STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

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PUBLIC AFFAIRS AND INFORMATION OPERATIONS: INTEGRAL OR INCOMPATIBLE?

BY

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Public Affairs and Information Operations: Integral or Incompatible?

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ABSTRACT

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Today's complex, cyber-powered global information environment presents formidable challenges for the military. Facing the certainty of intrusive media and an overload of information, the military has elevated the importance of two related battlefield functions: public affairs (PA) and information operations (IO). PA serves as the military-media interface, tasked with the role of facilitating media coverage of military operations. In doing so, PA fulfills the obligation to keep the American people informed, and helps to establish the conditions that lead to confidence in America's military. IO has a different purpose. It encompasses a wide range of offensive and defensive capabilities aimed at achieving information dominance over an adversary. Department of Defense joint doctrine identifies PA as a key related IO activity. But the relationship between the two is problematic. On the one hand, PA deals with the public release of factual information. On the other hand, IO may deal with false intentions, as an element of military deception or black propaganda activities. By association alone, actual or perceived IO to manipulate public information could jeopardize the credibility of concurrent PA media relations, and potentially damage the credibility of the overall military mission. It will be the purpose of this study to further examine this IO-PA relationship under fire in Bosnia, as the initial IO campaign there confronted multiple non-cooperative and IO-capable adversaries. Through this examination, the study will make a determination as to whether PA and IO are integral or incompatible military functions. Additionally, the study will look at initial feedback on IO and PA in more recent operations involving Kosovo. Based on these sets of experiences in the Balkans, the study will conclude with recommendations for a future direction for joint and service IO and PA doctrine.

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PUBLIC AFFAIRS AND INFORMATION OPERATIONS: INTEGRAL OR INCOMPATIBLE?

> Once you've got all the forces moving and everything's being taken care of by the commander, turn your attention to television because you can win the battle or lose the war if you don't handle the story right.[1]
>
> —Gen. Colin Powell

The former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff had these thoughts on the eve of Operation Just Cause, the December 1989 invasion of Panama. With Army paratroopers literally airborne and nearing their Panamanian drop zones, the U.S. military's senior officer spent the evening carefully preparing himself for his future battlefield: the next day's Pentagon Press Conference and the ensuing days and weeks of public illumination in the media's spotlight. In the war's aftermath, amid continuing complaints from reporters who had been blocked from covering the war, a frustrated Powell would reiterate his concern for proper media handling. He wrote a memo to the military's four-star Commander-in-Chiefs that read in part: "Otherwise successful operations are not total successes unless the media aspects are properly handled."[2] Gen. Norman Schwarzkopf gave similar counsel to his subordinates during operations in the Persian Gulf: "You do have this instant reporting that can cause you trouble. Therefore I would say to the field commanders – 'Be very careful what you say to the press. Be very careful what your troops say to the press.'"[3]

The "media aspects" that challenged these generals and their troops over 10 years ago, have exploded with intensity and complexity in today's high-speed and high-technology global information environment (GIE). This is an environment where "more than 120 communication satellites beam television to an audience of 1.2 billion people, and CNN International reaches 209 countries."[4] It is an environment of 43 million Internet hosts in 214 countries wired to the World Wide Web by satellite or fiber optic cable, with 100 million projected by 2001.[5] And it is in this environment that a combination of cable and satellite television news services and Web news sites can communicate all aspects of a military operation directly from the battlefield unfiltered, in detail, in near-real-time, and virtually on demand, to a diverse global audience of average citizens, family members, world leaders, and adversaries. Across broadcast, print, and cyber spectrums, consumer access to news appears limitless.

The invasive media and the pervasive information highway know no boundaries. On the all-accessible modern battlefield, vast numbers of journalists precede the arrival of U.S. forces, from the streets of Haiti to the shores of Somalia, and more recently, across the countryside of Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo. They are powered by the public's appetite for instant news. They are propelled by an increased demand for information from 24-hour-a-day television news shows and news services in cyberspace. They are equipped by a proliferation of affordable and available information and image technology. A veteran war reporter describes today's newsroom as a "supermarket of war video," due to the enhanced "ability, mobility, and technology to cover and beam back more sub-state horrors in

this world."[6] Certainly, the demands of these modern "media aspects" may have kept Gen. Powell awake for more than just one night.

The GIE presents formidable challenges for the military. Facing the certainty of intrusive media and an overload of information, the military has elevated the importance of two related battlefield functions: public affairs (PA) and information operations (IO). PA serves as the military-media interface, tasked with the role of facilitating media coverage of military operations. In doing so, PA fulfills the obligation to keep the American people (external public) and the military (internal public) informed, and helps to establish the conditions that lead to confidence in America's military and its readiness to conduct operations.[7] IO has a different purpose. It encompasses a wide range of offensive and defensive capabilities aimed at achieving information dominance over an adversary. Included among these capabilities are military deception and psychological operations (PSYOP). Department of Defense (DoD) joint doctrine identifies PA as a key related IO activity. But the relationship between the two is problematic. On the one hand, PA deals with the public release of factual information. On the other hand, IO may deal with false intentions. By association alone, actual or perceived IO to manipulate public information could jeopardize the credibility of concurrent PA media relations, and potentially damage the credibility of the overall military mission. It will be the purpose of this study to further examine the IO-PA relationship under fire in Bosnia, as the IO campaign there confronted multiple non-cooperative and IO-capable adversaries. Through this examination, the study will make a determination as to whether PA and IO are integral or incompatible military functions, and make recommendations on directions for future joint and service IO and PA doctrine.

INFORMATION OPERATIONS

The military developed its doctrine for IO as a way to harness the potential of emerging information technologies and achieve information dominance in this new environment. This concept was formulated in Joint Pub 3-13, Joint Doctrine for Information Operations, published in October 1998. By definition, IO involve "actions taken to affect adversary information and information systems (offensive IO), while defending one's own information and information systems (defensive IO) ... to achieve and sustain the level of information superiority required for decisive joint operations."[8] Offensive IO include military deception, PSYOP, electronic warfare (EW), physical attack, and computer network attack. Defensive IO include operational security (OPSEC), physical security, counter-deception, counter-propaganda, counter-intelligence, and EW. Again, although not defined by the doctrine as IO capabilities, other key "related activities" include PA, and Civil Affairs (CA). IO play a key role across the full spectrum of military operations, from peace operations to total war, and may be most effective as a means of deterrence. The combined offensive and defensive elements of an information campaign, "in conjunction with advanced intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance, gives the commander tools for genuine perception management...and could affect an adversary's leadership or population support so much as to forestall conflict and allow us to achieve our goals without placing U.S. soldiers in danger."[9]

This is not an original concept. IO, in one form or another, have been conducted throughout the ages of ancient and modern warfare. However, what is unique in the new IO doctrine is its integrated approach. Successful and effective IO "are conducted through the integration of many capabilities and related activities."[10] In the past, these differing capabilities and activities had operated relatively independent of one another. Operations in today's GIE require their optimization and synchronization in order to dominate the information spectrum.

PUBLIC AFFAIRS

In simple terms, PA is the military element that routinely deals with the "media aspects" referred to earlier by Gen. Powell. PA assesses media requirements and facilitates local, national, and international media coverage of military operations. In this way, PA can make a significant impact on national will, political direction, and national security objectives and policy. To this end, Joint Pub 3-13 identifies the following key offensive IO PA tasks:

- Expedite the flow of accurate and timely information to internal and external publics.
- Create an awareness of the military goals during a campaign or operation.
- Satisfy the desires of the internal and external audiences to be kept informed about the campaign or operation.
- Inform internal and external audiences of significant developments affecting them.
- Through the public media, allow a Joint Force Commander to inform an adversary or a potential adversary about the friendly force's intent and capability.[11]

For defensive IO, Joint Pub 3-13 states that "PA programs contribute to information assurance by disseminating factual information ... that counters adversary deception and propaganda."[12]

Conversely, Joint Pub 3-61, Doctrine for Public Affairs in Joint Operations, makes no mention of IO. It was published 17 months prior to Joint Pub 3-13. However, the IO-related PA tasks listed above are embedded in the fundamental policies, guidelines, and responsibilities defined in the PA doctrine. Consequently, the PA practitioner learns the mechanics of joint PA from Joint Pub 3-61, and is introduced to his PA role in IO by Joint Pub 3-13. The military services further amplify the IO-PA relationship in their own doctrinal manuals, such as the Army's FM 100-6, Information Operations (August 1996) and revised FM 46-1, Public Affairs Operations (May 1997). FM 100-6 recognizes that Command and Control Warfare (C2W - comprising OPSEC, deception, EW, destruction, and PSYOP), CA, and PA are interrelated operations: "One (C2W) provides the commander a traditional warfighting capability, while the others (CA and PA) support warfighting and provide essential links to the increasing influence of the GIE."[13]

CONFLICT

A potential conflict between IO and PA arises in the area of perception management actions, such as PSYOP, OPSEC, and military deception. The joint IO doctrine expressly states that "PA activities will not be used as a military deception capability or to provide disinformation to either internal or external

audiences."[14] The joint PA doctrine expands this restraint: "propaganda or publicity designed to sway or direct public opinion will not be included in DoD PA programs."[15] FM100-6 "does not sanction in any way actions intended to mislead or manipulate media coverage of military operations."[16] In contrast, perception management is a viable element of an IO campaign, with specific designs to "influence the emotions, motives, and objective reasoning, ... ultimately resulting in foreign behaviors and official actions favorable to the originator's objective."[17] Deception activities, by definition, are designed to deliberately mislead through "distortion, concealment, and/or falsification of friendly intentions."[18] These type activities and PA activities are joined by their common involvement in IO, potentially working side by side in the IO planning cell.

The IO cell concept and its IO-PA relationship faced an early test in Bosnia. The feedback has been mostly positive. "The public information campaign and the information campaign in support of force protection and implementation of the military aspects of the Dayton Accords were successes," according to the Command and Control Research Program (CCRP), a commissioned external study of the NATO-led peace enforcement operation.[19] Bosnia-veteran IO specialists emphasized in their lessons learned, to "ensure that PA and PSYOP work together" on a number of common IO tasks.[20]

Herein lies the dichotomy: As demonstrated in Bosnia, an effective IO campaign must incorporate PA along with the other elements from the full menu of IO capabilities. As the doctrine cautions, separation must exist between PA and any activity not based on absolute truth. And on today's battlefield, this dichotomy exists under the magnifying lens of the GIE. In this environment , the mishandling of information, whether it be intentional or accidental, could spell success or failure for the credibility of the PA effort, as well as the entire mission. The remainder of the study will focus on this dichotomy.

PUBLIC AFFAIRS POLICY

Before examining the IO-PA relationship in Bosnia, it is first necessary to recognize the objectives (ends), policies (ways), and resources (means) that govern DoD PA practices.

Ends: DoD Directive 5122.5 (Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs (ASD(PA)), dated 29 March 1996, defines the military's PA policy as follows: "to make available timely and accurate information so that the public, Congress, and the news media may assess and understand the facts about national security and defense strategy."[21] This policy includes five principles that emphasize the imperative of maximum disclosure with minimum delay. Information should be withheld only when disclosure would endanger national security or threaten the safety or privacy of DoD personnel. Taken together, the PA end state is an informed public on national defense matters, consistent with operational security. The military is accountable and responsible to the American public for performing its mission of national defense. When applied to the National Security Strategy, this PA objective is an integral component of the informational element of power, enabling the establishment and strengthening of credibility, public support and national resolve.

Ways and Means: Joint Pub 3-61 identifies the primary ways and means for achieving the PA objective as: facilitation of news media coverage...resourced by the military departments' PA personnel, equipment, and facilities.[22] This process is guided by nine Principles for News Media Coverage of DoD Operations, established in May 1992 and included in DoD Directive 5122.5. A post Desert-Storm agreement between the ASD(PA) and a committee of Washington news editors and bureau chiefs produced the principles, which were subsequently endorsed by the key press organizations. The principles define complete freedom of movement and open and independent reporting as the principal means of news coverage. Additionally, the principles set the parameters for media accreditation, ground rules, and other arrangements for reporting in a combat zone. Military PA staffs are responsible for establishing liaison with the media, coordinating media access to military units, and generally facilitating a free flow of information through press briefings, interviews, visits and the like. Commanders are responsible for planning for media presence and for preparing their leaders and soldiers to deal effectively with the media before, during, and after operations.

PUBLIC AFFAIRS DOCTRINE

Joint PA doctrine does not address IO due to its publication after the IO doctrine. However, service doctrine, specifically the Army's FM 46-1, Public Affairs Operations, addresses IO and offers some specific IO-related tasks and guidelines. The PA representative to the IO battle staff or cell should accomplish the following:

- represents PA concerns in IO.
- Identifies, assesses, and advises the commander on information and issues with PA implications.
- Reviews strategic and operational information with PA implications such as events, missions and propaganda.
- Coordinates with CA and PSYOP representatives to ensure consistency of messages and OPSEC without compromising PA credibility.
- Facilitates the availability of battlefield information for PA purposes (such as releasable visual imagery) used to inform the public of Army capabilities and accomplishments.[23]

FM 100-6 echoes the theme of mutual support, unity of effort, and consistency of messages among the various IO components. The manual provides a useful "mutual support matrix" that lists IO cross-applications for C2W, CA, and PA operations. Two examples follow:

- C2W can support PA by developing EEFI (essential elements of friendly information – which must be denied the enemy) to preclude inadvertent public disclosure.
- PA can support C2W by developing information products to protect soldiers against the effects of disinformation or misinformation.[24]

INCOMPATIBILITY

Despite the doctrinal assurances of mutual support, PA association with IO and perception management activities, risks the loss of credibility with the media. Manipulation and deception are tools of the IO trade. Yet, the perception of media manipulation greatly endangers the military-media relationship. As a consequence, negative attitudes and reports from the media could erode public support for the deployed military and national policy, as occurred during the Vietnam War era.

FM 46-1 recognizes this danger. It identifies the need for coordination, yet a degree of separation among PA and other IO activities:

> Effective information operations require the early coordination and synchronization of PA, CA, and PSYOP. Each may use the same communications media to communicate essentially the same messages to different audiences. While CA and PSYOP address local populations and adversary forces, PA operations are directed toward U.S. forces and U.S. and international media. The target audiences may differ, but the consistency of messages is important to credibility. With the expanding role of PA and IO, it remains important to preserve the separation of PA and PSYOP in order to maintain the credibility of PA spokespersons and products.[25]

But within today's GIE, these audience distinctions become blurred. It may be impossible to achieve this audience separation. A leaflet or broadcast message disseminated to the local populace gets picked up by a local journalist on the street and is reported electronically, either sequentially or simultaneously, through the local, national and international media. Conversely, a press announcement or release intended for international media is picked up by local television viewers watching "CNN International" or browsing a news service Web site. Therefore, because of audience merger, it is essential that both PA and PSYOP communicate common themes and messages. Discrepancies are easily detected; credibility suffers.

Because of the risks posed by direct IO-PA association, the Army PA doctrine further recommends that PA and IO coordination occur in the IO planning cell, but that the cell's PA representative should not be the primary command spokesperson.[26]

Gen. Schwarzkopf confronted a IO-PA conflict early on during the planning phase of operations in the Persian Gulf War. His deception planners proposed planting false stories in the newspapers in order to mislead the Iraqi leadership. A subsequent decision made in Washington and with his support, did not allow this disinformation activity to occur. He gave two reasons for the decision. First, it conflicted with the democratic value of integrity and honesty with the American people, which is the military's obligation to uphold. Secondly, in Schwarzkopf's words, " we didn't need to do it because there was so much stuff going on out there that I would have been confused myself, reading the papers, if I didn't know what was going on."[27] He strongly affirms that neither he nor anyone in his command ever intentionally manipulated the press during that war. He relied on other, non-manipulative measures to guarantee OPSEC for his forces.

In World War II, U.S. leaders within the Office of War Information confronted a similar IO-PA conflict. Elmer Davis, the Office Director, believed that truth alone "in the form of plain, unadulterated

facts that could educate listeners in a true interpretation of the enemy's designs, create a distrust of the enemy and diminish their prestige."[28] The Office's Overseas Director, James Warburg, felt otherwise. He believed that the OWI was an "important branch of modern warfare," a propaganda agency whose purpose was to persuade, not to inform. He was interested in disseminating "only such fact , such opinion, and such fiction masquerading as fact as will serve to make people act, or fail to act in a certain way."[29]

Warburg's "branch of modern warfare" has evolved into today's IO. Schwarzkopf quickly quashed his planners' manipulative intentions. However, the potential exists for current and future IO warriors to share similar intentions. The mass media remains a tempting, lucrative target for disinformation. And in today's GIE, the effects would be immediate and with powerful, widespread impact.

Armed with the IO and PA doctrine cited above, and confronted by an array of media-wise adversaries, U.S. military IO practitioners headed to Bosnia in 1995 to implement the first information campaign supporting a multinational peacekeeping force.

THE BOSNIAN ENVIRONMENT

> There will be potential adversaries who attempt to exploit the near-instantaneous collection and disinformation capabilities of the global media. Proliferating false or distorted images or messages may co-opt policy makers and influence their decisions. The technology of deception will continue to outpace that of verification. Manipulating the media in order to set an agenda or create an advantageous first impression may be one of the asymmetric approaches used against the U.S.[30]

This threat capability is extracted from the Defense Department's 1998 Joint Strategy Review. It describes various informational methods of universal asymmetric warfare. It could just as easily have been the threat template presented to IO planners in 1995 as they prepared for the initial peace enforcement mission in Bosnia, OPERATION JOINT ENDEAVOR (OJE). This mission commenced six days after the signing of the Dayton Peace Agreement (DPA) on 14 December 1995 by the former warring factions (FWF) of Bosniacs, Croats, and Serbs, marking the end of their four-year-long war and ethnic cleansing. The agreement "provided the structure and mandate for an international mission designed to end the fighting and help achieve reconciliation under a unified, democratic, and multi-ethnic Bosnia."[31] The fragile peace would be enforced by a NATO-led implementation force (IFOR), with its area of operations sub-divided into multinational division areas or MNDs. The U.S. contingent, named Task Force Eagle, occupied MND-North. As IFOR elements arrived in Bosnia, an adversarial information campaign targeting IFOR was already in full operation:

> Although the fighting subsided, the FWF continued to mount aggressive information campaigns using disinformation, distorted or incomplete reporting, manipulation of national and international media, public statements and accusations, intimidation and orchestrated media events.[32]

This factor placed IFOR's information campaign at a disadvantage, "because it had to compete with an already established and effective campaign that could get inside of the IFOR decision loop and outmaneuver some of the initial IFOR efforts."[33]

This disadvantage was compounded by the difficult media situation. International journalists had fairly unrestricted access to Bosnia and media representatives were permitted to move freely around the territory. Television was the citizenry's medium of choice. Local media were trusted by their audiences, and "most continued to act as tools of their respective factions" ... spreading disinformation as they see fit their factions' political objectives.[34] Consequently, disinformation reported in the local media was perceived as truth by a trusting local audience. The following demonstrates one pointed example of the situation: "In March 1996, the Pale media launched a campaign encouraging the Bosnian Serbs living in the Sarajevo suburbs to be transferred to the Bosniac authorities to flee. Pale TV argued that Bosnian Serb safety could no longer be guaranteed after their transfer of authority."[35] Certainly, this caused complications for IFOR, and placed its IO elements in the reactive mode of damage control. An analyst from the Center For Army Lessons Learned (CALL) deployed to Bosnia and documented such type incidents. He described the conflict as follows:

> "The battlefield in Bosnia-Herzegovina is one of a struggle of ideas competing for legitimacy and supremacy. On this battlefield, information is the 'weapon' that is wielded by many actors and through many forms to include propaganda, PSYOP, PA and CA. Although IFOR did not face off against an 'adversary' in OPERATION JOINT ENDEAVOR, the FWFs were occasionally uncooperative and at times bellicose towards IFOR."[36]

CCRP researchers in Bosnia observed firsthand the combined effects of a pervasive media presence and instantaneous global information grid, described earlier in this paper: "The information networks serving the media, IFOR, and its coalition members provided the ability to share information at a speed and efficiency never before experienced. Frequently, media report of incidents would reach the home country and/or higher headquarters before the commander on the ground was aware of the situation and able to react."[37]

INFORMATION CAMPAIGN PLAN

In summary, the ends, ways, and means of the IO campaign were as follows:

- Ends: Enable IFOR operations to achieve full compliance by FWF with the DPA.
- Ways: Truth saturation.
- Means. PA activities with the media; PSYOP activities with the local populace.

Information activities oriented on the commander's intent: to deter the FWF from violating the DPA and attacking NATO troops, and to convince the local population that a brighter future was directly tied to full DPA compliance by all parties. The campaign consisted primarily of a PA element and a PSYOP element. The PA element aimed at the media. Through press conferences, media visits, interviews, press releases, electronic bulletin boards, Internet Home Pages and other related methods, the PA

purpose was to establish IFOR's credibility with the international media to gain support for the operation. IFOR held a daily press briefing at the Sarajevo Holiday Inn as the main venue for release of information to the media. Separate briefings were conducted at the IFOR Press Center for special events and VIP visits. PA activities were led by the IFOR Public Information Officer (PIO) and executed by the combined efforts of the Coalition Public Information Center (CPIC) and subordinate MND PA personnel. The PSYOP element aimed at the local populace, without the mediation of the media. Through IFOR-controlled television, radio, newspaper, posters, and leaflets, the PSYOP purpose was to shape the local population's perception in favor of IFOR personnel and activities. PSYOP activities were executed by the Combined Joint IFOR Information Campaign Task Force (CJIICTF). The following key concepts drove all IO planning:

- IFOR was to run a transparent campaign, relying on truth and dispatching complete, accurate, and timely information to establish itself as a credible source of information and to gain and maintain public support for IFOR operations.
- IFOR was to coordinate messages internally with other operational elements and liaise with major civilian agencies operating in Bosnia.
- IFOR was to rely on information as a lever to encourage friendly behavior.[38]

In addition, NATO rules of engagement constrained IFOR IO. "The campaign was forbidden to use disinformation and deception and could not take actions that undermined the factions, take sides, or directly refute FWF disinformation activities."[39]

At the MND-level, the U.S. 1st Infantry Division Commander defined his intent for a supporting IO plan. He stressed that all available means must be used to convey information to its intended audiences. The plan's critical tasks included:

- Respond quickly with truth to propaganda and disinformation.
- Leverage the truth and stress peaceful cooperation.
- Hold public officials accountable for their actions.[40]

INTEGRATION

Again, the key element of the IFOR IO campaign at all levels was the reliance on truth as the only form of information. This factor greatly facilitated integration of all IO elements. This section will demonstrate this integration by illustrating the mechanics of the IO structure and the common themes prevalent among the IO elements.

The Army's FM 100-6 provides guidance on the formation of an integrated IO cell, led by the C2W operations director, and including representatives from PA, CA, PSYOP, deception, OPSEC, signal, intelligence, targeting board, EW, and Staff Judge Advocate. The design allows the various elements to work closely together to identify potential opportunities, map strategy, and de-conflict products, when necessary. The cell shares common tasks of developing command messages and countering enemy propaganda. Grouping assists this process:

> Grouping C2W, CA, and PA together as specific IO provides a framework to promote synergy and facilitate staff planning and execution. The idea is reinforced by including the CA and PA staff representatives in the IO cell. ... This construct conceptually provides for greater integration and synchronization of CA and PA with the more traditional warfighting elements of C2W.[41]

IFOR varied slightly from this construct but achieved a coordinated IO campaign that synchronized efforts and avoided duplication. Rather than establish a permanent staff work cell, it formed a series of ad hoc committees, as follows:

- Information Coordination Group: This group met every morning and worked on a one-day to one- week planning horizon. It was chaired by the commander, and composed of the chief of staff, civilian political advisor, civilian media advisor, chief public information officer (PIO), command spokesman, deputy commander CJIICTF (the PSYOP Task Force), G3 (operations director), and G5 (civil affairs director). The group decided each day which command message to communicate, the delivery system, and timing of the delivery.
- Perception Group: This group met every Friday and worked on a two to four-week planning horizon. It was chaired by the Chief PIO and included all of the above members, except for the commander, chief of staff, and political advisor. This group provided an IO assessment, by examining media coverage trends. The group produced a weekly information matrix summarizing all IO throughout the theater.
- Crisis Planning Group: This group met whenever a crisis developed, and included commanders and staffs necessary for immediate contingency planning. This group invited PA and PSYOP planners into operational planning at the earliest possible moment.[42]

In addition, the Chief PIO attended all staff meetings, and morning and evening conference calls with subordinate commands. PA and PSYOP liaisons worked in the Joint Operations Center, where confident and trusting working relationships were built. These arrangements enabled PA and PSYOP to have complete and timely knowledge of current and future operations. They also maintained a continuous flow of information between IO and other peacekeeping operations. As a consequence, IO operators at all levels were able "to anticipate and prepare for incidents (through the knowledge of plans) and difficult issues (through a clear understanding of Headquarters policy and thinking).[43] The coordination made it possible to develop a coherent information strategy that timed precisely the release of IO actions and products. It also made it easier to react with a common approach and informational response in a crisis situation. Direct communication channels among IO and PA staffers at all levels of command mitigated the inherent disadvantage of being in a reactive mode with the media and adversaries during a breaking event.

Close integration allowed IO to play an expanded role as the weapon of choice on the mostly non-lethal battlefield. IO provided the commander the necessary tools to communicate his intentions, military might, and resolve, which was vital to operational success. At the MND-level, press statements were routinely used to lay blame publicly on factions that had violated provisions of the DPA, and to pressure

them into compliance.[44] Likewise, at the IFOR-level, IO were employed in a number of high-visibility incidents, designed to coerce actions by FWF without resorting to violence. As an example, "in summer 1996, a Serb policeman fired a warning shot at an IFOR soldier and ordered his policemen to surround him. In response, the IFOR Commander approved an information plan resorting to press statements and PSYOP products to apply gradual public pressure on the FWF leaders to oust the chief of police."[45]

In contrast, the Stabilization Force (SFOR), which assumed the peacekeeping mission from IFOR in December 1996, tended to reduce IO representation among the command group and operations staff. As witnessed by the CCRP, interaction between all staffs in charge of information activities, such as PA, PSYOP, and intelligence, "did not seem to take place at SFOR HQ."[46] This lack of integration reduced the command's capability to monitor, assess, and potentially counter disinformation. It also caused for IO to occasionally be omitted from operational planning. In an illustrative example,

> "The Chief PIO learned of the raid to arrest two war criminals in Prijedor on 10 July 1997 only after it had already taken place. By this time, the Bosnian Serb media was already reporting events with their interpretation of the events. This left the Chief PIO unable to assume a proactive posture but in a reactive mode with the information initiative in Serb hands."[47]

BOSNIA TODAY

The current SFOR IO plan and structure closely mirrors the one established by IFOR in 1995, according to notes provided by Col. Lee Hockman, SFOR PIO January-June 1999. The primary IO methods include PA, PSYOP, and dialogue/bilateral meetings conducted by the SFOR command and staff. An IO Working Group maintains an established battle rhythm. The group meets regularly to synchronize activities, and to present IO summaries and forecasts to the commander. During Hockman's service in Bosnia, one of the IO objectives was to "de-link Kosovo" from SFOR activities. The IO plan developed three common IO themes for the purpose of deterring violence in Bosnia inspired by the air war over Yugoslavia. These themes were communicated by PA and embedded in messages produced by other IO elements:

- SFOR's mandate is separate and distinct from NATO operations in Kosovo.
- SFOR did not participate in offensive action against Yugoslavia.
- Bosnia-Herzegovina airports and SFOR bases were not used to launch strikes against the Yugoslavia.[48]

A key step in IO planning is regular assessment of the effects of IO activities. Like the planning process, assessment is carried out in a coordinated manner. The IO Working Group collects data from a wide range of sources, including PA media analysis, United States Information Service all-source media analysis, MND patrol debriefs, PSYOP population surveys, CA community leader feedback, and J2-collected human intelligence. Based on the collective assessment, future IO strategies are then developed to focus on weak areas and/or reinforce strengths, to achieve or support command objectives.

INFORMATION OPERATIONS OUTLOOK

Future conflicts will present different IO challenges than those faced in Bosnia. Beyond the peacekeeping battlefield, extending to the combat end of the military operational spectrum, the integration of IO and PA may not be so clean. Initial after-action reports from combat operations against Serbia in OPERATION ALLIED FORCE indicate that IO and PA operations were less than successful. This subject has prompted a PA-hosted conference in Europe in March 2000, the findings of which will not be available to this study.[49]

One shot of criticism was fired by NATO's Nations editorial director Frederick Bonnart. Citing a "highly charged information policy," he claims that "NATO's information campaign during the Kosovo crisis should be an alarm call for the democracies."[50] He believes that NATO erred in its estimation of Serb vehicles destroyed in the air campaign. He further contends that NATO leveraged its reputation for truth and fairness to achieve media acceptance of these erroneous figures. In his words, "In democracies, it is the duty of the public services to present the truth, even in wartime, and particularly when they are in sole control of the information. If it is deliberately designed to engender fear and hate, then the correct term is propaganda."[51] Regardless of the validity of Bonnart's specific claim, he makes a valid point relative to IO and PA relations: This relationship becomes problematic when information for public release is not credible.

Admiral James Ellis, Commander of Allied Forces Southern Europe, and the operation's Joint Task Force NOBLE ANVIL, has made other critical observations of IO and PA. He described the IO campaign as "at once a great success ... and perhaps the greatest failure of the war."[52] He believes that if properly executed, IO could have cut the length of the operation in half. Concerning PA, Ellis characterized them as "not a shining moment for the U.S. or NATO," which the enemy was better at and more nimble.[53] His following comments illustrate his frustration with what he termed reactive versus proactive PA:

> The enemy deliberately and criminally killed innocents by the thousands...but no one saw it. We accidentally killed innocents sometimes by the dozens...and the world watched on the evening news. We were continually reacting, investigating and trying to answer 'how could this happen?' (PA is) a much underutilized instrument of national and alliance power...ignore it at your peril.[54]

The perceived IO and PA failures were not accidental. They were likely the intended consequences of Ellis' adversary, Serb President Slobodan Milosevic. He took extreme and elaborate measures to exercise his nation's informational power. His ends were to weaken international public support for the NATO war, and to strengthen his own nation's resolve. His means were the powerful weapons of a state-controlled monopoly media. The Serb Parliament passed a "Public Information Law," that imposed bankrupting fines on any media organization guilty of offending the government . It also prohibited broadcasters from programming foreign broadcasts on the local airwaves. Serbia's few independent media outlets were shut down and disconnected from the Internet. Print news reports were submitted for censorship by the government. One refusing publisher was assassinated.[55] Milosevic's

administration masterfully manipulated the media to popularize ethnic insults, reinforce historical grievances, stage events and distort facts. One of his instruments was the Ministry of Information's official and highly sophisticated Web site, "www.serbia-info.com." This site, communicated mainly in English and was hyperlinked to a vast array of Western media Web sites. It transmitted "news reports" with titles such as: "NATO aircraft continue shooting at civilian targets all over Serbia." The site's home page linked the popular bull's eye image, symbolizing resistance to NATO, to another page titled, "These are NATO targets," a collection of photos of newborn babies, elderly dead, schools, factories, and other non-military activities harmed in the bombing.[56]

In view of these deliberate, deceitful measures, Admiral Ellis concluded that his enemy benefited from informational interior lines and the overall asymmetrical approach to information warfare. He cautions that future adversaries will exercise this approach as well, "and may take far better advantage of it."[57]

CONCLUSIONS

Independent observers in Bosnia witnessed the effective integration of PA into the IFOR information campaign. IO played a critical non-lethal role in achieving the command's objectives. The campaign relied on truth as the basis for all IO. Truth saturation through simultaneous and mutually supporting PA and PSYOP enabled IFOR peacekeeping operations and countered adversarial disinformation. IFOR IO did not employ deception or disinformation. The reliance on truth as the campaign's overarching principal, along with several organizational staffing measures, promoted full IO-PA integration. These practices remain in place today as effective instruments in this specific peacekeeping operation.

On the relatively low-intensity Bosnian IO battlefield, truth saturation sufficed. Kosovo provides a glimpse of another battlefield, with opposition from a more extreme, resourced adversary. This type opponent presents more complicated IO challenges, and may require IO measures beyond truth, involving deception and black propaganda, which is defined as information "emanating from a source other than the true one."[58] As noted by the CCRP researchers, "The close association between PA, PSYOP, and CA should aim at coordinating and synchronizing the messages so they reinforce each other. If the PSYOP campaign is engaged in black propaganda, however, this close association could become inappropriate." [59] For this eventuality, this study concludes with the following recommendations:

- Retain the current IO and PA service doctrines.
- Train current and future IO and PA practitioners that the two functions must be integrated with one another, but require some measured separation, as the service doctrines stipulate.
- Investigate further the charges made by Bonnart of some carelessness in the public release of potentially erroneous reports of bomb damage among Serb forces.

- Study further the IO lessons learned from Kosovo, with some focus on the IO-PA relationship and any evolving roles or functions that may have emerged.
- Revise the existing joint PA doctrine so that it addresses IO, and carefully defines the PA role in IO, integrating the IO-PA lessons learned from Bosnia and Kosovo.

IO in Bosnia demonstrated that despite some inherent incompatibilities, PA and IO can and need to be integral, synchronized military functions. Initial reports from Kosovo indicate that more work needs to be done at better integrating timely IO and proactive PA into the total military operation. In both areas of the Balkans, U.S. military leaders fully recognized the substantial value of IO in affecting our adversaries, and of PA in sustaining public support in the international arena.

WORD COUNT = 6330

ENDNOTES

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[3] Frank Aukofer and William P. Lawrence, America's Team: The Odd Couple - A Report on the Relationship Between the Media and the Military, (Nashville: The Freedom Forum First Amendment Center, 1995), 156.

[4] Richard Parker, "The Future of Global Television News: An Economic Perspective," Political Communication, 12, no. 4 (October-December 1995): 432.

[5] Connie L. Stephens, "The Revolution in Media Affairs: Reinventing U.S. Strategic Communications in the Era of Slobodan Milosevic," Essays 1999 (1999): 23.

[6] Nik Gowing, "Media Coverage: Help or Hindrance in Conflict Prevention?", Report to the Carnegie Commission on Preventing Deadly Conflict (New York: Carnegie Commission, 1997); reprinted in Core Curriculum Course 2: War, National Policy and Strategy (Carlisle: U.S. Army War College, 1999), 18.

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[9] David L. Grange and James A. Kelley, "Information Operations for the Ground Commander," Military Review, 77, no. 2 (March-April 1997): 9.

[10] Joint Pub 3-13, I-9.

[11] Ibid., II-6.

[12] Ibid., III-7.

[13] FM 100-6, 3-0.

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[16] FM 100-6, 1-13.

[17] Department of Defense, Dictionary for Military and Associated Terms, Joint Pub 1-02, (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Defense, 10 June 1998), 340.

[18] FM 100-6, 3-3.

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[22] Joint Pub 3-61, II-1-II-3.

[23] Department of the Army, Public Affairs Operations, Field Manual 46-1, (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of the Army, May 1997), 13.

[24] FM 100-6, 3-17.

[25] FM 46-1, 13.

[26] Ibid.

[27] Aukofer and Lawrence, 156.

[28] Clayton Laurie, The Propaganda Warriors: America's Crusade Against Nazi Germany, (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1996), 179.

[29] Ibid.

[30] Department of Defense, 1998 Joint Strategy Review (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Defense, 1998), 21.

[31] Wentz, Introduction Section, 1.

[32] Shanahan and Beavers, 54.

[33] Wentz, Summary Section, 7.

[34] Pascalle Combelles Siegel, "Target Bosnia: Integrating Information Activities in Peace Operations," Section on Assessing Information Activities in Bosnia, p. 13, available from <http://call.army.mil/call/spc_prod/ccrp/target/tartoc.htm; Internet; accessed 18 February 2000.

[35] Ibid., 8.

[36] Arthur Tulak, "PSYOP C2W Information Operations in Bosnia," available from <http://call.army.mil/call/trngqtr/tq2-99/psyopc2w.htm; Internet; accessed 18 February 2000.

[37] Wentz, Summary Section, 6.

[38] Wentz, Information Activities Section, 1-4.

[39] Wentz, Summary Section, 7.

[40] Shanahan and Beavers, 55.

[41] FM 100-6, 3-0.

[42] Wentz, Information Activities Section, 8.

[43] Ibid., 5.

[44] Ibid., 12.

[45] Ibid., 13.

[46] Siegel, The Public Information Campaign Section, 15.

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[48] Lee J. Hockman, "Public Information and the Information Operations Campaign in Bosnia-Herzegovina," briefing slides, Fort Leavenworth, provided via electronic mail attachment from Lee Hockman, Editor, Military Review to Gary Patton <gpattons5aol.com>, 3 February 2000.

[49] Hiram Bell, <bellhemh1.ftmeade.army.mil>, "PA Research," electronic mail message to Gary Patton <gpattons5aol.com>, 3 February 2000.

[50] Frederick Bonnart, "NATO Has a Duty To Be Truthful," International Herald Tribune, 1 October 1999, 10.

[51] Ibid.

[52] James O. Ellis, "A View From the Top," briefing slides, Fort Meade, Army Public Affairs Center, provided via electronic mail attachment from Hiram Bell, Director, Army Public Affairs Center to Gary Patton <gpattons5aol.com>, 3 February 2000.

[53] Ibid.

[54] Ibid.

[55] Stephens, 7.

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