



ISW
★ INSTITUTE FOR THE
STUDY OF WAR

in
2017



A Message from
Institute for the
Study of War (ISW)
Founder and President

**KIMBERLY
KAGAN**



2017 – ISW’S TENTH ANNIVERSARY

The Institute for the Study of War’s 10th anniversary provides a valuable moment to reflect on our history and our vision for the future.

I founded ISW to create an institution outside of government that could serve as a watchtower for America’s security; that could see around strategic corners; that could help our commanders and soldiers in the field; that could affect policy at home; that could explain to the American people what they need to know about their security. Above all, I wanted ISW to be a magnet that brings together many who accept the responsibility that each of us has, as a citizen of this great country, to act to secure it.

For a decade, ISW has had an important impact on national security policy, helped implement military campaigns, pioneered approaches to forecasting national security threats, and created a cadre of next generation leaders. As I reflect on our achievements, I am proudest that ISW is creating a community that spans generations. We are mobilizing people with remarkable experience and wisdom to help those just embarking on their careers, preparing young leaders to meet the challenges ahead.

ISW is committed, as ever, to playing a leading role in helping bring forth a new era that advances America’s liberty, security, and prosperity. We look forward to another decade of working with our many visionary partners to accomplish that mission.

Kimberly Kagan



“I rely on ISW to do everything I do in the national security arena because they are so credible.”

— ISW Board of Directors Chairman (U.S. Army, Ret.) General Jack Keane

“ISW not only informs those who are currently in a variety of different positions in government; it is also helping to develop the next generation of those who will take their place.”

— ISW Board of Directors Member (U.S. Army, Ret.) General David H. Petraeus



INTELLIGENCE ■ EDUCATION ■ INNOVATION

ISW provides decision-makers with timely, accurate, and independent analysis. In 2017, ISW's experts delivered actionable national security insights for civilians in Washington, D.C. and our warfighters deployed overseas.

ISW held its annual Security Conference in September 2017. The event brought together over 200 civilian and military leaders to discuss the convergence of national security threats and explore America's strategic priorities and options.



ABOVE: *U.S. civilian and military officials, allied partners, and private sector innovators take in a conversation on understanding and defending against the Russian threat to the United States.*

LEFT: *ISW Board Chairman Gen. Keane and Senator John McCain discuss America's critical global leadership role and the urgent requirement for rebuilding U.S. military strength.*

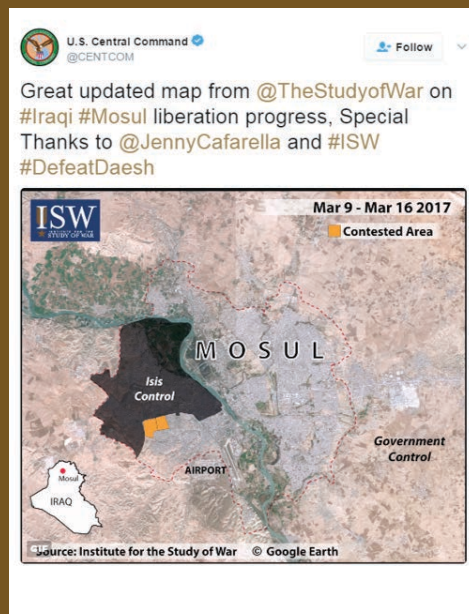
BELOW: *Lt. Gen. H.R. McMaster unpacks the national security priorities for the U.S., including the campaign to defend against North Korea's aggression.*



“ISW is the place to go...for trying to understand the complex threats and challenges we face.”

— National Security Advisor
Lt. Gen. H.R. McMaster

ISW has maintained its commitment to support the warfighter, supporting troops deploying overseas and the personnel supporting their missions.



FAR LEFT: Letter from the Commanding General. ISW continued to support our troops in Iraq with timely analysis.

LEFT: U.S. Central Command leveraged ISW's mapping of the anti-ISIS campaign in 2017, featuring ISW's research in its public updates.



“ISW’s research and analysis are invaluable to the work of the Senate Armed Services Committee in shaping defense policy and strategy and providing oversight of the military on behalf of our men and women in uniform.”

— Senator John McCain
Chairman, Senate Armed Services Committee



LEFT: ISW President Kimberly Kagan welcomed Lt. Gen. Michael Nagata of the National Counterterrorism Center at ISW's signature conference in 2017. The conversation highlighted the importance of bringing the warfighters' perspective into the discussion over future U.S. strategy.

INTELLIGENCE ■ EDUCATION ■ INNOVATION

ISW has earned the trust of military and civilian leaders. ISW has built on its reputation as a trusted resource for our government partners serving in military and civilian roles.



LEFT: *ISW team members brief the leadership and members of the Senate Armed Services Committee on the situation in Syria and Iraq. ISW regularly updates policy-focused government leaders on its forecasts and recommendations for action.*



BELOW: *ISW's Jennifer Cafarella testifies before a public hearing of the House Homeland Security Committee on the al Qaeda threat and U.S. policy in Syria.*

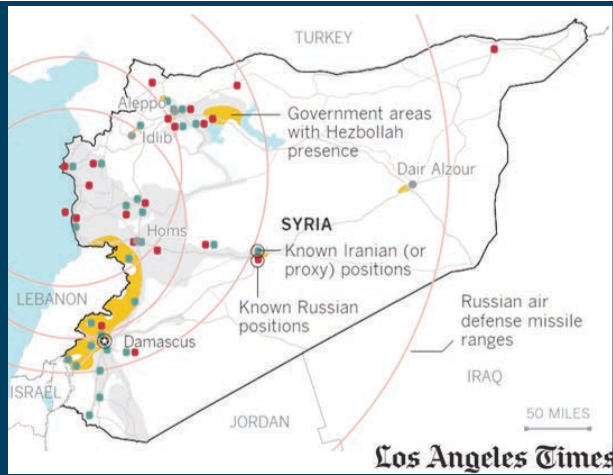


LEFT: *An ISW map depicting the situation in Iraq is a key discussion product at a meeting between Senate Foreign Relations Committee member Senator James Risch and an official from Iraq's Kurdistan region. ISW's products enable U.S. and partner government officials to understand and respond to complex, fast-paced security developments. Source: Twitter*



BELOW: *The ISW team provided its forecast for what to expect in early 2018 in the Middle East to an audience of U.S. government personnel and allied government representatives during an Insight Series event. These interactive discussions help inform the policy debate and foster engagement with ISW's growing network.*

ISW in the MEDIA



The ISW team and its insights continue to help shape the public debate by advancing informed media reporting. ISW's signature maps remained a go-to resource in 2017.

ISW's analysts are regularly called upon by major media outlets to put national security and foreign policy developments in context and provide viewers and readers insights that go beyond the headlines.

LEFT: ISW's Jennifer Cafarella appeared on *The Wall Street Journal's Opinion* video program to discuss recommendations for U.S. policy in Syria. ISW's analysts and products have earned nearly 1,000 media mentions since 2016.

"The Washington-based *Institute for the Study of War (ISW)*, which tracks areas of control and airstrike locations in Syria, noted in a report on Friday that Russia was 'reshaping its air campaign in Syria in order to compel the U.S. into partnering' with Moscow."

The Washington Post July 24, 2017

ISW's products help inform media coverage across the country and the globe.

BY THE NUMBERS

60+
BRIEFINGS
To Senior Executives
Annually

100+
**EMERGING
LEADERS**
Educated Annually

58,000+
TWITTER
Followers

28,000+
SUBSCRIBED READERS

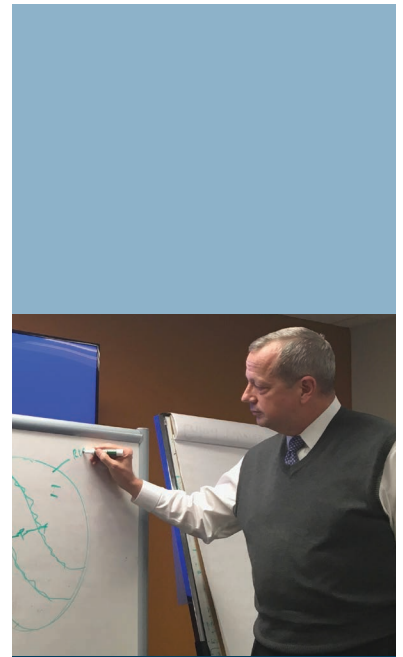
8 million+
Combined circulation of
7 MAJOR PRINT OUTLETS
that regularly cite ISW's work.

INTELLIGENCE ■ EDUCATION ■ INNOVATION

ISW identifies and helps cultivate the next generation of national security leaders. ISW's selective programs educate rising stars, equipping them with an understanding of conflict, military operations, and strategy. ISW's educational programs include the Hertog War Studies Program, ISW's internships, and ISW's emerging analyst program.

The Hertog War Studies Program (HWSP) is an intensive and highly competitive two-week summer program that brings together 18 remarkable students from across America to study the theory, practice, organization, and control of war and military forces.

The HWSP is led by ISW's President Dr. Kimberly Kagan, ISW Senior Fellow Lt. Gen. (U.S. Army, Ret.) James Dubik, and Director of AEI's Critical Threats Project Dr. Fred Kagan. Every year, HWSP alumni are invited to two advanced courses that further deepen the students' thinking on key national security issues.



TOP: Gen. John Allen (U.S. Marine Corps, Ret.) teaches a course at ISW on ISIS and al Qaeda's ideology.

BOTTOM: Gen. Mark Milley, Chief of Staff of the U.S. Army, speaks with HWSP students during the summer 2017 course.

HERTOG WAR STUDIES SPOTLIGHT

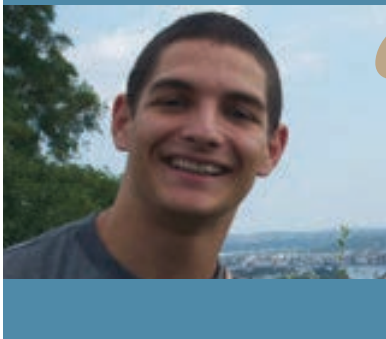
Reed
DIBICH

Stefan "Reed" Dibich recently graduated from Marine Corps Officer Candidates School and commissioned in May 2017.

He first joined Hertog in Summer 2015 for Vance Serchuk's "Lessons of the Iraq War" seminar and later returned for the 2016 War Studies Program.

“[ISW] runs the Hertog course each summer which brings in very promising undergraduates to Washington. They spend an intensive few weeks studying the history of conflict all the way up to the present. I have been a participant in that for the last several years and it is most enjoyable.

— General David (Ret.) Petraeus



INTELLIGENCE ■ EDUCATION ■ INNOVATION

ISW educates 75 exceptional interns a year as part of our rigorous professional development program. Interns conduct intelligence from open sources and directly support ISW's analyst team.

ISW's analyst-level program helps build national security expertise and launches rising stars. ISW's analysts are positioned to have meaningful impact through publications, informing the public debate, and briefing and advising civilian and military officials.



LEFT: Hertog War Studies Student Jessa Rose Dury-Agri speaks to Gen. (Ret.) Stanley McChrystal. Rose is now the Evans Hanson Fellow at ISW.

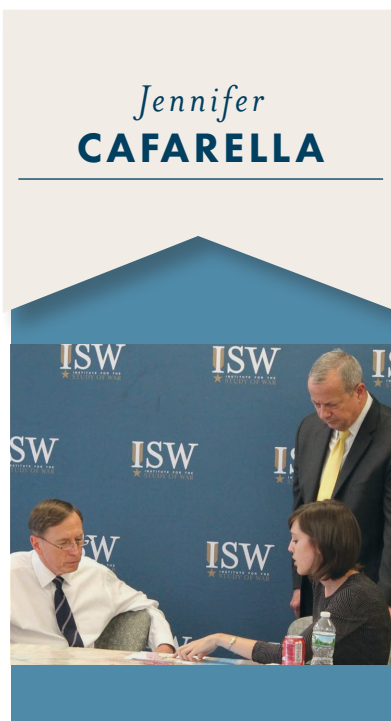
BOTTOM: ISW's Jennifer Cafarella explains the latest Syrian conflict developments to Gen. (Ret.) David Petraeus and Gen. (Ret.) John Allen.

ISW ANALYST SPOTLIGHT

Jennifer is currently ISW's Senior Intelligence Planner and previously its senior Syria analyst. She was a HWSP student in 2013, interned at ISW in 2013-2014, and became a full-time analyst in 2014. Jennifer is widely recognized as a regional expert, has traveled to the Middle East to conduct an assessment for the U.S. military, and has conducted predeployment training exercises. She has published broadly and advises a wide range of U.S. and allied civilian and military leaders.

“I see people unbelievably enthusiastic and passionate about their jobs and their research. They live this stuff every day, every minute.”

— Kevin Mandia, CEO & Board Director, FireEye Inc.





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The ISW team expanded its executive education outreach in the private sector in 2017. ISW's analysts have conducted forecast and methodology briefings for business executives across industries.

These briefings help our partners see over the horizon in a competitive environment and integrate ISW's best practices in planning and analysis.

TOP: ISW conducts a crisis simulation for 70 business executives at the Stephens CEO Summit in Arkansas.

LEFT: ISW briefs business executives in the Georgetown University McDonough School of Business Global Business Initiative.



“The ISW team was exceptional in presenting their analytical methodology to the GBI board who all commented on its usefulness and applicability to a business environment.”

— Maximo Blandon, Chair, Global Business Initiative (GBI), McDonough School of Business, Georgetown University.

ISW ALUMNI SPOTLIGHT

Jeff
DRESSLER



Jeff Dressler serves as the National Security Advisor to Speaker of the House of Representatives Paul Ryan. Before his service in Congress, Jeff was ISW's lead analyst on Afghanistan and Pakistan. In that capacity, he traveled to Afghanistan in 2010 to render assessments to the Commanding General. He started his career at ISW as an intern.

INTELLIGENCE ■ EDUCATION ■ INNOVATION

ISW's collaboration with leaders in technology helps boost the creative engine at the core of ISW's unique work.

ISW fuses traditional social science research and innovative technological methods. ISW is proud to deepen collaboration with its visionary partners.

INNOVATION PARTNERS



ISW employs Linkurious' graph visualization software to investigate relationships among actors across its portfolios where U.S. adversaries and the threats they pose are converging.



ISW leverages Microsoft's Power BI data visualization software in order to uncover trends and patterns in its analysis.



ISW utilizes Neo4j's advanced graph database software to power the analytic discovery process.



ISW relies on Praescient Analytics for its critical support in enabling technology implementation.



ISW applies Ntrepid's timeline software tool as an analytical aid for tackling complex data.



ISW taps into Javelin's creative vision for communicating and designing public-facing platforms.



ISW collaborates with Planet to derive strategic insights from an evolving imagery and geospatial data collection.

ISW'S PARTNERS

ISW thanks its many partners who supported its work in 2017.



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RESEARCH PARTNERS



Critical Threats Project

ISW works closely with the Critical Threats Project (CTP) at the American Enterprise Institute to understand the complex national security threats facing the U.S., forecast the most likely and most dangerous scenarios, and develop robust planning exercises that evaluate various U.S. courses of action. In early 2017, ISW and CTP collaborated to produce a recommendation for the U.S. in Syria based on an evaluation of America's interests, political-security dynamics in the region, and forecasts for the future plans of both allies and adversaries. The report was also based on the testing of 15 different courses of action that were aimed at destroying ISIS and al Qaeda without jeopardizing wider American national security interests or accepting undue cost or risk.

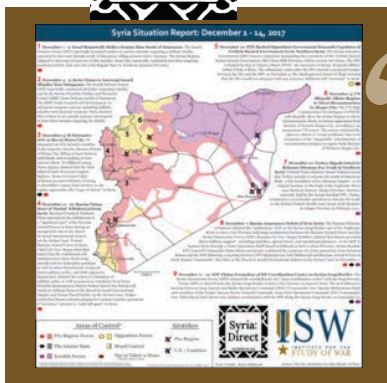


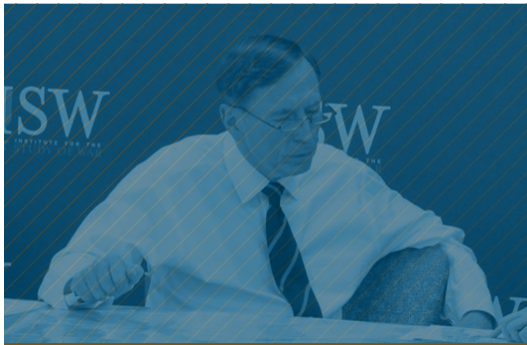
Syria Direct

ISW collaborates with Syria Direct to publish the Syria Situation Report map that details developments in the Syrian war and provides an accessible snapshot of its complex political-military dynamics.

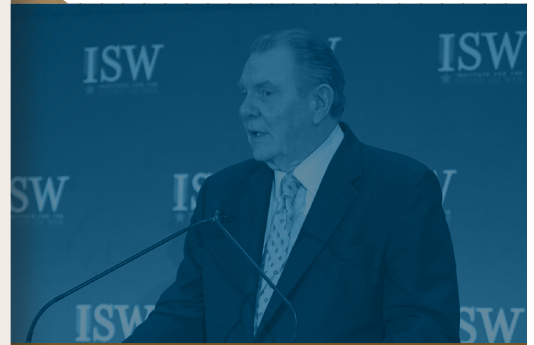
“ISW is a go-to resource for the reporters at Syria Direct. ISW analysts provide in-depth commentary on the political and military situation in Syria that complements and contributes to our independent reporting on the conflict. Our conversations with ISW continue to open up new avenues of investigation and highlight pressing questions about the Syrian war that need to be answered.”

— Syria Direct Managing Director Justin Schuster





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DIRECTORS



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