Multi-Service Concept

for

Irregular Warfare

US Marine Corps Combat Development Command
And
US Special Operations Command Center for Knowledge and Futures

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FOREWORD

This multi-service concept is designed to further the study of irregular warfare. We learned many hard lessons about the effectiveness of irregular warfare (IW) in the Philippines, Nicaragua, Vietnam, Haiti, Afghanistan, Somalia, the Balkans, Iraq, and elsewhere. We institutionalized those lessons for a time but under the pressure of our Cold War concerns, put them aside. Now, in the 21st century, we confront a new form of IW, one promoted by some of the most rabid enemies the United States ever has faced.

This new IW – encompassing insurgency, terrorism, religious and racial fanaticism, and transnational organized crime – is invigorated, expanded, and made more dangerous by its capacity to use rapid, global communications and diffusion of new technologies to recruit and train personnel, develop weapons, organize forces, and prepare and execute operations. Our potential adversaries capitalize on these capabilities and pursue an irregular approach to warfare, blending combat and non-combat actions to attack asymmetrically at times and places of their choosing.

IW is an armed political struggle for power, and it must be met by an armed political counter. The focus of all parties should be on securing the people continuously while attacking the enemies' strategy. IW is fought amongst the people and requires the careful balancing of combat operations that destroy forces threatening the security of the population, actions taken to gain the population's confidence, and actions to discredit our adversaries. IW is ultimately won by eroding the popular support that protects and sustains an enemy, thus neutralizing his power and reducing him to impotence or unimportance.

Building a credible capacity to counter insurgencies and other irregular threats is vital but insufficient. The US must also be able to choose an indirect strategy and conduct offensive IW against a hostile state or other power to avoid a direct military confrontation that could escalate beyond acceptable limits; conceal or limit US involvement in a conflict; or complicate an enemy's strategic calculations by presenting him with a combination of traditional and irregular challenges. The US has a long history of using indigenous or surrogate forces to accomplish its objectives and needs to rebuild this critical IW capability.

Military power is rarely the lead tool for conducting IW. More often, military power supports those political, economic or information activities used to achieve US objectives. For that reason, we must combine all of the elements of national power – diplomatic, economic, informational, financial, law enforcement, and intelligence as well as military – in well-considered harmony to produce a comprehensive campaign that deals with all of the elements of a conflict, not simply its military aspect.

This concept describes how the US Armed Forces working with US Government civilian agencies can conduct offensive IW and counter irregular threats, and how these two activities

must be blended into a fluid whole through campaign design. We have large advantages over our enemies – greater resources allowing us to fight not just in one style but in many styles at once, a broader array of military and non-military tools to use, and the adaptive capacity of US forces. In defense of our nation, we must master irregular warfare as well as we have mastered conventional warfare.

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PURPOSE

The *Multi-Service Concept for Irregular Warfare* broadly describes how future US military forces will conduct irregular warfare in support of unified action on a regional or global scale against both state and non-state adversaries. It is meant as a guide for enhancing and improving US military irregular warfare capabilities and capacities. It also is meant as a guide toward closer integration of US military and US civilian agencies in meeting the varied challenges of irregular warfare. Finally, it will provide the basis for experimentation intended to influence subsequent concepts and capabilities development

OBJECTIVES

This concept seeks to fulfill its purpose by accomplishing three objectives: (1) Describe the nature of irregular warfare, its emergence as the "warfare of choice" by our adversaries, and the strategic and operational opportunities and challenges of irregular warfare, (2) describe the importance of a comprehensive US Government approach to irregular warfare, and (3) describe the unique considerations required of commanders in planning, conducting, and responding to irregular warfare.

SCOPE

This document provides a conceptual baseline that will guide identification, assessment, and fielding of irregular warfare capabilities within the Marine Corps and Special Operations Command. It will also guide Marine Corps and Special Operations Command input into the Joint Capabilities Integration and Development System. This concept paper does not address homeland security against terrorist attacks, antiterrorism measures, or the conventional military defeat of regimes that support and sponsor insurgent, terrorist, and other irregular non-state organizations hostile to the United States and its partner nations.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Irregular warfare (IW) has as its objective maintaining or undermining the legitimacy of a political authority by the application of indirect approaches and non-conventional means to defeat an enemy by subversion, attrition, or exhaustion rather than direct military confrontation. IW achieves its objective by employing the full range of military and non-military capabilities to gain asymmetric advantages that erode an adversary's power, influence and will until he is neutralized or defeated. IW is the preferred approach of insurgents, terrorists, and others who lack substantial conventional warfare capability as well as of nation-states who must mask their actions or whose national troops use IW in fighting irregular warriors. Since September 11, 2001, we have become acutely aware of our enemies' ability to use IW to endanger US national security. We must re-examine our capabilities and capacities for IW and augment them in order to be able to conduct irregular warfare for prolonged periods on a regional or global scale.

The application of a purely military approach to irregular warfare has not proved successful in the past. IW is about winning a war of ideas and perception. Its battles are fought amongst the people and its outcomes are determined by the perceptions and support

of the people. The campaign must change perception and offer viable alternatives, rather than specifically kill an enemy or destroy his resources in isolation. While application of violence or threats of violence are critical components of IW, they must be seen as parts of a larger approach. That comprehensive approach applies all of the instruments of national power – diplomatic, economic, informational, financial, law enforcement, and intelligence as well as military — to achieve victory by undermining an enemy's popular support and compelling him to quit, collapse or sink into irrelevance. This approach can be achieved only by the most intimate collaboration of all US Government agencies -- military and civilian – in campaign design, planning and implementation. This approach also must consider carefully the cultural environment of the operational area and leverage genuine partnerships with host nation elements, coalition partners, and international, nongovernmental, and private voluntary organizations.

Conducting IW and countering irregular threats are not separate and distinct tools but part of an integrated and fluid campaign. In a single conflict, the US may defend against IW threats while launching its own attack by using an indirect approach to neutralize the enemy's ability to influence public sentiment. We may attack or counter-attack with combat forces or with reconstruction and stabilization projects. We may promote defense and offense sequentially or concurrently or in unpredictable alternation. This fluidity of multi-agency action is realized through a well-integrated campaign plan that considers **six logical lines of operation**:

- Information
- Providing Essential Services
- Training and Equipping (or Developing) Local Forces
- Combat
- Governance
- Economic Development

A campaign may demand more or fewer lines, but these six represent the general range required and those most likely to be applied. Application of these logical lines of operation must be continually refined to meet the needs of each unique and evolving campaign. Military and civilian responsibilities among the lines are inter-related and mutually supportive. The campaign harmonizes each line's progress with every other line to achieve the right balance among them in reaching the overall objective.

The key to United States' success in the global long war in the years ahead is development of a coordinated, multi-agency capacity for irregular warfare. This requires that the US Armed Forces and US Government civilian agencies develop a new way – an irregular way – of designing, planning, and implementing campaigns in defense of the nation.

CHAPTER 1: NATURE OF IRREGULAR WARFARE

Irregular warfare has existed for centuries and has at various times been labeled as "Low-intensity Conflict", "Small Wars", "Military Operations Other than War", "Limited Warfare", "Unconventional Warfare"[1], "Asymmetric Warfare", and, most recently, "Unrestricted Warfare.

DEFINING IRREGULAR WARFARE

Irregular Warfare (IW). A form of warfare that has as its objective the credibility and/or the legitimacy of the relevant political authority with the goal of undermining or supporting that authority. Irregular warfare favors indirect approaches, though it may employ the full range of military and other capabilities to seek asymmetric advantages, in order to erode an adversary's power, influence and will.

(Working definition approved by Deputy Secretary of Defense, 17 April, 2006)

Irregular warfare demands a more integrated approach than the US Government customarily has taken in the years since World War II, the last conflict in which we truly integrated all agencies of the Government to marshal every instrument of national and allied power in a global campaign.

THE HISTORY OF IW

War is "a violent clash of interests between or among organized groups characterized by the use of military force."[2] The nature of war in the twenty-first century remains as it has been since ancient times but an irregular approach to warfare more keenly focuses on war as an extension of politics and is fought immediately among the people. The terms "organized" and "military force" refer to a group's ability to mobilize support for its own political interests and its ability to generate violence on a scale sufficient to have significant political consequences.[3] These terms do not limit the participants in war to easily identifiable military organizations of a nation-state or limit the weapons they use to combat arms.

Since the Treaties of Westphalia in 1648, Western states have made war against other states in what most have come to see as conventional warfare -- peer-on-peer fighting by nation states. After fifty years of Cold War, the US military is structured for that kind of peer-on-peer warfare. However, war does not always follow convention and history reveals that

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[1] *There has been much misuse of the term Unconventional Warfare (UW) as a synonym for IW. UW, as defined in JP 1.02, does not fully encompass all the operations and activities for both waging and countering IW. UW is an offensive use of IW and falls under that section of the concept.*

[2] *MCDP 1,* Warfighting, *(Washington, DC, United States Marine Corps, June 1997) p. 3.*

[3] *Ibid., p.3*

violent clashes of interests often include irregular warfare and irregular forces[4] or factions that exist outside the authority of established states. Such students of war as Robert Asprey, in his book *War in the Shadows,* and Dr. Bernard Fall, in "The Theory and Practice of Insurgency and Counterinsurgency," consider IW the most common type of warfare. Asprey documented over two thousand years of combat between conventional and irregular forces. Fall estimated that there were 48 "small wars" in the first 65 years of the twentieth century that, *in toto*, involved as many people and as many casualties as either one of the two world wars.[5] The United States' own history is replete with IW conflicts, including the Indian Wars (1675 – 1890), the Barbary Wars (1801 - 1805, 1815), the Philippine Insurrection (1898 - 1911), Mexico (1910 – 1917), the "small wars" in the Caribbean (1915 – 1934), Vietnam and Southeast Asia (1959 – 1975), El Salvador (1980 – 1992), Afghanistan (1981 – 1989), Lebanon (1982 - 1984), Somalia (1991 – 1994), Bosnia and the Balkans (1994 – present), and the ongoing Global War on Terror (2001 – present).

The implication is clear. The United States must be capable of both conventional and irregular forms of warfare. Our proficiency at the former is proven beyond doubt and our deficiencies at the latter must be corrected. To begin do so, we must understand three elements underpinning the irregular conflicts producing the local and global small wars of this century:

- A **cause** that is compelling or can be made to seem compelling enough to motivate sufficient numbers of people to risk their lives and well-being—and the lives and well-being of their families and neighbors—by taking up arms or engaging in other actions to oppose a government, an occupying power or an insurgent, terrorist or criminal organization exercising *de facto* political authority over them. Such a cause may be supporting their government's efforts to counter an insurgent movement or expel a foreign occupying power. A cause may have as its goal the creation of a self-governing autonomous area for tribal, religious or ethnic groups or the overthrow of a repressive regime to establish or restore a government preferred by the local people. Causes are not always tied to regime change, but may be simply to advance a religion or ideology, or to institute political, economic, or social reforms within an existing social order.

- The existence of or the ability to form **an organization or movement** with the potential to mobilize a population in the name of a cause, regardless of the validity of the cause or the sincerity of the organizers. Such organizations or movements may consist of indigenous participants or surrogates. Normally, they must be willing to accept external support and assistance to achieve their own objectives, which may only partially coincide with those of supporting external powers.

- The capabilities, capacity, and will of an external power -- state or non-state – actors unilaterally to conduct or to provide **external support and assistance** to an

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[4] *Joint Publication 1-02,* DOD Dictionary of Military Terms, *electronic edition as amended through 31 August 2005. Hereafter referred to as JP 1-02.*

[5] *Bernard Fall, "The Theory and Practice of Insurgency and Counterinsurgency," Planning Bulletin from the Office of the Associate Technical Director, of what organization? How published? September 10, 1965.*

indigenous or surrogate organization **for the duration of a protracted war** fought primarily by indirect, non-conventional methods and means.

The vulnerability of adversaries to US conventional military and technological capabilities has resulted in a heightened need for their use of deception, dispersion, and detection avoidance in warfare. Our adversaries rely on a combination of informal/formal social networks and modern technology to direct and support forces that are distributed widely and concealed among populations. While the nature of war remains the same, the means and approaches continually change.

TODAY'S SECURITY ENVIRONMENT AND THE FUTURE OF IW

The international security environment throughout the latter half of the twentieth century was framed by the Cold War competition — political, military, and most prominently, nuclear – between the United States and the Soviet Union. Because of this unique and highly complex situation, the US National Security Strategy emphasized containment and stability, based on the concept of deterrence. Should deterrence fail, the Armed Forces of the United States were primarily organized, trained, and equipped for major combat operations against the Soviet Union. With the collapse of the Soviet Union came the inevitable breakdown of this global security paradigm.

The new security environment includes a mix of military and non-military challenges by state and non-state actors to US national security, with irregular warfare the favored war-making style of those who would be our enemies. The rise of political, religious, and ethnic extremist ideologies fuels conflicts worldwide. The absence of effective governance in many parts of the world creates sanctuaries for terrorists, criminals, and insurgents. Many states are unable or unwilling to exercise control over their territory or frontiers, leaving them open to exploitation. Weak or failing states suffering from stagnant economies, corrupt political institutions, epidemic diseases or which are caught up in multi-national competition for their natural resources too often become hotbeds for conflict that provide a nurturing environment, protection, and cover for insurgents and transnational terrorists. These trends are likely to escalate. The United States, with its economic, political, and military preeminence, will continue to be the chief target of extremist attention and of "globalized" irregular warriors who attempt to exploit local disaffection by painting the United States as the source of local and global problems.

The increasing number of local and regional conflicts and the increasing globalization of the threats they produce reflect the capacity of modern communications to link unrelated and isolated extremist groups that previously existed in isolation. Globalization of violent extremists allows sharing resources and skills to gather support and strike from unexpected quarters. Additionally, previously local issues can be catapulted onto the regional or world stage, enhancing support and effectiveness. A flattened command structure strengthens our adversaries' irregular capability allowing greater speed of information distribution supporting distributed action. Flat structure also offers fewer decision-makers as targets for attack and greater independence to leaders who can develop and stage operations as they please. All of this adds a new dimension of complexity.

CHAPTER 2: CONCEPT FOR IRREGULAR WARFARE

STATEMENT OF THE MILITARY PROBLEM

The emerging security environment includes a shifting mix of challenges and opportunities in which the US and its partners increasingly face state and non-state adversaries that use irregular warfare as their preferred form of warfare. US and coalition forces may be constrained from using conventional means or find that conventional operations are not the most effective way to achieve their national security objectives and will find it advantageous to conduct irregular warfare. **US and coalition forces will need sufficient capability and capacity to plan and execute irregular warfare as part of a protracted regional or global campaign.**

Policy makers and military planners must develop strategies and design campaigns appropriate for waging irregular warfare against state and non-state adversaries, or for countering the irregular warfare threats these adversaries present. While policy makers and military planners have mastered the process required to guide and execute conventional campaigns, the vast majority have yet to focus substantial attention on waging irregular warfare at the strategic level, or on designing, planning, and executing campaigns to defeat irregular threats on a regional or global scale. Conventional campaigns focus on combat operations as the primary means of achieving a decision. In irregular campaigns, combat operations are rarely decisive. Our rich and varied national experience in irregular warfare teaches that we must approach irregular warfare in a manner fundamentally different from our approach to conventional warfare between states.

SYNOPSIS OF THE CENTRAL IDEA

Anyone -- states, non-state entities, individuals such as terrorists, and the US military -- can practice irregular warfare. IW emphasizes the use of irregular forces and indirect, non-conventional methods to subvert, attrite, and exhaust an adversary rather than defeat him through direct military confrontation. IW offers US policy makers an indirect approach that avoids a direct confrontation that can escalate, conceals US involvement in a conflict between third parties, supports political primacy of a partner nation or confounds an adversary's conventional calculations by presenting him with a warfare for which he is unprepared. IW also allows the US to increase the legitimacy of a supported force while economically employing selected special and conventional US forces.

Unlike conventional warfare's focus on an adversary's military power, IW aims to influence a host population to abandon, uncover or fight against the enemy and so help destroy his power and influence over the people, from whom the enemy draws his support and freedom of maneuver. Designing a campaign to achieve these results requires application of every tool of US national power and a clear understanding of how each of those tools, carefully applied, will produce the response the US wants from the target population.

US military planners must shape the campaign to integrate military capabilities with the other instruments of national power and influence to achieve US strategic objectives as they confront irregular challenges. Irregular warfare is not dependent on materiel solutions but on new combinations of current capabilities and techniques for improved

capacity. That requires that we make a thorough examination of our global defense posture, including an assessment of ongoing and future commitments, to ensure sufficient IW capacity.

Many of the military **capabilities** required for irregular warfare currently exist within the Department of Defense as evidenced by unconventional, counterinsurgency, and other IW-related operations. However, irregular warfare requires a prolonged and persistent level of effort in contrast to the "rapid defeat" mindset characterizing conventional campaign design. This requires a comprehensive campaign – an interagency approach – comprehensively applied, supported by a sufficient capacity for rotation of forces with sufficient overlap to ensure continuity of effort. It also requires use of a broad range of types of warfare – conventional and unconventional, interagency, economic, guerilla, cultural, etc. And it requires a genuinely collaborative partnership with USG civilian agencies, and with multinational and host nation elements. In addition, it requires acknowledgement that temporary instability, inflicted by irregular warfare may be necessary to achieve necessary political, social or economic rebalancing of society in the conflict zone. However, achieving stability requires the support of the people affected by what happens.

IW IN THE CONTINUUM OF MILITARY OPERATIONS

The specifically military components of IW include a wide variety of operations and activities promoted in isolation, in combination, in alternation or as augmentation to conventional combat operations or in which conventional combat augments IW operations. These include: Information Operations, Intelligence and Intelligence-related Activities, Insurgency, Counterinsurgency, Unconventional Warfare, Terrorism, Counterterrorism, Foreign Internal Defense, Stabilization, Security, Transition and Reconstruction Operations, Psychological Operations, Civil-Military Operations, and transnational criminal activities that support or sustain irregular warfare, and those law enforcement activities to counter these activities. **Note: Some irregular warfare activities on this list, such as terrorism and transnational crime, violate US and international law and are not employed by US military forces or civilian government employees.**

CAMPAIGN DESIGN

> *The first, the supreme, the most far-reaching act of judgment that the statesman and the commander have to make is to establish...the kind of war on which they are embarking; neither mistaking it for, nor trying to make it into something that is alien to its nature. This is the first of all strategic questions and the most comprehensive.* *Carl von Clausewitz*

Our use of irregular warfare benefits from a comprehensive, multi-disciplinary, and multi-agency campaign design that focuses all efforts on winning popular support to discredit an enemy, degrade his power, and neutralize or defeat him. IW campaign design, as any other, begins with identification of the campaign's purpose as derived from the aim of national policy. Communicating goals clearly to decision-makers at every level provides context for operational and tactical decision making. While strategy drives campaign design and tactical actions, the reverse also is true -- observation of the results of tactical

actions can generate modifications to the campaign design which, in turn, may affect the strategic view and national aim. This circular relationship of learn, design, relearn, redesign demands a highly flexible and rapid approach to campaign planning and execution.

This design approach works especially well in confronting today's enemies. The global nature of our adversaries' capacity – if not always their ambitions – requires IW campaign planners to coordinate and synchronize conventional and irregular effects against globally dispersed adversaries. IW campaign planners should be prepared to envision and design multiple and comprehensive campaigns composed of combinations of conventional and irregular warfare promoted by all of the elements of US national power to meet the multiple and comprehensive threats from a rapidly changing list of enemies. The US, for example, may be required simultaneously to conduct a global conventional campaign against a state-sponsor, counter the irregular threat posed by a terrorist group acting as a surrogate for that state sponsor, and wage an IW warfare campaign to deter a second state from joining the first in conventional battle. This effort will stretch the imagination of planners too accustomed to thinking in conventional warfare terms. They need to learn to find new and innovative ways to bring all of the elements of national, coalition, and host nation power to bear on a strategic problem.

LOGICAL LINES OF OPERATION

Irregular warfare must be seen as a fluid whole that is mutually supportive, overlapping, and usually simultaneous in implementation: IW to defeat or neutralize a threat and countering a threat to ultimately achieve campaign objectives. It is difficult to imagine a campaign without consideration of IW capabilities. However, discussing the logical lines of operation in terms of a simultaneous application of conducting and countering simplifies explanation and clarifies the importance of harmonization among the lines.

No finite list of lines of operation could cover every dimension; however, the following logical lines of operation cover the vast majority of anticipated lines for campaign design:

- Information
- Providing Essential Services
- Training and Equipping (or Developing) Local Forces
- Combat Operations
- Governance
- Economic Development

While these six represent lines of operation most likely to be used in most IW campaigns, the circumstances of any particular conflict may require that campaign designers use more or fewer lines. Further, the nature of a conflict's resolution may cause one or several lines to dominate or cause various lines to rise to dominance and recede at different times as the campaign moves toward its objectives. These lines, whatever their number, are not meant to be fixed but flexible tools applied in appropriate balance.

CHAPTER 3: EXECUTION OF IRREGULAR WARFARE

Irregular warfare is an approach to warfare that targets or supports a political authority with asymmetric action along the full range of military and civilian capabilities. **As ideological conflict frequently is, or is claimed to be, the underlying cause of an IW conflict, our understanding of the ideological aspects of a conflict is essential to campaign development.**

- Ideology, often disguising racial, religious or tribal hatred, is a strong motivator of people and must be confronted by a more appealing ideology to be neutralized. (E.g., The power of Peronism in Argentina was not defeated by confrontation but by the idea of representative government.) A winning alternative ideology, which can be nothing more than an appeal to a people's war-weariness, helps to isolate and fragment adversary political and combat forces.
- Similarly, a more appealing ideology can "morally isolate" an insurgency from internal and external financial and political supports, as we have achieved with North Korea.
- Many conflicts have roots in legitimate popular grievances which must be relieved or removed to sustain US objectives. Each of these conflicts has two fundamental elements – a grievance and a catalyst. Grievances such as poverty or hunger channeled by a popular hero, a Ché Guevara, can produce conflict. Both must be neutralized or removed to achieve stability.
- More importantly for coming to a rapid conclusion of conflict, achieving moral isolation of an enemy persuades the host population to view the enemy as criminal and incapable of achieving a victory that can provide the people with the benefits the enemy has promised.

Winning the ideology battle demands a level of interagency teamwork far beyond that normally associated with conventional combat operations. It demands that commanders and planners have a deep understanding of the character of the conflict, of the people and culture among which the conflict is fought, of the conflict's context, and of its participants. The campaign design and execution team must be joint, interagency, and multi-national. The method of application of all of this complexity is through the use of six logical lines of operation applied in harmony.

SECTION I – INFORMATION OPERATIONS

The goal of Information Operations is to convince a host nation population to support the US side in a conflict. Information operations must infuse all other lines of operation so that every activity creates the correct perception. Our actions and our information program must work together to counter our adversary, set the stage for action, and support every action and counteraction to ensure winning the battle of local, US, and world public opinion. Achieving these goals requires an intimate understanding of the people, culture, and mores of the operational area, something that can grow most easily from a genuine

collaboration with host nation elements. Successful information operations can influence the behavior of an adversary by influencing him to act in defense of his own public relations and influence regional and international actors to abandon material or moral support for the enemy. It will accomplish all of this while promoting our actions supporting the legitimacy of our side.

Popular support comes first and last in an IW conflict if the US is to achieve the objective of returning a conflict zone to the long-term stability that will prevent that area from presenting another threat to US interests. IW is about ideas and therefore dependent on information, intelligence, and the clear and productive communication of ideas. Honest and creative use of information, founded on a clear understanding of cultural context, is essential to the task. It must aim at persuading the people in the conflict zone to support our objectives while promoting legitimacy regionally and globally. A successful information and intelligence operation denies the enemy the ability to hide among the population and to draw on outside materiél and moral support by convincing those who would hide or help the enemy to abandon him. The powerful effect on local and world opinion of North Vietnamese information operations demonstrated that result. Information planning involves marketing, advertising, and psychological operations.

- We counter an enemy's message by providing the people a reasonable explanation of an appealing alternative.
- Discrediting and delegitimizing an enemy is as important as crediting and legitimizing those we support.
- Sometimes, merely winning popular acquiescence or frightening a population into inactivity is sufficient to our goals of neutralizing an enemy's power over a people.
- Campaign designers must develop information operations for distinct military echelons and multiple target audiences in the same battle space.
- The information battle must be fought across all available mediums and no possible channel of communication can be ignored – newspapers, radio, television, Internet, flyers, skywriting, word-of-mouth, gossip, and combat shaped as communication (e.g., the Tet offensive).
- Among those channels are armed propaganda operations which, if properly executed, expose to public view an enemy's weakness, incapacity or leadership confusion. A criminal enemy may design such acts to provoke an overreaction by an authority, causing harm to the population, in hopes of driving the people toward the enemy's cause. The US does not engage in this type of premeditated collateral damage.

Finally, the character of the information campaign is critically important to its success. The credibility and perceived legitimacy of the US effort or of the cause we support must never be put at risk by deceptive information operations.

- The BBC is perceived by people around the world as a fair and even-handed reporter of news, regardless of the reality, while CNN often is regarded as a mouthpiece of the US Government. The BBC is more likely to persuade than is

CNN. Our information ops need to acquire a BBC-like reputation for honesty that can be used to persuade.

- Information operations built on truth are more likely to succeed and less likely to produce the "information fratricide" that too often results from deception efforts. That, in turn, undercuts our efforts to win legitimacy for our side.
- Toward this end, campaign designers must develop informational contingency plans to serve as templates to counter with truth an enemy's propaganda. The frequently repeated Taliban charge that a US air raid had struck yet another "wedding party" in Afghanistan rather than targeted insurgents can be rebutted effectively and in a timely manner only if templates are ready for use, augmented by visual and eyewitness evidence. Failing to counter promptly and with reasonable argument such false charges gives the enemy an undeserved win.

Of particular significance to success is how information supports and infuses all of the other lines of operation and can rebut of the oft-repeated view of our enemies that the US can be defeated by prolonging conflict and inflicting casualties on US forces. They cite our withdrawal from the Vietnam War and the Soviet Union's withdrawal from Afghanistan as evidence that a superpower will not stay the course. This ignorant but pernicious view must be countered to validate all else said in the information campaign. We need to articulate clearly our political and military aims and our strategic objectives to show our determination to sustain IW until we have achieved our objectives.

SECTION II – PROVIDING ESSENTIAL SERVICES

The goal of Providing Essential Services is to help our side to achieve legitimacy as the sole entity capable of governing by providing the people a better means to those basic government-provided services that make their everyday lives safer, healthier, and happier. It is about using clean water, better sewerage, improved roads, reliable electricity, and village markets to win a conflict. Essential Services seeks to reinforce a host nation government's capacity to provide security and other essential services or to provide superior alternatives that undercut the government's provision of services. Those services must be defined by the norms of the local society, and their requirements and forms must be based on the advice of host country nationals. They cannot be determined successfully by an "objective" standard set by planners distant from and inexperienced in the conflict zone. For that reason, before the physical campaign begins, a commander must establish an assessment team that includes host nation personnel alongside USG civilian experts in the conflict zone. While essential services clearly is an interagency line of operation, the military must prepare to be the USG's "first responder to stop the bleeding" and may need to carry on services for many months, until civilian USG or coalition agencies can arrive. By doing such things as providing work to absorb the unemployed young who would join the enemy, avoiding the disruption by combat of existing essential services, and, with local advice, shifting the provision of services to meet changing needs, we can win "buy in" by the local people that can lead to broader support for our objectives.

Essential Services is the easiest and most difficult line of operation to manage: We want to eliminate the enemy's capacity to win public approval by providing essential services, we want our side to provide those services to garner public support, and we must do these two conflicting things without damaging existing essential services. Harming existing services can throw a population into misery and despair and make them enemies of our cause. Yet building roads and bridges, restoring market places, finding potable water, opening seaports to commerce, and getting kids into classrooms are straightforward tasks easily undertaken. Providing essential services allows US forces or those we support to integrate with the local population, compounding the difficulties our enemy faces in separating us from the people.

- **In conducting IW** against a government or other political or self-appointed political authority we seek to erode the enemy's ability to provide essential services as we replace them with those provided by US forces or the irregular force we sponsor. This creates a second or "shadow" government or social network whose evident administrative capacity can win popular support. Over time, that translates into a shift of legitimacy from the present authority to the new authority we support.
- **In conducting IW against an insurgent or terrorist threat**, particularly in defense of a friendly government, US forces and the host nation forces we support aims to re-establish the local authority's capacity to provide services in order to rebuild that authority's legitimacy with its people. This work likely must be done while defending against enemy attacks on those services. Success in this line directly and hourly affects the lives of citizen and reinforces repeatedly and in a variety of ways the view that the local authority is capable, concerned, and decisive.
- We must take every effort to assure that extent essential services are not damaged but preserved against enemy attack and our own collateral damage. Those facilities required to be destroyed in combat operations must be restored rapidly. Blowing apart power stations to cripple an adversary is only acceptable to the people we seek to win to our side if those facilities are rebuilt promptly.

Essential services provide a means to integrate more closely with the local population and gain support for a host nation or surrogate effort. The local people, seeing value in the services that they are being helped to acquire, are likely to resist attempts by the enemy – now seen as "outsiders" – to take away what they have achieved and return them to a less appealing condition.

The provision of essential services must be done in close consultation and collaboration with the local population to assure that local needs are met in ways that are culturally acceptable and economically viable for the long term. There must also be close coordination with the local NGOs and PVOs and components of the US and coalition governments and international organizations. Working with locally experienced organizations, such as the International Red Cross or Red Crescent or NGOs such as CARE, allows us to leverage their expertise and to seek their guidance in the most effective management of essential services. It also helps to achieve "buy in" by organizations that can appeal to a broader, often international, community in awarding legitimacy to the US effort.

SECTION III – TRAINING AND EQUIPPING (OR DEVELOPING) LOCAL FORCES

The goal of Training and Equipping (or Developing) Local Forces is to help a host nation government (or a surrogate force) to achieve and preserve the internal peace and stability of a country, eliminating an environment that protects or sponsors those who would threaten US interests. This can require destabilizing a country or organization in order to foster political or governmental change or to defeat or neutralize a non-state enemy. Trained local irregular forces can wage IW in support of a cause or in defense of a friendly government under attack or they can be used to disrupt, harass, and neutralize an unfriendly government or other enemy organization. The immediate goals of these forces are to secure national borders or the borders of a sanctuary for the side we support and to reduce ungoverned territory that can provide sanctuary for the enemy. Ultimately, the training program must focus on enabling host nation elements to become more effective partners with the US in maintaining stability.

When waging irregular warfare against a government or other political authority, the objective of training and employing indigenous and surrogate irregular forces is to allow the US and its partners to conduct operations through, by, and with those forces to undermine and defeat an authority hostile to US interests. Working with surrogates can allow the US to achieve its goals surreptitiously. The capabilities, capacity, and will of the USG and its partners in coalition or the host nation to provide external support and assistance to supported forces over a potentially protracted period are decisive for success. The US and our coalition partners must be ready to provide external support and assistance to those surrogate forces for the duration of a protracted conflict. Such support is characterized as:

- Identify or create an indigenous or surrogate organization or movement willing and able to mobilize the host population in the name of its cause and agreeable to accepting our support where our objectives overlap.
- Train the surrogate organization, including training in the US or in coalition nations
- Locate and help defend sanctuary, in rural or urban terrain or in a neighboring country
- Rigorously screen recruits for suitability and loyalty to the cause
- Prepare to invest time and resources in organizing, training, and equipping surrogate forces.
- Key to this line's effort is the US advisory team, comprised of military or paramilitary coalition personnel. The team acts as a gateway between surrogate forces and their external supports. It can provide assessments of the capability of surrogate forces and of their political viability, command and control functions, and help in developing human intelligence networks. In Afghanistan, GPF, SOF and paramilitary advisors provided training, equipment, money, combat leadership, and highly effective linkages to US airpower, which led to our quick success against Taliban and al Qaeda forces.

When waging IW in partnership with a friendly government or other authority, against an insurgent or terrorist threat, the key element is to avoid training and shaping supported forces so that they "mirror image" US forces. Imposing US models on host nation organizations and host nation thought processes rarely produces happy results. Training must support programs and capabilities to solve problems in a manner that can be sustained by the host nation and in ways that are culturally acceptable to the host population. The goal of the training effort is to produce local forces capable of engaging in the types of combat and non-combat operations described in the six lines to shrink usable adversary terrain, gain control over any ungoverned regions, and to eliminate enemy bases. The sooner local forces can undertake and sustain these activities, the sooner US and coalition forces can withdraw from the country, thereby certifying the legitimacy of local forces of the government authority they represent. This can be achieved by:

- Use the US Mission's Country Team and host nation authorities for their insight, advice, and guidance
- Infiltrate criminal and other "wild" elements for informational and control purposes, as the USG very effectively won Mafia support for Patton's invasion of Sicily
- Prepare to take immediate combat action against illegal activity and hostile actors
- Use economic and military aid to gain and maintain leverage with the supported government or authority
- Develop human intelligence resources to penetrate ungoverned areas
- Target aggressive security assistance and capacity building programs on friendly nations suffering insurgency, internal terrorism, narcotrafficking, organized crime or those elements driving racial and religious genocide
- Develop new foreign area officer programs, investing in life-long, in-place military expertise, altering military presence in embassies to include experts in irregular warfare and strategic planning, and changing the primary thrust of US security assistance organizations to problem solving and enhancing host nation stability and capacity building.
- Orchestrate and prioritize theater security cooperation plans for optimal effect and resources aligned to support key efforts. Capacity building should become a military priority, embraced by the Department of Defense and the US Government as part of ongoing efforts to defeat irregular threats.
- Develop and mature relationships with friendly nations and their forces or with surrogate or potential surrogate forces.

SECTION IV – COMBAT OPERATIONS

The goal of Combat Operations is to neutralize the enemy's power to use violence as a means to coerce the local population into support of action or policy that threatens US

interests. This includes attacks on hostile regimes or states and against non-state organizations. The most direct means to achieve that objective is to demonstrate, with combat power, the enemy's incapacity to protect himself and, by extension, the population he claims to defend and seeks to coerce. IW combat operations physically isolate the enemy from the host population and international support while protecting supported forces, their clandestine infrastructure, and the population. Our combat operations will destroy adversary capabilities when that is useful in the overall campaign design. In conducting combat operations, it is equally important to demonstrate fair and proportional response to enemy attacks and to show humane concern for collateral damage and death. Our forces should be "no better friend and no worse enemy." By these means, combat operations contribute to the campaign's overall objective of winning popular support.

Combat actions must be developed in the broader context represented by all of the lines of operation. Sometimes decisive combat can bring failure to the larger goals of a campaign. Santa Ana's no quarter victory at the Alamo led to the complete failure of his war aims. For this reason, IW operations rarely focus on decisive combat actions. Instead, IW aims to build up our side while disintegrating and discrediting our adversary and while seeking to persuade the population to join our side.

A key to combat operations in IW is the idea of out-thinking and adapting faster than the enemy operates in order to deny him the ability to appreciate or maintain cognizance of the combat situation. Learning and adaptation is the key. To "out-adapt" our enemies in this way, US and coalition forces must use combat in combination with all of the other lines of operation to confound and neutralize the enemy. The FARC (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia), a narcotrafficking organization espousing Marxist revolution as its cover, is expert at applying this technique, using it against the legal government of Colombia and by application of logical lines of operation similar to those described here to gain control of a large portion of Colombia. The FARC can be neutralized by an adaptive attacker using an unexpected tempo. Attributes of IW combat operations are:

- Irregular warriors seek to avoid direct combat except at times and places of their choosing.
- They will conduct some combat actions solely for their informational or intelligence value or their psychological impact on an enemy or the local population.
- Irregular warriors are patient and persistent. They are agile and adaptable, their combat tempo giving an appearance of power and ubiquity.
- They seek to blend into the terrain, avoid establishing large formations too easily attacked, eschew obvious uniforms, and attack from their disguise in plain sight.
- IW small unit leaders and those small unit leaders fighting against them carry more of the burden for finding, fixing, and fighting. For that reason, combat intelligence and local cultural information must move up, down, and horizontally rapidly to provide commanders at all levels with the necessary data to neutralize or defeat a fighting enemy.
- IW combat operations focuses on physically isolating the enemy – a hostile government and its officials or a force of irregular warriors, such as insurgents or

terrorists – from the host population while denying the enemy the opportunity to do the same to us.

- IW combat operations can be waged in support of conventional combat operations in a traditional state-on-state conflict or conventional operations can be waged in support of IW operations, as in the use during the Vietnam War of Long Range Patrol teams to lure North Vietnamese Army elements into ambush by conventional units. The IW component of a conventional campaign can include establishing a competing insurgency or a shadow government, unconventional warfare, psychological operations, and counterintelligence activities. IW activities also can be conducted as an offensive independent of but supplemental to conventional combat operations, as partisans functioned in World War II. This technique has the advantage of limiting US involvement and/or the appearance of involvement to prevent a conflict's escalating beyond the limits allowed by achievement of US objectives.
- The eroding quality of IW combat operations makes it generally less expensive in the lives of our troops, in national treasure, and in collateral deaths than conventional warfare.

Unconventional warfare (UW) is the most common form of offensive irregular warfare. Its application in the future may be:

- Against hostile states or occupying powers, UW operations generally are conducted in support of conventional campaigns. (This type of UW operation is well established in doctrine and need not be addressed here.)
- Against non-state actors operating within states with which we are not at war, UW may be conducted on its own. In these increasingly common cases, UW must be carefully integrated into a comprehensive IW campaign plan that balances UW combat with all of the other lines of operation.
- Against non-state actors operating outside of the control of a government or which hide within or behind the power of a hostile state, as Al Qaeda hid behind the Taliban government of Afghanistan, UW may lead the way for a conventional combat attack.
- In addition, the US military must be prepared to support USG civilian agency covert campaigns to establish or support insurgencies, counterinsurgencies, counterterrorist, and other IW activities against hostile governments and organizations.

The complexity of all of these problems and the flexibility of UW as the primary offensive tool of IW calls for substantial further development of UW capabilities.

Not yet fully developed is the emerging requirement to confront non-state actors using UW. This application is beyond the scope of more traditional uses of UW. First, non-state actors do not have the same centers of gravity or the traditional infrastructure that have been the critical nodes for planning UW attacks. Second, unlike more typical UW campaigns against hostile states or occupying powers, future campaigns will be conducted against non-state actors operating within states with which the US is not at war. Finally, UW campaigns

also will be conducted against non-state actors existing outside of the normal institutions of a state or hiding within or behind the laws of a hostile state. This type of UW campaign is like trying to remove a parasite living in a host without harming to the host itself.

Establishing or supporting insurgencies is another offensive use of IW. As hostile state or non-state affiliated or transnational irregular threat organizations continue to threaten security regionally and globally, the US will require an offensive irregular warfare capability and capacity to disrupt and defeat these organizations. This requires that Joint Force planners design IW campaigns that integrate activities across all logical lines of operation to defeat non-state affiliated or transnational irregular organizations morally, mentally, and physically. The careful integration of US Joint Forces, partner nations, host nation elements, and surrogate force operations must be orchestrated carefully along the six logical lines of operation.

In this process, the increasing role of the General Purpose Forces (GPF) in IW must be examined. In keeping with the direction of the Department to have GPF forces more "SOF-like" in their capabilities, some missions traditionally associated with SOF increasingly will be conducted by GPF. These expanded roles can include:

- Building Partner Nation Capacity (BPC) to include training, equipping, and advising large numbers of foreign security forces
- Developing civil society in ungoverned and under-governed areas
- Conducting Operational Preparation of the Environment (OPE)
- Conducting strategic reconnaissance
- Conducting more focused "direct action" or raids than has been the norm for the GPF
- Operations to deny sanctuary to an enemy.
- Maintaining persistent, low-visibility, global presence
- Identifying, finding and fixing terrorists and other irregular enemies
- Waging ideological battle
- Mapping and characterizing human networks
- Developing GPF capabilities to complement or support UW

Rebalancing GPF capabilities and capacity toward IW will enhance their adaptability and improve their capability to operate against potential adversaries who control and can mobilize populations to resist and oppose US military intervention.

Success in IW combat revolves around the ability to understand the cultural landscape of the conflict zone and the ability to win the intelligence battle. The two are intimately related. The greater the understanding of the people – their culture, politics, lifestyles, and ambitions – the greater the accuracy of intelligence, and the more successful the IW campaign.

- To that end, IW combat focuses first on providing security to the host population and second on isolating the enemy from the population. Evident concern for the

safety and welfare of the people caught in the crossfire of combat helps to win hearts and minds. Eventually, policing or constabulary activities may take precedence over combat action, a positive sign that the enemy's power is being eroded and that popular approval is moving to our side.

- Combat units need to base as close as possible to the host population. "Hugging" the host population allows them to provide the people better protection from enemy attack and intimidation and to develop intelligence and broadcast information. By appearing to share the people's danger, these forces win the confidence of the people.
- To help win and keep popular approval, large unit operations must be minimized and large, firm bases not used. Both tend to separate US or supported forces from the people from whom they seek support and intelligence. Both tend to create an attitude of dissimilarity in US or supported forces that too often allows or ignores the collateral damage that costs public support.
- Under severe combat pressure, most IW forces will devolve into smaller units or cells or disperse for a period of dormancy as a protective measure. At this point, the IW enemy can be destroyed most easily. The growing confidence of the people in our side's eventual success and their support can make this mopping up stage a success. Abu Muswab al-Zarqawi was targeted and killed by US forces in Iraq thanks to a political decision by leaders of the Sunni community, reflecting growing hope in success of the US effort.

The most effective combat operation is one that removes a threat prior to that threat gaining a foothold. Effective security cooperation, partner capacity, and regional awareness can eliminate threats with minimal combat.

SECTION V – GOVERNANCE

Governance is about providing the political stability that will remove the threat. Waging IW requires us to erode the ability of a political authority to control a population while countering IW requires supporting a political authority. Effective development of governance or support to legitimate authority can pressure an adversary to change in the direction we desire. Effective if not necessarily ideal government in the post-conflict area can prevent a return of the problem that provoked US action.

- **When waging irregular warfare** against a government or other political authority the objective is to neutralize, disrupt, and eliminate existing political authority by undermining its ability to defend itself and its territory, to enforce its own laws, and to command a population and a territory, with the goal of replacing that authority with another. The targeted authority may be a government, a non-state actor affiliated with a government, a non-state or insurgent organization, a local or transnational rogue organization. Against the political power of the target, the irregular warrior must pose a viable and appealing alternative that gradually

establishes its own capacity to govern or restores government by assuming effective control of the extent bureaucracy

- **When waging IW,** in partnership with a friendly government or other authority, against an insurgent or terrorist threat, the objective is to disrupt an IW attack on a friendly government or other political organization by strengthening that entity's capacity to provide the services expected of its people, thereby winning for the entity to popular support that defeats an IW attack. To do that, the intervening joint force must assess, in collaboration with local authorities, the state of the existing government's bureaucratic and legal systems and help those authorities to repair or replace them. It must seek out the causes of the IW campaign against the local authority and persuade the authority to relieve those popular grievances that caused the people to abandon the authority. All of this may seem far a-field from traditional war fighting tasks, but restoring a nation's capacity to govern itself is critical to early resolution of the conflict and early departure of US troops. The governance line largely is a US and allied civilian agency responsibility, but military forces will need to begin the work and continue the work – including applying their own logistics, organizational, and administrative and judicial capacities to provide temporary relief for the people – until civilian agencies arrive.

- **Governance is a key element in the achievement of our security objectives.** Governance in an IW campaign aims at rebuilding or restructuring a host nation government along locally acceptable lines. The US and its coalition partners must work with the indigenous people to develop a government plan satisfactory to them and which promises the security from threat that we need. Barring a totally ungoverned area, as in parts of sub-Saharan Africa, it is as much a mistake as an insult to attempt to set up a government for another people. That guarantees resentment and the risk of renewed conflict. Even at the end of World War II, we did not restructure the German and Japanese governments so much as require that they adapt to democratic norms that would prevent those countries from threatening us again. Further, the evident ability of the indigenous government to deliver positive results is vital to its winning the allegiance of the host population. Joint force efforts to help provide water, sewerage, roadways, markets, and other governmental services must give credit to the local government to increase its popular legitimacy. Critical to this effort is coordination across US and coalition agencies to leverage maximum capability in rebuilding a post-conflict host nation government and in presenting united support for that government to prevent a resurgence of conflict.

SECTION VI – ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The goal of Economic Development is to reduce the root causes of popular discontent to prevent further conflict. It focuses on strengthening or eroding a host nation government's power and reducing an enemy's ability to exploit the discontent produced by economic failure. These operations seek to promote economic development for long-term

stability. Successful long-term economic development provides a benefit to our supporters and strengthens the legitimacy of those we support.

- **When waging irregular warfare** against a government or other political authority the objective is, the focus is on providing a viable economic alternative to that offered by the adversary and on waging economic warfare on an enemy. As a conflict proceeds, US and joint forces may promote economic development first in the areas under the *de facto* control of their or supported forces in order to lay the foundations for eventual national success guided by a restored or a replaced government or other political authority. To do this, the joint force needs to prepare well in advance, in close collaboration with local authorities or other national elements, short-term and long-term economic plans to do such things as provide infrastructure to improve the internal economy, offer microfinance to farms and small businesses, and to open the host nation to wider international trade. At the same time, US and joint forces can use legal means to attack the financial resources of an enemy – seize his bank accounts and other assets, close down his private money transfer systems, stop his ability to pay his forces and buy their supplies – in order to degrade the enemy's ability to carry on hostilities.

- **When waging IW** in partnership with a friendly government or other authority against an insurgent or terrorist threat, the focus is on supporting to existing host nation and local business. All efforts are focused on improving employment and economic well-being. Key programs should give high priority to development of local business. This effort has to be carefully balanced with security against as increasing employment or logistics support contracting opens opportunity for attack and sabotage by an adversary.
  - Success in the other lines of operation is critical to providing the benign security environment necessary to allow effective, long-term economic development.
  - As massive unemployment promotes discontent and opens the way to further conflict, the first economic action to be taken usually to provide employment – which could be on public works projects – for the young men and women who are the primary source of recruits for enemy irregular forces.
  - US and coalition economic efforts cannot end with the cessation of hostilities but must be carried on for whatever additional time is needed to help assure economic self-sufficiency for the supported side after US and coalition efforts cease.

If economic efforts end with the cessation of hostilities and before there is evidence that local self-sufficiency, security objectives will likely never be achieved. Those efforts must be carried on for whatever additional time is needed by US or joint civilian agencies or international or nongovernmental organizations to assure economic stability. Alternatively, the US simply may assist the host nation in reducing the underlying social, economic, and political conditions that gave rise to the problem.

CONCLUSION

Irregular warfare is about a comprehensive approach comprehensively applied to a problem. Faced with our dominance of conventional warfare, our enemies will continue to adapt their tactics and means beyond the confines of conventional warfare and regard irregular warfare as an effective means to oppose our conventional warfare power and render it irrelevant. They believe that we lack the capabilities necessary to stymie their plans and the long-term capacities required to wage a protracted irregular warfare campaign to neutralize or defeat their efforts.

We must study and understand IW not only to counter irregular warfare but also to use it against our enemies. US military forces and civilian agencies must organize, train, and equip for protracted irregular warfare on a local, regional, or global scale. We need to relearn and to incorporate into our military training and education programs the lessons of our past experience in IW.

- Military planners and civilian policy makers must learn to design IW strategies and campaigns appropriate for IW in confrontation with every possible state and non-state actor who would be our enemy.

- Policy makers and military planners must shift from designing and executing campaigns that focus on decisive combat operations to concentrate instead on comprehensive campaigns that employ all of the elements of national power to achieve US national security objectives.

The 21st century is shaping up as a period of global irregular warfare for which the United States and its military must adapt or risk the most serious consequences. The key to our success in the years ahead is to achieve coordinated, multi-agency prosecution of IW. This requires that the US Armed Forces and US Government civilian agencies develop a new way – an IW way – of thinking about, designing, planning, and implementing campaigns in defense of the nation.

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