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Information Operations



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CHAPTER III

INTELLIGENCE SUPPORT TO INFORMATION OPERATIONS

"To understand human decisions and human behavior requires something more than an appreciation of immediate stimuli. It requires, too, a consideration of the totality of forces, material and spiritual, which condition, influence or direct human responses. And because we are dealing with human beings, the forces which helped shape their actions must be recognized as multiple, subtle, and infinitely complex."

David Herlihy, *The History of Feudalism*

Introduction

Like all other aspects of joint operations, IO requires effective intelligence support. IO is intelligence intensive in particular and therefore successful planning, preparation, execution, and assessment of IO demand detailed and timely intelligence. This chapter briefly discusses how intelligence supports the planning and execution of IO.

2. Intelligence Support to Information Operations

Before military activities in the information environment can be planned, the current "state" of the dynamic information environment must be collected, analyzed, and provided to commanders and their staffs. This requires intelligence on relevant portions of the physical, informational, and cognitive properties of the information environment, which necessitates collection and analysis of a wide variety of information and the production of a wide variety of intelligence products as discussed below.

a. **Nature of IO Intelligence Requirements.** In order to understand the adversary or other TA decision-making process and determine the appropriate capabilities necessary to achieve operational objectives, commanders and their staffs must have current data. This includes relevant physical, informational, and cognitive properties of the information environment as well as assessment of ongoing IO activities.

(1) Physical Properties of the Information Environment. Physical properties of the information environment include people, places, things, and capabilities of information infrastructure and adversary information capabilities. Examples include:

- (a) Geographic coordinates of adversary information infrastructure and capabilities.
- (b) Organization of infrastructure and capabilities as well as identification of critical links, nodes, and redundant communication infrastructure.
- (c) Types, quantity, and configuration of information infrastructure and capabilities (with specific makes, models, and numbers).

- (d) Organizational planning, decision, and execution processes.
- (e) Enemy intelligence/feedback mechanism for gaining battlespace awareness, information, and knowledge.
- (f) Enemy computer attack, defense, and exploitation capabilities.

(2) **Informational Properties of the Information Environment.** Informational properties of the information environment include those systems and networks where information is created, processed, manipulated, transmitted, and shared. It includes those properties relevant to the electronic collection, transmission, processing, storage, and display of information. These properties may be electronic or human-to-human or a combination of both. They describe the formal and informal communications infrastructure and networks, kinship and descent relationships, licit and illicit commercial relationships and social affiliations and contacts that collectively create, process, manipulate, transmit, and share information in an operational area and among TAs. Examples of informational properties include:

- (a) Specification, capacity, configuration, and usage of information infrastructure and capabilities.
- (b) Technical design of information infrastructure.
- (c) Networks of human-to-human contact used for the transmission of information (couriers, rat-lines, dead-drops, etc.).
- (d) Social and commercial networks that process and share information and influence (kinship and descent linkages, formal and informal social contacts, licit and illicit commercial affiliations and records of ownership and transactions, etc.).
- (e) Content and context.

(3) **Cognitive Properties of the Information Environment.** Cognitive properties of the information environment are the psychological, cultural, behavioral, and other human attributes that influence decision making, the flow of information, and the interpretation of information by individuals or groups at any level in a state or organization. Cognitive properties may include:

- (a) Cultural and societal factors affecting attitudes and perceptions such as language, education, history, religion, myths, personal experience, and family structure.
- (b) Identity of key individuals and groups affecting attitudes and perceptions, whether in the same or a different country as those they influence.
- (c) Identity and psychological profile of key decision makers, their advisors, key associates, and/or family members who influence them.

- (d) Credibility of key individuals or groups and specification of their sphere of influence.
- (e) Laws, regulations, and procedures relevant to information and decision making, decision-making processes, capability employment doctrine, timeliness, and information content.
- (f) How leaders think, perceive, plan, execute, and assess outcomes of their results and actions from their perspectives.
- (g) Identify key historical events between the target country and the US, which may affect an individual or group's attitudes and perceptions of the US, whether in the same or different country as those they influence.

(4) While these broad types of properties of the information environment illustrate the diversity of IO intelligence requirements, it is important to note that multiple sources and methods may be required to collect physical, informational, and cognitive properties of specific collection targets in order to fuse and analyze different properties in support of IO planning. For instance, if operational planning requires intelligence on radio stations within an adversary country, that requirement may include the number and location of broadcast and transmission facilities (physical), the technical specifications of each station (informational), the identity of owners and key personnel, and the credibility or popularity of each station (cognitive).

b. Intelligence Support to IO Planning. Intelligence support is an integral part of IO planning. In particular, the joint intelligence preparation of the battlespace (JIPB) process provides a valuable methodology for identifying capabilities, vulnerabilities, and critical nodes within the information environment. JP 2-01.3, *Joint Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures for Joint Intelligence Preparation of the Battlespace*, discusses JIPB support to IC/ A sequential overview of intelligence support to IO planning includes actions to:

- (1) Identify adversary information value, use, flow, and vulnerabilities relevant to specific types of decision making.
- (2) Identify individual systems and target sets relevant to specified adversary or other TA decision making.
- (3) Identify desired effects appropriate to individual systems and target sets.
- (4) Predict the consequences (non-objective related outcomes) of identified actions.
- (5) Coordinate with planning personnel to establish priority of intelligence requirements.
- (6) Assist in developing IO assessment criteria during planning and then assist in monitoring and assessing IO during execution (which may extend before and after execution of conventional operations).
- (7) Tailor assessment/feedback methodologies to specific operations.

- (8) Evaluate the outcome of executed IO activities/tasks.
- (9) Provide assessment for IO actions relative to JFC objectives and mission.

c. Intelligence Considerations in Planning Information Operations

(1) **Information Environment Impact on Intelligence Support.** The nature of the information environment has profound implications for intelligence support to IO. Members of the operational community and the intelligence community must understand these implications in order to efficiently request and provide quality intelligence support to IO. These implications are listed below.

(a) Intelligence Resources are Limited. Information collection requirements are almost limitless, especially for many types of IO. Commanders and their intelligence and operations directorates must work together to identify IO intelligence requirements and ensure that they are given high enough priority in the commander's requests to the intelligence community (IC).

(b) Collection Activities are Legally Constrained. The nature of the information environment complicates compliance with legal constraints and restraints. Thus the IC must implement technical and procedural methods to ensure compliance with the law. Additionally, intelligence may be supplemented with information legally provided by law enforcement or other sources. Especially in the area of CNO, where the application of different domestic and international laws may be unclear, close coordination among the operational, legal, and law enforcement communities is essential.

(c) IO Intelligence Often Requires Long Lead Times. The intelligence necessary to affect adversary or other TA decisions often requires that specific sources and methods be positioned and employed over time to collect the necessary information and conduct analyses required for IO planning. Commanders and their staffs, including IO planners, must be aware of the relative lead times required to develop different types of intelligence both for initial planning and for feedback during operations. To deal with these long lead times, the commander must provide detailed initial guidance to the staff during the mission analysis and estimate processes.

(d) The Information Environment is Dynamic. The information environment changes over time according to different factors. Physical changes may occur more slowly and may be easier to detect than informational or cognitive changes. Commanders and their staffs must understand both the timeliness of the intelligence they receive and the differing potentials for change in the dimensions of the information environment. The implication is that we must have agile intellects, intelligence systems, and organizational processes to exploit this dynamic environment.

(e) Properties of the Information Environment Affect Intelligence. Collection of physical and electronic information is objectively measurable by location and quantity. While

identification of key individuals and groups of interest may be a relatively straightforward challenge, the relative importance of various individuals and groups, their psychological profiles, and how they interact is not easily agreed upon nor quantified. Commanders and their staffs must have an appreciation for the subjective nature of psychological profiles and human nature. They must also continue to pursue effective means of trying to measure subjective elements using MOEs and other applicable techniques.

(2) Coordination of Planned IO with Intelligence. Coordination should occur among intelligence, targeting, IO, and collection management personnel. The requirement for accurate intelligence gain/loss and political/military assessments, when determining targets to attack and means of employment, is central to the integration of IO.

(3) Foreign Perceptions and Human Factors Analysis. Assessing foreign perceptions is necessary for successful IO activities. Preparing the modern battlespace for successful joint operations relies on a thorough understanding of the information environment, including foreign perceptions, TA analysis, and cultural analysis. Geographic combatant commanders require IC support to continually assess foreign perceptions of support for the areas of responsibility (AORs) TSCP efforts, along with Joint Operation Planning and Execution System (JOPES) planning activities. Human factors analysis in conjunction with an understanding of the cultural environment are also important in avoiding projection of US cultural bias on TAs (mirror imaging). Intelligence resources contribute to assessing of foreign populations through human factors analysis, influence net modeling, foreign media analysis, media mapping, polling/focus group analysis, and key communicators/sources of influence analysis. This is, for the most part, open source intelligence and must be interpreted and synthesized by country/cultural intelligence subject matter experts (SMEs).

(4) Priority of Effort. The requirement to collect, analyze, and produce detailed intelligence of the granularity required for IO currently exceeds the resources of the IC. Assigning intelligence resources to IO as with all operations is regulated based on established requirements and processes within the IC. It is imperative that intelligence requirements be coordinated and prioritized at each level of command.

d. Sources of Intelligence Support

(1) Through the intelligence directorate of a joint staff (J-2), **IO planners and supporting joint organizations have access to intelligence** from the national and combatant command-level intelligence producers and collectors. **At the combatant command level**, the theater joint intelligence center supports IO planning and execution and provides support to JTFs through established joint intelligence support elements. In **multinational operations**, when appropriate, the J-2 should share information and assessments with allies and coalition partners.

(2) The J-2 on each joint staff normally assigns specific J-2 personnel to coordinate with IO planners and capability specialties through the IO cell or other IO staff organizations established by the JFC.
