Based on this analysis, we suggest which capabilities could be regenerated relatively quickly for large-scale IW contingencies as the need arises and which would be priorities to keep in the ground force structure due to the long lag times associated with rebuilding these capabilities once they are lost. Finally, we briefly review the pipeline for regenerating IW capabilities and how to ensure the pipeline could function rapidly if needed.

The Imperative of Rapid Adaptation for Large-Scale IW

Even if they accept that the United States might at some point get drawn into another such contingency, many observers are skeptical of making sizable investments in standing capabilities for large-scale IW. These skeptics generally make three arguments. First, because

insurgencies typically last many years, intervening forces have considerable time to adapt to the operational theme and environment.⁴ In contrast, conventional contingencies may conclude in victory or defeat in mere weeks. If one cannot pay the price necessary to be prepared for every kind of conflict, it is better to be prepared for conventional contingencies and, if necessary, adapt over time to irregular warfare rather than vice versa. Second, IW is typically fought by small units on a highly decentralized battlefield—a much easier task *militarily* than coordinating fire and maneuver across large numbers of higher echelon formations. The skeptics of IW investments maintain it is easier to adapt from more complex military tasks to less complex ones than it is to go in the other direction.⁵ Again, such an argument suggests that the bulk of investments should be made in conventional warfighting capabilities. Finally, skeptics of IW contend that counterinsurgency and stability operations have historically been “wars of choice” fought by the United States in less strategically vital regions of the world. These skeptics maintain that if fiscal austerity imposes the need for U.S. Armed Forces to accept a higher degree of risk than usual, this risk is best assumed in less-vital IW capabilities.

While defensible, each of these arguments overstates its case and minimizes the extent of the risk the United States would incur by failing to invest in standing IW capabilities or the ability to regenerate them quickly.

How Long Do Militaries Have to Adapt to IW? The answer to this question in any particular case obviously depends on circumstances. But history provides an approximate answer that can be used for force planning. While insurgencies typically last for more than 10 years (15 years, more recently), *foreign* militaries usually intervene in them for much shorter periods of time—at least when they are deployed in large numbers by democracies. Looking at the best-known cases of expeditionary counterinsurgency by democratic interveners, we see that democracies that have

deployed 25,000 or more forces have done so for only 5 years on average, and rarely—if ever—for more than 8 years.

Even these numbers, however, probably overstate the amount of time a democratic power such as the United States has to adapt to the requirements of IW. For instance, although the United States deployed large numbers of forces in South Vietnam from 1965 to 1972, it was searching for a way out after the Tet Offensive in January–February 1968—a mere 3 years after escalating its involvement. Similarly, the United States intervened on a large scale in Iraq from 2003 to 2011, but by 2007—less than 4 years after its invasion—the United States had committed to either win the war through the so-called surge or withdraw. And the United States is not alone in this respect. In the case of the large-scale French counterinsurgency in Algeria (1954–1962), many observers argue the war became unwinnable for France as a result of its widespread use of torture in the Battle of Algiers, which ended in 1957—3 years after the escalation of French involvement. Similarly, India completely withdrew its forces from large-scale counterinsurgency operations in Sri Lanka within 3 years (1987–1990), and Israel withdrew the bulk of its forces from Lebanon in less than 2 years (1982–1983).

In short, there appears to be a small window of time before an intervening democracy such as the United States reaches a “culminating point” by which it must be on a clear path to an acceptable outcome or face strong domestic political pressures to withdraw.

How Long Does It Take to Adapt to the Requirements of IW? There is no way to measure exactly what “good enough” adaptation looks like and how long it has taken across a range of contingencies. Instead, an examination of a single case—the U.S. experience in Operation *Iraqi Freedom* (OIF)—is helpful to illustrate how long it took U.S. forces to adapt in a recent war.

There is some debate about what constituted sufficient adaptation in Iraq and how long it took. A few observers—mostly counterinsurgency

skeptics—argue that U.S. forces adapted within the first year of their deployment in theater.⁶ Others, however, point to General Stanley McChrystal’s memorandum of November 2009 outlining counterinsurgency guidance for forces in Afghanistan as evidence that substantial portions of the force still had not mastered critical aspects of IW.

But a review of the literature suggests that these observers are outliers. Most sources agree that U.S. forces required 3½ to 4 years to adapt at least reasonably well to the exigencies of OIF. There is widespread acknowledgment that the U.S. military was initially ill-prepared for the insurgency it encountered in Iraq despite the efforts of individuals to do the best they could with what they had under extraordinarily trying circumstances. A survey by Colonel William Hix and Kalev Sepp reportedly found that only one-fifth of units demonstrated counterinsurgency proficiency in August 2005.⁷ On the basis of detailed examination of multiple units, one of the best empirical studies of adaptation in OIF found that many of the key breakthroughs occurred in 2006 and early 2007.⁸ A Joint Staff-sponsored retrospective on Iraq and Afghanistan concluded that:

operations during the first half of the decade [through 2006] were often marked by numerous missteps and challenges as the U.S. government and military applied a strategy and force suited for a different threat and environment. Operations in the second half of the decade often featured successful adaptation to overcome these challenges.⁹

Three problems of adaptation in the early years of OIF stand out from these various studies: insufficiently discriminate use of force, inadequate nonlethal enablers to conduct effective civil-military and intelligence operations, and insufficient (and often inappropriate) resources devoted to the advisory (foreign internal defense) function. These problems are summarized in table 1.

The math is both clear and troubling. On average, countries such as the United States have only 5 years

Table. Commonly Identified Adaptation Failures in the Early Years of Operation Iraqi Freedom

Lethal Operations	Civil-Military Operations and Nonlethal Enablers	Foreign Internal Defense (FID)
Over-emphasis on offensive operations, inadequately discriminate use of firepower	Failure of strategic planning	Failure to prioritize FID for first year, then failure to develop realistic expectations
Concentration of forces rather than dispersion in COPs	Failure to ensure full-spectrum training	Failure to plan for FID mission
Lack of cultural awareness and sensitivity	Leaders inexperienced with coordinating multiple LOOs across civil, military spheres	Failure to widely embed advisors with host nation forces
Failure to propagate new, full-spectrum doctrine	Inadequate numbers of trained, experienced personnel for civil functions, including reconstruction, IO	Inadequate numbers of personnel
Failure to ensure appropriate kinetic training	Intelligence capabilities inadequate in personnel levels, training, and organization	Poor training for advisors
		Inappropriate personnel chosen as advisors (inappropriate background/experience and/or poor quality)

(at best) to adapt to the requirements of large-scale irregular warfare abroad before they come under extraordinary political pressure to draw down their presence. But the United States recently required between 3½ and 4 years to adapt at least reasonably well to these sorts of contingencies.¹⁰ In other words, the United States was ill-adapted to the requirements of IW for—at a minimum—approximately two-thirds to four-fifths of the time that it has typically had to fight such wars on a large scale.

What Are the Consequences of Being Poorly Adapted to the Requirements of IW? Slow adaptation entails one of two costs: either worse outcomes, or higher costs paid to obtain the same outcome. The former has been framed in terms of a so-called golden hour, the early period in an intervention during which popular expectations are set and insurgents can begin to organize. Once formed, popular expectations can become highly resistant to change, making it extremely difficult for counterinsurgents to gain popular backing after a poor start. Moreover, insurgents are at their most vulnerable when they first start to organize, making it critical that counterinsurgents are effective in this early stage. Once violence and instability spread, they provide opportunities for additional latent conflicts to turn violent and for hatreds and suspicions to harden, leading to an intensification of the conflict. Observers have

detected such dynamics in the U.S. “attritional” strategy in Vietnam as well as in Iraq and Afghanistan. While counterinsurgents can still potentially obtain their objectives in the end even if they perform poorly in the early days of a conflict, the price is likely to be much steeper.¹¹

Nor is IW likely to be confined to peripheral regions of little strategic significance to the United States as contended by skeptics of significant investments in maintaining the ability to quickly regenerate large-scale IW capabilities. Many observers of conflict trends believe that irregular and conventional warfare are likely to blend in so-called hybrid conflicts.¹² In looking to potential future conflicts, most of the ones that appear to be both relatively more likely to occur and most significant in their impact involve likely hybrid threats—contingencies such as state collapse and loose nuclear materials in North Korea or a future nuclear-armed Iran. IW does not represent a set of lesser strategic concerns for the United States—“wars of choice” that can be easily avoided. To the contrary, IW is a likely element of many or most of the highest-risk scenarios the United States currently faces.

Rapid Adaptation to Large-Scale IW

Building readiness for future IW contingencies is not fundamentally different from building readiness for other types



Survival evasion resistance and escape specialist and rescue squadron flight engineer Airmen conduct combat survival training near Osan Air Base, South Korea, during 2012 Pacific Thunder exercise (DOD/Sara Csurrilla)

of war. As in all readiness debates, policymakers face tradeoffs among cost, military effectiveness, and time.¹³ In this era of fiscal constraints, policymakers are seeking to limit costs by reducing military readiness for large-scale IW contingencies, while still paying for the necessary infrastructure to regenerate such capabilities quickly if needed.

This approach is reasonable in principle. In practice, it requires answering difficult questions: How quickly can such capabilities be regenerated? Can they be regenerated quickly enough, given the relatively short timelines for IW adaptation discussed in the previous section? Capabilities in high demand for IW that can only be built or achieve adequate readiness over long periods of time are candidates to be retained as forces in being. Capabilities required for IW that can be built or achieve readiness

relatively quickly are candidates to be regenerated on demand. Once we know which capabilities need to be kept as forces in being, and what infrastructure is necessary to maintain a pipeline to regenerate other forms of IW capacity, we can determine (at least roughly) the price tag associated with the 2014 QDR's pledge to "preserve the expertise gained during the past ten years of counterinsurgency and stability operations [and] protect the ability to regenerate capabilities that might be needed to meet future demands."

Estimating Requirements for Capabilities in Being. Once the need for adaptation is recognized, it can occur in many domains relatively quickly. Training and doctrine, for instance, can be oriented toward the specific circumstances of new irregular contingencies within as little as a few months. Similarly, facilities

can be adapted, with mockups of foreign villages built and role-players hired on a contract basis, in relatively short order. Such adaptations are necessary, and the following section will detail some of the infrastructure necessary to ensure they are executed rapidly. But for IW, the long pole in the tent is typically human capital—the development of military leaders who can rely on the education and experience they have gained over many years (or even decades) to adapt to a complex environment. Such leaders cannot be regenerated quickly if decisionmakers have guessed incorrectly about the nature of future contingencies.¹⁴

What types of leaders are most in demand? Studies have found that several types of units were particularly stressed by IW requirements in Iraq and Afghanistan: combat arms, rotary aviation, military intelligence (especially



Airmen of 22nd special tactics squadron jump from MC-130H Combat Talon II during Emerald Warrior, DOD's only irregular warfare exercise (U.S. Air Force/Marleah Miller)

assets related to human intelligence), military police (particularly law enforcement), explosive ordnance disposal (EOD), and special operations forces (SOF).¹⁵ Nor are these demands unique to Iraq and Afghanistan; many of these same types of units were in high demand in a variety of other IW campaigns, both counterinsurgency (in Vietnam) and other forms of stability operations (for instance, in Bosnia and Kosovo).

Unfortunately, many of the types of units in highest demand for IW are rank-heavy formations filled with personnel with many years of experience in their fields. For example, personnel comprising a Brigade Combat Team (BCT) possess approximately 4 years of service on average. Many enablers, such as transportation or administrative units, require far less experience; the

personnel in quartermaster companies or light- and medium-truck companies possess approximately 3 years of service on average. In contrast, many of the enablers in high demand for IW contingencies possess personnel with considerably more experience. Personnel in interrogation battalions, law and order detachments, tactical military information support operations detachments, civil affairs teams, and EOD companies all possess between 5 and 7 years of service on average—approximately twice that of the logistical support units discussed above and substantially higher than the experience in a BCT. Moreover, the average years of service in these units is approximately as long as the United States ever remains committed on a large scale to IW contingencies. Regenerating these capabilities on demand, in other words, is probably

not practical unless decisionmakers are willing to accept dramatic declines in quality, no matter how large the pipeline for regeneration.

Capabilities that are in high demand for IW and have lengthy development times are high-priority candidates to be retained in disproportionately large numbers if the Department of Defense (DOD) makes a commitment to quickly regain critical IW proficiencies and capacity. These capabilities include aviation, certain types of military intelligence, law enforcement, EOD, and SOF. They could be retained as formed units, or their leadership could be retained in disproportionately large numbers in a “grade over-structure” or cadre that would serve as the basis for regenerating fully formed units in times of need.¹⁶ Regardless of how these capabilities are

maintained, DOD needs to ensure that it gains appropriate experience operating in real-world environments, ideally through security cooperation and similar activities. True proficiency in tasks conducted in “wars among the people” is simply too difficult to attain in the classroom or in artificial training environments.

Maintaining a Pipeline to Regenerate Other IW Capabilities.

Clearly, the United States cannot afford to maintain all the capabilities it needs for large-scale IW in capacities sufficient to meet the requirements of many plausible scenarios. Particularly where regeneration times are relatively rapid (for capabilities that require relatively less expertise) or where the overall numbers of forces involved make it impractical to maintain a force optimized for IW (as is the case for combat arms other than SOF), the United States will need to regenerate capacity and proficiency for IW as quickly as possible.

Three elements of the Services’ activities are especially important in providing a basis for regenerating IW capability in the future: organizations, exercises, and school curricula. To ensure that the Services maintain their pipelines for regenerating IW capabilities, DOD should ensure adequate funding and attention for each of these elements.

Both the Army and Marine Corps created many organizations to develop proficiency for large-scale IW during the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. The Army’s focal point for this area was the Army Irregular Warfare Fusion Cell, which helped to coordinate IW-related activities among the U.S. Army Peacekeeping and Stability Operations Institute, Asymmetric Warfare Group, Center for Army Lessons Learned, and U.S. Army Special Operations Command. Similarly, the Marine Corps established the Center for Irregular Warfare, Security Cooperation Group, and Center for Advanced Operational Culture Learning. These organizations that study and codify IW operations formed DOD’s intellectual foundation for preserving expertise.

In a period of fiscal constraint, these organizations’ budgets have already come under pressure; the Army Irregular

Warfare Fusion Cell, for instance, closed on October 1, 2014.¹⁷ There is ample precedent to anticipate further such cuts. Service culture celebrates command functions and operational experience, and the leadership is largely drawn from the warfighting branches. If money and manpower allocations are tight, Service priorities are likely to favor deployable units and operational functions over institutions—like IW organizations—whose product is less tangible and longer term. For example, the post-Cold War draw-down resulted in sizable reductions in Army institutions (particularly at the U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command). Similarly, when units were under pressure to deploy at full strength during the 1990s, the Army moved to increase manning in operational units at the expense of manning in the its institutional base. Therefore, we should expect that lower priorities are likely to be accorded to doctrine writers, training developers, experts in training/advising foreign forces, and even experts at the combat training centers. For these reasons, DOD should monitor the size of IW institutions and the seniority of their staff to assess their well-being and capacity to contribute to preserving IW capabilities.

Just as the Services developed organizations to gain IW proficiency over the past decade, they also oriented their training programs to the requirements of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. With the withdrawal of most American troops from both countries and the rebalancing of U.S. defense capabilities toward the Asia-Pacific region, the Services are justifiably reorienting their training to regain proficiency in conventional warfighting. Yet this reorientation does not mean the Services have abandoned IW. In fact, both the Army and Marine Corps have adopted scenarios based on hybrid threats, and both plan to incorporate these features into their major exercises. Steps have already been taken to test and refine these concepts.

As with institutional budgets, however, training budgets are also coming under pressure. Moreover, there are a finite number of days in a year, making it difficult to retain proficiency in as many

operational themes as might be desirable. Consequently, DOD should also monitor IW proficiency by monitoring units’ performance at the Services’ premier exercises, such as the Army’s combat training centers and Marine Corps’ predeployment exercises. DOD should track data on the content of exercises (goals, types of threats, operational environment, tactics executed and evaluated, and so forth), performance of the trainee units,¹⁸ and percentage of leaders in key positions—battalion commanders, S-3s, executive officers, company commanders—who actually execute a premier exercise rotation emphasizing IW skills during their tenure in that position.

Assuming that the scale of current operations declines as expected, fewer military leaders will have direct experience in IW. As a result, professional education courses will represent a critical means through which IW knowledge and skills will be inculcated in future cohorts of officers and noncommissioned officers. School curricula, however, are limited in the amount of student instructional time available; each domain of expertise must compete with others for curriculum hours (or “blocks of instruction”). How, then, could defense leadership monitor the curriculum profile to gauge the adequacy of IW focus? Previous studies have made a start by calculating occurrence of key words and phrases related to IW.¹⁹ A more complete monitoring effort would establish goals and criteria for determining which skills and knowledge are most important and then use small panels of knowledgeable veterans (preferably at the O-4 or O-5 level, who have IW experience and some academic research training) to monitor and track the extent to which these skills are taught in professional military education at all levels.

DOD cannot afford to maintain the Services’ current levels of proficiency in IW, nor is it necessary to do so for the majority of U.S. forces. Outside of the high-demand, long-development time capabilities for IW discussed above—capabilities such as aviation, law enforcement, certain types of military intelligence, EOD, and SOF—the goal should be rapid regeneration of IW

readiness should such a contingency require it. Maintaining organizations dedicated to retaining U.S. intellectual foundations for such warfare, continuing to require some degree of proficiency in IW in the Services' key exercises, and continuing to give substantial attention to IW topics in school curricula should all help to speed the regeneration process.

Conclusion

As much as all Americans may wish to avoid another Iraq or another Afghanistan, the country cannot afford to allow its capabilities for large-scale irregular warfare to atrophy as it did when decisionmakers insisted the United States would never again fight another Vietnam. Although the United States should certainly avoid such conflicts whenever possible, trends in violent conflict toward hybrid wars suggest that it would be prudent to invest in a hedge against the possibility of U.S. involvement in another such war.

Determining the precise composition of such a hedge or its pricetag is beyond the scope of this article. Instead, we have emphasized four critical points about the broad outlines of such an IW hedge.

First, adaptation to irregular warfare is a lengthy process and the United States is unlikely to have much time to adapt to such conflicts before it comes under considerable political pressure to demonstrate tangible progress or draw down its forces.

Second, the costs of being poorly adapted to IW are substantial. Poor adaptation significantly reduces the likelihood of achieving acceptable outcomes and raises the price of whatever success is realized. Moreover, we cannot be confident that poor readiness for IW represents "acceptable risk" because IW contingencies are likely to occur only where peripheral U.S. interests are engaged. To the contrary, many highly plausible and high-impact scenarios entail substantial IW elements.

Third, the ability to adapt rapidly to large-scale IW requires both maintaining certain capabilities in being and maintaining the pipeline to regenerate other capabilities. Those capabilities that are both in high demand for IW

contingencies and that depend on senior leaders—particularly certain capabilities in aviation, military intelligence, law enforcement, EOD, and SOF—represent priority candidates for retention in larger numbers as forces in being, either as formed units or in a grade over-structure or leadership cadre.

Finally, DOD should closely monitor resources and readiness levels associated with the pipeline to regenerate IW proficiency between maneuver and other forces as needed.

It should be Americans' fervent hope that such investments in rapid adaptation for large-scale irregular warfare prove unnecessary. But hope, as they say, is not a policy. As the 2014 QDR recognizes, hedging against such contingencies represents sound policy. Now it is time to ensure the resources follow to make good on such policy commitments. JFQ

Notes

¹ Thom Shanker, "Warning Against Wars Like Iraq and Afghanistan," *New York Times*, February 25, 2011.

² *Quadrennial Defense Review 2014* (Washington, DC: Department of Defense [DOD], March 2014), vii.

³ This article is adapted from a classified study conducted by the RAND Corporation for the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness. See Stephen Watts et al., *Adaptable Ground Force Structure for Irregular Warfare*, RR-120-OSD (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2014).

⁴ On the contention that there is adequate time to adapt to the requirements of irregular warfare (IW), see, for instance, Gian P. Gentile, "A Strategy of Tactics: Population-centric COIN and the Army," *Parameters*, Autumn 2009, 5–6.

⁵ When asked which of the possible future challenges the Army should prepare for, the incoming head of the U.S. Army War College, Major General Tony Cucolo, stated, "You focus on the hardest one. . . . The hardest one is high-intensity combat operations. . . . [I]f we focus on 'deter and defeat,' I firmly believe we can do almost anything else." Quoted in Sydney J. Freedberg, Jr., "Wake Up and Adapt, Incoming War College Chief Tells Army," *AOL Defense*, April 3, 2012, available at <http://defense.aol.com/2012/04/03/wake-up-and-adapt-incoming-war-college-chief-tells-army/?i_cid=related1>.

⁶ See Gian P. Gentile, "Misreading the Surge Threatens U.S. Army's Conventional

Capabilities," *World Politics Review*, March 4, 2008.

⁷ Cited in James A. Russell, *Innovation, Transformation, and War: Counterinsurgency Operations in Anbar and Ninewa Provinces, Iraq, 2005–2007* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2011), 5.

⁸ Ibid. See also Thomas R. Mockaitis, *The Iraq War: Learning from the Past, Adapting to the Present, and Planning for the Future* (Carlisle, PA: U.S. Army War College, 2007); and Chad C. Serena, *A Revolution in Military Adaptation: The U.S. Army in the Iraq War* (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2011).

⁹ Joint and Coalition Operational Analysis (JCOA), *Decade of War, Volume I: Enduring Lessons from the Past Decade of Operations* (Washington, DC: JCOA, June 15, 2012).

¹⁰ The United States is not alone in this regard. On other nations' experience with slow adaptation, see Rod Thornton, "Getting It Wrong: The Crucial Mistakes Made in the Early Stages of the British Army's Deployment to Northern Ireland (August 1969 to March 1972)," *Journal of Strategic Studies* 30, no. 1 (2007), 73–107; and John Kiszely, "Learning About Counterinsurgency," *RUSI Journal*, December 2006, 16–21.

¹¹ Perhaps the single most commonly cited source on poor adaptation to irregular warfare is Andrew Krepinevich's study of the U.S. Army's slow adaptation to the realities of the Vietnam War and its implications for outcomes; see Andrew F. Krepinevich, Jr., *The Army and Vietnam* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986). For a more recent similar treatment of the slow adaptation of American warfighting approaches to the context of Vietnam, see Lewis Sorley, *A Better War: The Unexamined Victories and Final Tragedy of America's Last Years in Vietnam* (San Diego: Harcourt, Inc., 1999). For an examination of the costs of slow adaptation in Afghanistan, see Daniel Marston, "Realizing the Extent of Our Errors and Forging the Road Ahead," in *Counterinsurgency in Modern Warfare*, ed. Daniel Marston and Carter Malkasian (Long Island City, NY: Osprey Publishing, 2008). On "golden hours" generally and the costs of slow adaptation in Iraq specifically, see James Stephenson, *Losing the Golden Hour: An Insider's View of Iraq's Reconstruction* (Washington, DC: Potomac Books, Inc., 2007). On the broader military implications of the golden hour, see Andrew F. Krepinevich, Jr., *An Army at the Crossroads* (Washington, DC: Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments, 2008), 47–54. On insurgent organization and vulnerability, see Steven Metz, *Learning from Iraq: Counterinsurgency in American Strategy* (Carlisle, PA: U.S. Army War College, 2007); and Mark Irving Lichbach, *The Rebel's Dilemma* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1995).

¹² Proponents of this view include former Defense Secretary Robert M. Gates, "A Bal-



Jordanian F-16 Fighting Falcon leads another Jordanian F-16, American F-16, and two Marine F-18s over training base in Northern Jordan as part of Eager Lion exercise (U.S. Air National Guard/John P. Rohrer)

anced Strategy: Reprogramming the Pentagon for a New Age,” *Foreign Affairs* 88, no. 1 (January/February 2009), 3; Frank G. Hoffman, “Hybrid Warfare and Challenges,” *Joint Force Quarterly* 52 (1st Quarter 2009), 34–48; and T.X. Hammes, *The Sling and the Stone: On War in the 21st Century* (St. Paul, MN: Zenith Press, 2006). This view has since become embedded in a wide range of Defense Department doctrinal publications.

¹³ Richard K. Betts, *Military Readiness: Concepts, Choices, Consequences* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 1995).

¹⁴ The 2012 *Army Strategic Planning Guidance* states, “The development of mid-grade officers and non-commissioned officers has been the historical limiting factor in expansibility.

Experienced and effective leaders are not grown quickly.” See 2012 *Army Strategic Planning Guidance* (Washington, DC: Headquarters Department of the Army, April 19, 2012), 12.

¹⁵ See Michael L. Hansen et al., *Reshaping the Army’s Active and Reserve Components*, MG-961-OSD (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2011), 32–35; and Donald P. Wright and Timothy R. Reese, *On Point II: Transition to the New Campaign* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Combat Studies Institute Press, 2008).

¹⁶ See Watts et al. for more precise analysis of historical IW utilization and the characteristics of the priority capabilities for retention.

¹⁷ Kevin Lilley, “Irregular Warfare Center to Close Oct. 1,” *Army Times*, September 1,

2014.

¹⁸ For a related evaluation effort, see Bryan W. Hallmark and James C. Crowley, *Company Performance at the National Training Center: Battle Planning and Execution*, MR-846-A (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 1997).

¹⁹ Stephen J. Mariano, “Between the Pen and the Sword: 40 Years of Individual and Institutional Attitudes Toward Small Wars,” Harvard University, Weatherhead Center for International Affairs, 2012 (PowerPoint briefing summarizing a Ph.D. thesis in war studies at the Royal Military College of Canada).