

I SPHERE

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Joint Information Operations Warfare Center





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Admiral Michael Mullen greets
Imam Al-Moosawi in Bagdad
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Views from the Top - Comments From the Director

Welcome to the winter 2010 issue of IO Sphere Journal. I sincerely hope that everyone in our worldwide Information Operations community enjoyed a wonderful holiday season and has an eventful and fruitful 2010. At the JIOWC we are working very hard this year on several new initiatives that will continue to build on Information Operations (IO) capabilities, as well as, Strategic Communications (SC) in the US Department of Defense. It will be a very exciting year for the field of IO.

This issue of IO Sphere is titled: "Engagement." The term "engagement" has several different meanings depending on the context. In a national defense and security policy and planning context, the term has become an important word for many in the US defense community. It is used to describe the requirement of military commanders to grasp and come to terms with the need to communicate with all audiences and stakeholders in their area of operations, as well as their area of interest. In fact, an argument can be made that in most contingency operations the area of interest is global, as the world's attention will be focused there for an inordinate period. The speed and abundance of communications technology has drastically made the military decision maker's task far more complicated while simultaneously offering greater access to information and decision making tools. I would argue that the abundance of media and communications technology in the area of operations today has mandated that a military leader or decision maker have a policy of engagement as a requirement in their operational plan.

The US Army is the leading US service exploring the concept of "engagement." The Army is also working on developing the

definition on what specifically the term means in both concept and application. The importance of this work is that it will help build and guide IO and SC policy and doctrine for the next two decades. Current operations in Iraq and Afghanistan in the War on Terrorism will be the laboratory for the continued development of the concept of "engagement." Lieutenant General William B. Caldwell (US Army) in his co-authored article in the September and October 2009 issue of Military Review titled "Fostering a Culture of Engagement" put the concept into practical terms. He stated; "...*the Army must get beyond business as usual to embrace a culture of engagement, and that responsiveness mandates that the Army provide timely and transparent information proactively.*"

General Caldwell's comments in the article were directed at his own service. However, his point can be transferred to the Joint and Coalition military and defense communities as well. We must look at all our operations and develop communications strategies that are built on a culture of "engagement." Additionally, Lieutenant General Caldwell's comments are specifically related to the military relationship to the journalistic media and the use of the emerging technologies of social media. However, I would expand the concept to include all stakeholders in a military contingency, as they too, need to be "engaged." Accurate, timely, truthful and relevant information to the stakeholders at all levels is critical to the understanding of a military operation and ultimately plays a central role in its success or failure.

Mark H. Johnson, SES
Director, JIOWC
Department of Defense



Mr. Mark H. Johnson, a member of the Senior Executive Service, is the Director of the Joint Information Operations Warfare Center, Lackland Air Force Base, Texas. Subordinate to the US Strategic Command, the Joint Information Operations Warfare Center is the lead component for Information Operations and Strategic Communication in support of US national security objectives. The Command's 420 personnel support the development of global effects and provide IO/SC planning in support of USSTRATCOM mission areas of strategic deterrence, space, and cyberspace operations. Mr. Johnson served in the US Army from May 1979 to June 2008, achieving the rank of Colonel. Prior to his active duty retirement, Mr. Johnson was the Deputy Commander, Joint Information Operations Warfare Center. He is a master parachutist.

From the Director...continued

The JIOWC, with its diverse team of seasoned IO practitioners, is building IO concepts and ideas and taking them downrange to support the Joint Warfighter. The art of IO, as an integrating strategy, will no doubt, benefit from the concept and subsequent development of engagement policy, doctrine, and tactical to operational-level tactics, techniques, and procedures. Indeed, the concept of engagement holds much promise for both services and the Joint Warfighting community, especially as it is now an integral part of General McCrystal's counterinsurgency strategy being employed throughout Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. Furthermore, in 2010, the JIOWC will be the leading Joint organization in assessing SC, as we have been chartered by the Joint Staff to Conduct a SC Capabilities Based Assessment. Our success in each of these efforts will depend on how well we develop our own unique culture of "engagement."

I hope you enjoy this issue of IO Sphere. All the submissions in this issue deal with the concept of "engagement" and I believe each one has significant value in the development of your own engagement strategy. As IO warriors, practitioners, academics and scholars, we must learn how to engage our audiences and stakeholders. Our continued success depends on it. ☺

From the Editor

Thank you for your continued interest in the IO Sphere. We truly appreciate our readers and contributors and without all of the interested individuals from around the world who see the importance of Information Operations and the need for a community journal, I would not be able to pull this project together.

As many of you know, the Joint Information Operations Center (JIOWC) publishes the IO Sphere on a quarterly basis. This issue is our third full color issue, and as we move forward with the issues in 2010 we will continue looking for better design and content and continue to publish in full color. We suspended the fall 2009 Issue due to reorganization and a change in the leadership and resourcing of the IO Sphere. Now, I am happy to say, we are back on track to publish an issue every quarter for four issues per year like the strategic plan describes. Thank you very much for your patience as we made these adjustments in your professional journal.

Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions, concerns, or suggestions that you may have and don't hesitate to contribute to the IO Sphere. I will gladly review and consider for publication the contributions from all of our great IO professionals. ☺

Henry (Keith) Howerton, Editor IO Sphere

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Perception Management in Conflict Zones

by
Brig SK Chatterji

Editor's Note: Brig SK Chatterji is a retired officer of the Indian Army. His views on engagement and influence operations are very salient given the growing security importance of South Asia and the important role that India is now playing in the interest of global security. This article represents an international view of engagement

Kinetic means of combat are increasingly failing to deliver comprehensive victory. In Afghanistan, Operation Enduring Freedom led to a swift demise of the Taliban, however, effective control of Afghan territory still eludes Karzai, the NATO led coalition and the US forces. The requirement of shaping perceptions and realigning leanings of the local populace is an inescapable imperative for lasting influence in an area. However, getting people in such areas to believe you, especially when you are otherwise considered an aggressor, is not an easy task. It needs both actions to meet local aspirations and a carefully orchestrated information campaign to win the trust of the populace, realign their leanings and accept the outside forces fielded as partners in their progress. Though the centre of gravity (CG) during a military operation may vary, it's the populace and their leadership that is the CG both before and after military operations. These twin elements retain their preeminence, today, even during the intense combat phase.

Perception management operations, if initiated well before the military activities, offer the dividends of lesser friction in the ensuing combat phase. They cannot be lost sight of either, even

after pre-defined politico - military end states are achieved, wether it be fighting an insurgency within one's own national boundaries or an ocean away, as is the case for the US and their allies in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The undertaking of such activities requires both an informative database and analytical skills. Every situation is different with varied ethnicity, religious following, status of personal liberty, degree of writ of insurgents/autocrats, and a host of other factors contributing unique characteristics. Such heterogeneity necessitates familiarization and evaluation before perception operations are launched. Certain defining factors in Perception Management initiatives, also termed as shaping the information environment, especially at the operational and tactical levels, have been debated in this article. Issues at the strategic level have only been mentioned in the passing.

Objectives of Perception Management at the Operational, Tactical Levels

Isolating the Insurgent

At the operational and tactical levels, the objectives of perception management primarily remain isolating the insurgents from the locals. A realisation in the locals that the forces deployed serve to create stable, secure and supportive governance, while the militancy subverts the fruition of their aspirations, is the objective. Creating a gulf between the people and the insurgents is central to a counter insurgency



Village in Jammu and Kashmir after Earthquake

Source: Brig SK Chatterji

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campaign, and perception management offers a route to it. The gulf created, in turn, complements the efforts at militarily asserting ascendancy over inimical forces. Creating a divide between the various insurgent groups by well orchestrated information activities would serve to weaken their resolve and may hold out the possibility of internal conflicts that induce greater fatigue in the groups. Also an objective is creating a chasm between elements of the leadership, and the led. Very often, especially in long entrenched insurgencies, the leaders tend to live a life of relative luxury, while the rank and file survives in harsh conditions. Such a chasm lends to exploitation in terms of weaning away or degrading the confidence levels of the militants in their leaders.

Attitudinal Leanings

Influencing attitudinal shift in favour of own forces, is an objective. In any insurgency-infested area, three basic segments can be identified in the populace. There are the ones who support our endeavours, those who are against, and finally, the fence sitters. Perception management efforts must address all three segments. It should be the endeavour to retain the supporters, win over the fence-sitters, and initiate a shift in leanings of those who oppose us.

Supporting existing Governance and Institutions

The operations must also address the legitimate local government, institutions that have a constructive influence and key policies that promise stability. Their levels of confidence, both in the forces, as also in themselves with the forces backing them, require enhancement.

Proxy War Situation

In a proxy war-like situation, when a rogue state provides wherewithal to insurgents, the objectives of perception management would include exposing the nexus and relating the rogue states activities to the prevailing insecurity, lack of opportunities for growth and investments in the disturbed area. Illusions served by promises from across

the borders by another state, have to be shattered.

Perception Management: Strategic Levels

At the strategic level, perception management operations would entail getting the militant outfits into banned lists of other nations. It would also involve sanctions against foreign powers supporting the terrorists, materially or otherwise. Ensuring the drying up of outside financial, men and material support remains a huge challenge. Strategic perception management operations may or may not have either the Army or even the Ministry of Defence as the lead player, but lead by the Ministry of External Affairs and intelligence agencies at their disposal. It would be formulated at an inter-ministerial level with politico-military objectives being kept in view.

Situational Imperatives in an Active Insurgency Area

Assault on local Identity

When forces are fielded to achieve dominance, a swath of the population of that area is likely to identify such forces as an army of occupation. Whether or

not such a segment is the majority, they tend to become the stronger influence, if not for any other reason than purely due to the fact of their being far more violent and ready to use force to coerce the rest into being at best mute, if not activist to their will. The people do not know the objectives of the forces applied, and the hostile propaganda by hostile elements would paint such deployment as an assault on the locals' identity, faith and beliefs.

Aliens Forcing Entry

Race, religion and nationality of forces applied in an area offer the key cornerstones essential to define such a force as outsiders. What is certainly understood by the competing authorities in illegitimate control or vying for it in a destabilized area, is that a military operation by an outside force will dilute their ascendancy and control on resources, finally eroding their power. As such, these inimical elements will ensure opposition to the deployment of an outside force or Government troops combating insurgencies within national boundaries. The pivots of their arguments will be the easily perceptible differences



Indian Army Crisis Relief Operations
Source: Brig SK Chatterji

between the locals and the force deployed. The congruence of the aspirations of the locals—peace, progress, stability and security with the objectives of the deployed force, will be obscured by their propaganda.

Lack of Familiarity with Area of Operations

The other side of the coin is equally important and it remains a fact that the forces operating often do not understand local conditions and sensitivities adequately. This results in varied problems, post deployment. As such, the willing participation in the effort of the local population, or a part thereof, is a potential that is not optimally garnered. Every area where influence is sought to be made paramount has its own cultural uniqueness. Methods applicable and acceptable in the New York or Delhi suburbs may be anathema in these operational areas. An intimate familiarity with the local customs, habits, influence pillars, need to be perceived by the residents of the area.

Choked Communications

The local population is often not aware of the positive spin-offs in as far as meeting their aspirations are concerned, as a sequel to the outside forces gaining an upper hand. The fact that they could be liberated from their state of poverty, bondage to an ideology, that their children could well live a life with adequate comforts and conveniences is often not perceived by the populace. The unrelenting propaganda and rhetoric of the militant elements holds many of them hostage, disallowing them the bonus that is around the bend. However, the hope of a better tomorrow for their children is not just a fleeting thought for them. Moreover, it can be strengthened.

Shaping Perceptions: Operational Planning and Execution

Selection of Themes for Propagation

Before beginning such an exercise, a detailed study of the environment that needs to be shaped will have to be undertaken. The cultural sensitivities are most important, especially in an orthodox environment where one misstep could easily lead to surrendering gains achieved over months of patient efforts. As such, the aspect of detailed mapping and database, to include their faith, leanings, sensitivities, aspirations etc., is a critical exercise that needs to be pursued with diligence by commanders, in their respective areas. Messages will have to be tailored for each segment to garner maximum dividends.

All communications will need to be carefully vetted to eliminate any offensive content. Even after being passed through such a sieve, the possibility of something being distorted by interested parties will need to be kept track of and remedial actions taken. It needs to be ensured that the deployment of forces is not viewed as an assault on the locals, nor is the objective the



Indian Army Crisis Relief Operations
Source: Brig SK Chatterji

subjugation of locals.

Themes involved can thus neither be top driven nor an entirely floor-level exercise. Further, it is essential to ensure that the language spoken at various levels is in congruence. Should contradictions arise in messages emanating from different headquarters, the terrorist establishments would seize the opportunity and paint the forces deployed as untrustworthy.

Precedence of Local Issues

While directing perception management initiatives, issues of importance to the local populace need to be addressed. Greater issues of global concern are often not of material value for people living in the backwaters. What is more important to them is either easing of hardships, sustainable means of livelihood or security concerns or living without fear for their families. Endeavours to alleviate the harsh local conditions will resonate with the populace, and if the payoffs seem tangible in the short timeframe, the locals would extend support.

Notwithstanding the need to satisfy the populace through short gestation period projects, it would be equally important to invest in long-term infrastructure, healthcare, educational, industrial and like projects. Such investments will assist in legitimizing the existing governance and serve the formulation of long-term influence in that region. Economic progress is also one of the best means of weaning away the younger lot from militancy.

Language of Communications

The language in which the themes need to be communicated unavoidably has to be the local language. However, different strata of the society in the targeted audience may have their own preferences in terms of use of certain more common languages

like English, French, etc., especially in areas with an old colonial legacy. While directing Information Operations across the targeted segments, language usage and any preferences of a particular segment must be taken into account.

Subtlety in Messages

While putting across the message it would be preferable to state the portion dealing with the inimical forces loudly, boldly and with adequate visual evidence. However, the same methodology may not hold true for drafting messages that communicate own activities or objectives. These need to be more subtle so as not to be identified as propagandist and thereby serve to create a wall of disbelief. Often, it would garner greater dividends if a comparison can be drawn of how the populace had been held hostage, vs the benefits that have accrued in places where the writ of inimical forces has been neutralized. Benefits accruing from projects being implemented are better articulated through the beneficiaries themselves, rather than by an official spokesperson.

Credibility

It is an all important factor. All messages have to be based on truth. The visual media will require evidence of what is stated to be concurrently shown in order to make the message forceful. Further, credibility in perception management is not like college grades that retain relevance for times to come. It is more a day-to-day rating that could easily slide.

Situations calling for Immediacy in Response

Certain messages that are intended to secure the lives of our men in distress need to promise lucrative returns. It could be a pilot bailing out over a hostile area, or an intelligence operative who has perforce to walk out beyond the area under control as a prerequisite to gathering enough operational intelligence. Eventualities that such personnel can face require immediate assistance from locals. Such imperatives have to be addressed with practicality, and an immediate monetary reward for any action taken by the locals

to ensure the security of our personnel needs to be included and announced boldly.

Communication Resources

The availability of communication resources and their reach beyond the urban milieu into the villages and fringes will also need to be mapped. The reach of the message will depend on the availability of communication infrastructure in that region, and these may well have to be augmented, protected, and made available for own utilization while denying them to the opponents. Information Operations can be successful only if dissemination is broad based, utilizing every available opportunity, and multiple media. At the tactical-level interaction, the loud key communicator retains its relevance and the local religious congregation destination of the populace, an invaluable asset.

Selection of the Spokesperson

The acceptance of a message and its credibility is enhanced if it is delivered by someone trusted by the audience. Members of the forces employed do not qualify for such a status. It would pay higher dividends to enlist local community leaders enjoying a greater degree of

acceptance, to be the spokesperson. Religious leaders of repute would enjoy better resonance and need to be co-opted. As perception management and military operations progress successfully, military commanders operating in the area, start enjoying greater acceptance and credibility, provided human rights have all along been respected.

Winning Hearts and Minds

Such initiatives as undertaking small developmental projects, extending healthcare in remote places, creating educational facilities, providing vocational training, and veterinary facilities have an universal appeal and pay disproportionate dividends in conflict zones where such essentials are inevitably inadequate. And, as hopes of a better tomorrow take firm roots, a bond between the troops and the locals is also nurtured. Such projects also assist intelligence gathering. Their successful execution and satisfaction levels so attained also need to be broadcast widely.

Countering Inimical Propaganda and Media

Perception Management operations inevitably involve the countering of propaganda against own forces and allies by insurgent groups, their harbourers and



Indian Army Crisis Relief Operations
Source: Brig SK Chatterji

covert workers. The first requirement for such an objective is the capability to monitor the media serving the area. It will also be essential to identify the reasons behind a channel supporting the militants' cause. In most cases, intimidation by militants will be found to be the prime reason. Other factors could include ethnic, religious leanings of the management, even biases of individual reporters.

Relationship Bridges with the Press

Whatever be the reasons, the first task is to create strong relationship bridges with the media. Allowing regular access to the media in their endeavour to contact formations employed in the area, will serve to provide the correct perspective to the media personnel. Media queries have to be handled with speed. The military hierarchical model and a tendency to centralize media responses at higher formation levels militate against timely response. Delay in response needs to be viewed as a handicap and it is minimized only if commanders at all levels understand fully well the complementarity of media to their operations.

Facilitation of Media

Media personnel also need to be facilitated in moving to areas where activities merit media coverage. The decision of which activities deserve such coverage needs to be arrived at in consultation with the media. Very often what commanders consider as newsworthy, is not viewed so by the media. However, facilitation of media coverage, more often than not, provides more positive coverage.

Countering Negative Coverage

Negative reporting needs to be contested through the media, based on truthful rendition of facts. Credibility of official spokesmen need to be always maintained. It is wiser not to react to negative coverage rather than feeding unsubstantiated or wrong/false inputs to the media.

There is a requirement for commanders



Indian Army Crisis Relief Operations
Source: Brig SK Chatterji

at all levels not to overreact to negative media coverage. Some negative reportage will be there, and needs to be taken in stride. Should a media channel be acutely and unduly negative in its coverage, legal recourse needs to be taken if possible and the media countered with a different point of view. In places where the laws of the land cannot be imposed, kinetic or electronic means need to be used to silence such propagation. Further, media channels earn their revenue through advertisements, which in turn, is a tool that could pay dividends.

Coercive Perception Management

The terrorists could also use a combination of coercion and seemingly logical interpretation of tenets of faith to manage perceptions of the populace. Such acts as flogging a woman in public and publicizing them are carried out more to instill fear and subjugate the locals rather than any commitment to the tenets of faith of any religion. It is essential to ensure that the people of the area feel reasonably secure by proximate deployment of forces, a fact that goes to make counter insurgency operations manpower heavy. Barbarous acts committed by insurgents may be used to create a gulf between the insurgents and the locals. As the security situation improves, such a gulf will aid in intelligence collection and surgical operations, thereby reducing collateral damage.

Conclusion

Perception management operations need to be rooted in the felt needs of the population. The triggering of the belief that a better road lies ahead if the forces employed in the area are allowed to function without resistance is the prime initial objective. The forces operating can further such efforts only by the best standards of conduct and display of absolute respect for local customs. As perception management progresses, the challenge is to sustain the gains and promote the concept that it is a partnership with the local populace that the forces seek. Finally, the fact that the local people are being empowered to decide their own future, and there is a better tomorrow for their children, security for their families, is the image that needs to fire the imagination of the target audience. ☺



Attack, Attack, Attack

Information Operations:

Multi-national Division Baghdad (4th Infantry Division)

December 2007 to February 2009

by

Lieutenant Colonel Frank H. Zimmerman, U.S. Army

Editor's Note: Lieutenant Colonel Zimmerman's contribution on IO during a specific time in the Iraq conflict highlights the evolving nature of IO in support of counter-insurgency operations. His views and experiences are very important to the evolving discussion of communications in the modern era of conflict.

Insurgents have an additional advantage in shaping the information environment. Counterinsurgents seeking to preserve legitimacy must stick to the truth and make sure that words are backed up by deeds; insurgents, on the other hand, can make exorbitant promises and point out government shortcomings, many caused or aggravated by the insurgency.

US Army FM 3-24 Counterinsurgency, December 2006, p 1-3.

Despite the Coalition's technological superiority and readily available funding for counterinsurgency efforts, in December 2007, the leaders of the numerous insurgent groups and Al Qaeda still maintained a significant advantage over Coalition Forces in the information environment within Baghdad. The story of insurgent and Al Qaeda escalation of carnage and death within Baghdad was instantaneously transmitted worldwide by the international media. This advantage enabled these groups to have and maintain the initiative. As a result, Coalition Forces in Baghdad, represented primarily by Multi-National Division Baghdad (MND-B), struggled with how to first degrade and ultimately eradicate the enemy's significant advantage in the information environment. In December 2007, Information Operations (IO) was executed utilizing a clearly doctrinal approach. MND-B adapted and adopted a new line of attack towards the execution of IO. This article focuses on the story of the MND-B Commander's understanding of that problem set. How he operationalized IO through command emphasis and his vision of a series of key innovations best characterized as massed IO effects using a new line of attack he described as a "flashlight" approach to achieve information superiority.

Command Emphasis and Information Operations "Attack – Attack – Attack"

There was an aggressive, clear and strong command emphasis by the MND-B Commander to integrate and operationalize IO at all levels of command during Operation Iraqi Freedom 07-09. To achieve information superiority as outlined in FM 3-13 Information Operations, the Commander focused all MND-B

efforts to the improvement of Coalition Forces' operational picture and accepted risk in order to get messaging out quickly. Concurrently, MND-B affected Al Qaeda in Iraq (AQI), Special Group Criminals (SGC) and other targeted enemy networks' battlefield perceptions in a way that led them to make decisions favoring Coalition Forces.

The MND-B CG devoted a significant amount of time to the integration of IO into the lethal targeting process. The G7 was required to brief IO support to lethal targeting during the two targeting huddles daily in the Commander's office. A Brigade Combat Team Commander, best surmised this command emphasis when he stated; "There was a common mindset in MND-B – ATTACK. There was no defensive mindset. We executed IO attacks, which created an offensive mindset." This command emphasis was a critical contributing factor, which enabled MND-B to protect the Iraqi populace and significantly increase the security of both the Iraqi population and Coalition Forces throughout Baghdad by November 2008. In early 2008, acknowledging that there was limited IO capacity, MND-B quickly transitioned from a decentralized to centralized command-and-control approach. The apportionment of the limited IO resources in Baghdad became a MND-B Commander level command-and-control function. Though the Brigade Combat Teams (BCT) were the decisive units, they required division command-and-control to achieve unity of effort across the multiple lines of efforts and against multiple non-contiguous threats.

Sensing a change in the MND-B operational environment in February 2008, the Commander directed the G2 to conduct a focused and detailed analysis of both the AQI and SGC Networks operating within the Baghdad operational environment. This analysis refined the target sets and established new targeting guidance to the BCTs. The primary MND-B mission was to protect the Iraqi population. Based on this mission and refined targeting guidance the IO was adjusted to focus on informing the Baghdad population of imminent threats such as suicide vests and vehicle-borne improvised explosive devices (VBIED) attacks and disrupting AQI Support Zones. Over the coming months, the MND-B Commander directed a series of operations and innovations to leverage all IO assets and capabilities in an effort to effectively saturate the Baghdad Information Environment with the Coalition Force and Government of Iraq message. This series of operations and innovations enabled the disruption of both the AQI and

SGC Networks, effective protection of the Baghdad population, and helped set the conditions for peaceful January 2009 Iraqi elections.

Re-organizing Information Operations to Meet the Needs of the Commander

The U.S. Army operated, organized and resourced the tactical level to execute IO based on previous assumptions, capabilities and levels of usage in the battlespace. Recent MTOE changes have further reduced the Division FA30 from eight to five officers. MND-B quickly learned that the MTOEs for both the Division and Brigade Combat Teams did not provide adequate personnel for the Division G7 or BCT S7s. MND-B IO assets required significant augmentation and reorganization to achieve the commander's vision. This included innovations in the structure and function of the MND-B G7 and Brigade Combat

Teams' S7 sections in order to increase capacity as well as apply new approaches to messaging in support of both lethal and non-lethal operations. The MND-B Chief of Staff approved a significant increase in the number of personnel dedicated to IO at the Division, BCT, and Battalion levels. In December 2007, the 4ID G7 deployed with an eleven-man cell, which was expanded to a 36-man cell during this reorganization. Officers and NCOs within the MND-B Headquarters were reassigned to the G7 section to meet mission requirements. The magnitude of the emphasis placed on IO as demonstrated by the Engagement and Targeting cells within the G7. The G7 Engagement cell grew from one Major to a twelve-man cell led by a Lieutenant Colonel. This expansion also included a political advisor, cultural advisor, Cultural/Political Assessment Cell (CPAC), and several IO contractors. The G7 also contracted additional positions

to include Engagement Coordinators for all the BCT S7 sections to assist with the ever-growing demand for engagement support.

The coordination between the G2 and G7 in MND-B intensified early in the deployment and was consistent and extremely close. The G2 support enabled a seamless integration of IO into overall targeting efforts. Because the IO Targeting Cell was central to conducting IO in a counterinsurgency environment, MND-B established the cell directly in the G2 Analysis and Control Element (ACE). The G2 devoted significant ISR and analytical assets specifically to G7 intelligence requirements. The IO Targeting Cell initially consisted of one Major and evolved to one Major (FA30), one Captain (35D), one Sergeant (35F Intelligence Analyst), and one civilian contractor serving as an intelligence analyst. The IO Targeting Cell's purpose

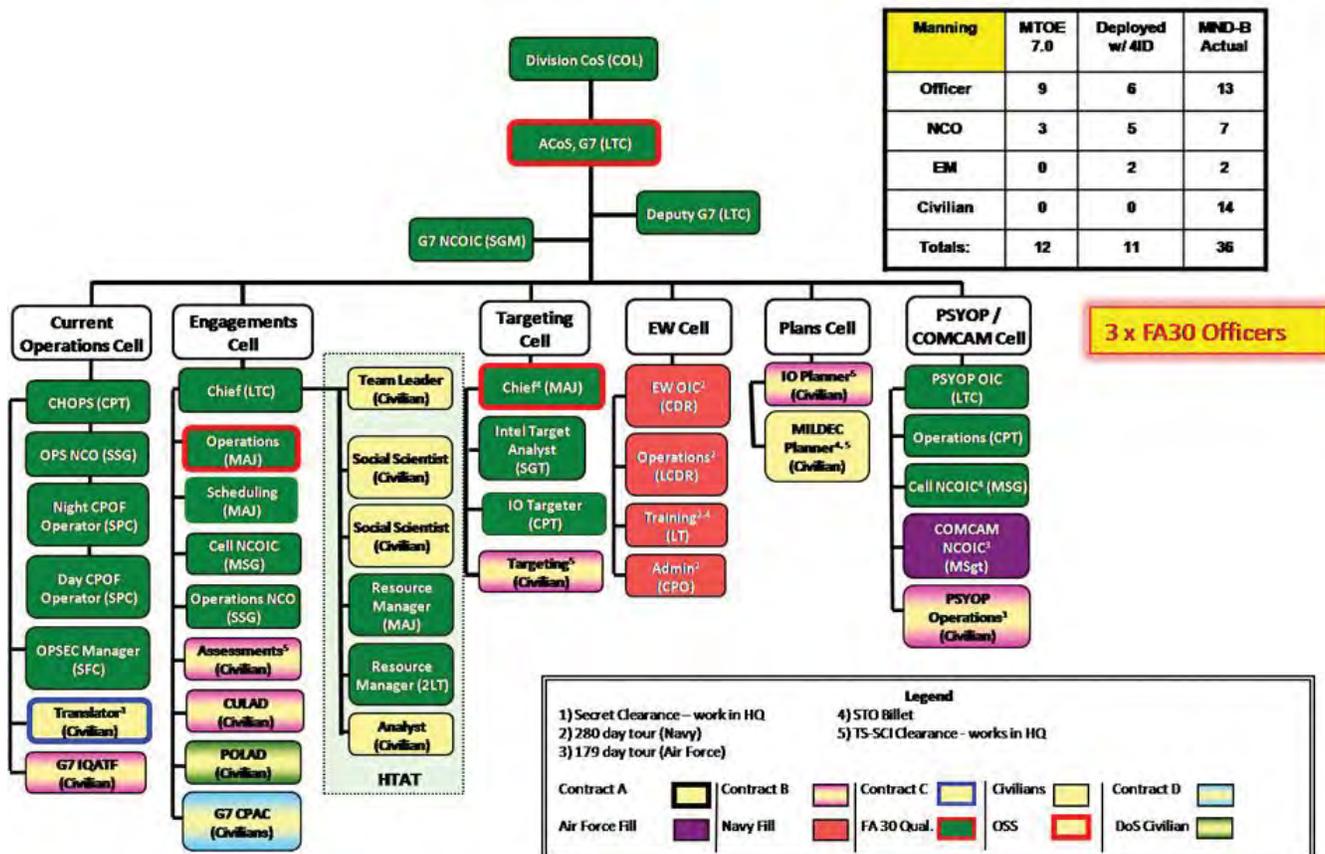


Figure 1 - Task Organization (16 Dec 2008)
MND Baghdad

was to provide intelligence support for IO in support of Division operations. The cell accomplished this by providing support to lethal and non-lethal operations; information for the production of PSYOP products or details about target audiences; by monitoring all intelligence reporting for information illustrating the effectiveness of on-going IO; and by identifying individuals or groups with susceptibilities that could be exploited through future IO efforts. In this manner, the information provided by the cell's efforts drove the following processes: IO individual and area target selections, PSYOP product production, and IO Measure of Effectiveness (MoE) evaluation.

The side-by-side interaction of the G2 and G7 targeting personnel enabled effective IO targeting operations that were nested and mutually supporting of lethal enemy network targeting operations. This close integration between intelligence and IO personnel made it possible for the commander to leverage IO to successfully disrupt enemy networks and set the conditions for security improvements in Baghdad. MND-B had effectively operationalized the IO targeting process and broken new ground in how to leverage intelligence support for IO.

Leveraging Information Operations

The establishment of a thriving IO targeting cell increased the pressure to find effective ways to execute IO shaping operations that would set the conditions on the ground and in the information environment to defeat the insurgency and AQI. The basic steps of targeting remain the same in a counterinsurgency (COIN) environment. MND-B learned two significant lessons -the positive effect on security by keeping the Iraqi population informed of threats and using IO to generate intelligence on networks or individual targets. In the COIN environment within Baghdad, IO-targeting improved security by (1) protecting the local populace by informing the populace of developing and imminent threats; and (2) executing shaping operations to increase intelligence gathering in order to facilitate time sensitive targeting of high value targets within a network.

In December 2007 MND-B was executing what can best be described as a "spotlight approach" to IO. At the tactical level, MND-B was executing IO focused on positive messaging with the Iraqi population as the primary target audience. Messaging was spread across the large urban geographic area consisting of the MND-B area of operation (AO). This "spotlight approach" was best characterized as IO executed over a large geographic location with a large and mixed target audience. The overall effects of messaging was diluted with little intensity in any specific situation or location. MND-B Commander quickly determined that the "spotlight approach" did not effectively focus the limited IO resources or capacity on problem areas. This approach achieved marginal to limited success in the MND-B information environment. The MND-B Commander realized that IO could not focus everywhere and on everything. The scope of the MND-B's IO plan had to be narrowed and focused to maximize all available resources. Rather than utilizing a spotlight, one should use a flashlight that is turned on at a specific location for a specific duration and then turned off

and moved to another location where it is then turned on again when targeting. These specific locations for IO were tactical areas of interest (TAIs) developed in conjunction with the G2. TAIs enabled the MND-B Commander to focus his limited IO capacity at the critical time and location of his choosing. A continuous series of IO attacks using the flashlight approach reduced the terrorist and insurgent networks' information advantage. The flashlight approach enabled MND-B to focus limited resources to gain information superiority in locations of the Commanders choosing. This revolutionary technique proved quite successful in practice in Baghdad.

Although not discussed in any further detail in this paper, the use of Military Deception (MILDEC) was a force multiplier and essential for IO planning. The MND-B Commander's foresight allowed IO planners to use creativity and ingenuity to deceive enemy decision makers, creating tensions between enemy nodes and increasing the fog of war from their perspective. This additional tool enhanced targeting efforts that led to kill/capture opportunities and disruption of enemy lethal activities.

Protecting the Iraqi Population: Rapid Reaction Packets of "Inform" Products

Informing the Iraqi populace of imminent and developing threats such as suicide vest (SVEST) and vehicle-borne improvised explosive devices (VBIED) significantly degraded the enemy's information advantage in the MND-B operational environment. MND-B's aggressive use of prepositioned rapid reaction packets of "inform" products targeting suicide vest and vehicle-borne improvised explosive devices prevented the enemy from leveraging their superior knowledge of rumors among the population.

This enduring operation throughout OIF 07-09 sought to mitigate developing and imminent AQI signature attacks based on available intelligence. In order to prevent or mitigate these attacks, messaging focused on demonizing known AQI leaders while also alerting the populace to signs of a potential SVEST or VBIED attack. Messaging was disseminated rapidly through leaflet drops and Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) led handbill



Figure 2 - Suicide Vest Warning Handbill

dissemination operations.

Although a short duration operation, these actions prevented many possible attacks from taking place to include an attack on the Khadamiyah Shrine that took place during the operation's first day of execution. Throughout this period, attack totals were lower than in previous years and the Iraqi populace's perception of this operations' messaging was positive. Rapidly informing the Iraqi population of emerging threats in a focused, timely manner proved an effective way to protect the populace and disrupt enemy decision cycles by denying them freedom of movement and action around potential attack sites. Another critical lesson learned during these operations is that ISF-led dissemination of products increased the credibility of the message and was a contributing factor in the increased professionalism of the ISF over time.

Demonizing AQI Operation Loyal Strike

Operation Loyal Strike (1-21 February 2008) targeted a specific AQI network operating within the MND-B OE. This operation was the first focused "demonizing" IO driven operation conducted by the 4ID during OIF 07-09. Messaging focused on demonizing specific AQI leaders as well as the entire network in order to drive a wedge between them and the populace. This was the first time the G7 worked closely with the G2 to develop specific targeted areas of interest (TAIs). The intent of developing TAIs was to enable MND-B to maximize its limited IO capacity to effectively message all target audiences and prevent dilution of the message in

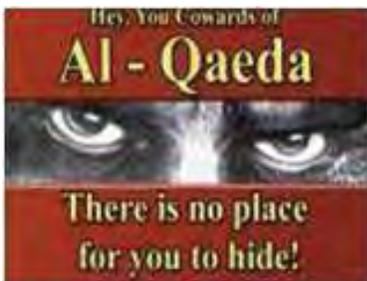


Figure 3 - AQI Demonizing Product

all the background noise of a counterinsurgency environment.

Messaging media used in this operation consisted primarily of handbills, posters, and loudspeaker broadcasts. It is significant to note that the volume disseminated far exceeded that of any other IO conducted in the Baghdad operational environment (OE) during the previous year.

However, the volume of IO was more concentrated and the volume of IO products exceeded prior operations; when compared to later operations conducted by the Division it was very limited. Despite the fact that this operation was limited, it was nonetheless important since it proved that saturation of identified TAIs is an effective way to ensure targeted individuals receive the desired message. As this operation concluded, the AQI elements in the East Mansour area were disrupted due to the capture of one prominent local AQI leader and the killing of another AQI leader within the network. A significant lesson from this operation was that IO was seamlessly integrated with lethal targeting to create intelligence, effect a target's decision cycle, and turn TAIs into non-permissive terrain, thus limiting a target's freedom of movement. The lessons from this operation were incorporated into future, larger scale operations such as Ironhorse Fortitude, Sadr City, and Ironhorse Blizzard. This operation laid the groundwork for the flashlight approach to IO utilizing IO TAIs and Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures (TTPs) based on volume, saturation, and speed.

Testing the Flashlight Approach Operation Ironhorse Fortitude

Operation Ironhorse Fortitude (20 February to 7 March 2008) targeted specific SGC in East and West Rashid, Sadr City, and Adhamiyah of Baghdad. The Commander's desired goal for Ironhorse Fortitude was to disrupt SGC networks by creating actionable intelligence and facilitating time sensitive targeting of identified SGC leaders. This



Figure 3 - AQI Demonizing Product

operation marked a significant increase in the quantity of products produced and disseminated. During this operation the Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) disseminated over 100,000 handbills, 20,000 copies of the Baghdad Now newspaper, and 5,000 wanted posters. Loudspeaker operations, daily radio announcements and press releases targeting SGC leaders were also regularly released during this operation. Simultaneously, targeted individuals within the Iraqi population were used to transmit truthful information that created distrust and increased uncertainty within each targets' networks.

This operation proved to be one of the first to effectively disrupt SGC networks throughout Baghdad and especially in Baghdad's Bayaa Belidayah. Demonization of identified SGC group leaders was conducted with focused messaging via handbills, loudspeakers, radio, and press releases, was the base line for all future MND-B IO using the flashlight approach. Furthermore, this operation demonstrated that the conditions in the MND-B OE were set for disrupting SGC networks using the flashlight approach.

Maximizing IO Capacity Sadr City

The fight for Sadr City was encapsulated in a series of operations covered by multiple orders, but all focused on the same objective - to defeat the SGC in Sadr City. In order to restore the rule-of-law in Eastern Baghdad and increase Government of Iraq and ISF legitimacy, Sadr City operations began in March 2008. Through the conduct of a massive information attack in Sadr City, MND-B regained the information advantage over SGCs. This information attack saturated Sadr City's operational environment with an unprecedented volume of products

over a thirty-day period. MND-B focused all available IO capabilities on enemy networks hiding among the Iraqi population in Sadr City.

Following Iraqi Prime Minister Nuri al-Maliki's declaration to restore the rule-of-law in Sadr City, MND-B exploited the GOI's posturing by working with the ISF to conduct their own leaflet drops and by following up their leaflet drops with massive CF fixed and rotary wing leaflet drops. Key Leader Engagements helped to communicate CF and GOI intentions in Sadr City throughout the process of improving the quality of life for local Iraqis.

As the ISF moved into Sadr City, additional copies of the Baghdad Now were disseminated in areas where the fighting had quieted down in order to provide residents with accurate information instead of SGC propaganda. Messages stressing GOI / ISF's legitimacy and SGC illegitimacy were also delivered through radio public service announcements (PSAs). These PSAs were broadcast by local Iraqi radio stations and Coalition Force controlled and owned "radio-in-the-boxes." In addition to the media already mentioned, Tactical Psychological Operations Teams conducted loudspeaker messaging on the periphery and later in Sadr City's Southern section. As a further means of communicating GOI / ISF intentions to Sadr City residents, 12 billboards were installed in Sadr City during May and June, which were later followed by even more new billboards in the following months. Numerous



Figure 5 - Handbill Dissemination in Sadr City

sources to include information gathered during key leader engagements showed that the populace perceived the new billboards as a sign of increased security. Executed through various media types, all Sadr City shaping operations focused on "demonizing" identified SGCs and increasing GOI / ISF legitimacy through the rule-of-law's restoration in this formerly extremist controlled section of Baghdad.

During the large-scale operations to shape Sadr City's Information Environment, it was initially difficult to gauge the effect upon local residents' perceptions. However, by July it was clear that CF messaging not only supported ground

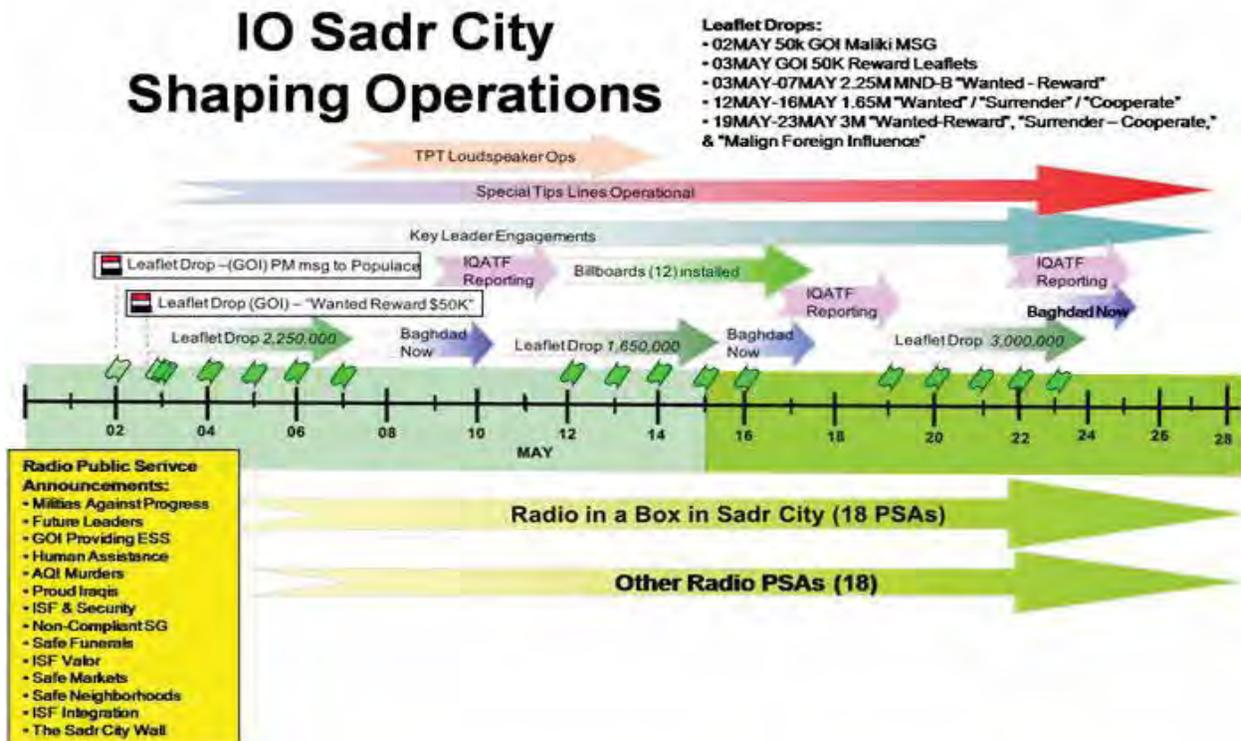


Figure 6 - Sadr City Shaping Operations (May 2008)

operations effectively by helping to minimize civilian casualties, but also that throughout Sadr City residents understood and usually welcomed the increased ISF presence. With the ISF's gradual removal of criminals from the area, Sadr City residents were slowly freed from extremist extortion. This resulted in residents finding CF messaging more credible than criminal messaging claiming the ISF's action was an "occupation."

This operation validated the IO methods used by MND-B and reinforced the fact that a "flashlight" approach to IO utilizing massive message saturation focused on targeted areas was effective in changing a population's perceptions. Of the methods that supported the "flashlight" approach, ISF-led handbill dissemination proved extremely effective when used in conjunction with targeted leaflet drops. Such dissemination forced the ISF to interact with local residents, which improved the GOI's relationship with the populace.

Many non-IO trained professionals worry about "over-saturating" a targeted audience with messaging because of potential resistance to future messaging. Although logical, overall this argument proved false during Baghdad's Sadr City shaping operations. It is true that some residents complained about the volume of leaflets dropped over Sadr City, but this reaction is no different than Americans complaining about excessive advertising. In both cases, target audiences acted upon the very messaging they complained about; the latter through increasingly supporting the GOI and the lesser through their purchasing behavior. Even if the people do not like being deluged with

messaging, the key is achieving message exposure. If understood, any message will elicit a response and serve to influence even the most hostile audiences. The amount of influence varies with the audience and messaging approach, but without basic message communication, influence cannot be consistently achieved or maintained.

Another key to the successful IO messaging conducted in Sadr City was the close link between actions on the ground and messaging. Within days of residents reading leaflets demonizing local criminals and advising locals to stay out of the ISF's way as they reestablish the rule-of-law, residents actually saw the ISF search neighborhoods for criminals resulting in their death or capture. Follow-on messaging highlighted security and essential service (ES) improvements, which were tied to other tangible actions by the GOI / ISF in the area.

Information Operations conducted to shape Sadr City not only led to the successful reestablishment of the rule-of-law in the area, but also demonstrated three important principles for conducting IO in general. First, message saturation does work when it is more critical for target audiences to get your message and less critical how they get it. Second, it is vital to tie messaging to actions on the ground in order for it to be viewed as credible and possibly even of local origin. Third, the more message dissemination can be viewed as local in origin often times the more credible that message will appear. Conducting IO is an art, but even in art there are characteristics that set masters apart from novices. The outcome of operations in one of the most dangerous areas clearly argues that the three principles above represent some of the most effective IO TTPs used in support of combat operations.

Sustained Disruption of Special Group Criminal Networks Operation Ironhorse Tempest

Operation Ironhorse Tempest (1 June to 30 October 2008) targeted Special Group Criminals throughout the MND-B OE with focused efforts in Sadr City.

Designed to prevent SGC from returning to traditional support zones as well as making conditions unbearable for SGC remaining in these areas, the goal of this operation was to expedite the GOI and ISF's ability to protect the population, decrease attacks on Coalition Forces, and defeat the SGC networks throughout the MND-B OE. As this operation progressed, the reduction of accelerant movement into the AO was added in order to further deny SGC networks the supplies they needed in order to conduct attacks.

This operation leveraged even more tools to shape the MND-B Information Environment (IE) than previous operations to include handbills, posters, banners, Baghdad Now newspaper articles, loud speaker broadcasts, metal signs on t-walls, radio broadcasts, billboards, press releases, and terrestrial television public service announcements. Print products were disseminated in conjunction with the Iraqi Army and police and the Sons of Iraq at checkpoints and on patrols through known SGC support zones.

MND-B messaging also targeted foreign-trained SGC leaders to drive a wedge between them and the populace by heightening the populace's awareness of SGC criminality, their ties to foreign influence and their disobedience to mainstream Jaish al Mahdi (JAM). Additionally, messaging throughout the OE exploited weapons cache discoveries, ISF criminal captures, humanitarian assistance, reconstruction, and economic developments while still mitigating enemy spectacular attacks or propaganda. Key leader engagements (KLE) were closely tied in to support this operation by opening communication with civilian leaders in SGC support zones. This operation took the flashlight approach to IO, first pioneered in Operation Ironhorse Fortitude, to new levels of effectiveness by incorporating more media forms and synchronizing KLE with this operation. Consequently, SGC suffered a significant decrease in active and passive support throughout Baghdad while positive perceptions of ISF performance and GOI



Figure 5 - AQI Demoning Banners

capability continued to increase among the populace due to these information operations.

Everything to Include the Kitchen Sink Operation Ironhorse Blizzard

Operation Ironhorse Blizzard (25 August to 30 November 2008) targeted enemy network leaders throughout the MND-B OE. This operation represented the ultimate combination of IO, Lethal and Non-Lethal Fires, Public Affairs Operations, and intelligence assets working together to capture, kill, or disrupt extremists within the MND-B OE. Operation Ironhorse Blizzard broke new ground in using focused IO to pressure multiple enemy networks simultaneously in conjunction with other battlefield enablers. This operation resulted in the execution of 108 IO CONOPs over the span of 138 days resulting in 17 High Value Individuals (HVI) captured or killed, 42 other targets fleeing Iraq from fear of death or capture, and all targeted criminal networks becoming severely disrupted.

As in previous operations, this operation used the flashlight approach with messaging being delivered using leaflets, handbills, posters, billboards, radio broadcasts, terrestrial television public service announcements and key leader engagements. This focused messaging disrupted enemy support zones and prevented SGCs from returning to the AO. This disruption and the time gained by preventing SGCs from returning enabled the GOI and ISF to take the lead in protecting the populace. Operation Ironhorse Blizzard accelerated conditions for the defeat of criminal networks throughout the MND-B OE. Although most emphasis was placed on defeating SGC, AQI Leadership was also targeted throughout this operation to further degrade their operation capacity already greatly reduced in some areas by previous operations like Operation Loyal Strike.

Messaging in support of this operation was disseminated in TAIs in the form of over 20,071,000 leaflets dropped from fixed and rotary wing aircraft, 2,789,004 handbills disseminated by Iraqi Security Forces, 2,450,000 issues of the Baghdad Now newspaper, 171,600 wanted posters hung throughout Baghdad, 631,000 tip cards, and 66 new billboards constructed. Additionally, in support of Operation Ironhorse Blizzard, the MND-B Public Affairs produced press releases with photos of suspected criminals and/or terrorists listing their alleged crimes. To further reinforce the effort, operational press release boiler plates were used to reinforce our efforts to bring wanted criminals/terrorists to justice by asking the Iraqi people to call in tips on established hotlines. Coalition and Iraqi Security Forces displayed wanted posters during joint press conferences and media events to highlight a team effort. This operation demonstrated the relevance of IO's contributions as a potent enabler whose application supports more than just "good news" type operations like humanitarian aid distribution. In this operation, IO directly supported lethal targeting and made a definitive impact on targeted networks. The results generated by Operation Ironhorse Blizzard contributed greatly in shaping



Figure 6 - Ironhorse Blizzard Leaflet Drop October 2008

favorable conditions in Baghdad for the January 2009 Iraqi Provincial Council elections.

Non-lethal Terrain Denial Operations

These operations used a mixture of essential service (ES) improvement projects, security operations and IO to deny enemy networks freedom of movement and action in targeted areas. Many of these areas include some of Baghdad's formerly poorest neighborhoods that once provided fertile recruiting areas and support zones for both terrorist and insurgent networks. The key to these operations' success is the use of IO to tie security and essential services improvements directly to the GOI and ISF through focused messaging. By using this multi-faceted approach to degrade populace support for the enemy and target AQI and SGC networks, security was improved in all areas of targeted non-lethal operations.

Not only was IO used to demonize but it was also utilized to expose other ways for the Iraqi population to gain enlightenment an alternative to violence. Messaging in support of this operation was tied directly to physical improvements on the ground like the greater availability of clean water or fewer civilian deaths due to criminal attacks. Press releases and increased coverage of improved conditions supported IO objectives. Handbills, leaflets, radio broadcasts, posters, terrestrial television public service announcements and billboards were standard means of communicating our desired message in targeted areas to inform and influence the populace.

As with other operations, BCTs ensured handbill dissemination was conducted by local ISF units to increase the products' credibility and further improve upon positive perceptions of the ISF in these areas. By limiting these operations' focus area and tying messaging directly to physical actions on the ground, these operations proved effective in preventing criminals from returning to these areas and limiting or eliminating the operational capacity of criminals already in these areas. Though IO is not the only enabler that makes these operations possible, it is the enabler which linked all other enablers' effects in these operations to achieve the operations' common goals

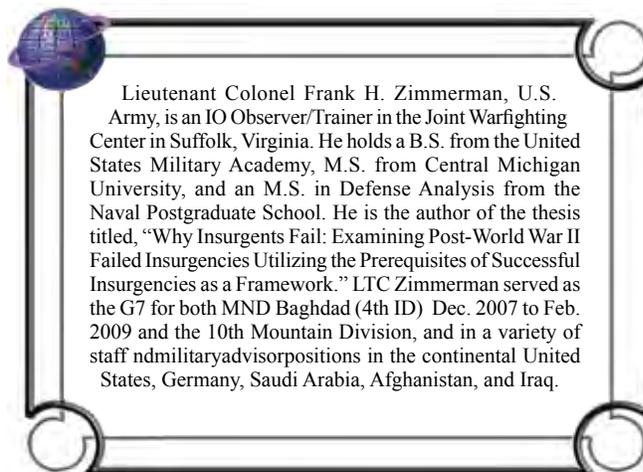
and message. Positive messaging focused on the populace combined with key leader engagements resulted in significant improvements in the Baghdad populace's perceptions of the Iraqi Army and National Police.

Conclusion

The significant IO lessons learned by the 4th Infantry Division as the Multi-national Division Baghdad during OIF 07-09 were (1) to mass IO effects using a "flashlight approach," (2) IO is an essential element of the targeting process, (3) a proactive approach requires IO to lead all planning, (4) IO was effective for exploiting enemy networks, (5) key leader engagements are an essential component of IO, (6) leaflet drops are effective in permissive terrain, (7) Military Deception (MILDEC) is an integral part of IO plans, (8) rapid dissemination information/warning products should be prepositioned at the lowest level possible, (9) Close integration of the G2 and G7 is essential for successful IO, and (10) combined IO increases credibility to messaging. The methods developed by 4ID in support of both lethal and non-lethal targeting proved successful in Iraq. The Commanding General's emphasis on IO was an essential component of the overall success of MND-B operations. A heightened level of command emphasis on IO must be a priority in a counterinsurgency environment. Furthermore, this command emphasis must aggressively be passed to BCT Commanders and synchronized and coordinated across the division by the G7.

At the conclusion of 4ID's service as the MND-B headquarters, the Division's method of massing IO effects to attack and maintain pressure on targeted networks resulted in over 700 leaflet drops, 15 Iraqi leaflet drops, 47 million leaflets, 183 million handbills, 400 billboards, and 1.2 million posters. This massed yet focused IO effect or "flashlight approach" where

volume, frequency, and duration of non-lethal attacks mattered, was demonstrably effective in exploiting and diminishing enemy networks. 

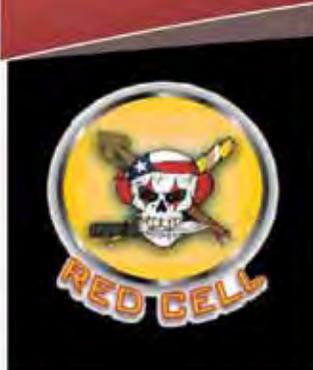


IO SPHERE



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IO SPHERE

Operationalizing Information Engagement

by

Major Therese L. Obidinski, US Army

Editor's Note: Like LTC Zimmerman's contribution, MAJ Obidinski in this article highlights the importance of "Engagement" in the conduct of military operations at the tactical level where actual contact is made. MAJ Obidinski and LTC Zimmerman were both serving in MND-B during the same time frame. Both of the submissions provide valued lessons learned for the IO professional.

Over time, if you build networks of trust, these will grow like roots into the population, displacing the enemy's networks, bringing them out into the open to fight you, and seizing the initiative. These networks include local allies, community leaders, local security forces...in your area.¹

LTC David Kilcullen, "Twenty-Eight Articles," *Military Review* (May-June 2006)

When the 4th Infantry Division Headquarters assumed responsibility of Multi-National Division Baghdad (MND-B) in December 2007, we quickly realized that we were fighting a war of perceptions in the Baghdad theater of public opinion at the tactical, operational, and strategic levels. From late Spring of 2008 through the beginning of 2009, the conditions within the MND-B operational

environment (OE) significantly changed as security visibly improved.² Improved security conditions created the maneuver room for the MND-B's non-lethal warriors. Despite significant improvements in security, MND-B identified a significant lag in the perceptions of these security improvements within the Baghdad population. The Baghdad populace's awareness of these improvements lagged because of the following: Government of Iraq (GOI) gaps in providing sustained essential services, ineffective coordination and synchronization of civil capacity efforts among various coalition force (CF) and GOI partners, and a lack of synchronized, concerted information operation efforts by CF and GOI to inform the local populace of security, civil capacity, and quality of life gains.

MND-B's challenge was to close this perception gap in order to leverage actual gains in security within the Baghdad OE. LTC Kilcullen's, "Twenty-Eight Articles" focuses on the tactical level. MND-B elevated Kilcullen's observation to the operational and strategic levels of war by identifying key security, religious, tribal, and government influence-enabling networks. MND-B's operationalization of information engagement (IE) was a key combat multiplier that empowered CF to identify Iraqi actors to engage at the right time and



MAJ Therese L. Obidinski, MND-B G7 Engagements Planner, shows local Iraqi girl picture of her daughter during a key leader engagement. Source: MAJ Therese Obidinski



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JIOPC Graduates:

- Understand the complexity and construct of the Information Environment (content and flow)
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- Know and demonstrate individual proficiency in the Joint Operational Planning Process (JOPP) and the completion of IO planning and execution products
- Graduate fully prepared to serve as a lead IO planner in a Joint IO or IO-related planning position.

The IO Division also conducts a 1-week Joint IO Orientation Course (JIOOC). The JIOOC can be taught in residence or conducted by Mobile Training Team (MTT). Past MTT audiences include multiple COCOMs, support to intermediate and advanced service PME, service IO education programs and inter-agency audiences.

The Joint Forces Staff College is the Accredited Institution for IO Education and is part of the National Defense University System. The JIOPC is the Joint Staff certified course for IO Training in U.S. Department of Defense.

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place to resolve issues and progress civil capacity building and security efforts across the OE – a shift to non-lethal network-based targeting. Ultimately, MND-B’s ability to synchronize both lethal and non-lethal efforts of CF and host nation actors closed this perception gap and enabled CF to leverage actual gains in security within the Baghdad OE.

As the GOI and Baghdad citizens struggled to support and govern themselves, insurgents, terrorists, and disenfranchised groups continuously exploited these perception gaps through harassing vehicle borne improvised explosive device (VBIED) and suicide vest (SVES) attacks amplified through aggressive tactical and strategic propaganda campaigns designed to do the following: discredit the Iraqi government and Iraqi Security Forces (ISF); degrade local Iraqi support for CF, ISF and GOI; reinforce negative local perception; maintain passive support of the local Iraqi populace, and lastly, to degrade the will and support of the American people.

While current doctrine still focused on fighting adversaries with vertically organized command and control structures, this was not the case in the current COIN fight which required friendly forces to fight against adversaries with more flexible, informal command and control elements who used non-standard tactics.³ In order to successfully “fight” against these atypical adversaries, MND-B would now have to equally apply the network-based approach to lethal and non-lethal targeting across all lines of effort (LOE). MND-B’s execution of Information Operations (IO), in concert with other lethal and non-lethal means, played a key role in this fight to influence the behaviors of the Iraqi people to cause small, steady gains in behavior change, which over time shaped perception and attitudes. This is where the Army IO subtask of information engagement took center stage. The G7 staff enabled the MND-B Commander, Major General Jeffrey Hammond, to shape Iraqi perceptions and behavior by: 1) integrating IE fully into the operations process and directly

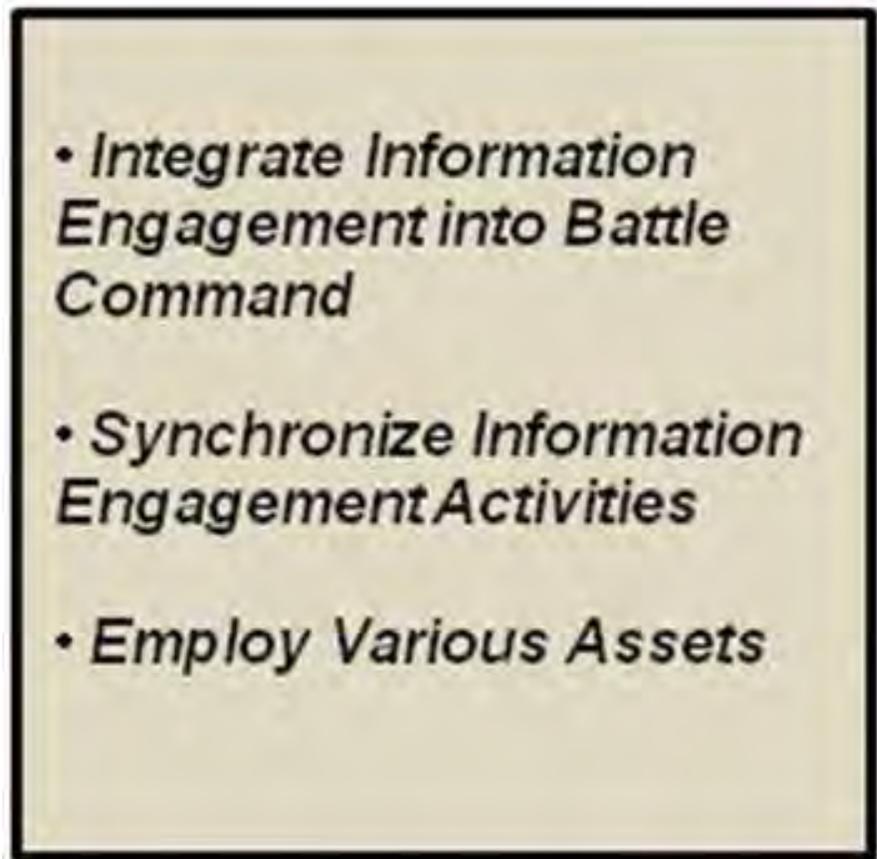
assisting the CG in exercising battle command, 2) synchronizing IE activities, and 3) employing various assets to achieve the commander’s desired effects of sustained security, improved essential services, and progress civil capacity building.

Integrate Information Engagement into Battle Command

as described in Army Field Manual 3-0, Operations, defines IE as “the integrated employment of public affairs to inform U.S. and friendly audiences; psychological operations, combat camera, U.S. Government strategic communication and defense support to public diplomacy, and other means necessary to influence foreign audiences; and, leader and Soldier engagements to support both efforts.”⁴ To accomplish this, the G7 ensured both IO and IE activities were fully integrated into the operations process and directly assisted the CG in exercising battle command. For example, the G7 ensured that the G7 staff leads were fully integrated into the military decision making process. G7

engagement, targeting, plans, military deception, psychological operations, and cultural and policy advisor staff leads attended division staff operational planning groups, IO working groups (IOWG), lethal targeting meetings, and other lethal and non-lethal battle rhythm events to facilitate staff coordination, de-confliction, and synchronization of all operations.

When 4th ID began participation in the weekly Sewer Water Electricity Agriculture Trash and Health (SWEAT-H) meetings led by the G9, there was insufficient coordination among the various MND-B partners such as Iraqi Amanat or city hall representatives, USAID, Provincial Reconstruction Team-Baghdad (PRT-B), Joint Reconstruction Operations Center (JROC), Engineer, Civil Affairs (CA) unit representatives, Staff Judge Advocate (SJA), G8, G9, and Public Affairs (PA) division staff leads, and Human Terrain Team (HTT) leads from identifying, prioritizing, synchronizing and executing essential service projects. Over the course of



time we learned that CF needed to improve coordination and communication through engagements with the Baghdad mayor, PRT-B, JROC, and other GOI ministries. CF partnered with the Amanat and Baghdad Governorate and PRT-B to sign the project's Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) which laid the framework for Amanat project specifications, identification, and prioritization. The door was now opened for more Iraqi representation and coordination at the SWEAT-H.

No project in the MND-B OE would be started without Amanat buy-in or approval, the ultimate example of partnership. G7 planners also attended the lethal/non-lethal working groups to prevent information fratricide and to synchronize and coordinate lethal and non-lethal targeting and messages across the OE. The G7 briefed the Commanding General (CG) in the daily Battle Update Assessment (BUA) brief, another key battle rhythm event. The culmination of G7 integration within the division staff occurred at the weekly lethal/non-lethal targeting brief chaired by the CG with the attendance of DCG-M, DCG-S, and the chief of PRT-B; thus, enabled the commander to make informed and timely decisions.

Synchronize Information Engagement Activities vertically and horizontally among the division, brigade, and allied partner staff leads to ensure words match deeds. Messaging must be tied to operations on the ground and

directed to the right target at the right time and right place. The infamous Route Irish which used to be laden with IEDs is one such example of how this was accomplished. Route Irish is the main route into Baghdad City. The main trash covered route to Baghdad deteriorated in recent years structurally and posed a potential security concern. It was common practice for the enemy to bury IEDs underneath trash and debris. The project's MoU facilitated the synchronization between MND-B and the Amanat to address this issue and to start a revitalization and public information campaign of partnered GOI and CF activities to restore Route Irish to its former glory. Joint Iraqi and CF press conferences with the Iraqis in the lead were broadcast to American and Arab audiences highlighting GOI and CF efforts to renovate and restore the route. This created public awareness of visibly, improving conditions and helped to promote the GOI's credibility and competency for providing for a better quality of life directed toward American and Iraqi publics. Thus, the partnering of GOI, ISF, and CF efforts helped to close the gap between perceptions and reality.

Employ various assets such as public affairs (PA), psychological operations (PSYOP), and engagements to inject messages into the populace. Operation Ironhorse Blizzard, which lasted from 25 August to 30 November 2008, is one such example of G7 support to transmit well-timed, synchronized, and coordinated messages to the Iraqi populace within the

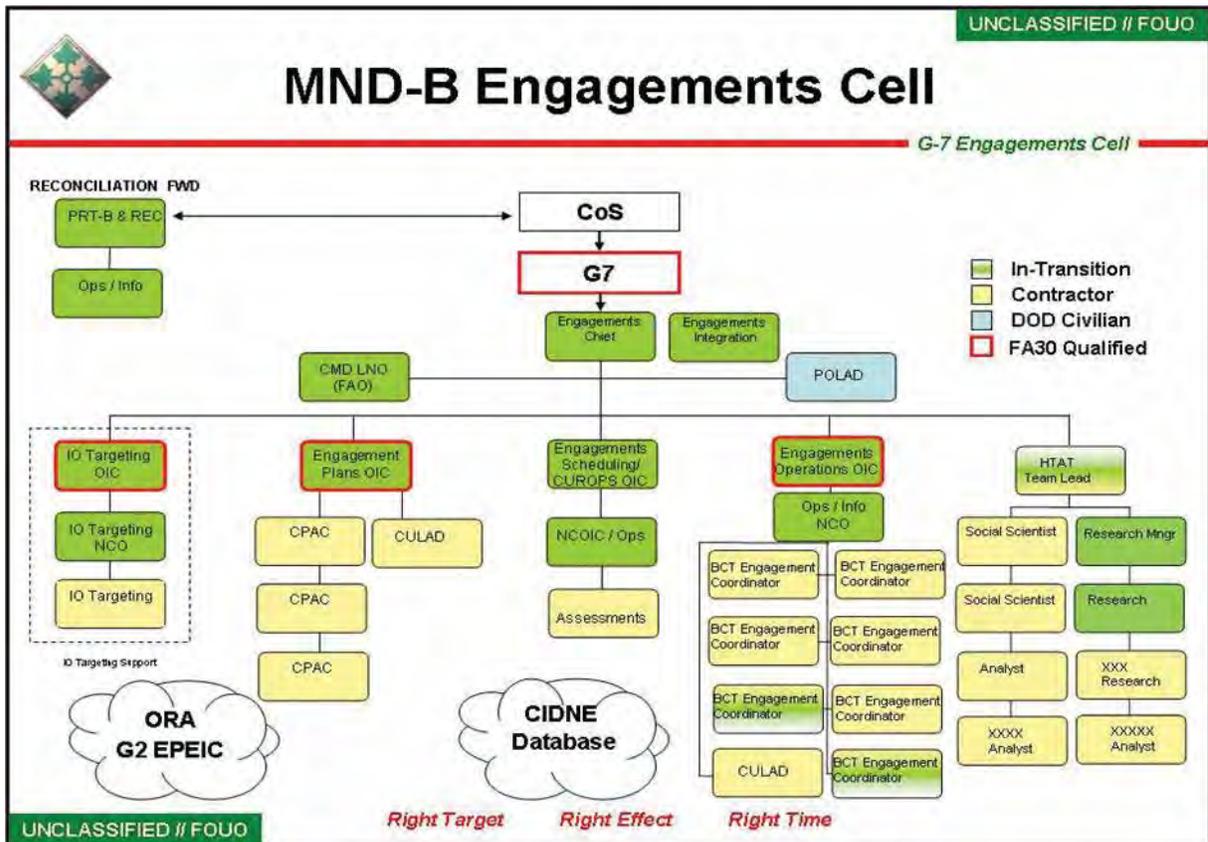


Figure 1 - MND-B Key Leader Engagement Cell
Source: MAJ Therese Obidinski

Baghdad OE. This operation served as another partnered Iraqi and CF campaign to prevent the return of Jaysh al-Mahdi Army and other special group criminals (JAM SGC) to their operating bases within the city by flooding the information environment with messages about JAM SGC return. Arab media outlets, joint CF and Iraqi press conferences, Arab newspapers, radio, tri-folds, leaflets, billboards, bedsheet banners,⁵ and face to face engagements were all conduits of the message to inform the populace of JAM SGC return, influence the populace to report JAM SGC activities to the ISF, and ultimately, deny JAM SGC from returning. A thorough analysis of the information environment to determine 2nd and 3rd order effects within the MND-B OE enabled G7 engagements to determine the best methods to ensure message delivery and acceptance by the target audience. Constant assessment and various

perception atmospheric methods are necessary to determine measures of effectiveness (MOE) of message injects into the populace. As an example, do not overuse any one asset, such as leaflets, as it can lose its effectiveness. MND-B utilized the Baghdad Survey and Iraqi Advisory Task Force (IQATF) to measure citizen perceptions of this operation and other issues such as SWEAT-H efforts, the GOI, and ISF in order to determine the effectiveness of CF and IA message delivery methods.⁶ MND-B also utilized engagement reports and intelligence reports to create MOEs. Lastly, always remember that not every event requires a response.

Role of MND-B Key Leader Engagement Cell

Due to the unique spheres of influence in MND-B, the division developed and organized the most robust, unique key leader engagement cell in the Army

(See Figure 1). The engagement cell's distinctive mission and organization enabled it to do the following: codify the engagement development process, conduct targeted, sequenced engagements across the OE in support of the commander's desired effects and lastly, required robust information sharing and knowledge management.

Mission Focus and desired end-state for all engagement operations was the reduction of violence and return to normalcy. The G7 engagement staff mission directed subordinate units to conduct full spectrum engagements in support of strategic communications in order to isolate extremists, cultivate engagement opportunities for long-term reconciliation and build credible national, provincial and local institutions. G7 engagement staff served as the synchronizing cell responsible for tiered and nested engagements at all echelons



Before and After Photos in MND-B Area of Operations
Source: MAJ Therese Obidinski

with key tribal, religious, Iraqi security force, business and political leaders. By the completion of the 2009 Security Agreement, the Baghdad Provincial and City governments had taken over nearly all-essential service project management. Coalition Forces continued to provide oversight in an advisory or consultative capacity.

Organization Matters

The Baghdad OE not only consisted of the urban government seat of Baghdad city, but also included the outlying rural provinces (See Figure 2). Additionally, the Multi-National Corps- Iraq (MNC-I) engagement cell was standing up their capability with limited personnel. As a result, an engagement gap existed as Multi-National Force- Iraq (MNF-I) would often cover down on what would be labeled as MNC-I level engagements. MND-B would cover up to fill this gap. Significantly more important to this unique challenge was the ability to organize the engagement cell with the quality and skills set of personnel that were required to execute engagement operations.

Coordination efforts with MNC-I and MNF-I progressed to ensure that all engagement operations were synchronized at all levels. Units were aware that spheres of influence for each echelon of leadership would overlap laterally with adjacent BCTs and also vertically with MND-B, MNC-I, and their individual battalions (See Figure 3). Force level engagements focused on the ministries, members of the Iraqi Council of Representatives (COR), and the Presidency Council while Division level engagements focused on provincial councils, ministry representatives, and tribal councils. Brigade level and below engagements focused on tribal leaders, District Advisory Councils (DACs), and Nahia or Neighborhood Advisory Councils (NACs). Subordinate units' understanding of engagement levels and spheres of influence was especially important to ensure that our information efforts would neither result in information fratricide, mismatching of words with deeds, nor what would be called engagement fatigue, over exhaustion of engagements with any one of our Iraqi counterparts and overexertion of engagements by any one member of CF.

Engagement Development Process

The organization of the cell enabled MND-B to codify the engagement development process, using the Army's detect, decide, deliver, assess (D3A) targeting methodology (See Figure 4). Each member of the cell played a distinct role in the process to identify the right issue and match it to the right enabler to engage at the right time and place in order to achieve synchronous and planned effects in support of the Security, Partnership and Transition, and Building Civil Capacity LOEs. The end

result was the key leader engagement packet which consisted of the following: background of the issue; brief biographical and background information of individual to be engaged; assessment or baseline position of the individual and proposed talking points for the command group. Thus, a system was created that codified the engagement development process using following D3A approach of *Detect, Decide, Deliver and Assess*.

Detect or define the problem, issue, or need of the people. When 4th ID arrived in Baghdad in December 2007, initial engagements were designed to spread the general message that CF were here to help. Increasing pressure on the commander's time caused a shift of focus to conduct engagements that solved specific issues, moved along particular processes, and/or addressed an identified need. The questions then became to our Iraqi counterparts, how may we partner to assist? What are your issues/concerns?

Decide which officials, leaders, enablers and decision makers should be engaged. Through the non-lethal working group and coordination with the G2 Economic, Political, Engagement, Intelligence Cell (EPEIC), Cultural Political Advisory Cell (CPAC), and the Human Terrain Analysis Team (HTAT), we were able to develop enabling tribal, religious, governance, security networks that focused on the influence structure, or informal structure within an organization, versus the formal, organizational structure. The network based approach to targeting enabled us to determine who to engage and at which level.

Deliver the goods. Just as important as deciding whom to engage, it was just as important to determine which asset at the brigade, division, or higher level would deliver and execute the engagement. Only when issues could not be resolved or processes moved along at the brigade level would engagements elevate to the next level. When necessary, the trump cards would be played in the form of the DCGs and the ace in the hole, the CG when additional muscle was needed. It is important



Figure 2 - Baghdad Governorate and Amanat ⁷
Source: Republic of Iraq District Field Manual, Volume I, USAID, July 2007 with modifications from author.

not to overplay your cards and know when to play them.

Assess the desired effects. The assessment portion of the process is crucial. CF utilized various assets such as the IQATF and the Baghdad Survey. In addition, the most important for the cell was the engagement summary (EXSUM) which summarized the key points of the meeting, due outs, and deliverables. All units were required to input within 72 hours of the scheduled engagement EXSUMs into the Combined Information Database Network Exchange (CIDNE). The CIDNE database, although not perfect, did not leave theater, and facilitated continuity of information on a secure network. Previously, files containing pertinent information were lost due to poor battle handover, taken home by the unit, or in diverse databases instead of compiled into one central databank. The cell could now review previous EXSUMs and linkages of individuals and determine whether they were effective or not. For each engagement, the G7 assessor, a civilian contractor, gave a rating of poor- effects not achieved do not engage to a rating of excellent- effects achieved continue to re-engage from the desired effects from the engagement packet. Once assessed, CF could determine whether or not to re-engage the individual or to move on to someone more efficient and start the engagement development process all over. From assessments, CF could now recommend to the commander whether to add or drop individuals from the High Value Engagement List (HVEL).

Targeted, Sequenced Engagements

MND-B working groups proposed targeted, sequenced engagements across the OE in support of the commander's desired effects. Engagements were planned and synchronized at the

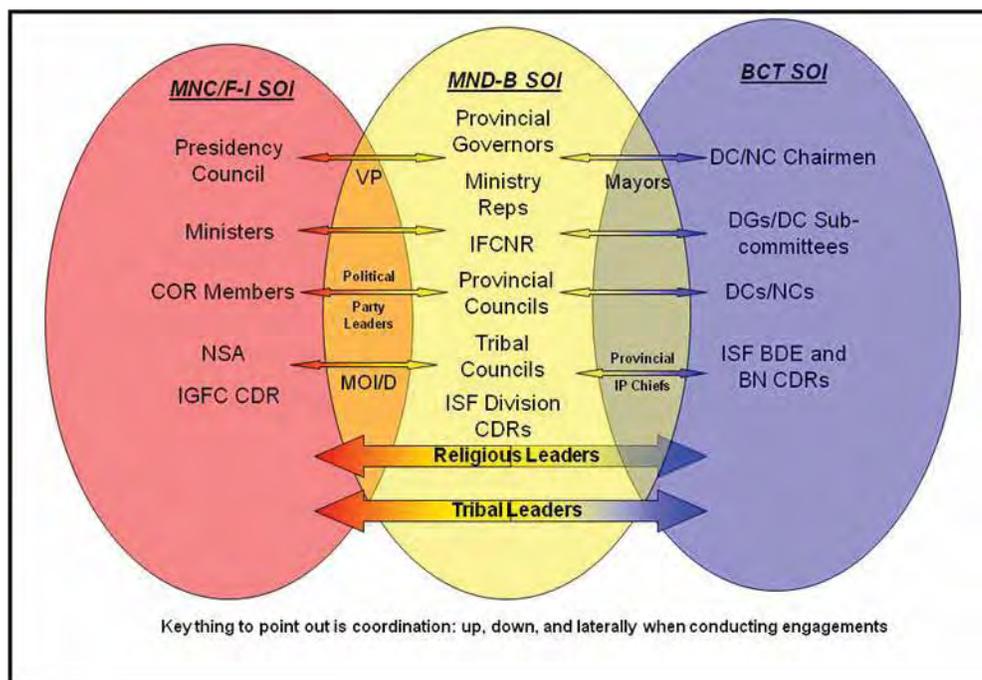


Figure 3 - Spheres of Influence
Source: MAJ Therese Obidinski

command level with engagements by the brigades. Together they created additional maneuver room and reinforcing and primary effects that advanced our LOEs.

Build and Share Knowledge

Engagement operations required robust information sharing and knowledge management. Previously, units who had redeployed often took their files with them. Reach-back centers in the states did not keep the same hours as CF in theater. It was often difficult to get information in a timely manner for the commander to make decisions. The CIDNE database became the crucial information exchange network. This not only would require individual staff personnel to organize and maintain section file systems, but also, would require a dedicated knowledge manager maintain the entire system of information files for the division.

As the OE and its complexities change, so will our tactics, techniques, and procedures change to ensure that we are constantly adapting our methods to achieve our desired effects and counter the enemy's actions. Engagements affect every Soldier at every level. Words and deeds do matter, and we must constantly ensure that we properly plan engagements in order to prevent information fratricide and engagement

fatigue. Just like synchronization of fires, we can mass information effects across the OE through a series of coordinated and synchronized engagements designed to match the right target with the right effect at the right time and place in order to change behavior and resolve problems. If we can accomplish this task, then we have truly made a lasting impact.

MND-B was successful in shaping Iraqi perceptions across the Baghdad OE because it equally applied the network-based approach to lethal and non lethal-targeting across all lines of effort; synchronized CF and host nation lethal and non-lethal efforts; integrated IE activities into the operations process, and lastly, was not afraid to employ various assets to achieve the desired effects of sustained security, improved essential services, and progress civil capacity building. MND-B's orchestration of both lethal and non-lethal activities closed the perception gap; thus, leveraged security gains across the Baghdad theater of public opinion at the tactical, operational, and strategic levels- making a lasting impact not only on the Iraqi people, but also on our Soldiers as well- and that has made all the difference. 🌀

Footnotes:

1. LTC David Kilcullen et al., "Twenty-Eight Articles," *Military Review* (May-June, 2006)
2. From MND-B reported attack trends from December 2007 through December 2008. Data recorded as of 10 January 2008.
3. BG (Ret.) Huba Wass de Czege et al., "Rethinking IO: Complex Operations in the Information Age," *Military Review* (November-December, 2008): 17.
4. U.S. Army Field Manual (FM) 3-0, *Operations* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office [GPO], 14 June 2001), 11-2
5. *Bedsheet Banners were a preferred Baghdad local method for message delivery.*
6. *Iraqi Advisory Task Force (IQATF) Reports. Reports are an IQATF product derived from information provided by IQATF Local National Advisors (LNAs) from throughout the MND-B Area of Operations. This report attempts to assess subjects categorized under the following topics from a local national perspective: Local Government, Security, Economics, and Essential Services. This report contains raw atmospheric information as reported by the IQATF LNA's.*
7. *Republic of Iraq District Field Manual, Volume I, USAID, July 2007*

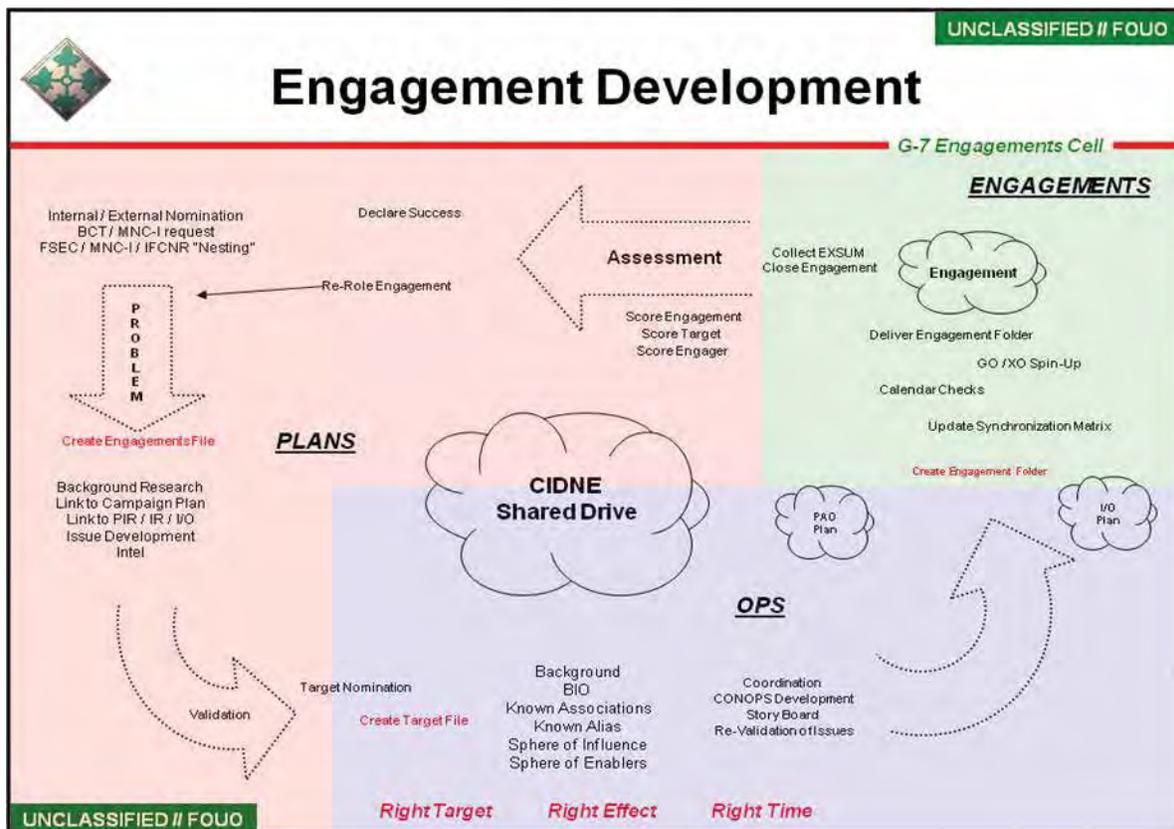


Figure 4- Engagement Development Process
Source: MAJ Therese Obidinski

Time of Change at the Joint Information Operations Warfare Center

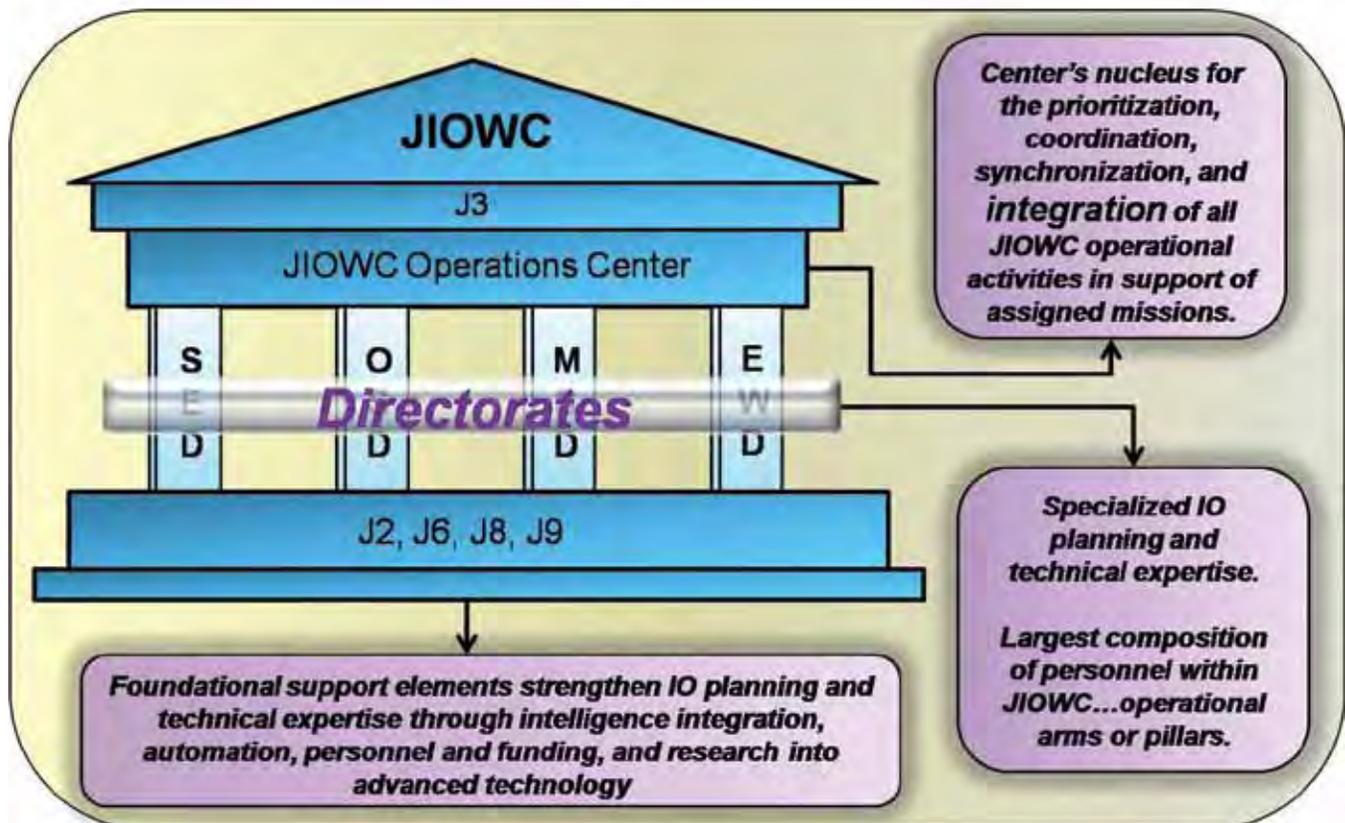
by

Mr. Mark H. Johnson, SES

Since General Kevin Chilton's visit as the newly designated Commander of US Strategic Command (USSTRATCOM) in the fall of 2007, the Joint Information Operations Warfare Center (JIOWC) has undergone some changes in organization and increased emphasis in supporting USSTRATCOM's Three Lines of Operation (LOO): Cyber, Deterrence and Space. This is significant as JIOWC support to the other Combatant Commanders and subordinate Joint Task Forces has remained an operational priority. JIOWC as an organization comprised of four distinct Information Operations (IO) centers of excellence in Strategic Effects (SE), Operations Security (OS), Electronic Warfare (EW), and Specialized Military Support (MS) has done a remarkable job in accomplishing its mission. We have assisted all supported commanders in the US Department of Defense plan and routinely execute all aspects of IO including core, supported, and related activities as directed by Commander USSTRATCOM. This is a success story that deserves much

credit and is a testament to the professionalism, dedication, and hard work of all members of the JIOWC team. However, as important as each IO center is in the eyes of the organizations it supports, we have identified room for improvement in integrating our specialized capabilities. Proper integration of IO capabilities and general IO planning expertise provides the joint Warfighter with a higher degree of support and it should be the JIOWC's number one strength and priority. Without integration, IO is simply a disparate force multiplier that does not capitalize on the strengths of its individual sub-specialties.

Additionally, a clear Mission and Vision, coupled with a measurable set of goals and objectives, provides the direction and purpose for what the JIOWC does and why it exists. The effort to develop the JIOWC's future strategy has recently been completed and I'm happy to say that it now accurately reflects JIOWC as a relevant and value-added organization positioned to benefit the joint warfighting community.



Joint Information Operations Warfare Center (JIOWC) Structure

Source: JIOWC

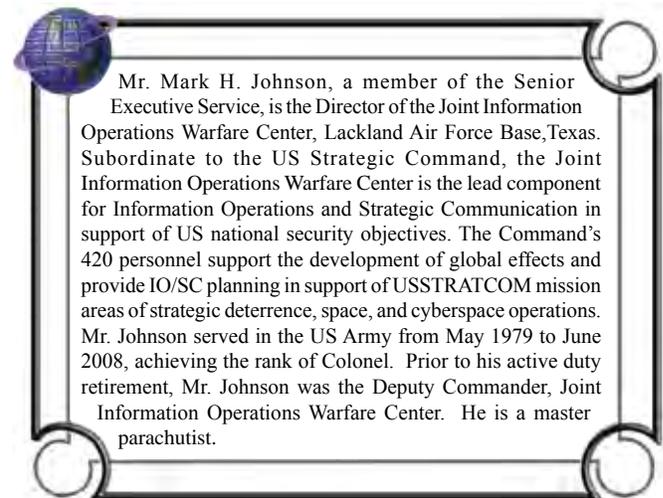
Parallel to this effort is the decision to fully resource the JIOWC Operations Center (JOC) to become the true organizational nucleus charged with **prioritizing, coordinating, synchronizing, and integrating** all JIOWC operations and planning activities in support of our assigned missions. To aid in this effort, the specialized former IO Centers are now designated as Directorates. As such, they now play a vital role in resourcing the JOC and are integral to supporting its role of orchestrating the myriad operational tasks and missions that flow through the JIOWC. Optimum Integration is our goal and by having full-time Intelligence, EW, OPSEC, MS and SE representation organic to the JOC, we will increase our level of support to the joint Warfighter. Moreover, having a nucleus of integrated planning and operational expertise in a single location is vital to maintaining control over ongoing operations while simultaneously remaining responsive to our own higher headquarters. A beneficial byproduct of this reorganization is the ability to have better oversight of all operations and unparalleled situational awareness that provides JIOWC leadership with the necessary insight to make appropriate resourcing decisions.

This realignment of personnel into the JOC will also serve as an open conduit between the Directorates and the JOC greatly improving our collective information sharing and collaboration on real-time operational activities and efforts. A key point worth emphasizing is that my JOC will have the enhanced capability to support short-notice planning teams, as well as, operational planning groups and crisis action teams. A nucleus of JIOWC expertise resident in the JOC also lends to integrating IO in support of USSTRATCOM and General Chilton's lines of operations in real-time, and thereby increases our level of support to all mission requirements.

I firmly believe that these organizational changes will reinforce the community's perception of JIOWC as an overall Center

of Excellence. Marketing the organization as a single entity, defined by its unique ability to facilitate full operational integration of IO in support of the joint Warfighter, remains of paramount importance. I want the joint warfighting community to understand that JIOWC continues to be a single organization capable of providing world-class IO support. We are not an organization that solely provides "stove piped" capabilities without regard to overall IO effects. The new Directorates will be as vital to the success of the mission as they were as Centers, but the effort will become much more unified in the minds of those the JIOWC supports.

These organizational changes to the JIOWC structure and terminology were set in place on 19 January 2010. I am optimistic that these changes will better allow us to support the joint Warfighter and US National Objectives for many years to come.



Mr. Mark H. Johnson, a member of the Senior Executive Service, is the Director of the Joint Information Operations Warfare Center, Lackland Air Force Base, Texas. Subordinate to the US Strategic Command, the Joint Information Operations Warfare Center is the lead component for Information Operations and Strategic Communication in support of US national security objectives. The Command's 420 personnel support the development of global effects and provide IO/SC planning in support of USSTRATCOM mission areas of strategic deterrence, space, and cyberspace operations. Mr. Johnson served in the US Army from May 1979 to June 2008, achieving the rank of Colonel. Prior to his active duty retirement, Mr. Johnson was the Deputy Commander, Joint Information Operations Warfare Center. He is a master parachutist.



Foreign Communications and Articulating the Essence of PSYOP

by

Major Jeremy S. Mushtare

Editor's Note: In this article Major Mushtare discusses the difficulty surrounding the perception of the meaning and use of the title psychological operations and how it is often difficult to articulate the actual meaning of the title to lessor informed audiences and stakeholders. His solution to the problem warrants thoughtful consideration.

The time is past due for the U.S. Army Psychological Operations (PSYOP) community to institute a viable alternative to its frequently, but understandably, misconstrued name. As virtually all practitioners within the current PSYOP community will likely acknowledge, we continue to suffer from the common misperceptions that the term "PSYOP" often engenders within those individuals unfamiliar with its core missions that we perform. Consequently, this has, on occasion, led to difficulties in performance of our missions, over-scrutiny of our soldiers, negative preconceived notions by interagency or host nation partners, and from time to time, poor publicity within the U.S. media. Given our obvious understanding of the magnitude of the written and spoken word, we should be cognizant of the importance of rectifying

this current disconnect in a timely manner; and no, I am not advocating "MindWar"¹ as a worthy substitute.

In light of the evident baggage that our profession's name carries, it was disconcerting that we still did not have consensus for an actionable alternative at the time that PSYOP was formally instituted as one of the newest branches in the Army during the fall of 2006. Some individuals have advocated the formation of an "Information Warfare Branch"² and others have declared the need for a merger of PSYOP and Information Operations into one Information Operations Branch³; this turf war has been going on for far too long without coherent resolution. The PSYOP mission where the need for resolution may be the most apparent, however, is most likely within the Military Information Support Teams (MISTs). It is currently, and should rightfully continue to be, the role of PSYOP; to institute and maintain MISTs at various embassies around the world. When given the highly politicized nature of introducing DOD forces into many of these interagency environments and compounded by the demands of mission execution in a wide variety of decentralized locations with minimal personnel, the importance of resolving this issue swiftly is obvious and



Tactical PSYOP Soldier Speaks with Iraqi Family

Source: defenseimagery.mil

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clear. Even to this day, in some U.S. Embassies around the world, both the terms “PSYOP” and “MIST” are viewed as both derogatory in nature and ultimately offer potential blowback against U.S. Country Teams. Interagency credibility is hard enough to build and maintain without entering into the situation with one hand tied behind your back due to the possible stigmas that these terms often carry. Furthermore, the PYSOP community failing to surmount such an easy obstacle as a name change should not hamper forward progress and potentially advantageous mutually supportive regional effects.

Lieutenant Colonel (Retired) Brian Rohm recently asserted in an article that, “Some argue that we need to change PSYOP’s name because it is associated with propaganda, lying, and misinformation, but those critics are missing the larger issue: what we actually need is a paradigm shift in the way we conceptualize information operations.”⁴ This, however, is actually far from the current reality, which is in fact, that PSYOP must change its name for the sake of its Soldiers’ effectiveness and credibility because successes in the current Global War on Terror require their expertise and capabilities. This is even truer given the ever-expanding demand for PSYOP forces, which presently seems very different from their “losing relevance” as has been recently claimed.⁵ Notwithstanding the current increasing scramble for the Information Operations Functional Area to seek to define itself and its role in the Army, the PSYOP community, as the force with both the bulk of the “IO” doers and mission requirements must evolve and adapt as needed.

The Same Bad Connotation – No Contemporary Resolution

In 1962, the community changed its name from Psychological Warfare (PSYWAR) to Psychological Operations (PSYOP) because U.S. Forces were not conducting “warfare” on the unarmed populace during war, peacetime, or consolidation operations.⁶ While this shift may have seemed substantial at the time, it did not satisfy the actual root problem itself. As Americans seek to comprehend what is meant by this military term, the closest concept they can approximate is an unfair form of coercion, or to the even less grounded in reality, the term “brainwashing.” Therefore, the superficial change from “warfare” to “operations” has proven to be ineffective over the last forty-six years. Furthermore, witness some of the publicized difficulties that “psychological operations” have encountered within just the last ten years.

In March 1998, the New York Times published a story entitled “U.S. Training of Indonesian Troops Goes on Despite Ban.”⁷ Training under the International Military Education and Training (IMET) program had ceased in 1992 due to Congressional concerns over possible human rights abuses occurring in Indonesia against the East Timorese.⁸ This article detailed the fact that, Defense Department documents show “The Pentagon has been training Indonesian military forces in specialized arts of warfare since 1992, despite a Congressional ban intended to curb human rights abuses by those soldiers.”⁹ It then stated in reference to Joint Combined Exchange Training (JCETs) that, “The Indonesian forces trained by the Pentagon



PSYOP Soldiers in Soccer Game with Iraqi Children
Source: defenseimagery.mil

include a special-forces commando unit called Kopassus, which human rights groups say have tortured and killed civilians. The unit has received training from United States special-operations soldiers in skills like *psychological warfare* and reconnaissance missions.” That year was the last year that US/Indonesia JCETs took place. Numerous websites picked up this information, and due to the inordinately broad term “psychological warfare,” indeed it gave a very dubious impression to the public at large. Toward the end of the article, it also stated that, “The JCET program provided training in *psychological operations* and marksmanship to the Rwandan Patriotic Army, which has been accused of the massacre of civilians in eastern Zaire.”¹⁰ Clearly a more innocuous term, or even speaking in terms of the tasks to be trained, “providing public information,” or “loudspeaker operations,” etc., would seem less damning in the eyes of a larger percentage of the public. Notice that the aforementioned Special Forces task of “reconnaissance missions” was listed out and not lumped under some sort of amorphous “Special Forces” term that left room for doubt. However, a different report placed the responsibility elsewhere in the Special Operations community when it incorrectly related that, “Army Special Forces ‘Green Berets’ instructed the Kopassus, an elite Indonesian unit, in skills that included urban warfare, advanced sniper techniques, air drop operations, close-quarters combat, and *psychological operations*.”¹¹

Yet another example is a General Accounting Office report to Congress from 1999 regarding the JCET program. It states that “in one JCET alone 39 special operations personnel from the Army, Navy, and Air Force trained with nearly 250 Thai military in activities such as small unit tactics, maritime beach reconnaissance/landing, and *psychological operations*.”¹² Clearly, the same problem is presented, however, the politico-military factors in Thailand were not as publicly volatile as those in Indonesia but the same potential for an immediate PSYOP “black eye” still existed.

In 2000, articles were published that, in a rather cursory manner, described internships under the Training with Industry program of PSYOP Soldiers at both CNN in Atlanta and NPR in Washington DC. One article accurately depicted the flavor of them all when it stated, “Media analysts who have expressed alarm about the case say that while any official armed-forces presence in the news-production process is cause for concern, the PSYOP personnel pose a particular threat, given the job they do.”¹³ Furthermore, the article stated that both CNN and NPR had taken action to cease participation in this arrangement.¹⁴ Ultimately, this particular article also asserted that, “PSYOP’s public standing probably suffers a bit due to the sinister-sounding terminology for the arsenal of weapons that target the mind. The parlance of propaganda operations includes euphemisms such as psychological warfare and perception management, but PSYOP is the term officially adopted by the U.S. military.”¹⁵ Even the expeditious, yet warranted, death of the Office of Strategic Influence, in its last writhing gasps was reported in the *New York Times* as “a mission of psychological operations, or psyops” with a quote from a senior Pentagon official that it “goes from the blackest of black programs to the whitest of white.”¹⁶

Of course, the community has also suffered a public blow to its reputation over the “burning bodies” incident of 2005 in which PSYOP soldiers were captured on film conducting loudspeaker operations as the bodies of two dead Taliban were burning nearby. The *New York Times* reported that the soldiers had, “burned the bodies of two dead Taliban fighters and then used the charred and smoking corpses in a propaganda campaign against the insurgents” and that it was conducted by an “American psychological operations team broadcasting taunts over their loudspeaker.”¹⁷ The obvious damage caused to the PSYOP profession due to poor judgment and elevated by the media, is further compounded by the weight that the terminology inevitably carries.

What is Today’s PSYOP- and What Must it NOT Be?

The increasingly ubiquitous term “Military Information Support Team” continues to have varying successes at U.S. Embassies, however, the danger of continuing this trend is the possibility of perpetuating or even exacerbating the current blur between Information Operations and Psychological Operations, which are not synonymous. While MIST is a seemingly innocuous term, it also has its roots in another time, a time prior to “information operations.” It was also the result of the impracticability of using the term PSYOP due to its usual negative connotations.¹⁸

The continued delays in formulating an effective alternative name underscore that it is truly a difficult process, namely because PSYOP are complex, multi-disciplinary, and largely intangible in nature. The field of PSYOP is very diverse and is clearly, like war itself, as much an art as it is a science. It involves aspects, to varying degrees, of psychology, sociology, anthropology, demography, international relations, political science, national security affairs, public relations, advertising, marketing, media and communications.¹⁹ While acknowledging difficulty, we must still pursue an alternative. The skill sets that make PSYOP officers and Noncommissioned Officers effective unnecessarily convolute the search for an all-encompassing and self-explanatory term. So what should PSYOP be called instead?

The new name must be as sweeping and descriptive of the current PSYOP missions as possible while remaining an innocuous term. It must convey the essence of the PSYOP missions without instigating automatic interagency or public backlash. Clearly, the community must understand that a thesaurus will not circumvent the adversity faced by using the term “psychological.” There can be no option considered having to do with “psychological,” “mental,” “persuasion,” “perception,” “influence,” etc., due to the inescapable, yet predictable, effects of the

very words. When viewed as the endeavors of the military or government these words appear to become sinister in nature. While it is important to acknowledge the public role that psychological operations play, adoption of such terminology as “public diplomacy,” “public communications,” etc., should be cautiously considered so long as we maintain necessary separation, avoid confusion, and more importantly, avoid the wider perception of a willful military manipulation of the accepted roles and standards of Public Affairs. While current Psychological Operations place a heavy emphasis on media operations neither this, nor advertising, nor marketing are all-encompassing enough terms due largely to the important face-to-face communications role conducted by Tactical PSYOP Teams (TPTs) in support of conventional and Special Operations Forces. In reality, the comprehensive answer is actually quite simple.

Foreign Communications

Probably the chief negative connotation that PSYOP carries is the belief that such operations can be conducted domestically within the U.S. Most people are completely unaware that PSYOP forces are prohibited from conducting operations, other than public information domestically, according to U.S. law and are prohibited from targeting U.S. citizens abroad.²⁰ Still, this perception has been perpetuated for 27 years after the passage

of the law and the signing of the executive order enforcing it on the DOD. This perception and is not likely to be rectified at this point. The alternative is to remove the possibility of such an association altogether. Therefore, the principal option is to stress the fact that we conduct operations in *foreign* locations directed toward *foreign* target audiences. This aspect begins to encapsulate the essence of what our community does “to influence the behavior of *foreign* audiences to support U.S. national objectives.”²¹ This first step to the name change debate is also in concert with much current thought over the competing roles of Information Operations and PSYOP. Colonel Curtis Boyd, a former 4th Psychological Operations Group Commander, proposes a reorientation of the current Information Operations model to one that focuses “PSYOP as the base for Army IO, forming the tactical ‘foreign media operations’ center of attention and main effort at corps and below.”²² Meanwhile, such a title as “foreign media operations” is not quite all encompassing enough. However, tactical face-to-face operations, while not necessarily utilizing media nevertheless constitute *Foreign Communications*. Thus, the true essence of what constitutes current PSYOP is articulated into something that is both much more palatable and descriptive. The term MIST that in some locations also has somewhat negative connotations – can be officially scrapped and instead we can deploy Foreign Communications Teams (FCTs). Tactical



US PSYOP Soldiers Working with Iraqi Police Media Relations Cell

Source: defenseimagery.mil

PSYOP Teams can ensure that maneuver commanders are still comfortable by only changing the term slightly to Tactical Communications Teams (TCTs).

Nevertheless, In the Interim..Be Mindful of “PSYOP”

In the meantime, and whenever the PSYOP name change occurs, when conducting missions abroad, such as JCETs the term PSYOP should be used sparingly as a task to be trained with foreign militaries. Combat engineers do not conduct engineering, but a host of tasks such as mining, mine clearing, demolitions, obstacle emplacement, breaching, etc. Similarly, Psychological Operations must be mindful of not allowing, just for simplicity’s sake, tasks to be rolled up into the ever-prevalent and generic term “PSYOP.” If the JCET will include training in providing public information in a humanitarian disaster scenario, or possibly loudspeaker operations at the tactical level, then that is what should be listed in all pertinent documents. This will help to reduce the chances of perpetuating the same old negative connotations that PSYOP has conjured up for years. Until then, bureaucratic inertia can be overcome by Persuading, Changing, and Influencing²³ using *Foreign communications*. 

Footnotes:

¹ Colonel Paul E. Valley and Major Michael A. Aquino, “From PSYOP to MindWar: The Psychology of Victory,” Headquarters, 7th Psychological Operations Group, Presidio of San Francisco, California, 1980. <http://www.xeper.org/maquino/nm/MindWar.pdf>.

² Major George C.L. Brown, “Do We Need FA30? Creating an Information Warfare Branch,” *Military Review* (January-February 2005), 39-43. <https://www.au.af.mil/au/awc/awcgate/milreview/brown2.pdf>.

³ Lieutenant-Colonel Frederic W. Rohm, Jr., “Merging Information Operations and Psychological Operations” *Military Review* (January-February 2008), 108-111. <http://usacac.leavenworth.army.mil/CAC/milreview/English/JanFeb08/RohmEngJanFeb08.pdf>.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 108.

⁵ If battalion, brigade, and division commanders do not see the PSYOP community’s marketing expertise, then PSYOP officers are not doing their jobs well. If the PSYOP community is failing to explain its discipline to the rest of the Army, is it any wonder that it is losing relevance?” *Ibid.*, 109.

⁶ Stanley Sandler, “Cease Resistance: It’s Good For You!”: A History of U.S. Army Combat Psychological Operations (Fort Bragg, NC: U.S. Army Special Operations Command Historical Monograph Series No. 9, 1999), 261.

⁷ Tim Weiner, “U.S. Training of Indonesia Troops Goes on Despite Ban,” *New York Times*, 17 March 1998. <http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=9C03E1DC1339F934A25750C0A96E958260>.

⁸ William C. Story, Jr., CRS Report for Congress, “Joint Combined Exchange Training (JCET) and Human Rights: Background Issues for Congress,” 26 January 1999, 12.

⁹ Weiner, “U.S. Training of Indonesia Troops Goes on Despite Ban.”

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹ Story, Jr., “Joint Combined Exchange Training (JCET) and Human

Rights: Background Issues for Congress.”

¹² United States General Accounting Office, “Report to Congressional Requestors: Military Training: Management and Oversight of Joint Combined Exchange Training,” July 1999, 49. <http://www.gao.gov/archive/1999/ns99173.pdf>.

¹³ John Elliston, “Target Audience: Fort Bragg’s Propaganda Troops at Work on the Home Front,” *Independent Weekly*. <http://www.indyweek.com/gyrobase/Content?oid=oid%3A14568>.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ Maureen Dowd, “Office of Strategic Mendacity,” *New York Times*, 20 February 2002. <http://query.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=9E0CE4DC173EF933A15751C0A9649C8B63>.

¹⁷ Eric Schmitt, “Army Examining an Account of Abuse of 2 Dead Taliban,” *New York Times*, 20 October 2005. <http://www.nytimes.com/2005/10/20/international/asia/20afghan.html>.

¹⁸ Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Publication 3-53: *Doctrine for Joint Psychological Operations* (5 September 2003), VI-5.

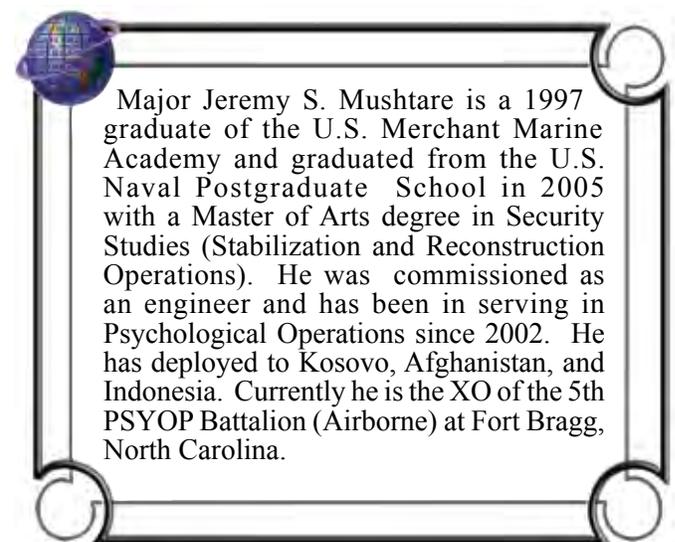
¹⁹ Headquarters, Department of the Army, *Soldier Training Publication 33-37II-OFS: Officer Foundation Standards II Psychological Operations (37A) Officer’s Manual*, 2 July 2007, iv.

²⁰ Headquarters, Department of the Army, *Field Manual 3-05.30: Psychological Operations*, April 2005, 1-12.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 1-2.

²² Colonel Curtis D. Boyd, “Army IO is PSYOP: Influencing More with Less,” *Military Review* (May-June 2007), 67-75, 74. <http://usacac.army.mil/CAC/milreview/English/MayJun07/Boyd.pdf>.

²³ “Persuade, Change, Influence” is the motto of the Psychological Operations Regiment.



PSYOP and the Iranian Elections

by

Mr. Njdeh Asisian

About This Article: This article was written right after the first popular demonstrations against the Iranian 10th Presidential elections. In this paper, I try to provide an honest assessment of what is going on in the country, which the major players are and what will be the future of this unending struggle of modernism and traditionalism between the Iranian political elites. Further, this paper explains why the conservative wing of the government decided to dismantle the reformist movement within the present Iranian political system. It is important to mention that post Iranian election protests have not died out and the Iranian government still considers demonstrators as the most deadly threat to their installed government.

Editors Note: Mr. Asisian's views on the situation in Iran are specific and relevant. He is a US citizen of Iranian decent. His views are not official views of the US government or the JIOWC. Mr. Asisian would like to thank Mr. Mark Sereduck and Mr Stephen Spencer who reviewed and edited this article for publication.

Introduction

The recent Iranian election, with Ahmadinejad winning in a landslide and the reaction of the people, was an event unprecedented in the last thirty years of the Islamic Republic. On the one hand, the Iranian people are in search of freedom and democratic reforms. On the other hand, the theocratic regime is trying to prolong its rule in Iran at any cost. For thirty years now, despite many different centers of power in Iranian politics, the Iranian regime has been unified and

coherent when it came to the Presidential election. Regardless of who became the President of Iran, the members of the regime were obligated more or less to accept the reality.

In the recent elections, things have changed very dramatically. As the head of the state, Ayatollah Khamenehi considered Mr. Ahmadinejad as a convenient tool to achieve some of the goals he has been pursuing for the last 30 years. He wanted to rid himself of some people that he has opposed from the beginning of the Islamic Republic. These people have challenged the Ayatollah Khamenehi and effectively contained his power. They were able to bring some balance to the domestic and foreign policy of the Islamic Republic.

This election is noteworthy for analysis both from the framework of the legality of the Ahmadinejad's presidency and human rights issues. It is also very important to analyze how the Islamic regime was able to purge the higher echelon of the Islamic Republic from unfavorable people by reinstalling Ahmadinejad as President.

This article emphasizes the cultural Psychological Operations (PSYOP) implemented by the Iranian government. This paper does not discuss a classical or modern understanding of Psychological Operations in the Western sense. What this paper represents is a cultural Psychological Operations that may be difficult to understand for many people. In Iran the collection of actions and reactions, direct or indirect discussions, and



Woman Holds Photo of Iranian Government Oppression

Source: statesman.com

edicts of religious myths have played an important role in the implementation of a successful PSYOP.

This election has exhibited all the above-mentioned factors. This paper discusses the following issues: the roots of the current Iranian political system, the internal turmoil it has exhibited since 1979 (background), the duality of the Islamic Republic and the presidency of Ahmadinejad, the preparation for the election during which Mousawi became the main contender, the importance of the Presidential Debates (especially Mousawi-Ahmadinejad debate and its aftermath), and post election unrest and reverse PSYOP.

Background

Ayatollah Khamenehi is one of those Iranian clerics who believe in the uniformity of the government under his rule. In previous years when Rafsanjani and later Khatami were Presidents, he was not able to fully exercise his power. Therefore, he used his constitutional power through the security services, the military, and the judicial system to limit both of those Presidents' programs that might liberalize the Iranian political system, economics, and society. The appearance of Ahmadinejad as a Presidential candidate in 2005 was the best news for Khamenehi's plans.

Khamenehi's second son who is more radical than his father is, and who held a strong influence on his father's opinions and decision-making introduced Ahmadinejad to Khamenehi. Ahmadinejad's political affiliation and his ideological worldview are connected to one of the most reactionary political groups in Iranian politics. He has close ties to secretive Hojatieh organization and its leader Ayatollah Mesbah Yazdi, "who believes that an Islamic state does not need to have any democratic aspects because its government is directly sanctioned by God. Such a state ideally would have no elections at all, because its rulers would be appointed by clerical experts divinely inspired to make the right choice."¹

Hojatieh accepts the role of Jurisprudence in the society literally as what it was

1400 years ago. They also accept Khamenehi's role literally absolute without any discussion for time being. Further, Hojatieh and its affiliates are also millenarists who believe that they have to pave the way for second coming of the twelfth Imam (Shia Messiah).

Therefore, Ahmadinejad's political worldview and ideological background were matched with the Khamenehi's goals in regard to the absolute power of Jurisprudence in politics and religion. For example, in June, right after the election, Ayatollah Khamenehi during Friday Prayers mentioned that his opinion is very close to the Ahmadinejad's ideas. Ayatollah Khamenehi delighted to have an obedient President who is willing to follow his orders without precondition. Since 2005 Khamenehi and Ahmadinejad have become strange bedfellows. Later, I will explain how Ahmadinejad brought all the executive branches under Khamenehi's full control.

In the recent Iranian elections, Khamenehi faced his worst nightmare due to the massive participation of the people in the election. He understood that this massive popular participation would finally bring back the pre-2005 election status by renewing the conflict of opinion between him and the President he patiently hates.

Khamenehi had serious problems with main reformist candidate, Mr. Mousawi during his Premier Ship in 1980. In the mid 1980s when he was President, he tried many times to replace Mr. Mousawi with someone who was more likeminded. Khamenehi always complained that Mr. Mousawi's government was weak and performing poorly. However, according to Ayatollah Rafsanjani's memoirs, Ayatollah Khomeini was strongly against the replacement of the Prime Minister due to war and economic hardship. Further, Khomeini considered replacing the Prime Minister a destabilizing factor in the Iranian society and in the international scene.



Mahmoud Ahmadinejad
Source: worldpress.com

After the death of Khomeini, the problem of the disobedient Prime Minister was resolved when Ayatollah Khamenehi obtained his office as a new leader of the Islamic Republic. One of his first changes was abolishing the office of Prime Minister, transferring all the responsibilities of Prime Minister to the Presidential office. Consequently, Mousawi lost his job, and for nearly twenty years, he did not participate in any election.

Mr. Mousawi was the least of Khamenehi's concern in this election. He faced stronger opposition. Ayatollah Khamenehi had serious problems with Ayatollah Rafsanjani. In the Friday's Prayer, he openly distinguished his differences with Ayatollah Rafsanjani. He mentioned, he has 84 points of disagreement with Rafsanjani in a wide range of issues such as foreign policy, social justice and culture. Rafsanjani was and still is a serious threat to the Khamenehi's power. Therefore, this election provided a wonderful tool to change the balance of power in the unelected part of the Iranian political system.

Further, in June 21st 2009, Associated Press reported chilling news that may finalize the Khamenehi-Rafsanjani's relations. The "State-run Press TV reported that Rafsanjani's eldest daughter, Faezeh Hashemi, and four other family members were arrested late Saturday." This incident is an unprecedented event in the last thirty years of the Islamic Republic. The government was very unforgiving toward people who were against the regime in any shape and form. However, they were always very tolerant toward the family members of the Regime. The arrest of the Rafsanjani's oldest daughter will widen the friction among the highest members of the Islamic Republic and it creates serious difficulties for future inner circle reconciliation.

The Islamic Republic's Duality and Ahmadinejad's Presidency

For a long time, the Iranian political system did not have a homogeneous decision making process. Abas Maleki, who was the previous assistant director of Iran Islamic Republic's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and, currently the Chairman of the International Institute for Caspian Studies, described Iranian foreign policy as the conclusion of "complicated and multi-level relations among official and unofficial players, many of whom have different and sometimes opposing interests."²

The 2005 Iranian Presidential election brought hardliners into the center of the Iranian politics. Since the 2005 Presidential election, the decision-making process has changed and "for the first time since the 1979 Islamic Revolution in Iran, the legislative, judicial and executive powers, which incorporate the military, and security forces have come to hold relatively homogenous views in all political, economic, ideological, military, security, cultural, and social spheres of policy. Therefore, uniformity of views among the new policy-makers is now the hallmark of the political landscape in Iran."³

Under Ahmadinejad's leadership, the executive branch of Iranian political system has been unified and works much more in harmony with each other. After unifying the higher echelons of the government, he also purged all reformist officials from government positions in both the central and provincial administrations.

The first phase of the Khamenehi's plan to have full control of power has been fulfilled with very little resistance. The second part of the Khamenehi's plan to purge people from the unelected sections of the Iranian political system has been left for another time. If Ahmadinejad was not able to have a positive influence on the Iranian society as a whole, he was able to fulfill, Ayatollah Khamenehi's order and concentrated more power in his hands than ever. Therefore, Ahmadinejad enjoyed Ayatollah Khamenehi's full support and trust.



Iranian Woman Holding "Vote" Sign
Source: worldpress.com

Preparing an Election Scenario

Beginning of Complicated PSYOP

The current Iranian Presidential election was a real struggle between both wings of the Iranian ruling elite. The Presidential election was in the making for the last 2 years. Ahmadinejad and Khamenehi have had the upper hand for the planning and execution of the Presidential election.

On one hand, Ahmadinejad as a conservative - lost his last credibility with many urban dwellers, middle class educated Iranians, and many ordinary people who did not want to see Ahmadinejad's reelected.

On the other hand, the reform camp had difficulty finding someone to run against Ahmadinejad. Therefore, many people asked ex-Iranian President Khatami to run again for Presidential office. His supporters were mindful of fact that he does not strongly oppose Khamenehi's orders, but they had no other choice.

Khatami's entrance to the electoral process caused a great shock in the conservatives' camp. Therefore, they decided to open two fronts against the reformers, especially Khatami. First, they tried to discourage Khatami from continuing his Presidential bid. Then they attempted to draw the unskilled reformist into the Presidential election.

In the first part of their operation, conservatives began a very sophisticated psychological operation against Khatami. Through their papers, social gatherings, weblogs, and other means, they have demonized his personality, accused Khatami of being liberal, pro-Western, corrupt and many other accusations. Further, the chief editor of the Keyhan newspaper Mr. Shariatmadari in one of his articles had openly blackmailed Khatami by reminding Khatami that he can share the Benazir Bhutto's fate if he stayed in the race for long time. During this campaign against Khatami,

the pressure groups whose primary role was creating chaos were operating at full throttle. They even came very close to directly attacking Khatami.

Conservatives evaluated Khatami's psychology quite accurately. They clearly knew that Khatami was not able to take such stress, and, if he found an alternative to his candidacy, he would quit the race. The second phase of the operation was finding someone who was not capable of running an effective Presidential campaign against Ahmadinejad. They soon found their wonderful alternative Mr. Mir Hussain Mousawi, a man who had been away from active politics for the last twenty years. Most of the people did not remember him from the time when he was Prime Minister.

It seemed that conservatives have found their reformist candidate. Conservatives had won on both fronts. Mousawi entered the Presidential race and Khatami ceased his Presidential campaign simultaneously. The battleground was ready for Ahmadinejad's easy reelection. However, what conservatives did not calculate was that the people were so fed up with Ahmadinejad and the Islamic regime that they would do anything to stop his reelection.

Presidential Election and Importance of Debates

First Stage of PSYOP with Ahmadinejad & the Rest

In the beginning of the Presidential elections, no one thought that Mousawi would be able to attract many voters. Contrary to all predictions, Mr. Mousawi had become a serious contender against Ahmadinejad. Mousawi was the dark horse of the Presidential elections. The reason for Mousawi's success was neither his personality nor his programs. The Iranian people understand very well that all the Presidential candidates, including Mousawi, are trusted agents who fully support the Iranian political system. As mentioned before, many urban dwellers, middle class educated

Iranians, and ordinary people were fed up with Ahmadinejad and what he represents in Iranian politics. Therefore, they really did not care who was running against Ahmadinejad.

Mousawi's improbable success and his popularity was a real game changer in the Iranian political system. He was able to undermine the conservative political structure that was perfected after the 2005 election. The Mousawi-Ahmadinejad debate was the best example of Khamenehi's desire to clean the unwanted people from his backyard. This was the second stage of a process that was started with Ahmadinejad's first presidency.

As mentioned before, Ahmadinejad solidified his power by purging all reformist officials in the government. However, this time, his aim was higher than the first. This time Khamenehi was after the clerics who did not get along with him; people such as Rafsanjani, Khatami and others. The Presidential debate provided the perfect scene to attack Khamenehi's rivals.

It is obvious that Ahmadinejad without Khamenehi's approval was not able to attack Rafsanjani and others, accusing them of corruption and embezzlement of the national wealth. Ahmadinejad's attacks against prominent pragmatic and reformist figures were very well orchestrated. Basically, Khamenehi wanted to force Rafsanjani and others to break their relationship with the government and retire from politics. The purging of politicians such as Rafsanjani could take place only if Ahmadinejad was reelected as President. Not surprisingly, Ahmadinejad won the Presidential election.

After the Election and the Future (Second Stage of PSYOP)

Based on some rumors Ahmadinejad did not officially win the election. In contrast, he took third place among 4 candidates while Khamenehi decided to change the election's outcomes. Yet, there is another story behind the Presidential election that has more credibility.

Mr. Muhsen Rezaii, who was the IRGC's supreme commander during the Iran-Iraq War and is one of the most trusted people in the Islamic regime, participated in election under the Conservative platform. Yet he also joined reformers' protests against the election and accused the government of rigging the vote right after the election. In an interview with the Iranian National Television Channel II, he mentioned that "in 170 voting stations out of 368, the number of votes were 95-140 percent higher than the number of registered voters in those areas." In other words, at least 50 percent of voting stations were filled with invalid votes in favor of Ahmadinejad.

Before Ministry of Interior declared Ahmadinejad reelection as a President, Khamenehi, quickly sent a congratulatory note, declaring Ahmadinejad's triumphant victory as "divine will" and he asked everyone to accept the elections outcomes and stay behind the government as a religious and national duty.

This letter was a clear indication of what Khamenehi had in mind. He understood that the pragmatic and reformist wings of the government would do everything they could to express their distaste of the electoral outcomes. He wanted to show them the election was a *fait accompli*.

Khamenehi's letter was not a simple document. Khamenehi has dual power. On the one hand, he is the head of the state as a political figure; on the other hand, he has religious authority far exceeding his political authority. As a religious leader or Vali Faghih, the representative of Mehdi (Shia Twelfth Imam) on the earth, his edicts must be followed unquestionably by all Shia-Muslims, especially in Iran, regardless of their validity. For example, the Imam of Tehran's Friday prayer, Ayatollah Khatami (not related to President Khatami), in his Friday sermon stated "A person who opposes the Vali Faghih's order, he also opposes the Imam Masoum order (Twelfth Imam), and opposing Imam Masoum's order is equal to opposing God's order."

Khamenehi abused his power to force people to accept Ahmadinejad's election as a "divine will." In other words, he ordered people to accept Ahmadinejad's Presidency, so everyone must obey his order because he is the one who has most knowledge, he is infallible and, therefore, he does not make mistakes.

Ayatollah Khamenehi in the Friday prayers used Cultural PSYOP against the opposition, repeatedly asking them to end the opposition, and accept the official verdict. He also used the Iranian sensitivity toward people's lives

and their future. He openly put the responsibility for bloodshed on the activities of the opposition. Then he washed his hands from any future bloodshed. He indirectly gave *carte blanche* to the security forces, pressure groups, and the IRGC to use excessive force against the opposition without any hesitation.

Ayatollah Khamenehi learned from the Shah who was very soft against the protesters. He understands that any softness against the opposition in the streets of Tehran will end the Islamic Republic within a few months. Therefore, the regime is not hesitating to use even more powerful tools to end the protests. There are some historical precedents that when Islamic leaders felt that their system was in danger, they were ready to take extraordinary steps to stop anti-Islamic regime activities. For instance, one of the most famous examples of this brutal behavior was the massacre of 4500 of the political dissidents at the end of the Iran-Iraq war.

After the end of the war, the Iranian regime was extremely weak and people were unhappy that after eight years of war, Iran surrendered without achieving its goals, and while accepting the destruction of its economy, and the death of millions of Iranians.



Bloody Iranian Woman Holds up the Opposition Hand Sign
Source: worldpress.com

With great fear of an uprising of Iranian people and with the jailed opposition leaders leading the movement from their cells, Khomeini decided to massacre all political prisoners, regardless of their level of political engagement in the Iranian politics.

Based on the latest news, it appears that a single incident will trigger more and bloodier conflict in Iran. Perhaps, this incident will cover up the election fraud for a while and will provide permission to use all repressive tools to ruin the Iranian opposition. A suicide bomber has attacked the Ayatollah Khomeini's mausoleum and killed a few people. It is obvious that this incident could be used as an effective PSYOP against the opposition, while at the same time empowering conservatives and religious zealots to attack the opposition mercilessly, as if they are responsible for suicide bombing incident.

I would like to draw the readers' attention

to another fact that the two former Presidents, Rafsanjani and Khatami, who are extremely influential within the Iranian political system, have kept their silence neither supporting nor opposing the street demonstrations against the Ahmadinejad and Ayatollah Khamenehi. This silence is very meaningful and sent more messages than any other loud rhetoric.

Their silence is a strong indication that the regime is crumbling from within. The Islamic Republic officials who in the last thirty years were able to defend their system through their resolution and unified front are now losing their major strength, their unity.

Post Election Unrest and Reverse PSYOP

No one could have anticipated the people's anger and impatience; it was unprecedented and a surprise to all. In the past thirty years, there were many opportunities for the people to

revolt against the government, but they waited patiently, not raising their voices. According to Mr. Nouradin Pir Mavedat, a former Iranian Parliament Representative, in a Stateside interview with Radio Free Europe said Khamenehi and his allies believe that "[people] will yell for a week and for four years they'll be cooled-off." However, this dream scenario never materialized – they witnessed angry people that will not forgive as in times past!

In reality, Khamenehi and Ahmadinejad were unprepared for such an immense and uncontrollable upheaval, and only when it was too late did the realities dawn on them. Unlike times past, this time lots of bloodshed was required for the government to protect its power. Khamenehi took the first step in the Friday prayer following the election when he declared the people must either accept the election results and go home, or face repression and death in the streets.



Street Protest in Iran
Source: livejournal.com

His words had little influence on the people who have had enough of this government. Unlike the West where freedom to peaceably assemble and dissent against any government is a right of the people, here we witness another type of psychological operation. Firstly, the government's official stance was that the demonstrators were vandals and hooligans; secondly, such demonstrations justified the government's extraordinary repressive measures to crush the street demonstrations; and thirdly, they deflected responsibility for the unrest by turning the tables on foreign powers like Great Britain and the United States and blaming them for fomenting the people's unrest.

The Khamenehi-Ahmadinejad government then tried to appeal to the people's sense of Iranian history and their exclusive culture in a bid to use 'cultural PSYOP' strategies. In an appeal to national pride, they reminded the people of how many times the U.S. and Great Britain had intrusively interfered in Iranian affairs over the last hundred years. Of course, comparisons were made between the past historical record of foreign abuses and the current state of affairs, suggesting the people's accommodation of 'foreign' ideas was 'un-Iranian.' This propaganda may have influenced the people in some measure, since from all walks of life they have long been exposed to the

strong paranoia of foreign intervention.

It is important to mention here that many consider foreign radio broadcasts as having a negative influence and used as a tool against their national interests. This concept is deeply rooted in Iranian psychology to the point that people jokingly say that the BBC caused the 1979 revolution, yet some seriously believe this.

The government tried to exploit the people's psychological predisposition by turning their focus from election fraud and irregularities and toward foreign conspiracy. The government has begun to harness the media to create a massive propaganda campaign against foreign radio and television broadcasters, linking their stations to the street demonstrations. Immediately after the crackdown en masse on the demonstrators, the authorities arrested those involved in radio and television broadcasting and made them confess that foreign media encouraged them to participate in the anti-government street demonstrations.

These types of propaganda are not new in Iranian politics. In the 80s, the Islamic government tried to establish itself by the



Very Large Protest in Iran
Source: worldpress.com

heavy-handed tactics by forcing opposition members to confess and incriminate themselves on national television. Under such strong-arm measures, one wonders if the opposition party members confessed to crimes they never committed.

This time it was different. The opposition party, among many others, and even the clerics, has openly condemned the corrupt practice of parading people with opposing views in front of a television audience to confess to crimes they did not commit. Further, they reminded the government that such forced confessions are inadmissible in a court of law.

What seems obvious is that the government is in a state of shock and incapable of making an honorable compromise with the opposition; more importantly, it has no reasonable plan to reduce tensions in the streets. The ongoing propaganda of accusing the foreign media and embassies of meddling in Iranian domestic affairs will become a recurring theme and standard of PSYOP in the coming year.

Conclusion

A powerful mixture of politics and deception has been used to reelect Ahmadinejad as President of Iran. The regime believes that the people will eventually accept that fact and go home.

However, they did not calculate the people's anger against a regime that is repressive, and reactionary in nature. The

psychological operations that they launched during the election and post election periods have had deadly results for the Islamic regime. They masterfully have used both religious and Iranian cultural, sensitivities in order to silence the political dissent. Nevertheless, it had the opposite outcome.

Also at issue, here is the Khamenehi-Ahmadinejad's plan to purge moderates, reformers and pragmatists from the higher echelons of government. The disappearance of more moderate members of the Islamic Republic may facilitate the radicalization of the State with the governing clerics becoming more conservative and fundamentalist along traditional lines. The Republican system (what some pundits call the "theocratic democracy") will morph from being people-centered into a restrictive Islamic Sharia Law based system with non-negotiable edicts.

In the possible short term however, many people believe that in the new repressive political environment, Khamenehi will be a big winner. In contrast, at the macro level Khamenehi will lose significant power to forces much more powerful (Hojatieh, Ayatollah Mesbah Yazdi and IRGC high-ranking officers). He could lose his office too. Khamenehi's misinterpretation of both the people and his leadership role during the dissent, forced him into an alliance with extremely conservative and reactionary elements that oppose a modern system of government. With the masses yearning to join the 21st Century, in Western parlance, Khamenehi may yet realize he backed the wrong horse.



Couple with "V" Sign

Source: politicaleducation.com

What we are witnessing is a process of Khamenehi cutting himself off from his main supporters, and wherein his new allies do not trust him, but are exploiting him to create an Islamic Khalifate. In such a draconian government, God and religious edicts are the main players, and democratic values are not even considered.

If the government wins the street battles with the people and purges powerful moderate clerics from government, there will be little to stop the winds that blow, we will see then and the widespread propagandizing of religious superstition and Shia eschatology. At the international level, Iran will be more politically alienated, isolated and radical in nature.

If they decided to compromise with opposition leaders, this regime may survive the current upheaval, but it has been a long and painful process of soul-searching at all levels of the Islamic Republic. If they continue to follow the hard line against their own people, it will be very difficult to believe that Islamic Republic can survive very long.

The collapse of the Islamic Republic in Iran will produce new sets of problems and challenges in world affairs. The Iranian resilience and political maturity and capabilities, however, should not be underestimated, for they have made phenomenal progress. Under the Islamic Republic of Iran, a new, modern, self-confident, well informed and democratic Iran is growing. The experiment of “theocratic democracy,” of trying to create legitimacy and standing-up political institutions with political campaigns and elections, was the best teacher of democracy for the Iranian people in order to create a vibrant Civic Society.

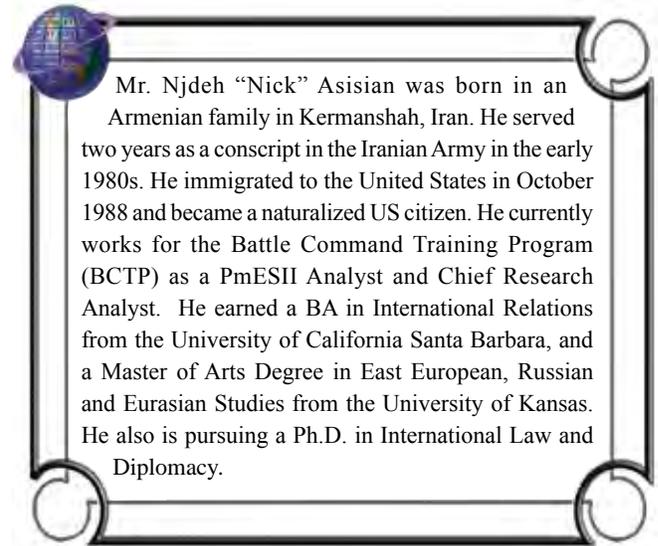
Besides the political maturity and reasonably fast learning curve of the Iranian people, another quality they possess is to exercise extreme patience these past thirty years. With no better political alternative to the Islamic Republic, they decided to not openly oppose their government but to rather work within its protective umbrella to protect their national interests, maintain security and provide hope for a better future.

In a word, the new Iran after Islamic Republic will have earned self-respect, become more democratic and be seen as a serious power on the world scene. Iran may also be seen as becoming a serious prototypical developmental model for the rest of the Islamic world. 📧

Footnotes:

1. Mazyar Mokti, Charles Recknagel, “Iran’s Ultra-Conservatives May See Chance To Revive ‘Wilting’ Revolution” available from http://www.rferl.org/content/Irans_Ultraconservatives_May_See_Chance_To_Revive_Wilting_Revolution/1768776.html; internet; accessed 4 Jul. 2009.
2. Abas Maleki, Sanad Cheshmandaz va Ravabet Khareji Iran, trans. By Njdeh Asisian, “The Outlook Document and Iranian Foreign Policy,” Institute of Russia, Central Asia and Caucasus Studies (IRAS), available from <http://www.iras.ir>; internet; accessed 3 May 2008.

3. Center for Strategic Research “Iran’s New Foreign Policy”; available from <http://www.csr.ir/departments.aspx?lng=en&abtid=07&&depid=106&&semid=661>; Internet; accessed Oct. 10 2007.



Information Engagement

“How Information Operates in a Permissive Environment”

by

Major Lyndon Jones

Editors Note: Major Jones’ perspective on US Army Information Engagement in the US Southern Command area of operation is a contemporary and relevant to the emerging US Army “Engagement Doctrine.” His views and experiences are of great value.

Author’s Note: US Army Colonel James Lowman contributed to the completion of this article. US Army Specialist Patrick Jacobs drafted the illustrations provided.

platoon exchanges, subject matter expertise exchanges and state partnership activities under one umbrella. BTH makes best use of resources while simultaneously building partner nation capabilities and benefiting the affected local populations. During these missions, the S7 is the tactical commander’s strategic linchpin between the operational planning and tactical implementation that translates JP 3-13

INTRODUCTION

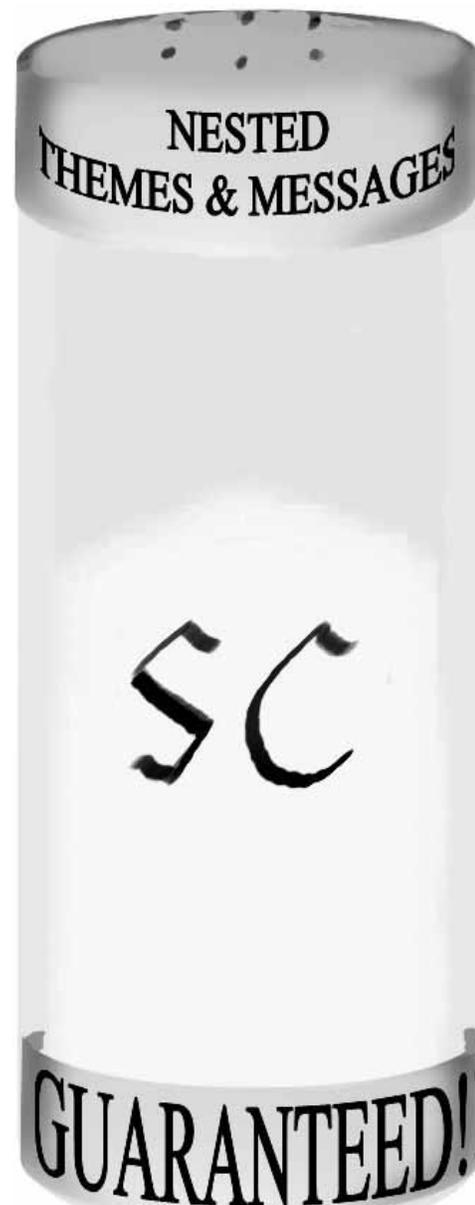
With the publication of Army Field Manual (FM) 3.0 in Feb. 2008, the Army changed the conceptual framework for Information Operations (IO). Instead of IO performing an integrating function for the staff, the new Army information tasks institutionalize IO functions into separate staff divisions. This change is designed to better address the cognitive domain of the information environment below the operational level in a way that JP 3-13 was not designed to accomplish. FM 3.0 accomplishes this by grouping the message (Strategic Communication and Defense Support to Public Diplomacy) and the means (Leader-Soldier, Public Affairs, Psychological operations and Combat Camera) into one of five Army information tasks – Information Engagement.

U.S. Army South is the Army Service Component for U.S. Southern Command (SOUTHCOM) and therefore conducts much of its operational planning with respect to Joint doctrine. However, many of the exercises within the Area of Focus (AOF) are executed below the Divisional level by forces from the reserve component (RC). Beyond the Horizon (BTH) is one such example of an Army South mission led by a Brigade-level commander in a permissive environment. With the update of FM 3.0, how does the Army translate Joint doctrine, including JP 3-13 and associated policy statements, into useful Information Engagement (IE) applications in a Theater of Operation? We will use BTH to demonstrate how employing IE in permissive environments can best support the delivery of strategic messaging.

INFORMATION ENGAGEMENT BEST PRACTICES

Best Practice #1 – Appoint an S7 IE Officer

BTH is an exercise conducted in Southern Command’s permissive AOF and carried out by Soldiers largely from the reserve component. BTH integrates engineering, medical, small unit familiarization program engagements, reciprocal



US Army South Strategic Communications Concept

into effective IE. The S7 provides the strategic key player, which facilitates continuity, effective coordination and synchronization of capabilities resulting in a more productive, and robust IE plan that enables training opportunities for reservists and supports the commander's Strategic Communication (SC) objectives.

It is imperative that an S7 IE Officer be appointed to serve on staff. The challenge of BTH begins with manning. RC brigades, battalions and companies often deploy without an S-7. US Army South's assignment of an S7 IE Action Officer has provided an effective bridge to cover potential continuity gaps. This Action Officer is responsible for planning, which begins in the early stages and continues through execution, ideally with the IE Action Officer serving as the S7. This practice has been most effective in establishing expectations for each capability based on command guidance and coordination with respective

directorates, translating JP 3-13 into effective IE as outlined in FM 3.0.

Best Practice #2 - The Information Engagement Pre-deployment Tour

During the planning phase, IO is always a stated priority but frequently becomes overshadowed by logistical and operational issues. In an attempt to support IO objectives without compromising the focus, US Army South's G7, G9, the BTH exercise Commander, his S3 in coordination Military Assistance and Advisory Group and US Embassy in Santo Domingo, conducted a one-week IE Pre-deployment Tour (IEPT). The IEPT consisted of two components: 1) Key Leader engagement and 2) Media engagement. The IEPT was successful in terms of pre-deployment messaging, reaching key Partner Nation political and civic leaders as well as important media sources. Just as one would send scouts

out on a route recon one needs to get an IE officer out early to meet respective key leaders. The IEPT is recommended as standard practice and serves as an effective intelligence preparation of the information environment.

The catalyst for the IEPT was NEW HORIZON 2006 – Dominican Republic. There was little or no pre-deployment messaging to inform the public of the scope and details of the exercise. As a result, Dominicans were left to draw their own conclusions. Consider the context: it is 2006 and the U.S. is engaged in the Global War on Terror. By-standers observed bulldozers on the backs of flatbed trucks driven by U.S. Soldiers moving through their towns. A generation of Dominicans vividly recalled the U.S. intervention and occupation in 1965 during the height of the Vietnam conflict. The media, unaware and always game for a sensational story ran with the negative story line. The result of this issue was that the exercise was disrupted. There



New Horizons Medical Engagement Clinic
Source: US Army Southern Command

were people who needed tooth extractions and children who needed a schoolhouse. They received neither of these. There were Soldiers who deployed expecting to train and put their skills to good use, and were left frustrated. Finally, the U.S. taxpayer got less than what a sound information strategy could have achieved.

The primary lesson learned is that U.S. Army South in coordination with the State Partnership Program through Puerto Rico's National Guard, Dominican Republic's state partner and the BTH headquarters element, led with an IEPT a month in advance of this year's exercise. The populace was given the opportunity to understand the purpose and intentions of the US presence as an invited guest and valued Partner Nation through the use of traditional media and key leader communications.

Best Practice #3 - Leader-Soldier engagement and the IE Reception Briefing

At U.S. Army South, G7 developed an IE brief that is provided as part of the overall reception brief for all BTH incoming Soldiers. The brief underscores the critical role of the leader and Soldier as strategic messengers in the context of national security. In the case of BTH, leaders and Soldiers have a unique training opportunity that enables relationships between Soldiers

and Partner Nation (PN) members that can serve to directly propagate the strategic message. Therefore, Soldier language and actions should be consistent with themes and messages. Just as every Soldier is a rifleman, every Soldier is a strategic messenger and should be trained accordingly. Ultimately, a reception brief addressing leader-Soldier engagement is only as effective as the leadership that reinforces Soldier expectations throughout each Soldier's tour of duty as a strategic messenger.

The Soldier has a unique and significant role in their ability to reinforce and amplify positive actions and increase goodwill and support for the friendly mission. To reinforce Soldier expectations the G7 designed a simple yet effective assessment tool to capture the public relations posture on the ground and serve as an early warning and mitigation mechanism should concerns arise. In effect, it serves as an inside out view of how we see ourselves in relation to the local populace.

Best Practice #4 - The Public Service Announcement (PSA)

This year U.S. Army South's G7, with support from the Office of Strategic Communication, developed a template for a PSA script as means to leverage mass communication despite budget constraints. Because PSAs are based on donated media time and

SOLDIER ENGAGEMENT

Questions:

- 3 1.How is the local populace treating you?
- 3 2.How would you describe your relationship with your PN counterpart?
- 3 3.Are there any issues that have the potential to impact public relations, positive or negative?

Observation

- 3 4.Language / conversations consistent with themes & messages
- 3 5.Body language and actions consistent w/ themes & messages

WEIGHT:
 Survey weight: - The individual survey is based on a single site visit. Each item is awarded a weight of 1-3 with 1 being the lowest and 3 being the highest. The five items are totaled, averaged and rounded down for each single site survey.
 Weekly snapshot weight - The weekly snapshot is based on the lowest single site assessment. For example, project site A visit averaged 3.0, project site B averaged 3.0, on a second visit project site A averaged 2.5. Therefore, the weekly snapshot for the task force is based on the lowest single site assessment that week of 2.5.
 Aggregate assessment weight - Based on weekly running average and rounded down. For example, in a two week period the first week earned a 2.5 and the second week earned a 3.0. Therefore, the aggregate or overall assessment is 2.75 rounded down to 2.7.

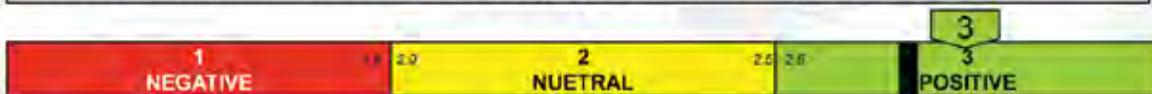


Figure 1: Soldier Engagement Assessment
 Source: US Army Southern Command

the benefits of BTH's medical readiness training exercises (MEDRETEs) and related services represented need-to-know public information, the PSA served as a cost-effective means to increase awareness within the construct of the partner nation's local media while also serving as a catalyst for all other BTH activities.

The PSA was initially employed in the Dominican Republic and proved to be very effective. While on the surface it gives the appearance of a simple promotional announcement, there are several subtle yet key messages. This PSA included the PN lead and ownership of BTH, the State Partnership Program between Dominican Republic and Puerto Rico and the duration of the exercise. The initial assessments were that the PSA read-script was well received and overwhelmingly preferred to the audio product. Reports indicate that recipients of the PSA were actively announcing the PSA at a frequency of greater than three times daily. Additionally, the initial recipients forwarded the read-script to their affiliates and professional peers expanding the overall coverage.

Our recommendation is to develop the PSA as a three-part package consisting of a read-script, audio format and video format. This approach accommodates radio and television formats. As a rule, the PSA should not exceed 45 seconds. The Commander may then select the highest quality of each for recommended distribution in coordination with the respective Security Cooperation Office and US Embassy.

The PSA read-script, due to its negligible production requirements, should be the minimum standard. Local populations are only one of several important audiences. The media itself is another audience and the better informed the media is, the less likely they will be to entertain and promote negative propaganda stemming from uninformed speculation.

CHALLENGES

Challenge #1 - Moving from Stovepipes to Partnerships

Conceptually, Information Engagement is sound and considerably easier to grasp as an Army information task than Joint and former Army IO doctrine.

Doctrinally, the coordination and integration of Civil-Military Operations (CMO) remains an issue of debate. Tactically, there is significant work to overcome the friction that currently exists between capabilities and their respective organizational cultures. Keeping the functions segregated into their respective "stovepipes" is inefficient and results in the underutilization of capabilities and resources. Successful Information Engagement in support of SC will come from an understanding of purpose and successful partnerships.

Challenge #2 - Educating Tactical Commanders

The Information Proponent Office at Fort Leavenworth is working hard to train enough FA30 officers to meet Army tactical level needs. The Information Officer Qualification course is currently the only course in the Army inventory that requires officers to pass an oral comprehension board as a condition of graduation. This is an important feature that enables graduates to educate the Army at-large with respect to Information Engagement and emerging doctrine.



New Horizons Medical Engagement Clinic Eye Exam
Source: US Army Southern Command

In practice, some exercises are too short to allow tactical commanders to begin learning on D-Day. With IE, timing and momentum are the keys to success. For example, New Horizon 2006 – Dominican Republic, the task force found themselves adrift responding to misinformation because the messaging was reactive versus proactive.

Trained FA30A officers, when available, not only understand but also have the ability to articulate Information Operations to tactical commanders. They need to be given the time and resources to educate commanders and shape the information environment.

Challenge #3 – Understanding Strategic Communication

Effective Strategic Communication (SC) is a top priority for leaders in the U.S. Military. However, that does not mean that every military leader conceptually understands SC. Some among our peers have been brave enough to ask the question “what is StratComm?” So what is Strategic Communication and who is responsible for it at the tactical level? SC is messaging. Just as with safety, everyone is a safety officer regardless of rank. The same applies to SC in that everyone is a strategic messenger. As with safety, in which the commander designates an officer to be responsible for the overall coordination of safety measures, the S7 serves the tactical commander as the chief communication officer. In the Army, this officer is normally FA 30 Information Operations trained individual responsible

for incorporating SC into all operations, actions, activities and products in order to maximize available capabilities, means and methods.

In Joint commands, however, the SC may fall in a separate directorate. For that reason, there is a need to doctrinally differentiate from JP 3-13 to FM 3-0 as it applies to the Tactical Commander so as not to confuse it with IE. IE is the broad umbrella that incorporates both the message (SC) and the means. Although Civil Affairs (CA) is not included in IE’s broad umbrella as a doctrinal capability it is a means and key enabler in support of strategic messaging at the grassroots through key leader engagement and civic action projects.

Challenge #4 – J-Staff versus S-Staff

Planning at the tactical level, according to FM 3-0 and FM 5-0, is intentionally and inherently different for Army and Joint forces. This excerpt from FM 3-0 is instructive:

Army forces do not use the joint systems analysis of the operational environment, effects-based approach to planning, or effects assessment. These planning and assessment methods are intended for use at the strategic and operational levels by properly resourced joint staffs. FM 3-0



New Horizons Medical Engagement Surgical Clinic
Source: US Army Southern Command



Information Operations Europe 2010

Two-Day Conference: 29th – 30th June 2010

Pre-Conference Workshops: 28th June 2010 | Bloomsbury Hotel, London

www.info-opseurope.com

Defence IQ is proud to announce the dates and venue for the 9th annual Information Operations Europe 2010, taking place at the Bloomsbury Hotel in London, 29th – 30th June 2010. The IO Europe conference series is widely recognised as the premier annual meeting for the info ops community and provides a forum for sharing techniques for Psychological Operations (Pysops), influence activity and Strategic Communications.

Key Topics Planned for This Year's Agenda

Information Campaign Case Studies:

- HQ US Africa Command's Community Outreach Programme for Peace, Tolerance and Understanding in Senegal
 - ISAF HQ's Combined Joint Psychological Operations Task Force's (CJPOTF) positive messaging campaign in Afghanistan
 - UK Influence Activity in Afghanistan, outlining successes, challenges and insights into how Afghans do business
- Employing New Media to influence attitudes:
- Understanding and harnessing the new media tools that are available to us and in use by our adversaries
 - The influence and intelligence opportunities of virtual worlds
 - Robust recommendations for confronting, understanding and embracing the challenge of the new real-time "information doer"
 - New media projects underway at NATO SHAPE and HQ US European Command

Strategic Communications:

- Debate and recommendations on definitions, responsibilities and the way forward

Measurement of Effect:

- Frameworks for measuring the Effect of information campaigns and the performance of different media channels

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It is important to understand that while a sprinkling of multi-service may constitute joint forces it doesn't necessarily constitute a Joint staff or J-Staff. This is important because a J-Staff implies joint doctrine. As already outlined in the introduction, Joint IO doctrine is not designed to address the cognitive domain below the operational level. Operational planning for the J-Staff is inherently more applicable to the strategic and operational levels. The S-Staff represents the tactical implementation through the Army Military Decision Making Process (MDMP) that takes place at Division and below. The roles and responsibilities of the S7 should remain aligned with tactical Army doctrine including MDMP and the conduct of the tactical IE mission and SC in order to better address the cognitive domain of the information environment.

CONCLUSION

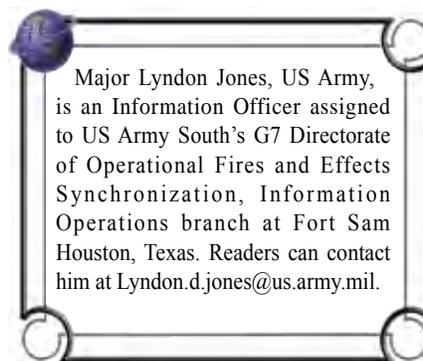
In this article, we have provided a snapshot of the current state of IE for the permissive environment within a Service Component Command. We have also provided very specific recommendations and best practices for the IE practitioner to employ immediately. The Information Engagement Pre-deployment Tour, in support of pre-deployment messaging requirements, is the primary method for deploying the best practices described in advance of an operation, activity or action in a permissive environment. With representation from each participating capability to include Civil Affairs, coupled with command and staff participation, this is effective in promoting the partnership and educating the tactical commander regarding IE and strategic messaging. Every effort must be made by planners to support this activity and ensure the selection and availability of key leadership for this requirement.

One additional recommendation, from a professional development standpoint, is to implement a system or functional area cross training and assignment to promote the migration from "stovepipe" to partnership and promote education within staff and command structures. Using the Army example, a PAO (46A) cross-trained and assigned in IO (30A) or



Figure 2: Soup Bowl Approach to Information Engagement
Source: US Army Southern Command

vice versa would enable the collaborative partnerships necessary.



Parting Shots:

I want to take a few words and thank all of the professional IO warriors and operators worldwide who support this publication. IO Sphere distribution has grown in a "viral" way in the past 3 years and the number of subscribers from all aspects of military, intelligence, diplomatic, and commercial communities of interest has grown with the distribution. Whether your profession calls it Information Operations, Communications, or Marketing the concepts that are discussed in IO Sphere are contemporary and relevant. It takes the entire community to make this publication work and I sincerely appreciate everyone's participation. A special thanks to Mr. Mark Johnson as the Director of the JIOWC and tremendous supporter of IO Sphere, and finally, to Lieutenant Colonel Frank DeCarvalho who serves as the executive editor and provides the leadership needed to keep the journal a viable and contributing periodical. Thank you all.

The Editor

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