



# Info Power News

July 2019 Edition 3

**From the JIOWC Director:** The JIOWC presents this newsletter to the Information, IO, and OIE communities to share current information and relevant actions. Articles are included for situational awareness, but inclusion does not indicate endorsement/agreement.

## [Influence Awareness JKO Course \(Joint Staff, 26 June 2019\)](#)

The Influence Awareness course has been published to JKO. The course covers aspects of the Information Environment (IE) relevant to U.S. Military and DoD personnel. The purpose of this course is to prepare U.S. military and DoD personnel to: (1) recognize influence attempts and select threats and trends in the IE; (2) have increased awareness of activities, patterns, and tactics by which enemies, adversaries, and competitors target the U.S. and the Department of Defense in the IE; (3) cope with evolving and future considerations in the IE; and (4) have knowledge, skills, abilities, situational awareness, and tools to detect and counter influence attempts. You are encouraged to take the course and provide feedback to Mr. Zina Carter, [zina.r.carter.civ@mail.mil](mailto:zina.r.carter.civ@mail.mil) and Mr. Jon Drummond, [jonathan.t.drummond.ctr@mail.mil](mailto:jonathan.t.drummond.ctr@mail.mil).

## [Joint Publication 3-XX, Information - Foundational Ideas and Force Development Considerations \(Joint Staff, 1 July 2019\)](#) (please copy and paste the link, into your browser, to open the article)

This Information paper describes the information joint function and the abilities that it provides to a commander, and provides some force development considerations related to a transition from information operations (IO) to OIE.

## [Competition Continuum, JDN 1-19 \(Joint Staff, 3 June 2019\)](#)

Competition is a fundamental aspect of international relations. As states and non-state actors seek to protect and advance their own interests, they continually compete for diplomatic, economic, and strategic advantage.

Rather than a world either at peace or at war, the competition continuum describes a world of enduring competition conducted through a mixture of cooperation, competition below armed conflict, and armed conflict.

## [“Annual Report to Congress: Military and Security Developments Involving the People’s Republic of China” \(Office of the Secretary of Defense, May 2019\)](#)

“China’s leaders have benefited from what they view as a “period of strategic opportunity” during the initial two decades of the 21<sup>st</sup> century to develop domestically and expand China’s “comprehensive national power.” Over the coming decades, they are focused on realizing a powerful and prosperous China that is equipped with a “world-class” military, securing China’s status as a great power with the aim of emerging as the preeminent power in the Indo-Pacific region.”

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## [“The United States Needs An Information Warfare Command: A Historical Examination” \(War on the Rocks, Conrad Crane, 14 June 2019\)](#)

“The battle over information has been a part of warfare from its beginning. Advances in communication through the electromagnetic spectrum have further expanded the tools and possibilities in the field, with cyberspace just the latest addition.”

## [“Social Media Warriors: Leveraging a New Battlespace” \(Parameters - Army War College, Buddhika B Jayamaha and Jahara Matisek, Winter 2018-2019 Vol. 48, No. 4\)](#)

“ABSTRACT: This article explains modern efforts to create a new battlespace within the civil societies of Western countries. This battlespace consists of the internet, social media, and other technologies that can be used to foment social and political discontent. The article includes recommendations for countering such efforts.”

## [“What the Army learned from a February cyber exercise” \(Fifth Domain, Mark Pomerleau, 16 April 2019\)](#)

“The Persistent Cyber Training Environment will allow the operational cyber force to conduct large scale training as well as to rehearse for specific missions. Such a capability for cyber forces does not currently exist.

In February, members of the PCTE program office, which the Army is executing on behalf of the joint force, took the first working prototype to a joint cyber exercise called Cyber Anvil. Now, with what the Army is calling prototype B, cyber mission force teams from five different time zones, seven geographic locations with over 100 participants from across the joint force can simultaneously plug in.”



# Info Power News

July 2019 Edition 3

## **“Is It Time to Abandon the Term Information Operations?” (The Strategy Bridge, Christopher Paul, 11 March 2019)**

“The current groundswell of interest in and attention on information within the U.S. Department of Defense is unprecedented. Information has been elevated to the status of a joint function, joining the six traditional functions of command and control, intelligence, fires, movement and maneuver, protection, and sustainment. The Marine Corps has created a Deputy Commandant for Information, and established information groups within the Marine Expeditionary Forces. The 2016 Department of Defense Strategy for Operations in the Information Environment led to the Joint Concept for Operating in the Information Environment and a formal, capabilities-based assessment. We have seen repeated acknowledgment of the importance of information in military operations by Department of Defense senior leaders. In the words of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Joseph Dunford, information must be baked into joint force thinking “from the ground up.””

## **“I Wrote to John Walker Lindh. He Wrote Back.” (Defense One, Graeme Wood, 23 May 2019)**

“Four years ago, I wrote a letter to John Walker Lindh, then—inmate number 45426-083 in the Terre Haute penitentiary, to ask for advice about jihadism, Islamic law, and the Islamic State. Lindh is the most famous jihadist America has ever produced. In December 2001, he was pulled, half-dead, from a cellar full of fellow al-Qaeda fighters in northern Afghanistan, and 10 months later he was sentenced to 20 years in U.S. prison for terror-related crimes. He is scheduled to be freed today, with three years off for good behavior, and many—including Donald Trump—have objected to his release.”

## **“How Russia Found a Disinformation Haven in America” (The National Interest, Rawi Abdelal and Galit Goldstein, 28 May 2019)**

“Americans continue to discuss Russia’s information operations efforts in the wrong way. We have wasted time debating whether “Russia” or “Russians”—the government or government-connected individuals—meddled in the 2016 U.S. presidential election. The Mueller Report definitively established that the Russians, both through the Main Intelligence Directorate (GRU) and the Internet Research Agency (IRA), undertook information operations campaigns. This has been reasonably clear for a long time—even when excluding evidence put forward by government sources, for the benefit of the paranoid. Some on America’s Left and in the Center have been unable to drop the idea that President Donald Trump could not have won without foreign help. Likewise, the American Right has been unable to drop the idea that there is a “deep state” Leftist media conspiracy bent on undermining a democratically elected president. And for now, we will leave aside critiquing the collective shock that foreign “meddling” could influence elections in the United States, a nation that has worked to promote its interests, in small or large ways, in many elections around the world—including every election conducted in post-Soviet Russia.”

## **“Taliban fighters double as reporters to wage Afghan digital war” (Reuters, Abdul Qadir Sediqi and Rupam Jain, 10 May 2019)**

“Zabihullah Mujahid, the Taliban’s chief spokesman and editor-in-chief of the insurgent group’s daily news bulletin, starts every day by collecting reports of overnight fighting with U.S. and Afghan forces.

Mujahid says he gets his team of writers to cross-check facts shared by some of the hardline Islamist groups fighters, who double as reporters in the 34 provinces across the country. The writers prepare press statements in five languages and gather footage and photographs shot on smartphones.

Taliban spokesmen say they have also stepped up their outreach as the pace of direct talks between its negotiators and the United States on ending the war in Afghanistan has picked up in recent months. They are often quicker than U.S. officials to give their read-out from the talks - the sixth round of which wrapped up in Qatar on Thursday.”

## **“Information War is the Continuation of Politics by Other Memes: Information, Disinformation, and Social Media as Weapons” (OTH – Over the Horizon: Multi-Domain Operations & Strategy, Jesse Miller, 8 May 2019)**

“The United States is under attack.

While the US government and the public debate the results of the Mueller report and its impacts on the Trump Administration, the US is missing the larger issue; the Russian government actively and deliberately attempted to influence the 2016 US presidential election. In doing so, Russia purposefully sought out divisions within the US political



# Info Power News

July 2019 Edition 3

and social systems, similar to their efforts during the UK's BREXIT vote, and intentionally used social media to expand those divisions with the goal of driving the US political parties and social groups further apart, ultimately creating an environment incapable of compromise and effective governance.

The 2016 US presidential election and BREXIT are only a couple of examples of how the Russian government has (and currently is) driving the US and many of its allies to the point of limited strategic paralysis. The two major parties of the US government must now contend with voters and politicians who are so divided that they are finding it almost impossible to debate, compromise, or pass meaningful legislation and recently suffered the longest government shutdown in US history. This limited effectiveness has made basic governance in the US a challenge, let alone the development of a bipartisan grand strategy to deal with rising global threats and great power competition."

## **"WEAPONS OF MASS DISTRACTION: Foreign State-Sponsored Disinformation in the Digital Age" (Park Advisors, Christina Nemr and William Gangware, May 2019)**

"If there is one word that has come to define the technology giants and their impact on the world, it is "disruption." The major technology and social media companies have disrupted industries ranging from media to advertising to retail. However, it is not just the traditional sectors that these technologies have upended. They have also disrupted another, more insidious trade – disinformation and propaganda.

The proliferation of social media platforms has democratized the dissemination and consumption of information, thereby eroding traditional media hierarchies and undercutting claims of authority. The environment, therefore, is ripe for exploitation by bad actors. Today, states and individuals can easily spread disinformation at lightning speed and with potentially serious impact."

## **"We live in a "fake" world" (Axios, Sara Fischer and Mike Allen, 25 May 2019)**

Welcome to our sad, new, distorted reality — the explosion of fake: fake videos, fake people on Facebook, and daily cries of "fake news."

Driving the news: This week we reached a peak fake, with Facebook saying it had deleted 2.2 billion fake accounts in three months, a fake video of Speaker Nancy Pelosi going viral, and Trump going on a fresh "fake news" tear.

A Pew survey last year found that two-thirds of tweeted links to popular websites came from non-human users (bots or other automated accounts), per Axios' Neal Rothschild.

Why it matters: This is just a small taste of our unfiltered future. It's only going to get easier to generate fake audio, fake videos and even fake people — and to spread them instantly and virally.

Fake polls, fake experts, fake fundraisers and even fake think tanks are proliferating.

More than half of internet traffic comes from bots, not people, in this astonishing tour of our fake world:

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## **JIOWC Force Development Training Intelink webpage**

JIOWC has created several short, computer-based training modules including: Assessment Primer, IOII for the IO Planner, MILDEC refresher, IO in the Joint Planning Process, Threats in the IE, and Information Joint Function Basic Familiarization. These modules can be reached via the hyperlink embedded in this title.

Info Power News is located at:

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Submissions can be made to JIOWC at any time to [Mr. Brent Fountain](#) and/or [Mr. Jonathan Drummond](#). Submission does not guarantee inclusion or a specific schedule.

NOTE: If any link does not work, please try a different internet browser before contacting the aforementioned. If there are any other problems receiving files, please contact Mr. Fountain.