WHAT THE JOINT FORCE COMMANDER NEEDS TO KNOW ABOUT CI AND HUMINT OPERATIONS

by

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Military Operations other than war (MOOTW) will continue to dominate the use of our military forces for the foreseeable future. Moreover, recent operations in Haiti, Bosnia and Kosovo have acknowledged operational CI and HUMINT activities as paramount to satisfying the JFC's force protection and intelligence requirements.

CI and HUMINT are complimentary efforts that work best in collaborative effort. At the JTF level their activities are coordinated by the J2X element which also coordinates collection requirements with CIA and SOF elements as well as providing collection focus to the theater level joint exploitation centers. Joint doctrine acknowledges their importance in successive peace operations but provides only superficial coverage insufficient to educate future JFCs and J2s.

Success in future contingency operations, especially peace operations, requires that CINCs and JFCs familiarize themselves with CI and HUMINT operations and fully exploit the advantages they bring to the table. The CI and HUMINT triad at the theater level commands (CISO, HSE, and DCI Representative) must educate senior leaders on the "value added" of CI and HUMINT in support of joint operations.
Introduction

The age of jointness was ushered in by the Goldwater-Nichols Act of 1986 and its evolution hastened by the lessons learned from Operations Desert Shield/Desert Storm and the numerous peace operations that followed in their wake. Joint vernacular is increasingly spoken and understood in the rank and file of all our military services. Joint Task Forces (JTF) have become the preferred method of executing military operations both in war and military operations other than war (MOOTW). C'est bon, let’s declare victory in the war on “jointness” and move on to something else. If only it were that easy. Although significant progress has been made, joint doctrine is still evolving and even if most of us can “talk the talk” we’ve yet to effectively “walk the walk”.

Operational intelligence is no exception. In recent years its tenets have found space in joint publications but only in sufficient detail to hint at the capabilities that exist. Operational intelligence is “intelligence that is required for planning and conducting campaigns and major operations to accomplish strategic objectives within theaters or operational areas.”¹ In his introductory note to Joint Publication 2-0, Doctrine for Intelligence Support to Joint Operations, then Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff GEN Henry H. Shelton commented:

Intelligence plays a vital role in the conduct of successful joint operations. Proper employment of collection and analysis assets is essential if joint force commanders are to gain and maintain information superiority. Without accurate intelligence, our joint forces will lose the essential advantages of surprise,
operational security, and flexibility. Joint force commanders, planners, and warfighters at all levels are encouraged to become thoroughly familiar with the doctrine in this publication and use it as a tool for meeting the Nation’s future challenges.

“The commander drives intelligence” is the Army intelligence principle intimated by GEN Shelton in his demand that joint force commanders (JFC) read and understand intelligence doctrine. Commanders must understand the capabilities and limitations of the intelligence function if they hope to fully exploit its potential. Nowhere is this more difficult than in the human intelligence (HUMINT) discipline whose principles are scattered in numerous classified joint publications and understood by only a small number of intelligence officers with specialized training in that field. Closely related to HUMINT with the same access problems is the intelligence function of counterintelligence (CI). Ironically, CI and HUMINT have surpassed signals intelligence (SIGINT) and imagery intelligence (IMINT) as the “go to” collectors for the JFC yet their full capabilities have yet to be exploited in large part because commanders lack the knowledge to fully leverage them. Success in future contingency operations, especially peace operations, requires that JFCs familiarize themselves with CI and HUMINT operations and fully exploit the advantages they provide. This paper will arm JFCs with sufficient knowledge to best employ CI and HUMINT assets to assist in satisfying their intelligence and force protection requirements.

CI Versus HUMINT

Many military professionals, to include intelligence officers, don’t understand the distinction between CI and HUMINT often resulting in the improper utilization of scarce resources. CI and HUMINT are
complimentary efforts that work best in a collaborative endeavor. Although complimentary, their focuses are opposite in nature. Joint Publication 1-02, Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms, defines HUMINT as “a category of intelligence derived from information collected and provided by human sources.” This definition is insufficient and misleading as it implies anyone can be a HUMINT Collector. A more complete definition is proposed in the most recent edition of Military Intelligence Professional Bulletin:

HUMINT is derived from the analysis of foreign positive information collected by a trained HUMINT Collector from people and multimedia to identify elements, intentions, composition, strength, dispositions, tactics, equipment, personnel, and capabilities. It uses human contacts and informants as a tool, and a variety of collection methods to gather information that satisfies the commander’s critical information requirements (CCIR) and cues other collection resources.³

HUMINT includes both controlled-source acquisition and overt collection (including documents and other material), such as interrogations of prisoners of war, debriefings of US citizens and foreign nationals, and official contacts with foreign governments.

All combatant commanders have a force protection mission. Inherent in that responsibility is an active CI effort. CI is an intelligence function vice a discipline and as such is separate and distinct from HUMINT. CI is defined as:

Information gathered and activities conducted to protect against espionage, other intelligence activities, sabotage, or assassinations conducted by or on behalf of foreign governments or elements thereof, foreign organizations, or foreign persons, or international terrorist activities.⁴

In other words, CI must detect, identify, exploit, and neutralize adversary efforts to gain information, exploit our vulnerabilities, and
strike our organizations and facilities. The purpose of CI collection is force protection and many times HUMINT collection techniques are employed creating confusion and causing some to classify CI as a subdiscipline of HUMINT. The CI collection function is similar to HUMINT in that it relies on human sources for information, in some cases the very same sources. Such sources include liaison sources with law enforcement agencies and foreign intelligence and security services (FISSs). The difference lies in the purpose and product of the collection operation. CI also conducts CI Force Protection Source Operations (CFSO) in support of deployments outside the United States. CFSOs are overt human source collection operations that respond to a commander’s force protection related intelligence requirements. They focus on collecting information from the local population with respect to any hostile activities that may threaten deployed JTF personnel, equipment, facilities or operations.

HUMINT is similar to other intelligence disciplines such as IMINT and SIGINT in that the purpose of its collection is to identify critical factors about the enemy to contribute to the all source picture of the battlefield. The HUMINT Collector’s job is complete once the information has been obtained and reported. The CI special agent’s job is just beginning once information is collected that indicates a potential threat to the JTF. CI must then take active countermeasures to exploit and/or neutralize that threat.¹⁵

**CI and HUMINT Resurgence**

Over the past decade CI and HUMINT have emerged from the backseat position they occupied in the final stages of the Cold War. Other intelligence disciplines that relied on remote collection capabilities
using advanced technology with near real time reporting capabilities were considered more capable of penetrating the Soviet Bloc with less risk. The end of the Cold War along with the lessons of Somalia, Haiti and Bosnia have resulted in a new intelligence paradigm where CI and HUMINT intensive environments are the norm. Although joint doctrine acknowledges this tendency, it does not provide sufficient emphasis. COL Allen Boyd, former Director of Futures at the United States Army Intelligence Center at Fort Huachuca writes:

Existing and emerging peace operations doctrine notes the importance of human intelligence (HUMINT) to varying degrees, but it does not assign to it the overwhelming importance that commanders and J2s continue to learn from one operation to another. ... Successive peace operations clearly reflect the necessity to establish a full-spectrum HUMINT network throughout the operational area and the reality that poor HUMINT simultaneously risks overall mission failure and protection of the peace force itself. Repeatedly peace operations commanders and J2s have reiterated that HUMINT was their most important intelligence resource. ⁶

As a result, new operational intelligence planning imperatives are required. The top two imperatives are; 1) make intelligence support to force protection the foremost priority, and 2) make HUMINT paramount. ⁷

Somalia is an interesting case study which clearly identifies the relevance of these intelligence imperatives. During Operation Restore Hope, CI and HUMINT personnel coordinated directly with local authorities and humanitarian NGOs to gain valuable insight into the Mogadishu system of government and culture providing the JFC the situational understanding necessary to accomplish the mission. ⁸ Unfortunately, this understanding of the importance of cultural intelligence did not carry over to the subsequent UNOSOM II mission. The following account is from the Joint Military Operations Historical Collection:
As the mission in Somalia changed from peacekeeping to peace enforcement during UNOSOM II, the UN failed to develop a full awareness of the local population’s disposition and did not obtain adequate intelligence on the adversary’s intentions and capabilities ... The JFC underestimated the military capabilities of rival factions, and as a result, UN forces were not adequately prepared for contingency situations.  

Operation Joint Endeavor provides another illustrative example of the increased importance of CI and HUMINT. The following excerpt from the principal lessons learned document from Bosnia reiterates that point as follows,

Doctrine, CONOPS, procedures, intelligence preparation of the battlefield, and intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR) capabilities had to be adjusted and augmented to accommodate peace operation requirements. Experience with other OOTWs also clearly demonstrated that although non-intrusive means of collecting information were especially useful, HUMINT [includes CI in this context] was usually key. In Bosnia, the man and woman on the ground collecting firsthand information about political leaders, business people, the conditions of roads and bridges, withdrawal of forces from the ZOS [zones of separation], weapons and ammunition in cantonment areas, freedom of movement violations, and demonstrations and ethnic incidents proved invaluable. Over time, HUMINT became the dominant player in the IFOR intelligence operation. ... The counterintelligence and HUMINT activities in Bosnia were also essential to accomplishing the force protection mission by providing the information and intelligence the commander needed to manage and avoid risk and still accomplish the mission.  

This assessment mirrors many other reports which indicate CI and HUMINT reporting were responsible for over 80% of the actionable intelligence in Bosnia. In fact, the Allied Command Europe (ACE) Rapid Reaction Corps (ARRC) Intelligence Summary (INTSUM), the most important intelligence product in theater, was nearly 100% composed from intelligence generated by HUMINT collection. 

Crisis Action Planning

Who advises the commander in chief (CINC) of a combatant command on the employment of CI and HUMINT activities? The J2 is the primary staff officer with that responsibility but imbedded in the J2 staff are two
functional area experts who provide the requisite direction, coordination and control. The Counterintelligence Support Officer (CISO) is the CINC’s advisor on CI support to the command and coordinates the actions of the component Service CI elements. The CISO staff normally consists of component Service CI representatives to assist in that mission. The CISO will ensure CI participation in the joint planning process and inclusion of CI activities as required in the combatant command’s operation plans.

Coordination of HUMINT activities is the responsibility of the HUMINT Support Element (HSE). The Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) provides an HSE to each combatant command to assist the command in obtaining HUMINT support. Since 1995, all Department of Defense (DOD) non-tactical HUMINT has been consolidated under the operational control of the Defense HUMINT Service (DHS), Directorate of Operations, DIA. DHS HUMINT collectors are deployed around the globe configured in operating bases (OBs) and operating locations (OLs). The HSE ensures the combatant command’s peacetime and contingency intelligence requirements are satisfied and coordinates for augmentation as required. DHS is also responsible for management of the Defense Attache System.

Each combatant command is also provided a senior representative from the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) commonly known as the Director of Central Intelligence (DCI) Representative. The DCI Representative participates in the command’s deliberate and crisis action planning processes and coordinates for CIA support to the
command’s operational requirements to include crisis augmentation packages.

Together, the CISO, HSE and DCI Representative constitute the CI and HUMINT triad of expertise on a combatant command staff. In peacetime, they ensure the integration of CI and HUMINT resources into deployments, operations and exercises to gain access and placement which translates into success in a contingency environment. All three are integral players in the command’s deliberate and crisis action planning.

If a JTF is stood up during the crisis action planning process, the CISO and HSE advise the JTF Commander (CJTF) and J2 on the formation of a J2X (CI/HUMINT coordination and deconfliction cell) and the establishment of joint exploitation centers such as the joint interrogation facility (JIF), joint interrogation and debriefing center (JIDC) and the joint document exploitation center (JDEC). The CJTF may also request a National Intelligence Support Team (NIST), of which CIA is an integral element, to improve the JTF’s “reach-back” capability for assistance in answering task force priority intelligence requirements. The remainder of this paper will focus on the “value added” of the above organizations and collection entities.

**J2X**

The United States’ experiences in Somalia and other contingency deployments demonstrated that HUMINT and CI collection activities could conflict if they are not thoroughly coordinated. Separate agencies may exploit the same sources, leading to circular reporting which appears to corroborate itself. Both HUMINT and CI could focus their efforts on the same information requirements, leaving gaps in collection against other requirements. Other activities, such as those conducted by special
operations forces (SOF), also may result in duplication of effort and misunderstanding. Based on these historical lessons, the DOD established the J2X doctrine in Joint Pub 2-01, Joint Intelligence Support to Military Operations, to prevent such problems.\textsuperscript{12}

The J2X is a subordinate staff element to the JTF J2 responsible for managing, coordinating and deconflicting the JTF’s CI and HUMINT activities and other information collection that uses human sources. First employed during Operation Restore Hope in Somalia, it has subsequently provided answers to critical intelligence requirements in Bosnia and Haiti. When established early and command supported it can be the difference maker in answering critical force protection and intelligence requirements. Its primary components are a HUMINT Operations Cell (HOC), staffed primarily by DHS, and a Task Force Counterintelligence Coordinating Authority (TFCICA), manned with component Service CI resources. The combatant command CISO and HSE should recommend designation of J2X, TFCICA and HOC Chiefs during the predeployment phases of crisis action planning to allow them involvement in coordinating the CI and HUMINT support for the JTF. CIA and SOF liaison elements should also collocate with the J2X to enable the best possible coordination and deconfliction of CI and HUMINT assets in the Joint Operations Area (JOA).

The J2X is the JTF’s single point of contact for all CI/HUMINT activities in the JOA and focuses intelligence collection on CI force protection requirements and HUMINT intelligence gaps. It “ensures proper resource application to provide a coordinated, deconflicted and integrated
CI, HUMINT and SOF collection and reporting effort for the JTF.” In addition, the HOC will coordinate requirements with the Country Team and provide oversight and collection guidance to the joint exploitation centers.

**Theater Level Interrogation and Debriefing Operations**

HUMINT embodies many subdisciplines to include interrogation and debriefing operations. At the theater level, these operations are conducted predominately at joint exploitation centers and consist of the following activities; interrogation of enemy prisoners of war (EPWs) and civilian detainees, debriefing of friendly forces, refugees and other civilians, strategic debriefing and document exploitation (DOCEX). The joint exploitation centers include the JIF, JIDC and JDEC. These theater level collection activities focus on satisfying the JFC’s priority intelligence requirements (PIR). If possible, they should be collocated in the same general vicinity to facilitate the rapid exchange of information. “Long term exploitation of the same material and sources at joint force level may provide valuable operational, strategic and technical data.” The Army component commander possesses the preponderance of trained personnel and equipment and should be given executive agent responsibility for establishing and operating these joint exploitation centers. These operations are manpower intensive and the theater J2 must coordinate in peacetime, and train accordingly, for augmentation from reserve and national guard components, other services and selected national agencies. To ensure unity of effort, HUMINT requirements are passed from the JTF J2 collection manager to the J2X which determines which exploitation center or other collection asset should satisfy the requirement.
Joint Interrogation Facility (JIF)

The JIF is a constituent at one or more of the many theater internment facilities erected by the Army component commander under the direction of the Provost Marshal using predominately reserve Military Police assets. In addition to the service Component HUMINT assets and DHS augmentation, CI teams should be attached to the JIF to identify and exploit persons of CI interest. Two JIFs were established during Desert Storm and between them screened, interrogated or debriefed 49,350 EPWs. Among the categories of personnel exploited at a JIF are; EPWs, civilian internees, detained persons, insurgents, defectors, refugees, displaced persons, agents/suspected agents, emigres and resettlers.

JIFs are equally applicable to military operations other than war as they are to major theater wars. “When the plan for Operation Uphold Democracy changed from a forced entry to a permissive entry the JIF was turned back to Ft. Bragg and not initially employed. This proved to be a mistake, and a JIF was subsequently stood up a week after initial entry.” This observation was made by the JTF 180 J2 who quickly recognized the need to detain and question both criminal and military hostile elements which pose an immediate threat to US forces.

Mobile interrogation teams (MITs) can deploy from the JIF as required to provide direct support to a component force or to screen prisoners at a detention facility where no JIF is present. Alternatively, CINCs should consider deploying mobile interrogation teams early on a time phased force deployment list (TPFDL) to provide interrogation support until the JIF arrives in theater. Such was the case last November when the 504th Military Intelligence (MI) Brigade
(CENTCOM’s theater support MI brigade) deployed a MIT to Uzbekistan and then Afghanistan to assist national level agencies in debriefing captured Taliban and Al Qaeda detainees in Mazar-e-Sharif.\(^\text{18}\)

**Joint Interrogation and Debriefing Center**

Joint Pub 2-01, Joint Intelligence Support to Military Operations, does not distinguish between a JIF and a JIDC but the need for both is essential. The JIF is focused on large scale screening operations (technique to identify individuals likely possessing information thereby meriting further exploitation) and follow on interrogations as required to satisfy intelligence and force protection requirements. The environment is austere, tents and barbed wire, with minimum comforts and less than gracious hosts. By contrast, the JIDC provides a rather comfortable and friendly setting where normally cooperative and/or high ranking officials are “debriefed” in detail over a longer period of time. Other sources might include returning prisoners of war. National level intelligence agencies will provide augmentation to the JIDC in search of information to satisfy strategic requirements. Some sources will likely receive positive incentives as a reward for their cooperation. JIDC liaison officers should be placed at the JIF to assist in identifying and relocating these sources should they mistakenly arrive at the JIF.

**Joint Document Exploitation Center (JDEC)**

The JDEC exploits captured enemy documents (CEDs) to provide tactical, operational and strategic information to the theater JTF and its subordinate commands. “CEDs are any written or graphical data
contained on any form of media. ... These documents include, but are not limited to: handwritten, typed or computer generated data or images stored on paper or paper-like substance; photographs; maps, charts, or overlays; video or audio tapes or other media used to store recorded material; and automated data processing storage media, other than component hardware.”

DOCEX occurs at lower echelons but the JDEC is the only facility in theater equipped to handle large volumes of CEDs. During Operation Desert Storm, 18 trailer trucks of CEDs were delivered to the JDEC for exploitation. JDEC Exploitation Teams can deploy to lower echelon command components to assist in screening and identifying CEDs as required. CEDs not determined to be time sensitive can be transported (electronically if possible) to reserve component sanctuaries in CONUS for exploitation.

**CIA Support to the JTF**

Since its inception in 1947, a primary function of the CIA has been to provide support to US military forces. However, following Operations Desert Shield/Desert Storm, GEN Schwartzkopf publicly rebuked the CIA and other national level intelligence agencies for allegedly withholding critical intelligence. Although this criticism is debatable, his testimony before the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence (HPSCI) and the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence (SSCI) was in part responsible for the establishment of the National Intelligence Support Team (NIST) concept and the CIA’s Office of Military Affairs (OMA).

Although significant national level intelligence assets were deployed in support of CENTCOM during the Gulf War, the support was
somewhat compartmented in that they largely consisted of separate deployed cells with insufficient coordination and deconfliction between agencies. The NIST concept was developed to overcome these deficiencies. NISTs provide a consolidated national intelligence “reach-back” capability to assist in answering the intelligence requirements of the supported JTF. CIA, the National Security Agency (NSA), the National Imagery and Mapping Agency (NIMA) and the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) have all formally agreed to support NISTs as required. NISTs must be requested through the National Military Joint Intelligence Center (NMJIC) by the theater CINC on behalf of the supported JTF and should specify the national intelligence capabilities required. The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS) is the approval authority.

The CIA created OMA in 1992 to “enhance cooperation and increase information flow between CIA and the military.” The Associate Director of Central Intelligence for Military Support (ADCI/MS), a flag rank military officer, is the principal adviser to the DCI on military affairs and oversees the OMA which is staffed by CIA and military personnel. When a NIST is requested through the NMJIC, OMA coordinates for and deploys the CIA augmentees. OMA also supports the combatant commands with permanent DCI representatives and staff and coordinates CIA participation in joint exercises. “Interaction between OMA and the DCI representatives to the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD), the Joint Staff, and the combatant commands facilitates the provision of national-level intelligence in support of joint operations, contingency and operation planning, and exercises.”
In recent years it has become increasingly difficult to receive NIST approval unless all four of the major intelligence agencies (CIA, NSA, DIA and NIMA) are represented. Moreover, NIST requests are sometimes denied when the CJCS determines the justification is not sufficient. To circumvent these situations, CIA developed Crisis Operations Liaison Teams (COLTs) to support deploying military forces outside the formal NIST process. These teams are ready to deploy on 48 hours notice to provide 24 hour crisis augmentation and facilitate the exchange of time-sensitive information between CIA and the military. These teams deploy only at the request of the Chief of Station (COS) impacted by the crisis or contingency. The JFC should meet with the appropriate Chief of Station (COS) to coordinate for this support when required. The COLT process provides the JFC with a non-bureaucratic option to immediately bring additional CIA capabilities to bear in a crisis.

CIA support to the military has steadily improved since George Tenet was sworn in as the DCI in 1997. His priority on support to the military is evident in remarks he made on 18 July 1998:

I will never let a man or woman in uniform deploy to a crisis or conflict without the best information our country can provide. I would never tolerate the loss of a single man or woman because some bureaucrat in Washington wants to have a philosophic debate about requirements. Theater commanders and J2s should capitalize on this military friendly environment by fully engaging the DCI Representative and OMA in support of exercises and operations to ensure procedures are in place prior to a crisis situation.

Conclusion
Peace operations will continue to dominate the use of our military forces. Moreover, the JTF approach that has steadily evolved since Operations Desert Shield/Desert Storm will be the preferred method of executing those operations. The operational intelligence function will continue to provide the information superiority required for success in this or any environment and recent operations in Haiti, Bosnia and Kosovo have acknowledged CI and HUMINT as dominating the MOOTW battlefield. This is significant because these intelligence activities have only recently emerged as the “go to” collectors and many JFCs are uncomfortable or unfamiliar with their methods and capabilities.

The CI and HUMINT triad at the theater level commands must educate combatant commanders and future JFCs on the “value-added” of CI and HUMINT in support of joint operations. They must work with the CINC and JFC to commit these assets long before the dispatch of combat troops to the theater. Early commitment of CI and HUMINT assets will save lives and exponentially increase their capability to satisfy force protection and intelligence requirements.

CINCs and JFCs must better understand their dual roles as directors and consumers of intelligence. They must apply the CI and HUMINT lessons learned from recent operations and fully exploit the advantages robust CI and HUMINT activities bring to the fight. This includes increasing their knowledge on leveraging HUMINT support available at the national level from the CIA.

Hopefully, this paper will serve as a first step in educating senior commanders on the critical role CI and HUMINT can and must play
on the MOOTW battlefields we are likely to engage on for the foreseeable future.
NOTES

1 Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS), Doctrine for Intelligence Support to Joint Operations, Joint Pub 2-0 (Washington, DC: 9 March 2000), GL-8.

2 Ibid., Cover Letter.


5 Jones, 31.


7 Ibid., 11.

8 Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS), Doctrine for Joint Operations, Joint Pub 3-06 (Washington, DC: 30 October 2000), III-16.

9 JP 3-06, III-17.


14 JP 2-01, G-1


17 “Requirement for a Joint Interrogation Facility,” JULLS No. 12343-67900, Unclassified.


20 FM 34-52, iv.


22 Ibid.

24 Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), *Crisis Operations Liaison Team (COLT)*, (Office of Military Affairs: Undated Pamphlet).


“Requirement for a Joint Interrogation Facility.” JULLS No. 12343-67900, Unclassified.


