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Employing Inform and Influence Activities to Neutralize Cross-Border Sanctuaries in Counterinsurgency Operations


by


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Major, United States Army


A paper submitted to the Faculty of the Naval War College in partial satisfaction of the requirements of the Department of Joint Military Operations.

The contents of this paper reflect my own personal views and are not necessarily endorsed by the Naval War College or the Department of the Navy.


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**14. ABSTRACT**

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## ABSTRACT

Fighting an insurgency is a complex undertaking and the use of cross-border sanctuaries by insurgents is a particularly sinister aspect of counterinsurgency operations. The thesis of this paper is that commanders must better understand and employ Inform and Influence Activities (IIA) in order to neutralize cross-border sanctuaries. For the counterinsurgency commander it is not only difficult to envision a workable solution to this multifaceted problem, it is often exceedingly difficult to even begin to understand the problem-set itself. This paper will begin by identifying two aspects of this issue that make it difficult for commanders to comprehend the problem of sanctuary neutralization – namely, the nature of the problem itself and recent changes to doctrine and terminology. The paper then argues that commanders can employ three IIA capabilities to influence targeted audiences in border areas. The commander's goal at this point is to garner the population's support in order to deny insurgents cross-border passage in these border areas – effectively neutralizing the sanctuaries. The paper concludes by discussing the importance of Measures of Effectiveness to assess the efficacy of these operations and the importance of nesting IIA into the overall Strategic Communication plan.

INTRODUCTION

The use of cross-border sanctuaries is a common characteristic of insurgencies. Army Field Manual (FM) 3-24, *Counterinsurgency*, identifies sanctuaries as "insurgent external support systems" that are viable targets for counterinsurgency (COIN) operations "that can link objectives to effects."[1]  The Joint Publication for COIN highlights one of the issues that makes cross-border sanctuaries a particularly difficult counterinsurgency problem, "Physical safe havens may be in areas with sympathetic governments or, more often, UGAs [Ungoverned Areas]. In either case, sanctuaries challenge or prevent COIN efforts to enter these areas that protect insurgents."[2]  There are myriad physical constraints, legal limitations and political sensitivities that often preclude U.S. forces from conducting movement and maneuver or kinetic strikes across international borders to interdict these sanctuaries.  Given these constraints – which are wholly representative of the current issue facing U.S. commanders fighting Haqqani and Taliban fighters using the Federally Administrated Tribal Area (FATA) in Pakistan as a cross-border sanctuary for fighting in Afghanistan – how can an operational commander begin to degrade these sanctuaries without putting U.S. 'boots on the ground' across these international borders?

The answer lies in employing Information Operations – or what the Army now refers to as Inform and Influence Activities.[3]  Whereas this paper will provide numerous, discrete examples of successful operations where Inform and Influence Activities (IIA) had a significant impact in COIN operations, by and large military leaders have yet to fully

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[1] U.S. Army, *Counterinsurgency,* Field Manual (FM) 3-24 (Washington, DC:  Headquarters Department of the Army, 15 December 2006), 5-29, accessed 10 May 2013, http://armypubs.army.mil/doctrine/DR_pubs/dr_a/pdf/fm3_24.pdf.

[2] U.S. Department of Defense, *Counterinsurgency Operations,* Joint Publication (JP) 3-24 (Washington, DC: DoD, 5 October 2009), II-12, accessed 10 May 2013, http://www.dtic.mil/doctrine/new_pubs/jp3_24.pdf.

[3] U.S. Army, *Inform and Influence Activities,* Field Manual (FM) 3-13 (Washington, DC:  Headquarters Department of the Army, 25 January 2013), accessed 30 April 2013, http://armypubs.army.mil/doctrine/DR_pubs/dr_a/pdf/fm3_13.pdf.

incorporate these activities into campaign planning for dealing with cross-border sanctuaries in a comprehensive manner which links tactical actions to strategic objectives. Two main reasons that commanders have difficulty employing IIAs against cross-borders sanctuaries are because COIN operations present 'wicked'[4] problems, and because myriad changes to military information operations doctrine over the past few years make understanding terminology and concepts exceedingly difficult. If, through education, commanders can become more comfortable with some of the ambiguity surrounding wicked problems and can better grasp the basic concepts of IIA (regardless of changing terminology), they can begin to resolve the problem of cross-border sanctuaries. It is the thesis of this paper that commanders must better understand and employ Information and Influence Activities in order to neutralize these cross-border sanctuaries during COIN operations.

COIN AS A WICKED PROBLEM

The U.S. Department of Defense describes an insurgency as, "The organized use of subversion and violence by a group or movement that seeks to overthrow or force change of a governing authority. Insurgency can also refer to the group itself."[5] The same publication describes counterinsurgency as, "Comprehensive civilian and military efforts taken to defeat an insurgency and to address any core grievances. Also called COIN."[6] The U.S. Army's Field Manual on COIN further explains that both, "insurgency and counterinsurgency

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[4] Horst W. J. Rittel and Melvin M. Webber, *Dilemmas in a General Theory of Planning,* Policy Sciences, no. 4, (Amsterdam: Elsevier Scientific Publishing Company, 1973) 161-167, accessed 10 May 2013, http://www.uctc.net/mwebber/Rittel+Webber+Dilemmas+ General_Theory_of_Planning.pdf.

[5] U.S. Department of Defense, *Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms,* Joint Publication (JP) 1-02 (Washington, DC: DoD, 8 November 2010), 140, accessed 05 May 2013, http://www.dtic.mil/doctrine/new_pubs/jp1_02.pdf.

[6] Ibid, 65.

(COIN) are complex subsets of warfare."[7] While this is accurate, one may argue that 'complex' does not quite capture precisely how difficult, convoluted and multifaceted counterinsurgency operations tend to be once leaders begin to try to frame the problem set. Perhaps 'wicked' is a better way to describe the problem of COIN planning and execution. First described in a 1973 article by Horst and Melvin, among other characteristics, 'wicked problems' can be considered to be a symptom of another problem, they have no definitive formulation, no defined stopping point, no way to ultimately test a proposed solution, and every wicked problem is essentially unique.[8] These factors make it difficult for some commanders (who have been trained to think in binary, left-and-right limit mindsets) to grasp the nebulous nature of COIN operations

Remaining cognizant that there are unique discriminators setting each wicked problem apart from other – even related – wicked problems, it is in the *existing similarities* that one can find a foundation for teaching principles. This concept of using similarities to bind and begin to understand underlying principles of related wicked problems is captured in the foreword of FM 3-24. In describing the approach to counterinsurgency operations, the manual states, "You cannot fight former Saddamists and Islamic extremists the same way you would have fought the Viet Cong, Moros or Tupamaros….Nonetheless, all insurgencies…use variations of standard themes and adhere to elements of a recognizable revolutionary campaign plan."[9] So, while there may be no cookie-cutter solution to COIN operations in general (and cross-border issues specifically), commanders can exploit the commonalities of insurgencies in order to begin to bring this wicked problem under control.

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[7] FM 3-24, 1-1.
[8] Rittel and Webber, *Dilemmas in a General Theory of Planning*.
[9] FM 3-24, *Counterinsurgency*, Foreword.

The tools to exploit these commonalities are found in the Inform and Influence Activities

toolbox – if the commander can grasp the fluctuating IIA paradigm.


INFORMATION OPERATIONS v. INFORM AND INFLUENCE ACTIVITIES

The many recent changes to publications, terminology, and concepts associated with

information-related military capabilities may lead commanders to hesitate to incorporate IIAs

because of the confusion that comes from constant doctrinal change. In January 2013, the

Army changed FM 3-13 from Information Operations (IO) to Inform and Influence

Activities. Both Joint Publications 1-02 (Dictionary of Military Terms) and 3-13

(Information Operations) still define IO as, "The integrated employment, during military

operations, of information-related capabilities in concert with other lines of operation to

influence, disrupt, corrupt, or usurp the decision-making of adversaries and potential

adversaries while protecting our own."[10, 11] The Army's FM 3-13 (IIA) states that, "*Inform*

*and influence activities* [are] the integration of designated information-related capabilities in

order to synchronize themes, messages, and actions with operations to inform United States

and global audiences, influence foreign audiences, and affect adversary and enemy

decisionmaking."[12]

While there are discernible differences in these definitions, the Army goes on to say,

"The Army's concept of IIA is the *integration of information-related capabilities* that

informs and influences audiences simultaneously. This concept, very similar to the joint's

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[10] JP 1-02, *Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms,* 137-138.
[11] U.S. Department of Defense, *Information Operations,* Joint Publication (JP) 3-13 (Washington, DC: DoD, 27 November 2012), vii, accessed 10 May 2013, http://www.fas.org/irp/doddir/dod/jp3_13.pdf.
[12] U.S. Army, *Unified Land Operations,* Army Doctrine Reference Publication (ADRP) 3-0 (Washington, DC: Headquarters Department of the Army, 16 May 2012), 3-3, quoted in FM 3-13, *Inform and Influence Activities*, 1-1.

information-influence relational framework, *supports the national strategic communication effort and information operations tasks* [emphasis added] to influence, disrupt, corrupt, or usurp the decisionmaking of adversaries and potential adversaries."[13] The most salient point is that both IO and IIA integrate what they refer to as *information-related capabilities* in order to meet their desired end states.

Similar to the definition found in JP 3-13 (IO), the Army's FM 3-13 (IIA) states that, "Information-related capabilities are capabilities, techniques, or activities employing information to affect any of the three dimensions within the information environment to generate an end(s)."[14] The manual then describes the specific information-related capabilities (IRC) that can be employed to generate these ends. It provides that IRCs "…typically include, but are not limited to, public affairs operations, military information support operations (MISO), combat camera, Soldier and leader engagement, civil affairs operations, civil and cultural considerations, operations security (OPSEC), and military deception."[15] It is through the lenses of these IRCs that commanders can better understand and employ Information and Influence Activities to neutralize cross-border sanctuaries. Specifically, commanders can leverage MISO, civil affairs operations, and public affairs operations to influence populations in the border regions and convince these targeted audiences to cease support for insurgents crossing the border area and to provide information about the insurgents – thus facilitating sanctuary neutralization by denying the insurgents freedom of movement across the border.

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[13] Ibid, v.
[14] Ibid, 1-1.
[15] Ibid.

MILITARY INFORMATION SUPPORT OPERATIONS

Formerly known as Psychological Operations (PSYOP), Military Information Support Operations (MISO), "…are planned operations to convey selected information and indicators to foreign audiences to influence their emotions, motives, objective reasoning, and ultimately the behavior of foreign governments, organizations, groups, and individuals. MISO focuses on the cognitive dimension of the information environment where its TA [target audience] includes not just potential and actual adversaries, but also friendly and neutral populations."[16] Special Operations Military Information Support Teams (MIST) are successfully conducting MISO operations against Violent Extremist Organizations (VEO) linked to insurgencies outside of the Afghanistan Joint Operations Area (JOA).[17]

In Sub-Sahel Africa, "Military information support teams…execute effective messaging and influence operations in deployed locations around the world. MISTs…provide the Department of Defense, interagency partners and select host-nation partners the messaging subject-matter expertise and nuanced cultural knowledge necessary to address the increasing spread of VEOs in the Sahel and counter the proliferation of violent-extremist ideology."[18] These teams work in areas of, "…extremely porous national borders, which allow for the often-unregulated movement of persons, weapons and illicit goods."[19] In order to garner the support of the local populations in these areas to fight these issues, "…MISTs have pursued an approach where messaging campaigns are conducted in partnership with local or national-level border enforcement authorities in order to link

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[16] JP 3-13, *Information Operations,* II-9 – II-10.
[17] Boehnert, John and Nasi, Jamie, "*Military Information Support Operations in the Trans-Sahel*" (Special Warfare, January-March 2013, Vol. 26, Issue 1), 10, accessed 11 May 2013, http://www.dvidshub.net/publication/issues/11420.
[18] http://www.africom.mil/oef-ts.asp, quoted in Boehnert, and Nasi, "*Military Information Support Operations in the Trans-Sahel*."
[19] Boehnert and Nasi, "*Military Information Support Operations in the Trans-Sahel*," 11.

negative societal conditions such as communal violence and weapons proliferation with the criminal actors who traffic the majority of the small arms, munitions and explosives into the affected communities."[20]

In this example, a small group of soldiers properly trained in the employment of IIA, specifically MISO, were able to successfully link cause and effect in the eyes of the local population (communal violence to criminal actors) and begin the process of denying these criminal actors associated with VEOs the tacit support of the community that they need in order to continue operations. Furthermore, the MIST leadership provided the operational-level continuity that ensured the tactical-level messaging nested with strategic objectives. According to Boehnert and Nasi, "All MIST activities are nested in the various theater, operational and tactical plans as well as the U.S. Embassy's mission support resource plan."[21]

While the MISTs in Sub-Sahel Africa enjoyed some success in their operations, the Military Information Support Element supporting contingency operations in Libya provides some insight into the challenges associated with incorporating MISO operations into campaign plans; specifically the importance of integration during the planning process. A MISO Detachment Commander points out in a recent article in *Special Warfare* that, "Had the regional MISO battalion had a more codified relationship with the COCOM [Combatant Commander], participated in their CONPLAN reviews and had the freedom to project liaisons in anticipation of orders, the initial series [of MISO messages] would have been synchronized within the overall campaign and served to amplify the lethal effects being

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[20] Ibid.
[21] Ibid, 10.

delivered on the ground."[22]  While the author goes on to highlight some discrete successes during the Libyan operations, he highlights in his conclusion that, "The inability to articulate quantifiable MISO success stems in large part from the way in which the CJTF constructed its PSYOP program, as individual products rather than narrowly tailored series."[23]

As highlighted in these recent operations in Africa, MISO can be a useful tool that allows planners and commanders an opportunity to influence targeted audiences – whether these audiences are within the area of conflict or around its borders.  The porous borders between Afghanistan and Pakistan (AF/PAK) are similar to the borders described in the Sub-Sahel article; porous, poorly regulated and poorly defined.  The insurgents that transit the AF/PAK border travelling to and from their Pakistani sanctuaries rely upon the tacit – if not explicit – support of population centers in the border areas.  Taking the best practices from current operations in Sub-Sahel Africa, MIST operators may be able to influence target audiences in the AF/PAK border region in order to convince them to stop their support for the insurgents.  This would be a solid initial step to begin to neutralize the cross-border sanctuaries in the targeted regions by leveraging the IRC of MISO.  It would also be prudent to incorporate the lessons learned from the Libyan IIA activities as well – namely the importance of early integration of MISO professionals in the campaign design and planning process.  In doing so, commanders can ensure unity of effort between the non-kinetic effects of MISO and kinetic operations.

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[22] Geoffrey Childs, "*Military Information Support to Contingency Operations in Libya*", (Special Warfare, January-March 2013, Vol. 26, Issue 1), 15, accessed 03 May 2013, http://www.dvidshub.net/publication/issues/11420
[23] Ibid, 17.

CIVIL AFFAIRS OPERATIONS

According to FM 3-13, "Civil affairs forces support commanders by engaging the civil component of an operational environment to conduct civil-military operations or accomplish other stated U.S. objectives."[24] The Joint Publication for civil-military operations (CMO) states, "At the strategic, operational and tactical levels and across the full range of military operations, civil-military operations (CMO) are a primary military instrument to synchronize military and nonmilitary instruments of national power, particularly in support of stability, counterinsurgency and other operations dealing with 'asymmetric' and 'irregular' threats."[25] It is in the links between the operational commander and her staff planning for CMO, the tactical commander executing the civil affairs plan, and the civilian leaders in the targeted audience where focused IIA operations can begin to exploit populations with the power to neutralize cross-border sanctuaries. It is the local populations in the vicinity of the sanctuaries that must ultimately unseat the insurgents.

Renowned counterinsurgency expert David Kilcullen notes that, "Counterinsurgency is armed social work; an attempt to redress basic social and political problems while being shot at. This makes civil affairs a central counterinsurgency activity, not an afterthought. It is how you restructure the environment to displace the enemy from it."[26] Civil Affairs Teams (CAT) operating in Afghanistan are demonstrating that populations can be influenced through targeted Civil Affairs, or CMO, endeavors. These Special Operations CATs are, "…equipped with tools to quickly engage, document and analyze the local populace. Included in that specialized skill set are training in advanced negotiations and civil-

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[24] FM 3-13, *Inform and Influence Activities*, 3-3.
[25] U.S. Department of Defense, *Civil Military Operations,* Joint Publication (JP) 3-57 (Washington, DC: DoD, 8 July 2008), vii, accessed 11 May 2013, http://www.dtic.mil/doctrine/new_pubs/jp3_57.pdf.
[26] David Kilcullen, "Twenty-Eight Articles: Fundamentals of Company-Level Counterinsurgency," 33-34, accessed 11 May 2013. http://www.au.af.mil/info-ops/iosphere/iosphere_summer06_kilcullen.pdf

information management, and certification on the Asymmetric Software Kit. These tools allowed the CATs to assess local citizens, identify their amount of influence, and establish relationship links between these individuals and people of interest."[27] By using the tools and training inherent in the CATs (e.g. the ability to assess and establish relationships with leaders) and incorporating Kilcullen's notion of restructuring the environment (influencing those with the power to make change), military commanders can leverage the information-related capability of CA to redirect allegiances in key border areas away from insurgents and back to the local leaders. In doing so, U.S.-led forces can continue to deprive the insurgents of the popular support that they need to retain their cross-border sanctuaries.

PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Along with MISO and CA operations, military commanders can also employ the IIA of Public Affairs (PA) to influence the populations that can deny insurgents the freedom of movement needed to move to and from cross-border sanctuaries. There is no doubt that the enemy understands the importance of PA messaging. The introduction of JP 3-61, *Public Affairs*, begins with a quote from Ayman al-Zawahiri to Abu Musa al-Zarqawi which reads, "…I say to you: That we are in battle, and more than half of this battle is taking place in the battlefield of the media. And that we are in a media battle in a race for the hearts and minds of our Umma [sic]…"[28] As al-Zawahiri correctly points out, it is the support of the Ummah (the people) that transcends all aspects of COIN operations. "Through the responsive release of accurate information and imagery to domestic and international audiences, public affairs

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[27] Neiman Young, "*4th and Long: The Role of Civil Affairs in VSO*", (Special Warfare, July-August 2011, Vol. 24, Issue 3), 18, accessed 11 May 2013, http://www.dvidshub.net/publication/issues/8888

[28] U.S. Department of Defense, *Public Affairs,* Joint Publication (JP) 3-61 (Washington, DC: DoD, 25 August 2010), I-1, accessed 11 May 2013, http://www.dtic.mil/doctrine/new_pubs/jp3_61.pdf.

(PA) puts operational actions in context, facilitates the development of informed perceptions about military operations, helps undermine adversarial propaganda efforts, and contributes to the achievement of national, strategic, and operational objectives."[29] Undermining insurgent propaganda and releasing accurate information about U.S. operations are fundamental ways to facilitate winning over the people.

Releasing accurate information about insurgent activities and violence against civilian populations is a proven way to sway supporters away from insurgents. In a RAND study examining the U.S. IO campaign in Afghanistan, Arturo Munoz points out that, "highlighting specific acts of Taliban terrorism, such as destruction of schools and the killing of schoolteachers, do discredit the insurgency."[30] While in this particular instance the author was referring to MISO products as the dissemination medium, PA has the capacity to do the same.

Releasing accurate information also serves to undermine the propaganda that insurgents use to control local populations. For instance, admitting fault for mistakes when innocents are injured or killed can build trust amongst local populations. Public affairs soldiers can facilitate this by quickly releasing information to the public that explains the circumstances surrounding the incident, the military's remorse, and outlining steps that will be taken to avoid the same mistake(s) in the future. In a review of the evolution of U.S. COIN doctrine, Robert Cassidy points out, "There are three chapters in *FM 3-24* that emphasize the importance of local forces in the context of countering insurgents. The very first chapter observes that 'nothing is more demoralizing to insurgents than realizing that

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[29] Ibid, vii.

[30] Arturo Munoz, *U.S. Military Information Operations in Afghanistan: Effectiveness of Psychological Operations 2001-2010* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2012), xvi, accessed 11 May 2013, http://www.rand.org/pubs/monographs/MG1060.html.

people inside their movement or supporters are deserting or providing information to government forces."[31]  The objective in this case is to foster the trust that eventually leads to the population sharing information about the insurgents with military forces.  Once that trust is formed, U.S.-led forces can work hand-in-hand with the target audience to marginalize the insurgents and deny them local passage – effectively neutralizing the cross-border sanctuary.

MEASURES OF EFFECTIVENESS

Assessing the components of Inform and Influence Activities can be challenging.  JP 3-13 points out that, "Despite the continuing evolution of Joint and Service doctrine and the refinement of supporting tactics, techniques, and procedures, assessing the effectiveness of IRCs continues to be challenging.  MOEs [measures of effectiveness] attempt to accomplish this assessment by quantifying the intangible attributes within the information environment, in order to assess the effectiveness of IRCs against an adversary or potential adversary."[32] Despite the difficulty in doing so, it is imperative that practitioners of IIA strive to quantify their successes in order to demonstrate to commanders that IIA are worthwhile endeavors in the COIN fight.  In a results-oriented military culture, IIA leaders will need to leverage every available MOE to quantify the intangible aspects of their results and vie for continued support – as opposed to their peers who can point to bridges built or roads cleared as measures of their effectiveness.  Given that MOEs attempt to "assess changes in system behavior, capability, or operational environment that are tied to measuring the attainment of

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[31] Robert M. Cassidy, "Indigenous Forces and Sanctuary Denial:  Enduring Counterinsurgency Imperatives" (Small Wars Journal, 2008), accessed 11 May 2013, http://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/indigenous-forces-and-sanctuary-denial.
[32] JP 3-13, *Information Operations*, IV-8.

an end state…"[33], and given that COIN represents a 'wicked' problem set that may not have a clearly defined end state – it can be particularly difficult to measure effectiveness.

While the exact processes of defining, designing, implementing and measuring MOEs are beyond the scope of this paper, a short list of *means* for measuring MOEs will illustrate that – while difficult – the task is not impossible. FM 3-13 lists "intelligence assets, local leader engagements, media monitoring, reports from local partners, and patrol and spot reports"[34] among the means available to assess IIA activities. All of these methods are readily available to IIA leaders; they simply need to be assessed through the prism of MOE to ascertain relevant data.

In his article about MISO operations in Libya, Childs provides an example of how media monitoring can provide feedback regarding U.S.-led messaging activities. He notes that "…the CJTF developed and disseminated a radio message highlighting the reported use of rape as a means of attacking rebels and suspected rebel families. The [Libyan] regime became aware of these messages and circulated a press release categorically denying NATO's accusations that they were in any way condoning or encouraging violence against women."[35] In this instance, the effectiveness of the CJTF radio message was undeniable. Obviously not all MOEs will be so easy to deduce; however, this simple example proves that there are relevant, readily available methods at IIA leaders' disposal to validate and codify their work. These MOEs provide commanders the objective, tangible evidence they need to feel confident about the validity of IIA, an often-intangible form of combat power. The only way to convince commanders to employ IIAs to neutralize cross-border sanctuaries is to prove their validity by providing relevant MOEs.

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[33] Ibid, IV-9.
[34] FM 3-13, *Inform and Influence Activities*, 7-1.
[35] Geoffrey Childs, 15.

A WORD ABOUT STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION

While Strategic Communication (SC) does not fall under IIAs in Army Doctrine, FM 3-13 does recognize the relationship between SC and IIA. "The Department of Defense supports national-level strategic communication by ensuring its military objectives synchronize with and complement other United States Government information and communication efforts…At the operational and tactical levels, the Army uses IIA, in coordination with cyber electromagnetic activities, to support strategic communication and information operations-focused objectives and to execute joint directed tasks."[36]

While it is promising that the Army recognizes that SC and IIAs are related, the separation of the two into different contexts seems artificial. Munoz points out (in some outdated terms because of the recent doctrinal changes) in his review of IO in Afghanistan from 2001-2010 that these divisions are not warranted. Specifically he states that, "Although the existing division of labor between IO, PSYOP, and strategic communication makes sense on a theoretical level, in practice, in the Afghan theater during the period in question, it did not seem to be the most-efficient way to marshal limited resources against the enemy's relentless propaganda offensive."[37] In other words, it is imperative that the IIA practitioner, in his efforts to neutralize cross-border sanctuaries using IRCs, ensures that IIA themes are nested with larger strategic communication themes. Any attempt to separate IIA and SC messaging is artificial at the least – and counterproductive to the overall IO effort at worst.

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[36] FM 3-13, Inform and Influence Activities, 2-4.
[37] Arturo Munoz, xv.

CONCLUSION

Commanders can neutralize cross-border sanctuaries by employing Information and Influence Activities – specifically, the individual Information-Related Capabilities of Military Information Support Operations, Civil Affairs, and Public Affairs.  In order to do this, the military must better educate leaders on the nature of COIN as a 'wicked' problem, and must distill the various IO and IIA doctrines into understandable themes.  Civil Affairs, MISO and Public Affairs – when nested and synchronized with Strategic Communications, other IRCs, Joint Information Operations, and in concert with other military activities – can effectively neutralize cross-border sanctuaries by influencing the indigenous populations in the border areas of concern.  Without localized popular support in the border regions, insurgents will not be capable of sustaining cross-border sanctuaries.

In an article in *Military Review*, Celeski reiterates the importance of neutralizing cross-border sanctuaries when he states that, "Denying insurgents operating space attacks one of the triad of options in irregular warfare (the other two being time and will) that weaker actors employ to take on the strong.  Porous borders and spaces for sanctuary, which provide operating space, can prolong an insurgency if the counterinsurgent ignores them or handles them insufficiently."[38]  One could argue that, given the myriad changes that the DoD – and the Army in particular – has made to its information-related doctrine over the past decade, we as an organization are actively trying to modernize our efforts and are not ignoring the spaces for sanctuary highlighted by Celeski.

With that said, there is certainly a case to be made that the DoD is handling these sanctuary spaces insufficiently at this time.  The previously mentioned RAND report is

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[38] Joseph D. Celeski, "Attacking Insurgent Space: Sanctuary Denial and Border Interdiction," *Military Review* 86, no. 6 (2006): 51-57, accessed 11 May 2013.  Proquest.

relatively clear that, "The current disconnect between official IO doctrine and how IO are practiced in the field is counterproductive... [and] the recommendation of an IO officer who served in ISAF [International Security and Assistance Force] to combine IO, PSYOP, and PA into a new military occupational specialty (MOS) of communication officer should be considered, so that everyone receives the same basic training and doctrine, enhancing operational unity."[39] While one could argue against the merits of rolling these different areas into a single MOS, the preponderance of evidence suggests that changes need to be made.

Overall, this paper highlights a phenomenon that is often seen in today's operating environment: disparate tactical successes that, while arguably successful in their own right, are not linked to strategic objectives through operational-level controls. The U.S. government recognizes the importance of Strategic Communication and the Special Operations CAT leader can adeptly influence local leaders in his AO using IIA capabilities; however, there is often no common operational-level design or plan guiding these tactical endeavors and linking them to the strategic objectives. It is here, at the operational level, that leaders can invest time to better understand the functions and roles of IIA and ensure their staffs do the same. There is little doubt that IIAs have the localized effects necessary to influence discrete border regions to locally neutralize cross-border sanctuaries. What is needed is operational leadership that can cobble localized tactical success into the wall that can stop insurgents from freely moving across borders into the sanctuaries that they so desperately need to survive.

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[39] Arturo Munoz, 150.

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