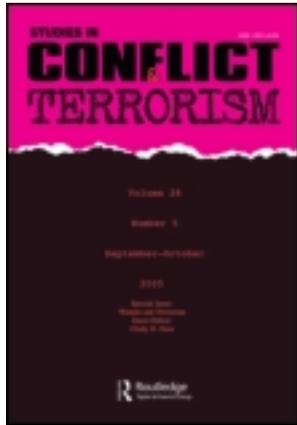


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The Future of Insurgency

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The Future of Insurgency

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What are key historical trends in insurgencies? And what do these findings suggest about the future of insurgency? We examine four aspects: causes of insurgency, outside support, strategies, and tactics. Based on an examination of quantitative and qualitative data, we make several arguments about the future. China could become increasingly involved in supporting insurgencies and counterinsurgencies if its economic and military power continues to increase and its global interest expands. In addition, insurgent groups will likely require less time to achieve high levels of sophistication for improvised explosive devices and other asymmetric tactics, which we expect they will use against more powerful mechanized counterinsurgent forces. We also expect that insurgent groups may take advantage of commercially-available technology to communicate, distribute propaganda, and recruit individuals. In addition, insurgents will likely make further use of encryption, anonymizing services, location-masking tools, and other related technologies to protect their online activities.

Over the past several decades, the United States and other major powers have faced a significant challenge from insurgent groups. Take Afghanistan, for example. In early 2012, there were approximately 432,000 counterinsurgent forces in Afghanistan—90,000 U.S. soldiers, 30,000 North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) soldiers, 300,000 Afghan National Security Forces, and 12,000 Afghan Local Police.¹ In addition, the United States spent over \$100 billion per year and deployed a range of sophisticated platforms and systems to support efforts against the Taliban and its allies.² The Taliban, on the other hand, deployed between 20,000 and 40,000 forces (a ratio of nearly 11 to 1 in favor of counterinsurgents) and had revenues of roughly \$100–\$200 million per year (a ratio of 500 to 1 in favor of counterinsurgents).³ Afghan insurgent groups also exploited a range of asymmetric strategies and tactics, from tribal engagement to the use of improvised explosive devices (IEDs). The Taliban's ability to utilize limited resources and conduct a sustained insurgency against the United States and its allies is remarkable. But is it also a harbinger of the future—that insurgent groups will increasingly confound major powers?⁴

Examining the future of insurgency—which we define as a protracted political–military activity directed toward subverting or displacing the legitimacy of a constituted government and completely or partially controlling the resources of a country through the use of irregular military forces and illegal political organizations—is particularly apropos.⁵ Some studies have found that while states routinely defeated insurgents in the past, this pattern has reversed as insurgents have increasingly beaten counterinsurgent forces or achieved

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negotiated settlements.⁶ To help understand the future of insurgencies, this article asks two questions. First, what have been key insurgency trends over the past several decades? Second, what do these findings suggest about the future of insurgencies over the next decade? We focus on four aspects of insurgency: causes, outside support, strategies, and tactics. Each category represents a key component of insurgency.

We make several arguments about the future. First, we conclude that China could become increasingly involved in providing outside support to insurgencies—and counterinsurgencies—over the next decade. This insight has important implications regarding which geographic regions the United States should be concerned about, what types of assistance these sponsors may provide, and how to counter them. With China, for example, we argue that while its leaders are likely to remain cautious over the next few years, several factors could increase China's interest in assisting insurgents and counterinsurgents over the long run, including (1) a continuing rise in its economic and military power, (2) an increase in its global interests, (3) limited power projection capabilities, and (4) progress on its capabilities to support insurgencies and counterinsurgencies.

Second, evolving technological developments are likely to continue to impact the tactics of insurgent groups. Groups will require less time to achieve high levels of sophistication for IEDs and other asymmetric tactics, which we expect insurgent groups to continue using extensively against powerful mechanized counterinsurgent forces such as the U.S. military. In addition, we expect that insurgent groups will increasingly use the Internet and social media forums to communicate, distribute propaganda, and recruit individuals. By 2015, Internet Protocol (IP) traffic from wireless and mobile devices is likely to surpass traffic from wired devices; the largest increases are likely to occur in Latin America, the Middle East, and Africa—all areas of potential instability. These developments, combined with open-source and commercial encryption technologies, are likely to increase insurgents' ability to learn and innovate.

Third, we argue that certain aspects of insurgency may remain fairly constant over the next decade, including the causes of insurgency onset and insurgent strategy. As has been the case historically, future insurgencies are most likely to form in poor countries with geographically amenable conditions. Moreover, for the foreseeable future, insurgent groups are likely to use either a guerrilla or a conventional strategy that aims to overthrow national governments or to secure territorial autonomy. A "global insurgency strategy," in which territorial control is less important, is unlikely given that all militants—including Al Qaeda and its allies—still must overthrow governments to achieve their goals.⁷

The article is organized into five sections. The first explores the outbreak of insurgencies. The second section examines insurgent strategies and implications for the future. The third analyzes outside support to insurgents from state and non-state actors. The fourth assesses insurgent tactics. The fifth discusses implications for counterinsurgency.

Onset of Insurgency

Why are some countries more vulnerable to insurgency than others? Which indicators foreshadow the outbreak of insurgencies? Have these indicators remained constant, or have they changed over time? This section examines patterns in the causes of insurgency. We review three leading explanations: greed, grievance, and state capacity. These explanations provide useful guideposts for identifying conditions associated with insurgency onset. We describe key variables associated with each, critique their internal logic, and assess their evidentiary strength before discussing their implications for future insurgencies.

Historical Trends

The first argument is economic. The incidence of insurgency is explained by circumstances that generate profitable opportunities for violent entrepreneurs.⁸ In this view, insurgencies are caused by greed. Building on a significant body of economic literature, this argument likens violence to an industry that generates profit from looting, with its proponents suggesting that insurgents may be “indistinguishable from bandits or pirates.”⁹ Economic opportunities available to insurgents often include the extortion of natural resources and other primary commodity exports, such as food, nonfood agriculture, oil, and other lootable materials, such as diamonds. Researchers have linked levels of primary commodity exports to a country’s risk of civil war by generating opportunities for looting and extortion, making rebellion feasible or perhaps even attractive.¹⁰ One such study estimates that a country in which primary commodity exports comprise one-third of its Gross Domestic Product (GDP) faces a risk of civil war some 20 times greater than a similar country whose economy does not rely on primary commodity exports.¹¹

In some resource-dependent countries—such as Nigeria and Sierra Leone—the occurrence of war appears consistent with this argument.¹² Yet there are several challenges with economic explanations of insurgency. First, a major concern is the questionable use of proxy variables used to test the greed hypothesis. For example, Collier and Hoeffler use low literacy as a proxy for greed. But an equally strong argument can be made that low literacy proxies grievance as well—particularly in poor countries, such as Liberia and Sierra Leone, in which anger at collapsing education systems has played a role in triggering conflict. Second, the greed argument reduces insurgency to mere criminality, and as a consequence, glosses over important political and social dynamics that underlie most armed rebellions. This enhances theoretical parsimony, but comes at the potential cost of misdiagnosing the dynamics that propel nascent proto-insurgencies into full-blown rebellions. Third, cross-national evidence does not favor the greed hypothesis to the same extent that its proponents claim. Subsequent influential studies have found little systematic relationship between primary commodity exports and civil conflict in their models of insurgency.¹³

The second explanation emphasizes ethnic or religious grievances among the population. A common view is that tensions make highly diverse societies particularly prone to insurgency and civil war.¹⁴ Ethnic and religious ties, it is claimed, are stronger, more rigid, and more durable than the ties in ordinary social or political groups.¹⁵ Hypernationalist rhetoric or atrocities can harden identities to the point that appeals for conciliation are unlikely to be made and implemented. As a result, restoring civil politics in plural states shattered by war is difficult because war itself can undermine potential cooperation.¹⁶

The evidence for grievance-based explanations is mixed. One prominent study of civil war incidence found evidence that proxies of the grievance argument correlate with the outbreak of rebellion.¹⁷ The analysis suggested, for example, ethnic fractionalization has a statistically significant quadratic relationship with civil war, and that democracy is negatively related to the incidence of civil war.¹⁸ However, subsequent studies have cast doubt on these findings.¹⁹ They suggest that insurgency is no more likely in diverse countries or in countries with repressive, autocratic governments once per capita GDP is controlled for.²⁰

Third, numerous writers argue that governance and state capacity—conceived as an index of factors that includes measures of government effectiveness, corruption, the rule of law, as well as GDP—are associated with the likelihood of an insurgency.²¹ As recent experience in Afghanistan suggests, poor governance can foment and exacerbate insurgency.²² But does the cross-national evidence link bad governance to the onset of insurgencies? The

answer appears to be yes: countries with low scores on governance indicators collected by the World Bank, for example, have experienced more civil wars than similar countries with better scores on these indicators.²³ Per capita GDP is the factor most robustly associated with insurgency: insurgencies are most likely to occur in low-capacity states because financially, organizationally, and politically weak central governments are less likely to prevent nascent opposition from becoming a viable insurgency.²⁴ Because the state is incapable of controlling its own territory, this weakness creates opportunities for insurgent groups to control these areas and challenge the state authority's rule. This is especially true in remote areas of the country with rugged terrain in which insurgents can establish strongholds.²⁵

There is strong evidence in support of this theory. Based on extensive cross-national quantitative data on every country and year from 1945 to 1999 and over 20 in-depth case studies of countries that experienced civil war during this period, scholars found that poverty indeed put governments at a disadvantage vis-à-vis dissidents.²⁶ And consistent with the implication that insurgencies are most likely to occur in areas where governance is particularly costly, geographic data that captures the percentage of mountainous terrain per country also correlates with insurgency.²⁷

Since we are interested in time trends that may reveal information pertinent to the evolution of insurgency, we disaggregated the database by key time periods to evaluate whether these variables' explanatory power was similar for post-Cold War insurgencies.²⁸ The regression results shown in model 2 of Appendix 1 demonstrates that both variables have retained virtually identical explanatory power in the post-Cold War period, suggesting these are enduring conditions that insurgencies exploit regardless of changing geopolitical conditions and technologies. Overall, governance and state capacity is the most convincing explanation for insurgency onset—both intuitively and empirically: insurgencies are likely to develop in rugged, difficult-to-govern countries when governments' capacity to tamp down or co-opt opposition groups is in decline.

Future Implications

The persistent link between poverty, terrain, and insurgency has implications for the future of insurgency. These conditions have remained strongly associated with the onset of insurgencies after the Cold War, suggesting that state weakness and physical sanctuary remain critical ingredients in insurgency despite technological advances that enable virtual mobilization. Insurgents will always search for new ways to pursue their goals, but we expect physical space to remain critical in the future even as technological innovation continues.

Based on this analysis, where are insurgencies most likely to begin? Looking only at poverty—the variable associated in many studies with insurgency—provides some plausible conjectures. Africa is likely to remain a prime site of insurgency. As of 2009—the last year for which per capita income data are available—the ten poorest countries in the world were all located in Africa: Zimbabwe, Democratic Republic of Congo, Burundi, Liberia, Somalia, Niger, Eritrea, Central African Republic, Malawi, and Ethiopia.²⁹ All but Zimbabwe and Malawi have experienced insurgency within the last two decades; Zimbabwe has teetered on the brink of instability for much of that time, while Malawi has also faced recent unrest. The continued poverty in key African countries is consistent with the idea that Africa will be a particularly important zone of instability in the next decade.

The simple model also suggests plausible candidates for instability—likely in the form of insurgency—outside of Africa. The poorest non-African country is Timor-Leste—it ranks 23rd—followed by Afghanistan (24th), Nepal (27th), Bangladesh (32nd), and Haiti (33rd). According to the state capacity model, insurgencies are likely to be associated

with negative economic shocks. In 2011, the countries experiencing the most significant economic declines were Cote d'Ivoire (-5.8 percent), Yemen (-2.5 percent), Syria (-2 percent), and Sudan (-0.2 percent). These shocks coincided with the emergence of insurgencies in Syria and Yemen; Cote d'Ivoire and Sudan both face significant risk of resurgent insurgency.

Insurgent Strategies

We now turn to insurgent strategies. A strategy is an insurgent group's plan for using armed forces and other instruments to achieve its military and political goals. In this sense, strategy should be distinguished from "grand strategy," which is the broader process (usually by a state) of determining vital security interests, identifying the threats to those interests, and deciding how best to employ political, military, and economic resources to protect those interests.³⁰ It should also be distinguished from tactics, which we discuss below in more detail.³¹

Historical Trends

Historically, insurgents have used a number of strategies. One is a traditional Maoist guerrilla strategy. The goal of this strategy is to engage the government in long, costly wars of attrition in which insurgents rely on subversive tactics—both violent and nonviolent—to lower the morale and raise the costs of war for the government.³² Although a Maoist strategy targets opposing armed forces and their support networks, its goal is to destroy or undermine the government's *will*, not necessarily its capacity to fight. It is not a strategy aimed at securing a quick military victory.

A Maoist strategy consists of three phases. The first involves organizing insurgent political and military structures from among the population.³³ One of the primary objectives during the first phase is to persuade as many people as possible—by co-opting or coercing them—to commit to the movement. While a Maoist strategy has generally been implemented in rural insurgencies, it has also been adapted to urban insurgencies. If the insurgents can gradually gain support and achieve initial military successes, they enter the second and longest phase, which is characterized by guerrilla warfare and progressive expansion from stronghold areas. Further victories, if they occur, may cause demoralization, lethargy, and defections from the government. In some cases, these dynamics prompt government or third-party forces to concede or withdraw in defeat, as in Algeria during the 1950s and South Vietnam in 1972. In other cases, insurgents move to a third phase in which they shift to conventional attacks to hasten government collapse or concessions, as in the Eritrean War of Independence.³⁴

Second is a conventional strategy.³⁵ It usually involves skipping Mao's first two stages and focusing on conventional military action against the government. The goal is to win the war decisively by destroying the government's capacity to resist. Insurgent forces may, for example, attempt to capture strategic assets, such as the capital city, communications centers, and bases until the government concedes or is overthrown.³⁶ Recent examples include the Biafra conflict in Nigeria (1967–1970), the Abkhazia conflict in Georgia (1992–1994), and the wars in the former Yugoslavia (1992–1995). In the Biafran conflict, for example, the principal goal of the dominant ethnic group in eastern Nigeria, the Ibo, was to secede. With the exception of a belated effort to conduct guerrilla attacks, military operations were essentially conventional, reflecting the training of the Ibo officers at Sandhurst in Great Britain.³⁷

Table 1
Insurgent strategy, 1944–2012

Strategy	Number of insurgencies	Total share percent
Guerrilla	87	55.77
Conventional	50	32.05
Other	19	12.18
Totals	156	100

Note. Kalyvas and Balcells (2010) coded each war from 1944–2004. We brought their research up to 2012, coding strategies for insurgencies that began after 2004 based on the criteria they used.

A review of 156 internal conflicts from 1944 to 2012 reveals that guerrilla strategies and conventional strategies have predominated: rebels used a guerrilla or a conventional strategy in 137—just under 90 percent—of the cases.³⁸ Of these cases, insurgents used a guerrilla strategy more often than a conventional strategy. Table 1 shows the number of campaigns in which insurgents used each type as their primary strategy and the percentage constituted by each type as a share of total insurgencies during the period.

Of the 156 campaigns in the database, insurgents used a guerrilla strategy in 87 (55.77 percent) and a conventional strategy in 50 (32 percent) campaigns. The remaining cases tended to be wars in failed or failing states whose military and paramilitary forces were weak, fragmented, and consequently relied largely on unconventional strategies—as in Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Zaire during the 1990s. Conflicts of this nature comprise a third type of warfare that does not fit neatly into existing notions of guerrilla or conventional war.³⁹ Such conflicts tend to be of relatively low interest to major powers, since they usually occur in small, poor countries and pit adversaries of limited military sophistication who are less threatening and less useful to powerful countries than insurgencies fighting stronger and more sophisticated governments, which figure more prominently into major powers' strategic considerations.

Patterns of insurgent strategy have not remained static over time. Although rebel organizations have favored a guerrilla warfare strategy, they did so more during the Cold War and in the post-9/11 period than in the intermittent period, as Figure 1 shows.

Insurgent groups grew more reliant on a guerrilla strategy as the Cold War became more entrenched: about three-quarters of insurgencies that emerged in the 1970s and 1980s relied on a guerrilla strategy. The percentage of 1970s insurgencies using a guerrilla strategy (72 percent) was almost 10 percentage points higher than the 1960s cohort (63 percent) and nearly 20 percentage points higher than the 1950s cohort. The only decade in the post-war era when guerrilla warfare was not the most common strategy was the 1990s, in which only 28 percent of insurgencies used a guerrilla strategy. Forty-eight percent of 1990s rebel groups relied on conventional warfare.⁴⁰

The 1990s reversal is at least partly attributable to the fall of the Soviet Union, which triggered major shocks to state capacity worldwide. The strength and repressive capacity of governments that had relied on Cold War arrangements declined; this increased the chances that insurgents could mount attempts to overthrow governments after the Cold War. Where neither state authorities nor insurgents were willing or able to build governance structures that expanded far beyond the capital city, as in West Africa and parts of the Horn, insurgencies fragmented and their strategy resembled warlordism more than classic guerrilla warfare. They tended to be highly local, ethnic, or clan based, and unmotivated to project a broad ideological agenda.

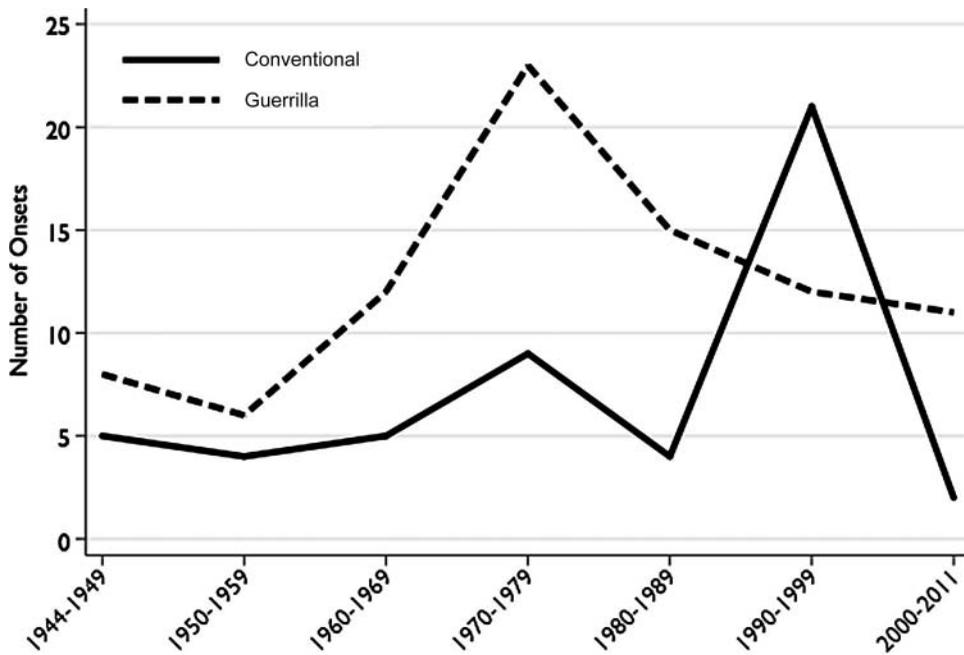


Figure 1. Trends in insurgent strategy by decade. Kalyvas and Balcells 2010; author estimates.

Consistent with the state capacity hypothesis, guerrilla strategy has returned to dominance since 2000—which coincides with the 9/11 period and the United States’s renewed focus on state capacity-building and military assistance to counterinsurgency. These actions may be a double-edged sword. On the one hand, there have been fewer internal wars during the 2000s than in any decade since the 1950s, which may be partly attributable to successful peacekeeping missions and post-conflict efforts that have prevented civil wars from recurring in at-risk countries. On the other, of the 16 insurgencies in our database that began after 2000, 70 percent have adopted a guerrilla strategy—the most difficult strategy for a large, conventional military to counter.⁴¹

Future Implications

What strategies are insurgencies likely to adopt in the future? We expect that insurgent groups will choose between two main strategies over the next decade. We expect insurgencies to continue using a guerrilla strategy when they have asymmetric capabilities. The Taliban’s strategy in Afghanistan, for example, has succeeded in embroiling the world’s only superpower in a prolonged, bloody, and expensive war and triggering the withdrawal of other powerful militaries from Afghanistan, including France and Great Britain. Guerrilla insurgency could increase with a Taliban victory in Afghanistan, providing a pathway for *jihadists* who view it as successful.

Some insurgent movements will still adopt a conventional strategy—especially when their capabilities are roughly symmetric with the government’s capabilities.⁴² This will occur in cases where a government has largely collapsed or where insurgents are able to increase their power because of outside support from states, diaspora, or other entities.

But in general, states will retain superiority over non-state actors and asymmetric warfare techniques will remain the order of the day.

In addition, some scholars have posited a “globalized insurgency strategy” as a third alternative.⁴³ John Mackinlay argues that changes in mass communications and the rise of the Internet have profoundly changed insurgencies and brought the world into a “post-Mao” era.⁴⁴ In global insurgency, physical space is less important and insurgent objectives more ambiguous. Mackinlay argues that states are now “deterritorialized”: no longer is just one country’s civilian population significant in an insurgency, but many spread across the globe.⁴⁵ Insurgents can now use propaganda crafted and disseminated from geographically distant locations to expand their influence as a partial substitute for traditional guerrilla tactics. A global insurgent strategy still requires subversion, but subversion is dispersed and virtual rather than concentrated and intimate.⁴⁶

While intuitively appealing because it highlights technological and demographic changes, there are several problems with the notion of a global insurgent strategy. First, states are still crucial: global movements may seek to capture territory larger than a single state and seek support from populations outside of their state, but they still need to overthrow national governments.⁴⁷ This is even true of Al Qaeda—the motivating example for global insurgency theorists. Over the course of the Arab Spring, for example, Al Qaeda leader Ayman al-Zawahiri advocated the overthrow of *specific regimes* such as Egypt and Syria as a means to establish a pan-Islamic caliphate. Ayman al-Zawahiri treated them as separate campaigns because they required overthrowing different regimes in independent countries.⁴⁸ The same pattern can be seen in many other cases—Yemen, Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Somalia, Afghanistan, and Pakistan, among others—in which Al Qaeda has supported insurgencies to overthrow national regimes. What this shows is that even the most globalized of groups still must confront existing realities of the international system to pursue their goals. This is unlikely to change in coming generations. As a result, insurgent groups will continue turning to the traditional strategies.

External Support

External support can significantly improve the capabilities of insurgent groups. Insurgencies that receive outside support are substantially more likely to outlast counterinsurgency efforts and ultimately overthrow incumbent regimes or force concessions than those without a foreign patron: of the 70 insurgencies in our database that received outside support, the insurgency’s average duration was 7 years—roughly three years longer than insurgencies that did not receive external support. Given the disproportionate costs of countering insurgencies, outside support that sustains insurgency can be tremendously costly for states countering them.⁴⁹

External support also affects the outcomes of insurgencies. The opposition won 15 of the 23 campaigns (65 percent) in our database that had a clear winner or loser.⁵⁰ Insurgents that did not receive support won far less often—39 percent overall. Although the impact of outside support varies on a case-by-case basis, the historical trends demonstrate the power of outside support for insurgencies. This highlights the importance of anticipating not only the likely locations of future insurgencies, but also the probability that foreign governments will use them in ways that threaten U.S. interests.

Historical Trends

Table 2 shows trends in outside support from the mid-1940s through 2012. The table shows the number of insurgency onsets per decade, as well as the number of insurgencies that received external military support in the form of manpower or materiel. As an additional

Table 2
External support for insurgencies, by decade

Decade	Number of insurgencies	External support to insurgents	External support to governments
1940s	16	3 (19%)	5 (31%)
1950s	11	6 (55%)	4 (36%)
1960s	15	10 (67%)	7 (47%)
1970s	19	14 (74%)	13 (68%)
1980s	24	14 (58%)	16 (67%)
1990s	39	20 (51%)	24 (62%)
2000s	18	8 (44%)	10 (56%)

point of comparison, the table also shows the number of insurgencies in which the *government* received third-party support.

Outside support for insurgencies peaked in the 1970s, at the height of the Cold War, when roughly 75 percent of insurgencies received external assistance. However, in the preceding two decades—the decades immediately following the Cold War—the percentage of insurgencies receiving external support rose steadily as the Cold War rivalry and competition intensified. More than half of the insurgencies that began in the 1950s received external support. Outside support increased in the 1960s to approximately two-thirds. And in the 1970s, three-quarters of insurgencies received outside support. As the Cold War drew to a close in the 1980s, the trend in outside support declined. Yet the rate was still relatively high: foreign governments supported almost 60 percent of insurgencies that began during the 1980s. This trend continued in the 1990s, with roughly 50 percent of insurgencies receiving outside help.

Examining trends in external support for governments also reveals an interesting pattern. Table 2 and Figure 2 both show that governments were more likely to receive external support than insurgent groups immediately after World War II. But after the Cold War began, governments were consistently less likely, albeit by relatively small margins, to receive external support than insurgents. The pendulum swung back in the 1980s. During that decade, insurgencies were slightly less likely to receive foreign support than governments were, which is consistent with the idea that the relative value of stability—as opposed to revolutionary change—increased as the Cold War rivalry wound down. This trend persisted through the 1990s and the 2000s, after the United States asserted itself as the world’s only superpower.

Examining patterns of insurgent ideology over time demonstrates how global politics—particularly rivalries involving at least one major power—affect the nature of asymmetric threats. Figure 3 shows trends in insurgency type from 1946 to 2012. It plots the number of new Communist insurgencies and the number of Islamic insurgencies per decade, as well as the total number of insurgencies during each decade to provide a sense of the overall share of each.

Islamic insurgencies were rare from the end of World War II until they began to increase during the 1970s, when militant Islamist ideology began to spread rapidly and Islamist “foreign fighters” began deploying in significantly larger numbers in support of Muslim insurgencies waging *jihad* in other countries.⁵¹ During this phase of the Cold War, communist insurgencies, some of which fought as anti-colonial “national liberation”

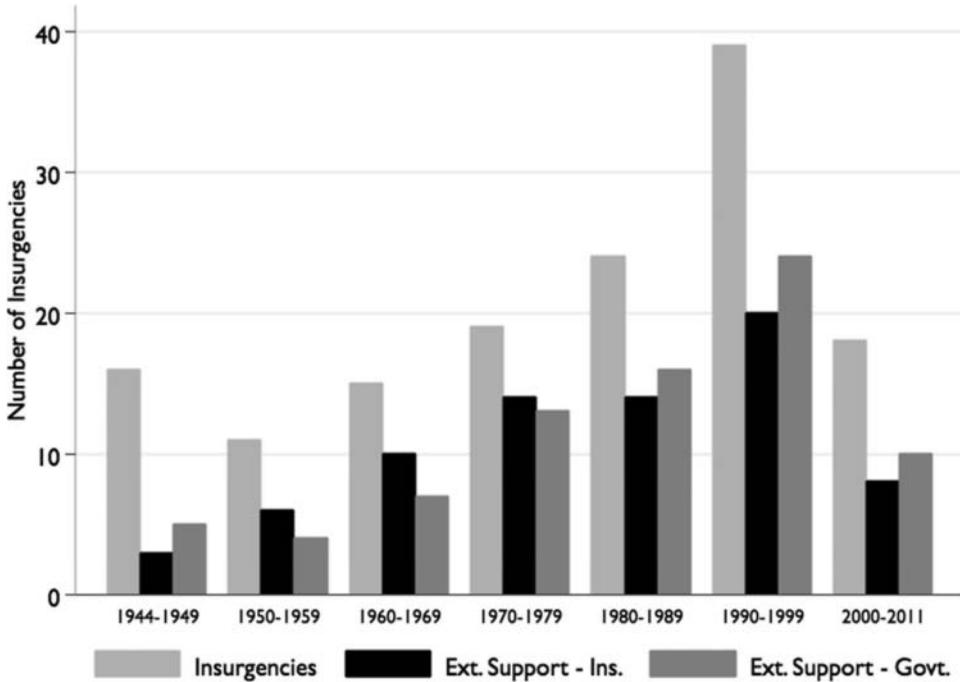


Figure 2. Trends in external support.

movements, were much more common. As Table 3 shows, Communist insurgencies outnumbered Islamic insurgencies from 1945 through 1969 by more than a 3-to-1 ratio.

New Communist insurgencies still outnumbered new Islamic insurgencies during the 1970s, but the margin was narrower, with 12 Communist insurgencies versus 10 Islamic insurgencies. By the 1980s, Muslim insurgencies were being initiated at a higher rate than Communist insurgencies, a trend that dramatically accelerated during the 1990s, which saw a sharp post-Cold War increase in instability overall, but a steep decline in Communist insurgency. Of the 39 insurgencies that began in the 1990s, just 4 involved

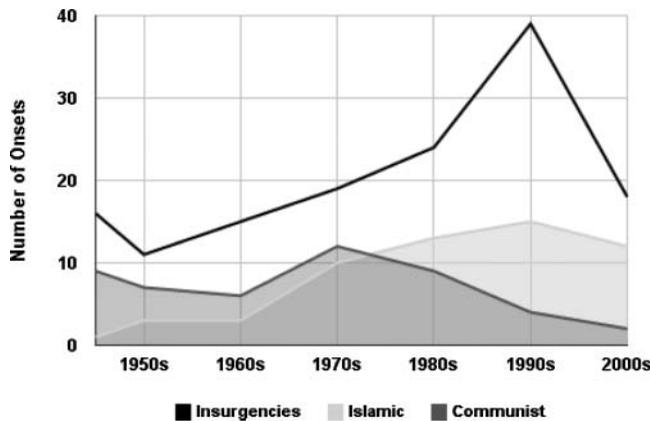


Figure 3. Trends in insurgency onsets, by type.⁵²

Table 3
Number of Communist and Islamic insurgency onsets per decade

Decade	Insurgencies	Communist	Islamic
1940s	16	9 (56%)	1 (6%)
1950s	11	7 (64%)	3 (27%)
1960s	15	6 (40%)	3 (20%)
1970s	19	12 (63%)	10 (53%)
1980s	24	9 (38%)	13 (54%)
1990s	39	4 (10%)	15 (39%)
2000s	18	2 (11%)	12 (67%)

Communist insurgencies. Islamic insurgency, by contrast, was on the rise, with 15 onsets in the 1990s—almost four times the number of new Communist conflicts.

The gulf between Communist and Islamic insurgencies continued to widen after 2000, particularly after 11 September 2001. The former declined to just two—the lowest since World War II—while the latter remained significantly higher, with 12 recorded onsets, despite a dramatic decline in overall conflict, a trend that began in the late 1990s.

What explains this dramatic reversal? The simplest explanation is the Cold War rivalry between the United States and the Soviet Union, in which each side made extensive use of proxy insurgencies rather than risking a direct military confrontation, which threatened escalation to nuclear war. Absent available support from Communist countries after the Cold War, ideological entrepreneurs who opposed Western policies manipulated latent tensions and vulnerabilities to mobilize supporters for their movements. Not all of these entrepreneurs were radical Islamists preaching the gospel of global *jihad* , but Islamist movements organized around sectarian cleavages won out as the most successful.

In sum, two broad historical patterns emerge over the past seven decades. One is that outside support has been beneficial to insurgent groups and improved their capabilities. A second is that global powers—such as the Soviet Union—have generally become involved in supporting insurgents. These powers have shown a strong proclivity to expand their power and influence through proxies—both governments and insurgent groups—in some instances rather than risk direct, conventional conflict.

Future Implications

As the preceding section demonstrated, patterns in the rise and fall of global actors are associated with the nature of outside support for insurgencies. We expect this trend to continue in the future. Given their weakness in size and materiel relative to national governments, insurgents will continue to look to outsiders for arms and materiel, money to buy them, or goods to trade for them. Foreign governments, diaspora populations, and international networks will continue to provide this assistance, in a range of forms, when it suits their interests.⁵³ Sanctuary will continue to be particularly important. In a sanctuary, a group can plot, recruit, proselytize, contact supporters around the world, raise money, and—perhaps most important—enjoy a respite from the government’s counterinsurgent efforts.⁵⁴

There are likely to be a range of future state supporters of insurgents and counterinsurgents, from the United States to Russia and Iran. But the rise of China as a global power

suggests that Beijing may turn to proxies to protect or expand its interests.⁵⁵ Much of the U.S. interest in China focuses on the potential for conventional conflict in Taiwan or the Korean Peninsula. Yet like other great powers, China may also co-opt insurgents and counterinsurgents to pursue its interests.

China is likely to remain cautious in its foreign policy in the near term. With the Chinese Communist Party's 18th Party Congress in late 2012 ushering in a new generation of party leaders, China will likely eschew abrupt changes in foreign policy that would alarm its neighbors or the United States.⁵⁶ Indeed, looming domestic challenges—including slow economic growth, popular discontent, and socioeconomic inequality—will likely force Xi Jinping and other leaders to focus on internal issues. This decision would mark a reaffirmation of Deng Xiaoping's cautious and low profile approach to foreign policy. Over the next ten years and beyond, however, there is more uncertainty about Chinese foreign policy. Several factors may impact the likelihood that China will support insurgents—and counterinsurgents—as part of its foreign policy.

First is Chinese economic and military growth. Numerous projections suggest that China could overtake the United States as the world's largest economy before 2050, and some at least two decades earlier.⁵⁷ Based on present trends, China's defense spending could overtake U.S. defense spending by 2035.⁵⁸ All great powers, including the United States and Soviet Union, have historically supported proxies as a way to expand influence overseas.⁵⁹ During the Cold War, for example, states regularly supported insurgent groups. The United States assisted the Nicaraguan contras, Afghan mujahidin, and Tibetan Buddhist fighters among others. The Soviet Union and China backed guerrillas in Angola, Greece, South Africa, Vietnam, and multiple other countries. Even regional powers—such as Russia, Iran, South Africa, and Pakistan—regularly support insurgencies as a covert foreign policy instrument.⁶⁰

Second, an increase in China's global interests—particularly economic interests—could trigger a need to protect them. With a growing population, China is committed to meeting the country's demand for energy and raw materials, as well as pursuing investment opportunities overseas. Internal debate over how to best protect these overseas interests will likely intensify under the fifth-generation leadership.

Chinese companies and workers increasingly operate in Africa, Latin America, the Middle East, and Asia. Chinese interests in unstable areas may lead it to co-opt insurgents, militias, and other sub-state actors who control territory. The China Metallurgical Group, a state-owned enterprise, has opened a copper mine in Logar Province in Afghanistan, where the Taliban has a substantial presence, and the Chinese are planning to further extract other minerals. In addition, China has oil and gas exploration contracts with Ecuador, Bolivia, Colombia, and Venezuela. Oil contracts and pipeline deals are a major part of China's relations with Central Asian states such as Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan. China's oil exploration interests extend to Burma, Vietnam, and Malaysia. Imports of crude oil constitute the bulk of China's imports from African states.⁶¹ China imports more than half of its crude oil from the Middle East, which holds nearly 62 percent of the world's reserves. Of China's approximately 4.8 million barrels per day of imported crude in 2010, more than 2.2 million barrels, or 47 percent, came from the Middle East. China's second-largest source of crude imports for that year was Africa, where it imported 1.5 million barrels per day, or 30 percent.⁶² Its largest African suppliers of oil are Angola, Sudan, the Republic of Congo, Equatorial Guinea, and Nigeria. Other African countries that export oil to China include Gabon, Algeria, Libya, Liberia, Chad, and Kenya. Several of these countries are

already engaged in insurgencies (including Afghanistan, Colombia, Burma, Algeria, and Nigeria), while many others are at risk.

Third, China's limited power projection capabilities may increase its temptation to support proxies as a feasible, low-cost option. The United States has a substantial advantage over China in several categories: cruisers and destroyers (13 Chinese vs. 83 American), aircraft carriers (0 vs. 11), nuclear-powered submarines (5 vs. 57), principal amphibious ships (1 vs. 29), transport aircraft (57 vs. 847), and tanker and multi-role aircraft (13 vs. 550).⁶³ In the absence of substantial power projection capabilities, Chinese leaders may conclude that a limited deployment of military and intelligence personnel is a more viable option. There is already a concern among some countries in the region—including India—that China could provide assistance to insurgent groups to protect its interests.⁶⁴ Future conflict in Korea, Taiwan, India, or in Southeast Asia could cause Chinese leaders to develop a more assertive foreign policy and provide support to insurgents or counterinsurgents.⁶⁵ With some of China's neighbors concerned about its intentions, covert support to proxies offers an option that maximizes plausible deniability and minimizes a regional backlash.

A fourth factor is Chinese asymmetric capabilities. China has closely examined lessons from recent insurgencies and counterinsurgencies—including the U.S. experience in Afghanistan—and applied them to the PLA's development and modernization programs.⁶⁶ Examples include the use of unmanned aerial systems for intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance.⁶⁷ It has utilized some of these asymmetric capabilities to deal with instability within its borders, including in Xinjiang against separatists.⁶⁸ China has also participated in a range of counterinsurgency and insurgency exercises, including jungle warfare training.⁶⁹

While it is unlikely that China would provide asymmetric capabilities directly to insurgent groups, it could offer intelligence collected from these sources to inform insurgent strategies, operations, and tactics. Over the long-term, improvements in China's command, control, communications, computers, intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (C4ISR) could facilitate aid to insurgencies. The same is true of Chinese advancements in unmanned aerial vehicles, signals intelligence (SIGINT), satellite reconnaissance, cyber warfare, and other technological capabilities.⁷⁰ In addition, China is developing its special operations forces to conduct a range of missions, including support to insurgents and counterinsurgents. Chinese analysts have observed and analyzed the performance of U.S. and coalition special operations forces in Afghanistan and other counterinsurgency campaigns.⁷¹ PLA special operations forces appear to be developing two main missions to support—or counter—insurgencies. The first are special operations strike missions, which include the following areas:

- Conducting psychological warfare
- Raiding enemy command, control, communications, computers, and intelligence assets
- Raiding high-value transportation nodes and logistics depots
- Capturing or destroying airfields
- Destroying enemy air-defense assets
- Harassing and ambushing enemy strategic or campaign command organs, high-tech weapons systems, C4ISR systems, and larger rear-area bases and storage facilities

In addition, Chinese special operations forces continue to develop special reconnaissance capabilities that could be helpful for insurgencies. They include locating enemy command posts, reserves, and logistic sites; scouting enemy terrain; locating possible river crossings and avenues of approach; and computing data to nominate targets.

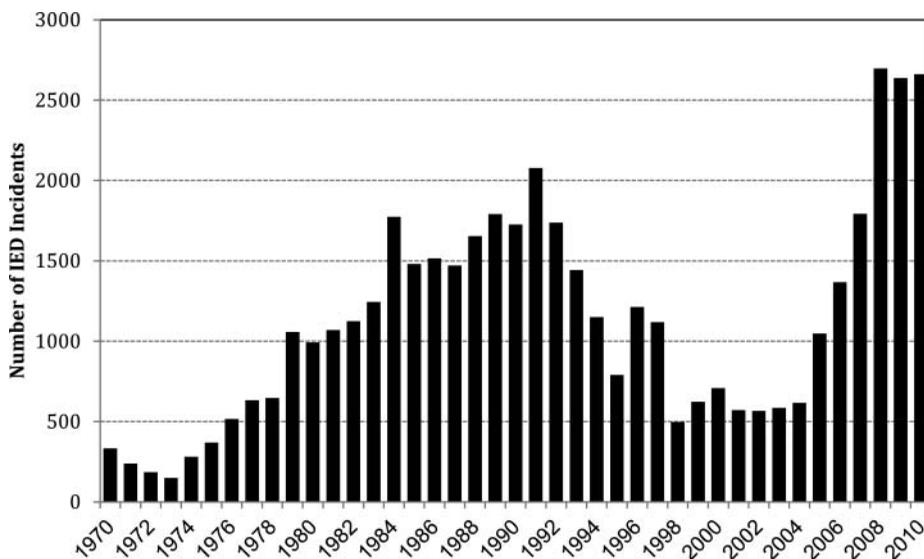


Figure 4. Trends in IEDs, 1970–2010.⁷²

None of these factors guarantee that China will become a major supporter of insurgencies or counterinsurgencies in the future. But we expect that a continuing rise in Chinese economic and military power (and its great power status), an increase in its global interests, limited power projection capabilities, and continuing development of its asymmetric capabilities should increase the likelihood that China will have both the ability and intentions to support proxies. U.S. analysts should closely monitor these developments. China would present a significant challenge if it opted to support insurgent groups. Of particular concern would be its ability to improve the competence of insurgent groups by training insurgent forces and supplying them with material and information.

Insurgent Tactics

A final category includes insurgent tactics. The relative weakness of most insurgent groups requires them to develop asymmetric tactics. Examples include the use of suicide tactics and IEDs, which have become a *deus ex machina* for groups against better-equipped, mechanized counterinsurgent forces.⁷³

Historical Trends

There has been a rise in the use of suicide attacks, which provide insurgents with a relatively cheap and maneuverable weapon that can often kill with chilling precision.⁷⁴ As one study concludes, terrorists and insurgents “have learned that this strategy pays.”⁷⁵ Suicide attacks rose from low levels in the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s to a peak of 469 in 2007, and then decreased to 235 by 2010.⁷⁶ The number of individuals killed and wounded because of suicide attacks followed a similar pattern.⁷⁷

As Figure 4 illustrates, the number of IED attacks rose throughout the 1970s and 1980s, peaked at the end of the Cold War, decreased for half a decade, and then increased beginning in 2004. Insurgents have long used IEDs and other types of remotely detonated or victim-detonated explosives as low-risk, high-payoff weapons. They can terrorize civilians,

demoralize troops, and force counterinsurgents to seek safety in fortified bases—cutting them off from the local population.⁷⁸ In Afghanistan, the Taliban and other insurgents have utilized an assortment of types including: radio-controlled IEDs (RCIEDs); suicide attacks; pressure-activated circuits with diamagnetic, low-metal switch components; and explosively formed projectiles.⁷⁹ More generally, insurgents have developed more sophisticated RCIED switches (using cell phones, personal mobile radios, hand-held transceivers, vehicle security systems, garage door openers, and high-power cordless phones), timed switches (that are electric, mechanical, or chemical), and victim operated switches that come in numerous types.

What explains the broader pattern in IED use? There are several possibilities. One is that IED use is correlated with the number of insurgencies, which increased in the 1950s and peaked in the early 1990s.⁸⁰ The logic is straightforward: the greater the number of insurgencies, the more insurgent groups there are, and the higher the number of IEDs. While intuitive, this argument is flawed. In particular, it cannot explain the rise in IEDs by the end of the 2000s, when the number of insurgencies declined from Cold War levels. Consequently, there was an increase in IED use but a *decrease* in the number of insurgencies.

A second possibility is that a rise in foreign military occupations contributes to an increase in IEDs.⁸¹ There is some evidence that the growth of asymmetric tactics—especially suicide terrorism—is caused by the stationing of foreign combat forces on territory prized by insurgents and terrorists. The logic is that insurgent groups turn to asymmetric tactics like IEDs because they are an effective tool against foreign occupiers when crucial interests are at stake. In short, IEDs are used to secure national liberation from foreign military occupation.⁸² If this is true, we should find the overwhelming number of IEDs in such countries as Iraq and Afghanistan, where U.S. and other foreign troops were deployed to fight insurgent groups. But this explanation has empirical problems. IEDs have been prevalent in numerous countries with little or no foreign forces. According to data from the National Counterterrorism Center, IED use has been high in Algeria, Colombia, India, Indonesia, Nigeria, Pakistan, and Turkey—not just Iraq and Afghanistan.⁸³ In addition, IED use has remained high in Iraq even *after* the departure of U.S. forces, with the monthly IED incident rate in January and February 2012 remaining roughly at pre-withdrawal levels.⁸⁴

A final explanation is tied to counterinsurgent adoption of more advanced vehicles, platforms, and systems and their subsequent asymmetry with insurgent groups. During the nineteenth century, militaries were, in part, organized around “foraging” practices in which armies interacted with the local population to secure food and other supplies during warfare. These practices forced armies to cooperate regularly with local populations, often providing an excellent source of intelligence for counterinsurgent forces. But the combination of industrialization and World War I established a new system of military organization premised on the use of high-tech vehicles and platforms to increase mobility and survivability on the battlefield.⁸⁵ To counter these developments and to make up for the asymmetry in power, insurgents have developed a range of asymmetric tactics, including IEDs, to target counterinsurgent innovations and separate armies from the local population.

Yet not all counterinsurgent forces have access to these kinds of vehicles, platforms, and systems. Some wars are “low tech” and involve poorly equipped government forces that fight against poorly equipped insurgents. These counterinsurgent forces may not receive substantial aid from major powers. There are several examples of low-tech insurgencies, from the wars in Congo-Brazzaville (1993–1997) to Somalia (1991–today).⁸⁶ Consequently, variations in IED patterns may be partly caused by the number of insurgencies involving high-tech counterinsurgents that possess overwhelming conventional military superiority.

There may be other related factors at work as well. Some insurgent groups, for instance, may learn and innovate faster and better than others.⁸⁷

Future Implications

We expect insurgent groups to leverage a range of emerging technologies and techniques—including IEDs and social media—for tactical innovation over the next decade. In particular, technological developments will likely allow insurgents to quickly adapt their tactics. One example is the evolution of IEDs. As noted earlier, we should expect insurgents to continue developing a range of IEDs, especially against mechanized counterinsurgent forces. Procurement efforts by advanced armies continue to focus on mechanized vehicles that place barriers between counterinsurgent forces and the local population. Several Western armies, for instance, have spent considerable resources on Mine Resistant Ambush Protected (MRAP) vehicles. By 2011, the U.S. Department of Defense alone had invested \$35 billion in developing and producing MRAPs.⁸⁸

To keep up with these and other developments, insurgent groups will likely develop increasingly lethal IEDs. In Nigeria, for example, groups like Boko Haram are already conducting sophisticated IED campaigns with aid from Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb. The group has dramatically increased its rate of IED attacks, from only one documented attack in 2009 to nine in 2010 and 88 in 2011.⁸⁹ In particular, Boko Haram has improved its ability to build hollow charges—or directional blast devices—that are capable of causing substantial damage to structures and lightly armored vehicles.⁹⁰ Insurgent groups are also likely to establish increasingly sophisticated homemade explosives (HME) and recipes, in addition to commercial-grade explosives like trinitrotoluene (TNT) and pentaerythritol tetranitrate (PETN).

Perhaps more serious, though, it is taking insurgents less time to achieve relatively high levels of technical and tactical sophistication for IEDs. It took the Irish Republican Army about 30 years to progress from command wire improvised explosive devices (CWIEDs) to remote-controlled improvised explosive devices (RCIEDs) and then to shaped charges. By contrast, it took about six years for Chechen insurgents to make the same improvements, three years for fighters in Gaza, and about 12 months for insurgents in Iraq.⁹¹ In Afghanistan and Pakistan, fighters began with RCIED technology in hand, and quickly progressed to innovations such as diamagnetic, low-metal switch components. This can be explained at least partially by the widening availability of bomb-related information exchanged through person-to-person communications, printed manuals, and the Internet. It may also be attributable in part to the proliferation of consumer electronic and other commercially available technologies that are suitable for making bombs. The compression of the training, execution, and innovation cycles will likely continue to accelerate in the future, forcing governments to exert great effort, innovation, and resources to keep pace with insurgents.⁹² In addition, insurgent exploitation of global positioning systems may allow them to more accurately target fixed or slow-moving targets.

Finally, we expect that insurgent groups will make increasing use of the Internet and social media to communicate, distribute propaganda, recruit individuals, and accomplish other tasks in the future.⁹³ The evolution of information technology may continue to be driven by demand from governments and businesses, but there will almost certainly be a resulting cascade of uses by insurgents. According to analysis from Cisco Systems, IP traffic has increased eightfold over the past five years and may increase at least fourfold over the next five years. Overall, IP traffic is expected to grow at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 32 percent through 2015, which suggests that the number of devices connected

to IP networks could be twice as high as the global population in 2015.⁹⁴ In addition, the estimated growth of IP traffic from wireless devices, which accounted for only a third of IP traffic in 2010, is likely to grow. By 2015, Wi-Fi and mobile devices could account for as much as 54 percent of IP traffic, while wired devices could account for 46 percent of IP traffic. Still, the number of bytes transferred via wired devices may continue to exceed the number of bytes flowing over wireless devices. This growth will not just occur in the West, but may grow at the fastest rates in Latin America (48 percent) and the Middle East and Africa (52 percent).⁹⁵

We expect these developments will have a notable impact on insurgent tactics, supporting what MIT professor Eric von Hippel calls “democratizing innovation.”⁹⁶ Users of products and services, including insurgents, will increasingly be able to innovate for themselves because of the improving quality of computer software and hardware, better access to easy-to-use tools, and easy access to information from the Internet and other sources. These advances will likely make it easier for insurgents to recruit, distribute propaganda, communicate, and identify and track people. Any insurgent with a cell phone camera, for example, can case a target and collect information. Virtually all insurgent groups will likely create websites, enabling geographically dispersed insurgents to establish relationships with one another and raising the possibility of collaboration and cross-pollination. The social networking features of these websites recreate the cohesive virtual communities of traditional extremist forums on stable and technically reliable sites, which are largely sheltered from denial-of-service attacks by intelligence services. When used in combination with more conventional password-protected private forums, mainstream websites can provide insurgents with alternate channels for identifying potential recruits.

Some insurgent groups, such as the Taliban, have begun to take advantage of these developments by disseminating propaganda through mobile phones. The content is uploaded to mobile phone flash media cards or directly onto a phone’s hardware and includes Taliban propaganda videos, martyrdom photos, and fight songs. In addition, the Taliban have developed a short message service (SMS) network, where posts on the group’s websites and Twitter feeds are sent to individual mobile phones in the region. These users then forward the messages to a network of phones through SMS.⁹⁷ In Indonesia, Jemaah Islamiyah and other groups are increasingly adopting these technologies as a new generation is more comfortable working with Internet sites, mobile phones, and computers.⁹⁸

The proliferation of readily available, inexpensive online communications and location-masking tools may also complicate counterinsurgent efforts to collect and exploit insurgent communications. Some insurgent groups have already moved in this direction. The Tehreek-e-Taliban, for example, has used social networking and file-sharing services, remote desktop access software, Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP), and anonymizers to conceal their operational activities, identities, and locations. Insurgents will likely make further use of encryption, location-masking tools, and other related technologies to protect their online activities. Anonymizing services and commercial encryption techniques have been available for several years and will likely continue to proliferate, as will many other commercial technologies.⁹⁹ The widespread adoption of these tools will likely expand as a rising generation of insurgents becomes more familiar with the low cost, ease-of-use, and security benefits of emerging technologies. More sophisticated and innovative groups will be well versed in understanding their operating environments, including the threats posed by ambient or ubiquitous sensing, webcams, biometrics, and other new technologies.

Conclusions

Based on recent trends, insurgent groups and their supporters will likely combine an adaptive mixture of strategies and tactics against more powerful opponents. In practical terms, this has several implications for counterinsurgent forces, including the United States.

First, counterinsurgents need to reconsider their strategies and reliance on mechanized warfare, especially if it decreases regular interaction with the local population. Technological developments in warfare may give counterinsurgents some advantages through the use of sensors, intelligence collection capabilities, vehicles, platforms, and systems. But the tendency of counterinsurgents to separate themselves from the local population by moving around on heavily armored vehicles and hunkering down on bases will likely undermine their likelihood of success. The casualty aversion of many democratic populations, including in the United States, also creates an impetus to minimize risks. Yet Mao's advice is still prescient when he noted that there is an inextricable link in insurgencies "between the people and the troops. The former may be likened to water and the latter to the fish who inhabit it."¹⁰⁰ This reality suggests that counterinsurgents should adapt their strategies, tactics, and even security procedures to collect intelligence, target enemies, disseminate information, and conduct other activity—yet still regularly interact with and, ideally live with, the local population.

It may also mean that outside powers should think carefully before deploying large numbers of conventional forces overseas to conduct counterinsurgency. In many cases, national and local forces may be more knowledgeable about terrain and more legitimate among the local population. In Iraq, for example, part of the success against insurgents in Al Anbar and other provinces was the U.S. military and intelligence community's effective leveraging of tribal leaders and their support networks. The same was true in Afghanistan, where U.S. Special Operations Forces moved out of bases—and into villages—beginning in 2009 as part of the Village Stability Operations program. In some cases, then, a better approach may be an indirect strategy that focuses on small numbers of Special Operations Forces to advise, equip, and support local regular and irregular forces.

Second, the growth of social media provides a range of opportunities to monitor—and counter—insurgent operations and tactics. This includes not only "defensive capabilities" such as monitoring websites, chat rooms, and social media forums like Twitter and Facebook. But it also includes "offensive capabilities" such as targeting insurgents and spreading information that discredits them. Governments need to keep up with insurgent use of encryption, location-masking tools, and other relevant technologies to protect their online technologies. Technological advances will provide counterinsurgents the ability to improve surveillance and data mining, even with insurgent innovations. Yet countermeasures may not always be technical, especially when insurgents resort to more primitive means of communication like couriers.

One of the most illustrative examples of offensive capabilities was in Saudi Arabia, when Al Qaeda attempted to foment an insurgency against the House of Saud beginning in 2002. In addition to arresting or killing insurgent leaders through human and technical methods, drying up funding, and targeting Al Qaeda's support base, the Saudis developed an effective Internet and social media campaign. Insurgent surrenders were highly publicized and repentant militants regularly appeared on television and on-line, giving the impression that desertions were common (even when they were not). In addition, the state used all available outlets—the mass media, Internet, official religious authorities, and the education system—to convey one overarching message: the militants were confused rebels bent on creating disorder and killing Muslims. Newspapers were full of editorials and op-eds

condemning the attacks. Virtually the entire religious establishment—including the Sahwist clerics—decried the bombings. The Saudi government, in short, effectively used information against insurgents to discredit their message—and, perhaps most importantly, to undermine their entire *raison d'être*.¹⁰¹

Finally, there is a possibility that Western challenges in Iraq and Afghanistan—as well as the prospect of conventional conflict in such areas as North Korea and Taiwan—will tempt some to dismiss the importance of insurgency and counterinsurgency in the future. As John Nagl concluded about the post-Vietnam era, U.S. officials “decided that the United States should no longer involve itself in counterinsurgency operations.”¹⁰² Repeating this mistake would be egregious. For the United States in particular, the preponderance of American military, economic, and political power will almost certainly encourage states and non-state actors to adopt asymmetric strategies and tactics against the United States—including fomenting insurgencies. We expect that insurgency will remain alive and well for the foreseeable future.

Notes

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27. See *ibid.*, p. 75.

28. It is worth noting that Fearon and Laitin's dataset only extends through 1999. Given the extensive multivariate country-year data required for these statistical tests, the dataset was not

extended through 2012, unlike the other data sources we draw on. Doing so would be ideal, yet the 1999 cutoff significantly decreases the sample size, which, all else equal, reduces the significance level of the results relative to the full sample. Still, the GDP per capita variable is significant, and the “percentage mountainous” variable just misses statistical significance but has a similar point estimate and sign.

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36. Arreguín-Toft, *How the Weak Win Wars*, pp. 30–31.

37. O’Neill, *Insurgency and Terrorism*, pp. 56–57.

38. Data on insurgent strategies comes from Kalyvas and Balcells, “International System and Technologies of Rebellion.” We recode their “Irregular Warfare” category as “Guerrilla Strategy”; cases coded as “Conventional Warfare” are coded here as “Conventional Strategy”; and cases coded as “Symmetric Unconventional Warfare” were assigned to the “Other” category shown in Table 1. To extend the list through 2012, nine cases were added to the Kalyvas and Balcells database: Yemen (Houthis), Somalia (ARS/UIC), Iraq, Somalia (Al-Shabaab), Pakistan, Rwanda, Libya, Syria, Yemen (AQAP).

39. Scholars refer to this class of cases as “symmetric unconventional warfare.” Kalyvas and Balcells, “International System and Technologies of Rebellion,” pp. 415–429.

40. *Ibid.*

41. Arreguín-Toft, *How the Weak Win Wars*, pp. 30–31.

42. Lacquer, *Guerrilla Warfare*; Arreguín-Toft, *How the Weak Win Wars*, pp. 30–31; Kalyvas and Balcells, “International System and Technologies of Rebellion,” p. 419.

43. See, for example, Schultz, *Global Insurgency Strategy and the Salafi Jihad Movement*.

44. See, for example, Mackinlay, *The Insurgent Archipelago*; Mackinlay, *Globalisation and Insurgency*, Adelphi Paper Volume 42, No. 352 (London: International Institute of Strategic Studies, 2002).

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47. Stephen D. Krasner, *Sovereignty: Organized Hypocrisy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999); Jack L. Goldsmith and Eric Posner, *The Limits of International Law* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005).

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55. See, for example, National Intelligence Council, *Global Trends 2025: A Transformed World* (Washington, DC: Office of the Director of National Intelligence, 2008), pp. 28–39; David C. Kang, *China Rising: Peace, Power, and Order in East Asia* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007); John J. Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2001), pp. 360–402; Arvind Subramanian, “The Inevitable Superpower: Why China’s Rise Is a Sure Thing,” *Foreign Affairs* 90(5) (September/October 2011), pp. 66–78; Gideon Rachman, “American Decline: This Time It’s for Real,” *Foreign Policy* No. 184 (January/February 2011), pp. 59–65; Christopher Layne, “The Waning of U.S. Hegemony—Myth or Reality? A Review Essay,” *International Security* 34(1) (Summer 2009), pp. 147–172; Robert A. Pape, “Empire Falls,” *National Interest*, No. 99 (January/February 2009).

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94. The compound annual growth rate measures the rate of return for an investment over an investment period, such as 5 or 10 years. It is also called a "smoothed" rate of return because it measures the growth of an investment as if it had grown at a steady rate on an annually compounded basis.
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Appendix 1
The impact of state capacity on civil conflict

Variables	(1)	(2)
	Cold War	Post-Cold War
warl	-1.100*** (0.405)	-0.850 (0.534)
gdpenl	-0.335*** (0.0844)	-0.390** (0.175)
lpopl1	0.264*** (0.0852)	0.320** (0.157)
lmtnest	0.187* (0.0994)	0.191 (0.161)
ncontig	0.424 (0.317)	0.633 (0.643)
Oil	0.738** (0.336)	0.468 (0.543)
nwstate	1.450*** (0.409)	2.313*** (0.735)
instab	0.399 (0.294)	0.670 (0.486)
anocl	0.465* (0.281)	0.259 (0.511)
deml	0.450 (0.341)	-1.130 (0.729)
ethfrac	0.191 (0.425)	-0.0886 (0.821)
relfrac	0.0224 (0.595)	0.495 (1.103)
Constant	-6.825*** (0.864)	-6.760*** (1.620)
Observations	4,943	1,384

Results are from logic regressions. Standard errors in parentheses. *** $p < .01$; ** $p < .05$; * $p < .1$.
Source: Fearon and Laitin (2003).