AU/ACSC/OWENS/AY09

AIR COMMAND AND STAFF COLLEGE

AIR UNIVERSITY

INFLUENCE OPERATIONS

BUILDING THE RIGHT ORGANIZATION, ONE MESSAGE AT A TIME

by

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A Research Report Submitted to the Faculty

In Partial Fulfillment of the Graduation Requirements

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April 2009

Distribution A: Approved for public release; distribution unlimited.

Report Documentation Page

Form Approved
OMB No. 0704-0188

Public reporting burden for the collection of information is estimated to average 1 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to Washington Headquarters Services, Directorate for Information Operations and Reports, 1215 Jefferson Davis Highway, Suite 1204, Arlington VA 22202-4302. Respondents should be aware that notwithstanding any other provision of law, no person shall be subject to a penalty for failing to comply with a collection of information if it does not display a currently valid OMB control number.

1. REPORT DATE	2. REPORT TYPE	3. DATES COVERED
APR 2009	**N/A**	**-**

4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE	5a. CONTRACT NUMBER
Influence Operations (IO) Building the Right Organization, One Message at a Time	5b. GRANT NUMBER
	5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER
6. AUTHOR(S)	5d. PROJECT NUMBER
	5e. TASK NUMBER
	5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER
7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) **Air Command And Staff College Air University Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama**	8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER
9. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)	10. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S)
	11. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S)

12. DISTRIBUTION/AVAILABILITY STATEMENT
Approved for public release, distribution unlimited

13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES
The original document contains color images.

14. ABSTRACT
The first part of the paper helps detail the argument for "why" an effective influence organization is required. The second part of the paper examines successes and failures of the US information influence, and propaganda machine in previous conflicts and possible lessons learned. The third part of the paper outlines a recommended organization to meet the requirement detailed in part one. The research method used for this paper is the problem/solution method. The paper examines the problem of the United States Governments lack of an effective organization to enable unity of effort in countering propaganda by VEOs. This paper explores a solution to maximize efficiency and improve the United States Governments ability to counter VEO influence. The United States Government needs to create an organization dedicated to influence operations with the necessary authorities, manpower, and budget to perform operations at the appropriate attribution levels to effectively win the information component of the Global War on Terror. Significant unclassified documentation exists regarding the execution of information operations in both current and past operations. Primary sources for this paper included Air University Library textbooks and magazines, as well as material from online resources such as EBSCOhost, ProQuest, and LexisNexis. References included PME based research papers, professional journals, and various geopolitical websites. Additionally, the author conducted interviews with information operations experts via phone and email.

15. SUBJECT TERMS

16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF:			17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT	18. NUMBER OF PAGES	19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON
a. REPORT	b. ABSTRACT	c. THIS PAGE			
unclassified	**unclassified**	**unclassified**	**SAR**	**38**	

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Preface

The Global War on Terror (GWOT) is a multifaceted requiring innovative and at the same time, proven solutions to solve it. This paper addresses only one facet of the GWOT problem/solution set; the use of influence operations. The war on terror began over seven years ago and a great majority of Americans currently view the GWOT as a military problem, met by a few thousand troops serving in Iraq and Afghanistan. Many Americans go about their lives with no concept of the myriad on-going global activities the US Government pursues to win the GWOT. Worse yet, most Americans fail to recognize the risks associated with losing the GWOT.

A few years ago, I had the opportunity to work for an organization dedicated to winning the "information war." Prior to that assignment, I too was unaware of the on-going efforts to influence the attitudes, actions, and behaviors of people susceptible to the attractions of violent extremist organizations. This assignment was an eye-opening experience that ignited an interest in how the US Government successfully employed these types of activities during other conflicts. There are numerous lessons the US Government can learn and apply from the use of influence operations in previous conflicts. My goal is to illustrate in this paper how the US Government can organize and employ an influence operations organization to help win the GWOT.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the people who assisted me in the completion of this paper. My academic advisor, Dr. John Reese provided sage advice on research techniques and methodologies. I want to thank all the psychological operations (PSYOP) professionals of the JMISC who helped "educate" this Air Force Communicator and provided me the opportunity to expand my mind.

Abstract

The first part of the paper helps detail the argument for "why" an effective influence organization is required. The second part of the paper examines successes and failures of the US information influence, and propaganda machine in previous conflicts and possible lessons learned. The third part of the paper outlines a recommended organization to meet the requirement detailed in part one. The research method used for this paper is the problem/solution method.

The paper examines the problem of the United States Government's lack of an effective organization to enable unity of effort in countering propaganda by VEOs. This paper explores a solution to maximize efficiency and improve the United States Government's ability to counter VEO influence. The United States Government needs to create an organization dedicated to influence operations with the necessary authorities, manpower, and budget to perform operations at the appropriate attribution levels to effectively win the information component of the Global War on Terror.

Significant unclassified documentation exists regarding the execution of information operations in both current and past operations. Primary sources for this paper included Air University Library textbooks and magazines, as well as material from online resources such as EBSCOhost, ProQuest, and LexisNexis. References included PME based research papers, professional journals, and various geopolitical websites. Additionally, the author conducted interviews with information operations experts via phone and email.

Chapter 1 - Introduction

". . . a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them. . ."

Thomas Jefferson
The Declaration of Independence
July 4, 1776

The United States is engaged in a long struggle of wills as it enters the eighth year of fighting in the Global War on Terror (GWOT). The United States GWOT strategy involves completion of two types of operations, direct and indirect, to counter the activities of violent extremist organizations (VEOs). The direct lines of operation involve activities most commonly recognized by the American public. These activities include the killing and capturing of terrorists and associated personnel or seizing financial assets of terrorist organizations and their supporters. However, the other lines of operation are less well known, but are equally if not more important to winning the GWOT. The United States utilizes the indirect lines of operation to influence the actions, behaviors, and attitudes of target audiences worldwide. VEOs use all forms of media to spread their messages. The United States must counter VEO propaganda with the appropriate, effective influence campaigns.

Many organizations within the United States Government perform influence operations. Unfortunately, no single organization coordinates influence activities across the full spectrum of operations. The Department of Defense has the greatest preponderance of organizations performing influence operations. Army organizations such as the 1st Information Operations Command and the 4th Psychological Operations Group are very effective at performing operations at the tactical and operational levels, but don't coordinate activities at the strategic level. Organizations such as United States Special Operations Command's (USSOCOM), Joint Military Information Support Command (JMISC) work well at the strategic level and operational level, but operate within a highly constrained environment. The Undersecretary of Defense for

Public Affairs/Public Diplomacy (USD/PA-PD) has significant influence over DOD policy for the utilization/implementation of influence operations, but does not perform IO planning or execution.

The use of propaganda and influence products during conflict is not a new phenomenon. Many United States Government organizations performed the indirect lines of operation during previous American conflicts. Organizations such as the World War II era Office of Strategic Services (OSS) and Office of War Information (OWI) operated across the full spectrum of operations, direct and indirect, as well as attributed and non-attributed activities. The post-World War II United States Information Agency (USIA) fought the communist ideology and helped win the Cold War.

The United States needs to build an organization appropriately resourced with personnel, equipment, budget, and authorities to effectively wage the influence operations element of the GWOT. Inspiration for this organization should come from the experiences of previous United States conflicts. Examining the successful activities and operations of previous conflicts can lay the framework for an effective organization to meet today's GWOT requirements. The actions and activities of organizations such as USIA present many lessons that the United States can duplicate in today's environment to help win America's on-going wars and defeat violent extremist ideology.

Chapter 2 – The GWOT Problem

The September 2006 *United States National Strategy for Combating Terrorism* describes the War on Terror as "a different kind of war."[1] The strategy recognizes that the Global War on Terror is a battle of both arms and ideas. The United States must fight terrorists not only on the physical battlefield, but through the promotion of freedom and human dignity as an alternative to the vision of oppression and totalitarian rule propagated by violent extremist organizations. The new combating terrorism paradigm includes the application of all elements of United States national power and influence. The United States must employ diplomatic, information, military, economic, financial, intelligence, and law enforcement capabilities to extend defenses, disrupt VEO operations, and eliminate support for VEOs.[2]

Today the United States faces a global terrorist movement that justifies the use of violence in the name of religion as a legitimate means of political expression. The terrorists exploit Islam to serve their violent political vision. Radical ideology fuels a false belief that the United States is the cause of most Muslim problems today. VEOs seek to expel Western power and influence from the Muslim world, and establish regimes that rule according to violent and intolerant distortions of Islam. Taliban-ruled Afghanistan illustrates how such regimes would deny political and religious freedoms and serve as sanctuaries for extremists. Using these sanctuaries, terrorists could then launch attacks against the United States, its allies and partners, as well as the Muslim world. Al-Qaida in particular harbors even greater territorial and geopolitical ambitions and seeks to establish a single, pan-Islamic, totalitarian regime that stretches from Spain to Southeast Asia.[3] As this threat evolves, the United States must continue to refine its strategy to defeat it.

The current *United States National Strategy for Combating Terrorism* lists the following necessary elements to defeat radical ideologies:

- Advance effective democracies as the long-term antidote to the ideology of terrorism;
- Prevent attacks by terrorist networks;
- Deny weapons of mass destruction to rogue states and terrorist allies;
- Deny terrorists the support and sanctuary of rogue states;
- Deny terrorists control of any nation they would use as a base for launching terror;
- Lay the foundations and build the institutions and structures necessary to fight terror.[4]

The United States must overcome many challenges to accomplish these elements. Terrorist networks typically operate in a dispersed, de-centralized small cell environment inspired by a common ideology with no central command structure. The United States must remain constantly vigilant in order to prevent terrorist attacks. The United States requires almost perfect accuracy in its assessments and intelligence to prevent terrorists from slipping an attack through the cracks. The terrorists on the other hand, only need to successfully carry out a minimal number of attacks to gain the required visibility and resultant reaction from the American or world public. The United States Government and its partners have prevented numerous attacks since the events of September 11, 2001, but the terrorists have still carried out successful attacks around the world in places from Baghdad to Bali. Terrorists continue to pursue acquisition of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) with the intent of inflicting catastrophic attacks against the United States and its allies, partners, and interests around the globe. State sponsored terrorism remains a significant problem. Countries such as Syria and Iran lead the pack in sponsoring terrorism.[5] Terrorists are using increasingly sophisticated applications of the internet and mass media "to communicate, recruit, train, rally support, proselytize, and spread their propaganda without risking personal contact."[6]

From the beginning, the GWOT has been a battle of both arms and ideas in fighting against terrorists and radical ideologies. "In the short run, the fight involves the application of all instruments of national power and influence to kill or capture the terrorists; deny them safe-haven and control of any nation; prevent them from gaining access to WMD; render potential terrorist targets less attractive by strengthening security; and cut off their sources of funding and other resources they need to operate and survive."[7] However, in the long run, any campaign for winning the GWOT must focus on winning the battle of ideas. "Ideas can transform the embittered and disillusioned either into murderers willing to kill innocents, or into free peoples living harmoniously in a diverse society."[8] The United States' strategic intent focuses on the battle of ideas in pursuit of a two-pronged vision. The United States continues to lead an expansive international effort that includes defeating violent extremism as a threat to free and open societies; and creating an inhospitable global environment for VEOs and their support networks.[9]

The GWOT is not a war in the traditional sense. To win the GWOT, the United States must employ techniques such as those in irregular warfare (IW). The *Irregular Warfare Joint Operating Concept*, dated September 11, 2007 defines IW as a "violent struggle among state and non-state actors for legitimacy and influence over the relevant populations. IW favors indirect and asymmetric approaches, though it may employ the full range of military and other capabilities, in order to erode an adversary's power, influence, and will."[10]

The nature and characteristics of IW encompass a spectrum of warfare significantly different from traditional war. "Rather than seeking to impose societal change from the outside by a decisive defeat of the population's military and security forces, proponents of IW seek a change from within by delegitimizing the institutions and ideologies of the targeted state, and

eventually winning the support of the population (or at least acquiescence) for their cause." [11] Both traditional and irregular forms of warfare may be present in a given conflict.

IW is a form of warfare that encompasses insurgency, counterinsurgency, terrorism, and counterterrorism. "The nature of warfare in the 21st century remains as it has been since ancient times – 'a violent clash of interests between or among organized groups characterized by the use of military force.' These organized groups are no longer limited to states with easily identifiable regular armed forces, nor do they all operate by internationally accepted conventions and standards."[12]

IW is not a product of the 21st century. Organizations throughout history have clashed for political control for thousands of years. However, "changes in the international environment due to rapid global communications, near instantaneous 24-hour world news coverage, increasingly interdependent global commerce, and the proliferation of technologies and weapons of mass destruction/disruption make ensuring United States security more of a challenge. Adversaries, unable to defeat the United States in conventional warfare, continue to resort to and develop new IW capabilities and tactics."[13] The IW protracted approach that adversaries may use requires a long-term strategy for victory. Winning a protracted IW war requires a winning of the struggle of ideas, reducing the influence of competing ideologies, effectively addressing legitimate grievances, controlling the enemy's influence, and eliminating the support of the people for the enemy. IW requires significant persistence and adaptation.[14]

Since the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, the Department of Defense has significantly bolstered its planning capacity for the GWOT. United States Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) is the designated DOD supported command responsible for planning, synchronizing, and, when directed, executing GWOT strategy and operations. USSOCOM created multiple Concept of Operations Plans (CONPLAN) and Operations Plans (OPLAN) that capture

the GWOT strategy.[15] CONPLAN 7500 revolves around two different types of operations. As illustrated in figure 1, there are kinetic operations, referred to as "direct" and non-kinetic operations, referred to as "indirect." The direct lines of operation center around two elements: deny terrorists access and use of WMD and defeat terrorists and their organizations. The direct lines of operation are the most commonly recognized by the public. These typically involve the use of military force to kill or capture terrorists and eliminate terrorist organizations. Less well known are the indirect lines of operation. The indirect lines of operation revolve around four primary elements: deny terrorists resources; enable partner nations; counter state and non-state support for terrorism; and counter ideological support for terrorism.

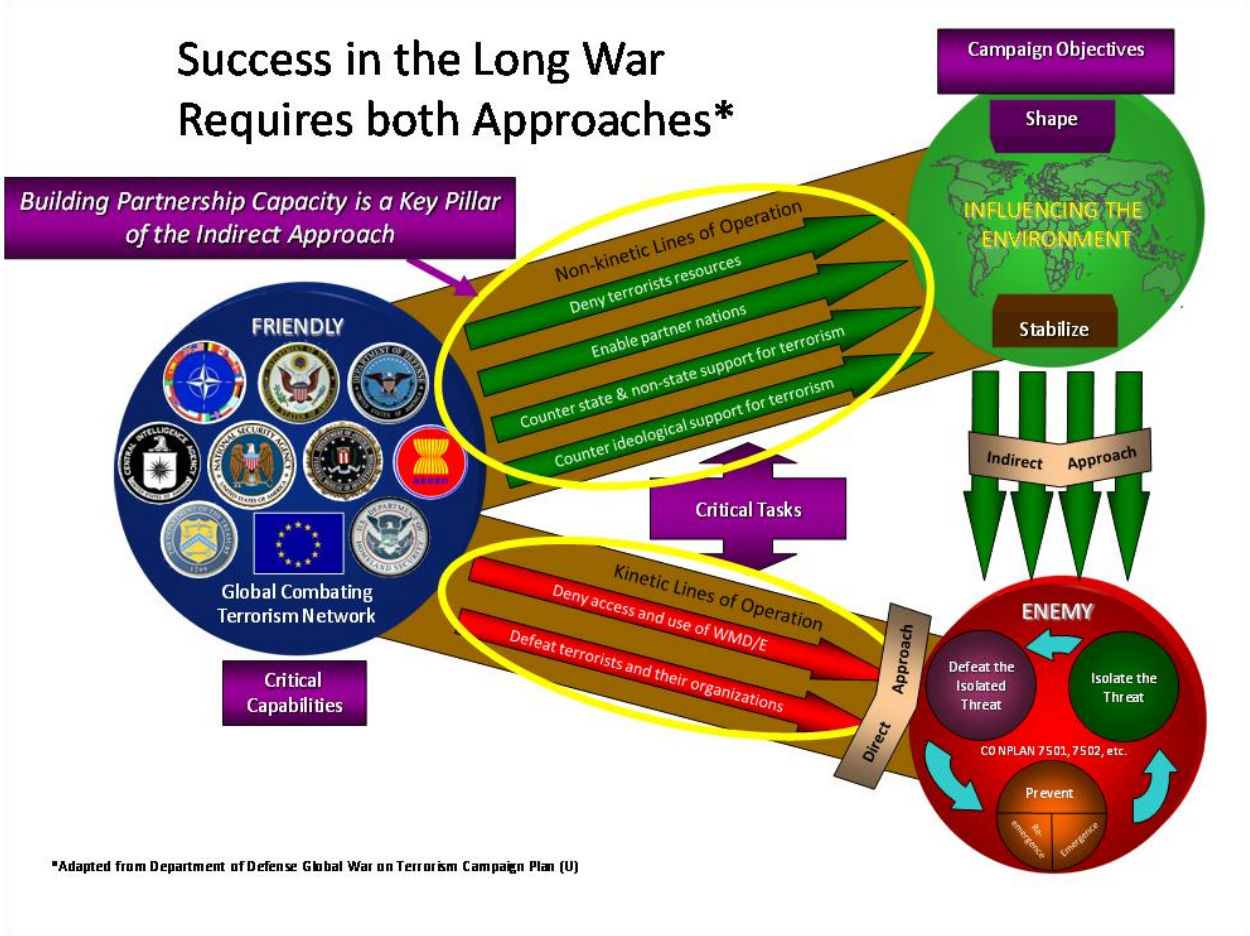

Figure 1 - GWOT Lines of Operation

The basic theory between using direct and indirect lines of operation involves the effect on the terrorist. The idea is to isolate the enemy threat, defeat the isolated threat and then prevent the threat from re-constituting and/or re-emerging. This requires the cooperation of the Global Combating Terrorism Network (GCTN) comprised of United States Government departments, agencies, allies, and partner nations, to influence the environment by shaping and stabilizing it with the indirect lines of operation.

As the United States pursues the indirect approach, it will require the employment of all the instruments of power (IOP) including diplomatic, information, military, economic, financial, intelligence, and law enforcement capabilities. However, the one instrument that will lend the greatest value to the indirect approach is the information instrument. This particular IOP is important because it spans the United States Government and all its departments and agencies.

The information IOP needs to influence, disrupt, corrupt, or usurp adversarial human and automated decision making while protecting our own."[16] The United States Government focuses its information related efforts through Strategic Communications (SC) to understand and engage key audiences in order to generate, reinforce, or preserve conditions favorable for the progress of United States Government interests, policies, and objectives with coordinated programs, plans, themes, messages, and products synchronized with the actions of all instruments of national power.

PSYOP, also known as influence operations, as a supporting element of SC is the most crucial tool in the tool chest to support a victory in the long war. "Psychological operations are planned operations to convey selected information and indicators to foreign audiences to influence the emotions, motives, objective reasoning, and ultimately the behavior of foreign governments, organizations, groups, and individuals."[17] PSYOP support the broad range of

activities of the United States IOPs. PSYOP, delivered as information, support operations during peacetime and conflict to inform and influence target audiences.[18]

The United States Government must develop and employ a "grand strategy" influence campaign to win the GWOT. This grand strategy needs a three pronged approach. The first prong addresses an international engagement strategy. The objective of this strategy is to develop a "global narrative" to create a secular space for the international community to constructively engage Islam on the "lowest-common denominator" of human values. The global narrative will focus on the fact that terrorism is an unacceptable form of political or religious expression and that the debate/discussion is more important than ultimate consensus. The following items are important elements of the global narrative:

- Provides a secular venue for global participation—beyond Nation-States
- Euro-led; East-European Sponsored
- US/UK participate in background
- Employs a dissolution approach
- Living/breathing dialogue and product
- Builds from the premise of "Live and Let Live"
- Becomes a self-sustaining, free-flowing viral campaign that indirectly undermines VEO ideology and credibility
- Overcomes moral high-ground issues in "post Abu Ghraib/Guantanamo" environment

The second prong of this approach needs to focus on a GWOT SC strategy designed to dramatically reduce VEO's ability to employ terrorism to disrupt peaceful co-existence and the prosperity of peoples in the community of nations. This prong focuses on undermining credibility of VEO ideology, countering VEO recruitment, and degrading popular support for VEOs. The following items are important elements of this prong:

- United States Government-driven, regionally focused "Coalition of the Willing"

- Sovereign Partner Nations (SPN) in a peacetime environment
- Contribute and provide access on their own terms
- Primarily utilizes indirect methods
- Law Enforcement-centric vs. Kinetic
- Employs a structured dissolution message targeting specific audiences
- Major component is targeting Arab and Muslim Youth by actively creating an alternative space that indirectly undermines the VEO ideology, support base, and recruitment

The third prong of the grand strategy involves more specific actions focused on Iraq and Afghanistan. The primary purpose of this prong is to provide a stable environment for Iraq and Afghanistan to establish and maintain self-governance. The following items are important elements of this prong:

- US/UK-driven, country focused "Coalition of the Participating"
- Emerging Host Nations in a semi-hostile environment
- Primarily utilizes direct methods
- Military-centric vs. Non-Kinetic
- Employs a limited dissolution message targeting full-range of audiences
- Pursuing a stable environment to enable the Host Nation to govern

The implementation of a grand strategy enables the USG to focus all of its resources to effectively engage and defeat national threats. The USG employed grand strategies to defeat the Axis powers during World War II and the communist ideology during the Cold War. The historical lessons learned provide insight for developing an organization and strategy for fighting today's Global War on Terror.

Chapter 3 – Historical Success

"He who molds public sentiment goes deeper than he who enacts statutes or pronounces decisions. He makes statutes and decisions possible or impossible to be executed."

Abraham Lincoln
Ottawa, Illinois
July 31, 1858

The GWOT presents new and challenging scenarios for the development of a strategy to defeat VEOs using the indirect approach. Doctrinally, the United States military has not performed or planned for a great deal of information operations to defeat an ideological threat within recent decades. However, this does not mean that the United States is unfamiliar with the methods necessary to win the long war. The United States has learned many hard lessons through fighting wars across the globe. The United States put in place numerous organizations starting in World War II and continuing through the end of the Cold War that effectively performed influence activities against United States adversaries. The Office of Strategic Services and Office of War Information and their many branches set the standard for the use of influence products during major combat operations in World War II. While the United States Information Agency expanded on the legacy of the OSS and OWI and helped defeat the Communist ideology during the Cold War.

The OSS began as the Office of Coordinator of Information (COI) in July 1941. The COI's publicly announced mission as an agency was to collect and analyze information and data. However, as the organization evolved it became the United States' first venture into organized espionage, subversion, propaganda, and related activities under the guise of a centralized intelligence agency.[19] These various functions in themselves were not new to warfare. The importance of this new organization lay in the manner that it pursued these functions and their overall combined effect.

The man charged with establishing and running the COI was William J. Donovan. Prior to World War II, Donovan had been a successful college athlete, public official, lawyer, and had a distinguished military career during World War I. Donovan recognized the important relationship of information to strategic planning in warfare. He understood the essential requirement for pertinent and properly analyzed intelligence. Additionally, "Donovan concluded 'there is another element to modern warfare, and that is the psychological attack against the moral and spiritual defenses of a nation.' In this type of warfare, 'perfection can be realized only by planning, and planning is dependent upon accurate information.'"[20]

From its inception, the COI was a different type of organization. The presidential order that established the COI was designated as neither an executive order or as a military order. Both President Roosevelt and Donovan agreed that it was "advisable to have no directive in writing" for specific functions.[21] The order and the White House announcement carefully avoided words like "military", "strategic", "intelligence", "warfare", "enemy", "attack", and "psychological". "Donovan asked for three guarantees: that he should report directly to the President; that the President's secret funds would be made available for some of the work of the COI; and that all departments of the government are instructed to give him such materials as he might need. To all of these conditions the President agreed."[22]

The first operational branch of the COI was the Foreign Information Service (FIS). The FIS was responsible for development and dissemination of propaganda in the Eastern Hemisphere. FIS's primary purpose was "directing propaganda toward potential allies and enemies across the Atlantic and Pacific."[23] The term "propaganda" became a controversial word. Various departments of government levied different interpretations based on their particular objectives. For the COI it was "the use of ideological appeals and news manipulation

to advance national policy."[24] On the surface, the COI established the FIS to inform peoples outside the Western Hemisphere about the United States—to relay the message about the justice and desirability of democracy's aims, the extensive power associated with American production, and to spread United States foreign policy through the support of all the weapons of publicity.[25]

Donovan thought about propaganda in terms of its application to military and intelligence tasks. While Donovan thought it was generally good to spread the message of democracy to foreign peoples, he was less concerned with preaching the "American way of life" than with conducting the business of disrupting the enemy as related to military operations. He referred to propaganda as "a reconnaissance in force" and "the arrow of initial penetration…in preparing…the territory in which invasion is contemplated."[26] Donovan believed that COI should be the agency to integrate and whenever possible, conduct psychological warfare in all its phases under the immediate direction of the Chiefs of Staff. The FIS propaganda would serve as one tool in the toolkit. It could also serve as cover for more secret phases of the war.[27]

The COI proved its metal in North Africa. As America prepared to engage in North Africa, the COI was on the ground helping to "sow the dragon's teeth."[28] However, there were organizational issues back in Washington. In March 1942, there was a general reorganization of information agencies. During this reorganization, the COI became a supporting agency to the Chiefs of Staff. North Africa operations helped prove the utility of COI's secret intelligence, morale and physical subversion, propaganda, and guerrilla action in prepping the battle-space for large-scale operations. Donovan's first large-scale test of his concept for softening up a target area proved influential in the Chiefs of Staff decision in the summer of 1942 when the COI was transformed into the Office of Strategic Services.[29]

The organizational changes that occurred in the summer of 1942 would set the stage for the successful operations throughout the remainder of the war. The information agency reorganization resulted in a division of COI functions and responsibilities. The COI operated under a broad charter that included the entire spectrum of propaganda.[30] An ideological dispute within the government questioned the validity of the COI charter and the conduct of psychological warfare. The head of FIS, Robert Sherwood, contended that "propaganda broadcasts should stick scrupulously to the facts, and let the truth eventually prevail."[31] Sherwood believed that America's image and prestige would suffer if the United States employed the methods and tactics of the Axis. Additionally, he advocated for civilian control of FIS functions.[32] President Roosevelt, influenced by Sherwood, determined that two separate organizations would administer America's propaganda operations. The same executive order that created the OSS also established a new organization responsible for "white" propaganda, the Office of War Information.[33] White propaganda was propaganda that recognized its source and conformed to government policy. "Black" propaganda which was "subversive in every possible device, disguised its source, and was disowned by the government using it" would be the purview of the OSS.[34]

The OWI operated both a Domestic News Bureau and a Foreign News Bureau, commonly called the Overseas Branch. The Overseas Branch planned, developed, and executed all phases of foreign dissemination of propaganda to include radio, press, and publications. The Overseas Branch divided its operations between Atlantic Operations in New York City and Pacific Operations in San Francisco. OWI targeted four types of targets overseas including: in enemy countries, it directed missions to destroy morale and war efforts; in enemy-occupied countries, it pursued missions to fuel resistance and keep liberation hopes alive; in neutral

countries, its missions focused on winning popular support and fortify the belief in Allied victory; and in Allied countries, its primary mission was countering enemy propaganda to improve morale and foster the desired opinion of the United States.[35] The OWI operated as a civilian organization under the direction of the President. However, military theater commanders maintained the authority to approve or disapprove OWI products. Most military commanders generally accepted the OWI branches and their white propaganda as opposed to the OSS and its black operations.

The OSS black propaganda efforts fell to its Morale Operations (MO) Branch. Similar to OWI, the OSS MO Branch's charter included activities to "incite and spread dissention, confusion and disorder within enemy countries, and to promote subversive activities against enemy governments. In enemy-occupied or controlled countries, it was to encourage and support resistance to the enemy."[36] The methods necessary to accomplish these aims included secret propaganda by radio and rumor, and distribution of pamphlets, leaflets, and pictures.[37]

The OWI and OSS developed a close working relationship which helped distinguish the differences in their respective operations. The source from which the propaganda originated or ostensibly emanated as opposed to whether the propaganda was "black or white" distinguished the two organizations. OWI took responsibility for official propaganda that emanated from American sources outside the enemy controlled territory. OSS took charge of propaganda that originated or alleged to originate from within the enemy territory.[38]

By the end of the war, the Overseas and MO Branches had demonstrated their value in operations against Germany and Japan. One of the more successful MO operations was Soldatensender-Calais, a radio station allegedly broadcasting from the French coast at Calais, but was actually working out of Milton Bryant, England. The station eroded the morale of the

German civilians and military by broadcasting news, unreported by German news agencies detailing German military failures. The MO Branch employed dozens of writers and musicians to build the "black" radio programs that provided a mixture of truth and fiction.[39]

One of the more successful Overseas Branch operations was the introduction of counterfeit 10 Yen Japanese banknotes. On one side of the note was an exquisitely reproduced lithography that closely resembled the genuine bill. On the other side of the note was one of four different propaganda messages designed to create resentment against the Japanese government and instigate a fear of inflation. During the summer of 1945, the United States dropped hundreds of thousands of the false notes on Japan. Postwar interrogations of Japanese officials conducted by Colonel Bonner F. Fellers revealed that the banknote propaganda leaflets were the most effective of all the leaflets dropped on Japan.[40]

At the end of World War II, the OWI and OSS experienced dramatic changes at the hands of politically motivated actors. Republicans in Congress who concluded that the OWI domestic propaganda praising Roosevelt's leadership in the war significantly contributed to his re-election in 1944 led the campaign to dismantle the OWI. Additionally, many southern Democrats, offended by Roosevelt era progressive propaganda promoting racial integration voted to break up the agency.[41] Donovan's OSS met a similar fate. While Roosevelt liked Donovan, Truman and many in Congress did not like him or trust his agency. In late 1945, Truman dissolved the OSS and transferred most of its functions to the State Department. By early 1946, postwar psychological operations asserted itself as Truman established the Central Intelligence Group (CIG). Within two years the CIG transformed into the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) dedicated to covert and psychological warfare including "black" propaganda.[42]

As the CIA took ownership of the black propaganda from its predecessor the OSS, white propaganda took a little longer to find a home. The first organizational iteration occurred as the Office of International Information and Cultural Affairs (OIC) under the guise of the State Department.[43] America's postwar disinterest in foreign affairs hampered the agency's efforts to demonstrate relevance. Foreign information efforts commanded a low priority until start of the Cold War at which time Congress woke up to the potential implications of such an information agency.[44] The agency saw a few improvements in personnel and budget as the United States entered the conflict in Korea. As with any good bureaucracy, the agency changed its name again and in 1952 it became the International Information Administration (IIA).[45] However, the IIA remained ineffectual under the State Department for the next year due to political difficulties of the McCarthy witch-hunts which resulted in unsubstantiated claims of Communist sympathizing and homosexual security risks within the organization.[46]

A new era in information operations began in August 1953 when President Eisenhower removed IIA from the State Department and established the United States Information Agency.[47] Due to its origins, USIA organized in a pattern similar to the State Department with day-to-day emphasis on geographic bureaus. USIA operated with four main divisions that included: Staff Offices for administrative functions; Media Services that handled broadcasting, information center service, motion picture and television service, and press and publication service; Geographic Offices that managed planning and policies for the regional areas; and Overseas Operations that included the US Information Service (USIS) posts around the world.[48] The original agency organization minimized the number of units in the supervisory and administrative structure as well as decentralized operations to the greatest extent possible.[49]

For the next three decades USIA would play a "strong role in the export of American information and cultural products, particularly in third world countries" in an effort to help win the Cold War.[50] USIA experienced its greatest period of success during the Reagan years. By 1989, the agency's yearly budget was $882 million, nearly double the budget in 1981.[51] Charles Wick, director from 1981 to 1989, succeeded in melding Reagan's ideological warfare plans and policies into USIA operations. USIA's media output echoed the Reagan Administration's primary themes of the "evil empire" and "trust but verify" as it applied to the Soviet Union.[52]

In 1983 an important shift occurred in USIA's role within the government's structure for ideological warfare. USIA became part of a newly created organization called the Special Planning Group (SPG) which also included the State and Defense Departments. USIA moved from being a mouthpiece to a policy participant.[53] One of the first SPG projects was Project Democracy, designed to involve US civic groups, labor unions, and other private groups in supporting democratic organizations overseas. The SPG eventually reorganized into the National Endowment for Democracy, an organization still engaged today with democratic projects abroad.[54]

Following the collapse of the Soviet Union, USIA began to experience political difficulties in the United States. With no "enemy" to fight abroad, Congress looked at USIA as having served its purpose and started efforts to minimize the organization. By the mid 1990s, USIA's $1.3 billion budget was ripe for the "picking." President Clinton used USIA as a bargaining chip with Congress to gain favor on desired legislation. Budget cuts and Congressional pressure throughout the 1990s put USIA and its activities on the back burner. Many in Congress felt that the communications revolution of the internet and mass media made

the USIA services obsolete. In 1999, President Clinton disbanded USIA and reallocated its remaining assets to the State Department, except for Voice of America.

When President Clinton disbanded USIA, he eliminated an extraordinary tool in the US influence operations arsenal. USIA refined its operations through decades of experimentation and growth to become a premier "representative" for distributing US information abroad. USIA, the OSS, and the OWI offer unique organizational lessons from which to build a new influence organization that can meet today's requirements and fill a critical void in the United States' ability to represent itself and influence actions, attitudes, and behaviors of target audiences around the world .

Chapter 4 – Building an Influence Operations Organization

The US Government's current information exportation environment is inadequately organized to meet today's influence operations requirements of the GWOT. The Undersecretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs leads the US engagement for public diplomacy outreach which includes communications with international audiences, cultural programming, academic grants, educational exchanges, international visitor programs, and efforts to stem ideological support for terrorism.[55] The Clinton Administration levied this responsibility on the State Department in 1999 when it folded in the United States Information Agency. Unfortunately, when the State Department subsumed USIA it dismantled and reallocated its personnel and assets within other elements of the department. Additionally, the State Department established the Under Secretariat as an advisory position with limited authority, no significant budget, and no clear mission.

Many people in the government believe that public diplomacy revolves around repeating a slogan slowly, loudly, and often until the target audience embraces it. The message is only part of public diplomacy. Public diplomacy is about advancing US interests and security by informing, influencing, and creating understanding in foreign publics and expanding dialogue between American citizens and institutions and their overseas counterparts.[56] The United States needs to disseminate information on US values and policies directly to foreign publics through various media, independently of repressive governments or organizations. This requires a pro-active strategy that enables the building of long-term relationships with targeted audiences across numerous media channels and the ability to coordinate the actions of multiple government agencies.[57]

Other government agencies that have public diplomacy roles include the Department of Defense, the National Endowment for Democracy (NED), the US Agency for International Development (USAID), and the Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG). The Department of Defense performs information operations, NED distributes data on democratic governance, USAID provides foreign media training programs, and the BBG took over USIA's Voice of America network and surrogate outlets and broadcasts balanced news and cultural programs.[58] Similar to the manner in which America's intelligence agencies operated before the attacks on September 11, 2001, these organizations work in different universes with limited synergy between them.

History illustrates how the management of information operations at the strategic level has not flourished under the State Department. The first step to improving the United States Government's use of information to influence global audiences is placing the responsibility for managing such operations in an organization designed and dedicated to accomplish that task. President Eisenhower recognized the need for an independent organization in 1953 by removing the responsibility from the State Department and standing up USIA. Today's President needs to establish under presidential directive, an organization dedicated to developing, coordinating, synchronizing, and executing global information activities to promote United States interests abroad. This new organization, the United States International Information Agency (USIIA) will be the USIA of the Twenty-First Century.

USIA serves as the foundation on which to build the new USIIA. Many USIA organizational characteristics are still relevant in today's construct such as geographic alignment, maintaining a presence in countries with USIS-like bureaus, utilizing a decentralized execution framework, and employing personnel with media backgrounds. While building on the past is

important, a number of areas will differentiate USIIA from its predecessor including an emphasis on exploiting cutting edge technology to disseminate messages, integrating representatives from other US Government departments and agencies, and hiring personnel with PSYOP, cultural, and political science backgrounds.

USIIA requires an organization aligned both functionally and geographically. Focusing on geographic regions will place USIIA on a common operating environment with most Geographic Combatant Commands as well as numerous other US Government departments and agencies such as the State Department. Additionally, building operations around geographic regions will enable USIIA to build the appropriate cultural expertise required to effectively execute information campaigns within a specified location. USIIA functional alignment will enable the development of critical specialty areas such as the use of technology across dissemination and distribution channels.

Along with a geographic focus, USIIA must build an on-the-ground presence around the world. When the United States shifted its program focus to third-world concerns in 1959, USIA had twenty-four posts in thirteen African countries. By 1963, USIA expanded their operations to fifty-five posts in thirty-three African nations.[59] This is the kind of growth required to re-establish US information posts in the "global area of operations." Most of USIA's capability which consisted of 190 posts in 142 countries went away when it was disbanded in 1999.[60]

USIIA must have an organizational structure that allows for centralized planning and decentralized execution of operations. One way to represent this structure is through a "hub and spoke" framework. Planning and development of strategic themes and campaigns that re-enforce the overarching principles of US policies and goals originates at the "hub" of USIIA. These themes are distributed through the "spokes" to the lower planning elements to incorporate those

themes and develop culturally appropriate material for dissemination in target areas. At the same time, "local" USIIA units must have the freedom to react to activities that occur within their area of responsibility and develop and disseminate necessary messages. However, in today's rapid communications environment, local "spoke" activities still need to be coordinated with the "hub" to mitigate the possibility of negative impacts to other regions.

USIIA requires staffing different from that of a typical government agency. The primary focus of USIIA is utilization of media based information and requires leadership with the appropriate media related backgrounds. President Kennedy recognized the importance of placing someone with media experience in the top USIA post. In 1961, Kennedy appointed Edward Murrow as Director, USIA. Murrow was a veteran CBS news correspondent at the height of his professional career and understood the business of media and the art of story telling.[61]

Staffing for USIIA should consist of a combination of personnel disciplines. A collection of media personnel with backgrounds in print, radio, television, and internet media are required. Additionally, personnel trained in psychological operations will be necessary to capitalize on the important aspects of irregular warfare as they apply to global operations. Finally, it will be important to bring in a number of personnel with political science backgrounds to help facilitate coordination and operations with other departments and agencies. In addition, USIIA needs to create billets for representatives from other departments and agencies to work hand in hand with USIIA personnel. Having personnel from organizations such as the Department of Defense, State Department, Central Intelligence Agency, and Treasury Department will enable employment of integrated, flexible, and mutually-supporting interagency capabilities.

USIA's most effective information campaigns revolved around the use of radio and print media dissemination channels. Technologically speaking, it was the right media at the right time to reach the intended target audiences and deliver the desired message. In today's communications environment, USIIA will need to utilize a much broader range of dissemination channels. USIIA must harness the power for viral dissemination inherent in the internet and rapidly advancing smart phone technologies. However, as USIIA exploits current and future technology, it cannot throw to the side and disregard legacy dissemination channels such as terrestrial radio and television broadcast. In many of the areas in which the US Government is and or will be engaged, such as portions of Afghanistan, still rely on these "primitive" systems as their primary means of communication.

A significant budget will be required to effectively spread America's message around the world. Based on existing operations in the Department of Defense, five Geographic Combatant Commands divide responsibilities for global operations. Using this as a model, each geographic area will require approximately $40 million to establish operations and build the infrastructure to disseminate US influence products. USIIA operations in the United States will require at least $120 million to establish the organization and bring in talented personnel to jumpstart operations. In comparison, the USIA budget in fiscal year 1999 was $1.109 billion.[62]

The initial manpower bill for USIIA will be approximately 1500 personnel. Each geographic area will require about 250 personnel to perform all aspects of operations within that region. Approximately 250 personnel will be required at the headquarters level of USIIA in Washington D.C. These personnel will work the strategic aspects of operations as well as the administrative and technological functions required for worldwide operations. Prior to USIA's

closure in 1999, the agency employed 6,352 employees. Almost half of the USIA employees worked as Foreign Service personnel.[63]

USIIA requires the appropriate legal authorities to execute its mission. As the name implies, USIIA focuses on spreading a message to an international audience, not the United States domestic audience. Congress must put legislation in place that accounts for today's communications environment and does not hamstring USIIA's ability to counter-VEO messages. USIIA needs to be able to operate in the "white to gray" scale of attribution. While "black" or non-attributed operations reside within other government agencies, USIIA will work primarily in the fully-attributed range of influence operations. However, USIIA needs the flexibility to disseminate some products in certain environments in a less than fully-attributed manner.

If USIIA was in place today, it would play a significant role in employing a US Government grand strategy. USIIA would serve as the primary distribution network for the United States' strategic message, tailored to the local level. Additionally, USIIA's established presence around the globe could help facilitate conferences and build the necessary "space" for discussions among nations on the global narrative.

Chapter 5 – Conclusions and Recommendations

"Information and education are powerful forces in support of peace. Just as war begins in the minds of men, so does peace."

Dwight Eisenhower
January 27, 1958

Like the Cold War, the Global War on Terror is going to be a long struggle of ideas. Defeating VEOs will take concerted efforts to reduce the influence of radical violent extremist ideologies. To achieve this goal, the indirect lines of operation are paramount. There is significant history to guide the United States in developing organizations to effectively meet this need. World War II initiated America's involvement in the organized use of propaganda. The OSS and OWI executed influence operations that ranged the full spectrum of attribution. After World War II, the United States Information Agency became the flagship organization for spreading American information abroad.

For almost 50 years, USIA used the right combination of talent, experience, and authority to spread the counter-Communist message around the world. Thousands of employees, utilizing billions of dollars stationed in dozens of countries across the globe helped end the tyranny of Communism. They used the technology of the day to present a consistent US message and provided an alternative data set for people to make choices about government and how to live life.

In 1999, the United States eliminated its primary source for effectively communicating its message abroad when it disbanded USIA. America has struggled to counter the message of violent extremist organizations since the events of September 11, 2001. While the responsibility for US Government information operations abroad was delegated to the State Department, a lack of emphasis on personnel and resources was applied. The primary post within the State Department responsible for this task went unfilled for the first nine months after the post was

established. The State Department has made some strides in the last half dozen years, but it really serves as a band-aid to the problem as opposed to a solution to the need.

The best way for the United States to gain the upper hand and outperform VEOs in the realm of influence operations is with a dedicated agency working directly for the President. This agency, the United States International Information Agency (USIIA) needs to be staffed with a mix of personnel who don't subscribe to normal Washington D.C. bureaucracies. USIIA needs to work with strategic communications and themes and messages at the highest level of government. Equally important to the strategic message, USIIA must be able to tailor that message within each area of responsibility around the globe. Another key element of USIIA is that it needs to have funded billets for representatives from other appropriate departments and agencies of the US Government. This will help engender communications flow from USIIA to and from the other departments and agencies such as the State Department and the Department of Defense.

USIIA must capitalize on the latest forms of technology. It must do this to reach the greatest audience possible and to properly synthesize the extraordinary volumes of information flowing in and out of target areas to enable the building of the "right" messages for dissemination. Due to the speed of today's communications, USIIA must use a decentralized execution model for operations. USIIA has to build business processes that enable rapid processing and approval of requests for emerging requirements and the requisite message campaigns.

The process for building this new organization needs to begin with the National Security Council. The easiest way to start framing the organization is to dust off the old USIA documentation and build on its foundation. The National Security Advisor recently indicated the

need for a “whole of government” approach to planning and fighting the Global War on Terror. USIIA would provide an important piece of the puzzle and enable synergistic activities with the rest of the government. The United States Government needs a dedicated organization to perform influence operations with the right people, authorities, and funding. USIIA provides a “one-stop shop” organization to perform the indirect lines of operation and help America win the Global War on Terror, one message at a time.

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