

SPECIAL WARFARE

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REFLECTING ON 100 YEARS OF
PSYCHOLOGICAL OPERATIONS

LOOKING AT THE FUTURE
OF THE BLACK KNIGHTS



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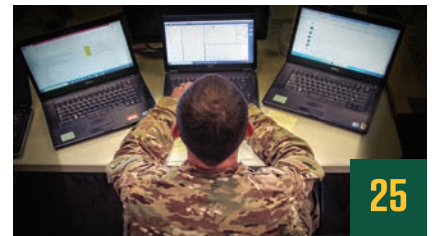
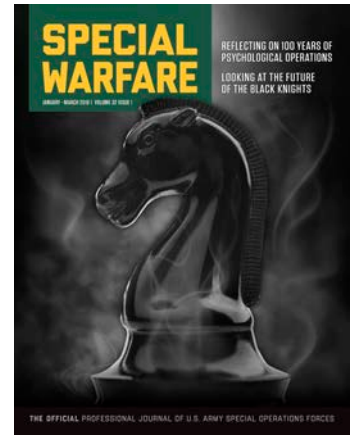
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ON THE COVER

In 2018, the Psychological Operations Regiment turned 100. In celebration of that milestone, we put together an issue that pays homage to the past, but more importantly looks to the future of the Black Knights of the PSYOP Regiment.



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from the COMMANDANT



The John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center has significant ties to the Psychological Operations Regiment. In 1950, the U.S. Army developed the Psychological Warfare Division of the Army General School at Fort Riley, Kansas. Two short years later, in April 1952, the PSYWAR training activities were transferred to Smoke Bomb Hill at Fort Bragg, as the PSYWAR Center, and in 1956 it was renamed the Special Warfare School. As an institution, the art of PSYOP is one of our cornerstones.

The Psychological Operations Regiment celebrated its 100th birthday this past fall. In this issue, we are looking at not only the history of the PSYOP Regiment, but also at its future. Of note, is an article we republished from an earlier *Special Warfare* that pays tribute to the "Father of Psychological Operations," Major General Robert McClure. Not only did McClure build the PSYOP Regiment, he also promoted the use of Civil Affairs and Special Forces, "selling" the need for an unconventional warfare capability to senior military and civilian leaders at that time. Even though he faced fierce resistance to the idea of unconventional warfare he kept pushing. The connection between our regiments is strong and the historic ties that bind us together can be traced directly back to the Psychological Operations Regiment.


KURT L. SONNTAG
MAJOR GENERAL, USA
COMMANDING GENERAL

“In this war, which was total in every sense of the word, we have seen many great changes in military science. It seems to me that not the least of these was the development of psychological warfare as a specific and effective weapon.”

— *General of the Army,
Dwight D. Eisenhower*

PSYOP TECHNICAL MANUAL SERIES TO ADDRESS THE COMPLEXITY OF INFLUENCE

BY PATRICK C. MCKINNEY

Lessons learned from military operations over the past decade and extensive dialog with the community of interest identified challenges critical to U.S. Army and Joint Psychological Operations Forces in the conduct and assessment of Information Operations. The PSYOP Commandant directed an explorative doctrine review and concurrent review of lessons learned to identify gaps and proximate causes for an inability to adequately assess and report IO effectiveness.⁰¹ This in-depth critical review resulted in the defining of core tasks required to accomplish PSYOP, development of the Hierarchy of Psychological Effects Model, a more robust approach to target audience analysis, and a new approach to measuring effects attributable to PSYOP efforts.

CATALYST FOR CHANGE

Initial reviews of IO challenges conducted by the Psychological Operations Commandant's Office, Doctrine Division, U.S. Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School focused on an inability to assess effectiveness attributed to PSYOP efforts, with the initial assumption that assessment practices were the root cause of PSYOP assessment failures. The exploratory research suggested that the narrow scope of assessment failures did not adequately define the problem. Assessment challenges were discovered to be decidedly an outcome of the broader problem which is found in the processes and practices of how PSYOP are planned and executed with an inadequate approach to target audience analysis.

Further, research concluded that current doctrine did not adequately address the dynamics of computer mediated communication or multi-channel delivery consistent with a single thread narrative. Communicative influence practices must be consistent with target audience media consumption practices and expectations. Media type and channel selection cannot be driven by what is most familiar or readily accessible to PSYOP soldiers, but



01

rather by analysis of target audience communication preferences and the defined desired behavior.

PSYOP CORE TASK TECHNICAL MANUAL SERIES

The review of doctrine resulted in a complete revision of the Army's key-stone PSYOP manual (Field Manual 3-53, Change 1, 2013) and significant changes to the authoritative document for joint psychological operations (Joint Publication 3-13.2, 2014). To better describe the process by which practitioners plan, execute and assess IO, the decision was made to revise the previous tactics, techniques and procedures manual into a series of technical manuals (for each of the PSYOP core tasks of *analyze, advise, plan, develop, deliver and assess*). This expansion into a TM series allows for more comprehensive and detailed descriptions of each task and the overall execution of IO.

The PSYOP Core Task Technical Manual Series incorporates the outcomes of explorative research and provides detailed techniques and procedures for six core tasks that, in their whole, enable the conduct of PSYOP by PSYOP forces. Each TM in the core task series provides unique content, however the TMs are

01

The knight chess piece, part of the Psychological Operations branch insignia, is a traditional symbol of special operations and signifies the ability to influence all types of warfare. Psychological Operations soldiers are often referred to as "Black Knights," which embodies the complexity and strategy of their profession. U.S. NAVY PHOTO BY MASS COMMUNICATION SPECIALIST 3RD CLASS GITTE SCHIRRMACHER

interconnected and codependent. TM 53-01, *PSYOP Process*, provides an overview and summary of the interconnectivity between the TMs and higher echelon publications. The remaining TMs address each of the PSYOP Core Tasks: TM 53-01.1, Analyze; TM 53-01.2, Advise; TM 53-01.3, Plan; TM 53-01.4, Develop; TM 53-01.5, Deliver; TM 53-01.6, Assess.

Note: Initially, analysis was to be nested within the TM for plan. Research, however, exposed significant gaps in target audience analysis and specific inadequacies in the outcome product of TAA in terms of what is required to accomplish the other PSYOP core tasks. For this reason, Analyze was added as a separate TM in the core task series.

HIERARCHY OF PSYCHOLOGICAL EFFECTS MODEL DEVELOPED

Following a review of doctrine, practices and communicative influence theories, the PSYOP Commandant's Doctrine Division developed a hierarchy of psychological effects model and formulations adapted from expectancy value theory,⁰² the extension of expectancy value theory to include media uses and gratification,⁰³ and the theory of reasoned action⁰⁴ which expands EVT to include a greater emphasis on behavior intentions and perceived behavioral control.

The hierarchy of psychological effects model complements the seven phase PSYOP process by introducing a logical framework for PSYOP procedures and assessments that consider *awareness, understanding, attitude, preference, intent* and ultimately *behavior*. This logical HPEM framework enables series of actions and messages to be tailored to address progressive intermediate steps between initial assessment and the achievement of the desired behavior. This model further shifts the practices of PSYOP away from more narrowly scoped marketing and sales models, towards applications consistent with socio-scientific approaches of communicative efforts to influence broader population behaviors.

The implementation of the hierarchy of psychological effects model is objective behavior-focused through each step, and relies heavily on continuous analysis and evaluation of conditions. Figure 01 depicts the steps of the hierarchy of psychological effects model applied to a series toward a PSYOP objective.

The hierarchy of psychological effects model is linear and progressive in nature, taking into account that a target audience will generally have to meet thresholds determined by the PSYOP planner in one step prior to a reasonable expectation of the target audience achieving subsequent steps.⁰⁵ For example, without the target audience having understanding and awareness of a desired behavior, the expectation of preferring one behavior over another may be unreasonable.⁰⁶ It is important to note, however, that

though the HPEM is progressive in nature a TA will likely both progress and digress along the continuum as the information environment changes.

Initial assessments determine the step that most precisely describes the target audience's present state, and assist the PSYOP planner in more accurately directing efforts. Linear models are generally found to account well for psychological data, even when generated from multiple sources.⁰⁷ Initial assessment accuracy is solely dependent on the quality of target audience analysis.

TARGET AUDIENCE ANALYSIS REVISITED

Conducting PSYOP is dependent on proficiency in six core tasks; analyze, advise, plan, develop, deliver and assess. Of the core tasks, analyze is the one that enables the rest. Analysis, like planning and assessment, is a continual process that affects the accuracy and efficiency of all influence activities. Analysis of a particular operational area should be ongoing regardless of whether or not a specific program currently exists.

TM 53-01.1, Information Operations Core Task: Analyze establishes techniques and procedures for PSYOP forces conducting analysis of foreign target audiences in relation to commander's objectives and supporting PSYOP objectives. Analysis provides requisite information for planners to develop, deliver and assess series. Series focus on a single desired behavior and TA combination in support of a PSYOP objective. Multiple series support the achievement of each PSYOP objective. Multiple PSYOP objectives support a PSYOP program. Analysis further enables informed advice and increases behavior forecast accuracy.

An example of how analysis is expanded in the TM, to make the available material more robust for the operational force, is found in the discussion of TA susceptibility and preparing for shaping of the environment. Susceptibility is the likelihood that the TA will be open to influence toward a desired behavior. Initial degree of susceptibility determinations assists in developing series to shape optimum susceptibility conditions by targeting beliefs, valence toward a likely behavior outcome, and perceived credibility. This shaping of the environment in support of the commander's objectives ensures greater precision in the PSYOP effort.

One of the challenges identified during the research for developing the TM Series was that of accuracy expectations during various phases of an operation. PSYOP Forces provide commanders with forecasts of likely TA behavior resulting from various changes to the TA's environment. Forecast accuracy increases over time as the analyst gains understanding of the environment and the target audiences. When making recommendations it is important to convey the current

level of uncertainty and expected level of accuracy. Increased accuracy over time is referred to as a cone of uncertainty. Probability estimates may initially be based on limited data points and high uncertainty, but continuing operations will allow for observation and forecast refinements as uncertainty decreases. Accuracy over time is where the mutually dependent relationship between analysis and assessment is most apparent. Assessment accuracy depends on quality analysis and assessment results provide additional data which enhance analysis. Figure 03 (page 08) depicts an applied cone of uncertainty model.

Another area expanded is related to the understanding of the TA's latitude of acceptance and how PSYOP planners, with greater understanding of a TA's beliefs and values as related to a desired behavior, can target with greater precision. Latitude of acceptance refers to the consistency of a behavior in relation the TA's beliefs and values anchor. This latitude extends from acceptance, to non-commitment, to rejection of

the behavior. Actions and messages that present a desired behavior consistent with the TA's currently held beliefs and values are said to be close to the TA's anchor, or within their latitude of acceptance. A desired behavior that is far from the TA's anchor is within their latitude of rejection. Between acceptance and rejection is a neutral zone of non-commitment where the TA is not completely accepting of the behavior but does not outright reject it.

When a desired behavior is inconsistent with a TA's anchor, a well-planned series will gradually move the TA away from their anchor and reinforce beliefs and values that are consistent with the DB. This gradual change is accomplished by increasingly targeting the non-commitment neutral zone of the TA's latitude of acceptance with intermediate objectives. Series developers and planners determine where along this latitude is best for targeting a specific TA. Targeting closer to the latitude of acceptance may be used to build rapport or increase

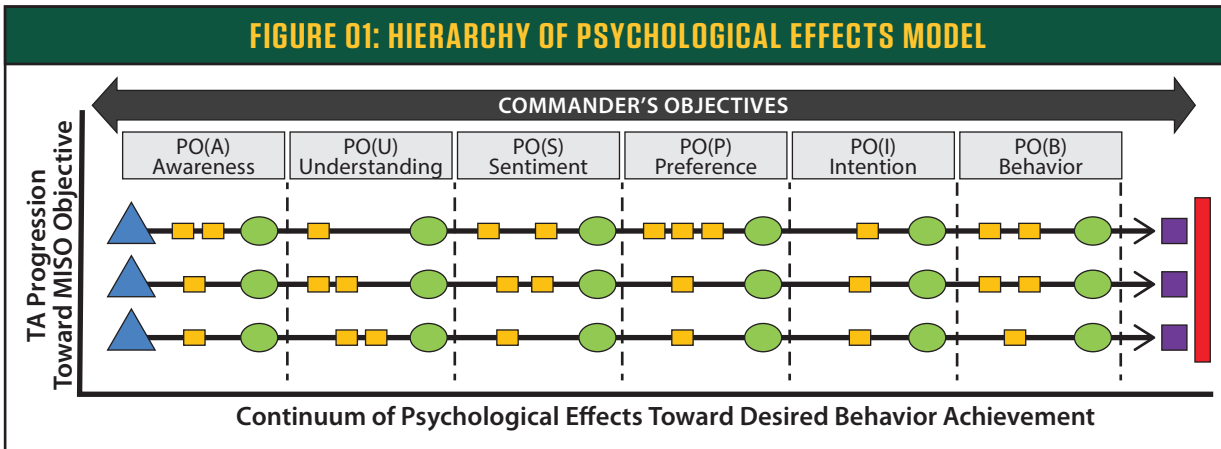


FIGURE 01 Hierarchy of Psychological Effects Model. Depicts the steps of the hierarchy of the psychological effects model applied to series toward an objective.

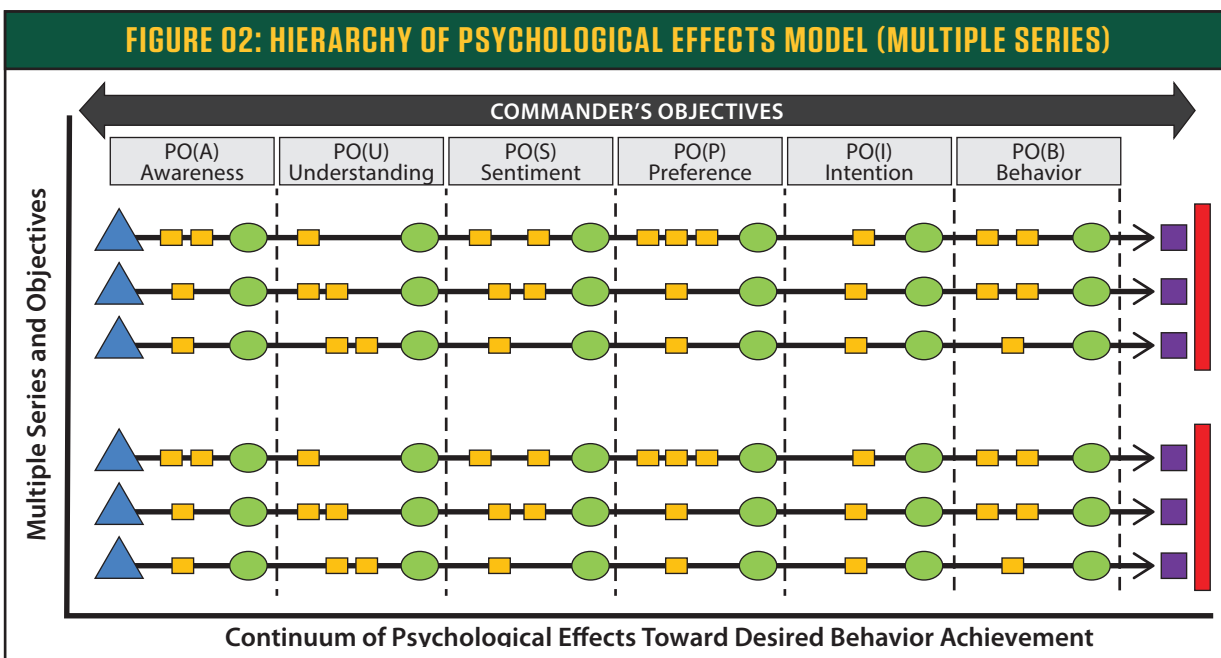


FIGURE 02 Hierarchy of Psychological Effects Model - Multiple Series. Depicts multiple series and objectives that are collectively a PSYOP program.

LEGEND

- MISO Objective
- Desired Behavior (DB)
- ▲ Target Audience (TA)
- Series
- - Threshold
- Psychological Objective (PO)
- Supporting Psychological Objective (SPO)

**MISO
TECHNICAL
MANUAL
SERIES**

continued from page 07

trust and credibility, but since it is where the TA currently resides cognitively and behaviorally, there will be little or no behavior change. Targeting too close to the TA's latitude of rejection will also likely end in no behavior change. Figure 04 depicts the preferred target range for PSYOP actions and messages.

Attributable MOE is the ability to evaluate degrees to which a causal link can be drawn between a behavior and the antecedents leading to that behavior. For this causal analysis to occur there needs to be a mechanism in place which specifies which factors are to be measured. PSYOP practitioners must employ both art and science in determining attribution of effect as evaluations rely on both objective data and the more subjective estimations rendered through experience and intuition.

DEGREES OF SUSCEPTIBILITY FORMULATION

The following section will discuss in detail a proposed degrees of susceptibility formulation adapted from the formulations of expectancy value theory,⁰⁸ the extension of this formulation to apply expectancy value theory to media⁰⁹ and the requirements of central route processing per elaboration likelihood model.¹⁰ Susceptibility of a message is dependent on the TA's motivation and ability to process information, followed by the TA's associated beliefs or perceived favorability of outcome towards the message, and their perceived credibility of the attributed source of the message.¹¹

If the TA does not have an adequate schema to which they can associate new information, they will not likely perceive relevance or value, and will therefore lack motivation to elaborate.¹² In this series, soldiers must ensure that steps of awareness, understanding and attitude have been achieved by the TA prior to assessing the TA's valance towards messages directed

at preference, intent and behavior. A premature assessment of valance may result in invalid measures of an audience's favorability towards a likely outcome. In other words, the PSYOP practitioner cannot expect an audience to have a stable valance towards an object to which they are only partially aware.

It is important to note that audiences are susceptible to messages and influences other than those delivered as part of the PSYOP effort; therefore this formulation may assist in not only assessing and refining PSYOP efforts, but also in determining degrees of external influence, and in assessing measures of effectiveness attributable to PSYOP efforts.

Degree of susceptibility is equal to the sum total of beliefs (r) held by the TA related to the message or objective + the evaluated strength of beliefs (B_i) + the evaluated valence, or perceived degree of favorability, towards the likely outcome (V_i) + the evaluated perceived credibility of the message or message source (C_i) and divided by the number of all beliefs related to the PSYOP message or external influences (N_r) times nine, as three is the highest possible evaluation of each of the three variables.

Note: Evaluations of variables are based on PSYOP assessments of the target audience.

- Number of Related Beliefs (N_r)
- Beliefs (B_i) evaluated: 3 strong, 2 neutral, 1 weak
- Valence (V_i) evaluated: 3 positive, 2 neutral, 1 adverse
- Credibility (C_i) evaluated: 3 high, 2 medium, 1 low

$$DS = \frac{\sum B_i + V_i + C_i}{N_r} \div 9 (N_r)$$

Assessing the likely degree of susceptibility of a series and all known external influences allows PSYOP planners to more accurately forecast attitude change that is predictive of behavior, thereby enabling increased accuracy in the advising of commanders. The estimation of susceptibility enables planners to develop series that target specific variables of susceptibility. For example, if a positive correlation is determined between ineffective PSYOP efforts and credibility, then the planner may decide to change the delivery means or the source attributed to the message to increase credibility of the PSYOP effort, while simultaneously delivering messages and executing actions to degrade the credibility of an external influence.

DEGREES OF SUSCEPTIBILITY AND MEASURES OF EFFECTIVENESS

Once degrees of susceptibility are established for both the PSYOP series and external influence efforts, they can assist in determining whether or not assessed changes in the target audience can be more or less attributed to PSYOP efforts or external influences. This attribution would be dependent on which message(s) or

FIGURE 03: APPLIED CONE OF UNCERTAINTY MODEL

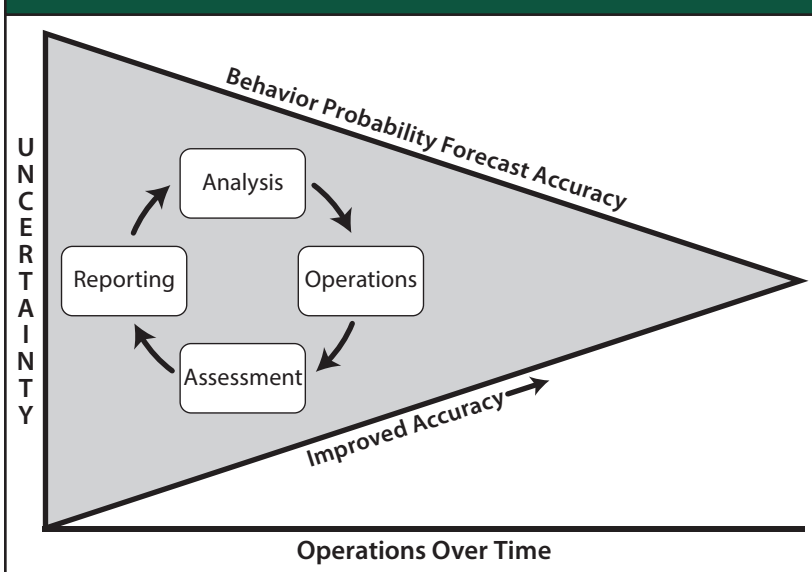
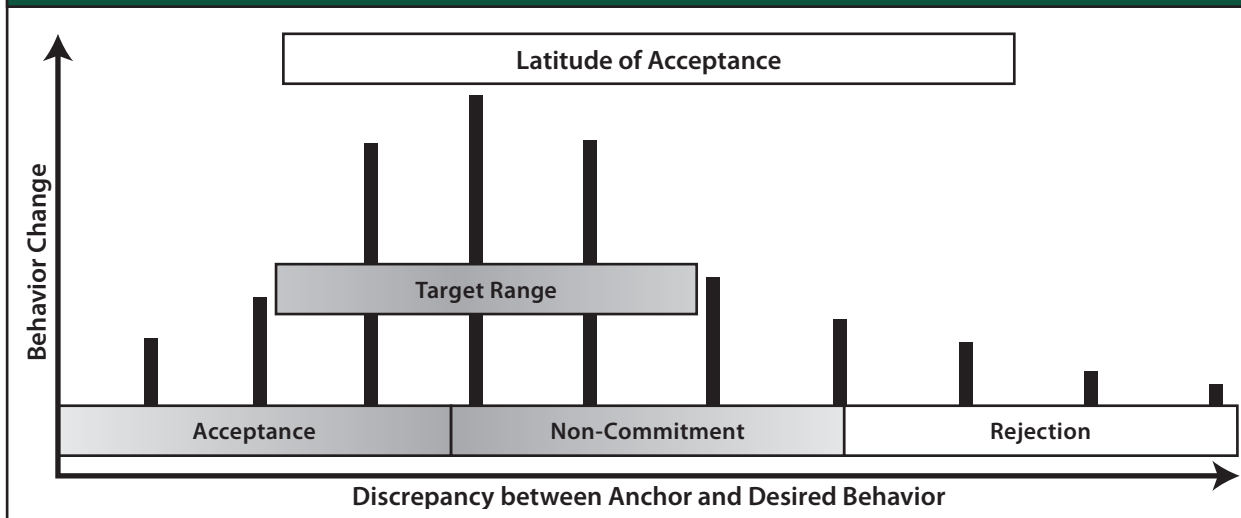


FIGURE 04: MOVING BEYOND ALL-OR-NONE MEASURES OF EFFECTIVENESS (MOE)



action(s) likely had the greater influence based on the assessed degree of susceptibility of the target audience.

The likely degrees of attribution when reporting measures of effectiveness can be evaluated by subtracting the degree of susceptibility of external influences from the degree of susceptibility of PSYOP influence efforts. MOE (A): Measures of Effectiveness (Attribution) Ie: PSYOP Influence Effort

- Ex: External Influences
- DS: Degree of Susceptibility

$$MOE(A) = Ie_{(DS)} - Ex_{(DS)}$$


The DS formulation gives a more objective means of assessing the change in relationship to both PSYOP and external influences. Measures of PSYOP effectiveness have been historically discussed as an all or none proposition. If assessments could not solely attribute behavior change to PSYOP efforts then the change was not attributed to PSYOP. Once change in the TA is assessed, and DS calculations are complete, it can be attributed to PSYOP efforts to varying degrees even if external influences had a greater effect.

CONCLUSION

PSYOP efforts require approaches as current and dynamic as the information environment in which they are employed. PSYOP Soldiers operate in an environment that is never static and as complex as the human experi-

ence. To overcome barriers of innumerable variables the PSYOP soldier requires doctrine that provides methods and practices to ensure the greatest level of accuracy and efficiency, distill the most salient factors, and determine TA's most capable of achieving desired behaviors toward PSYOP objective accomplishment.

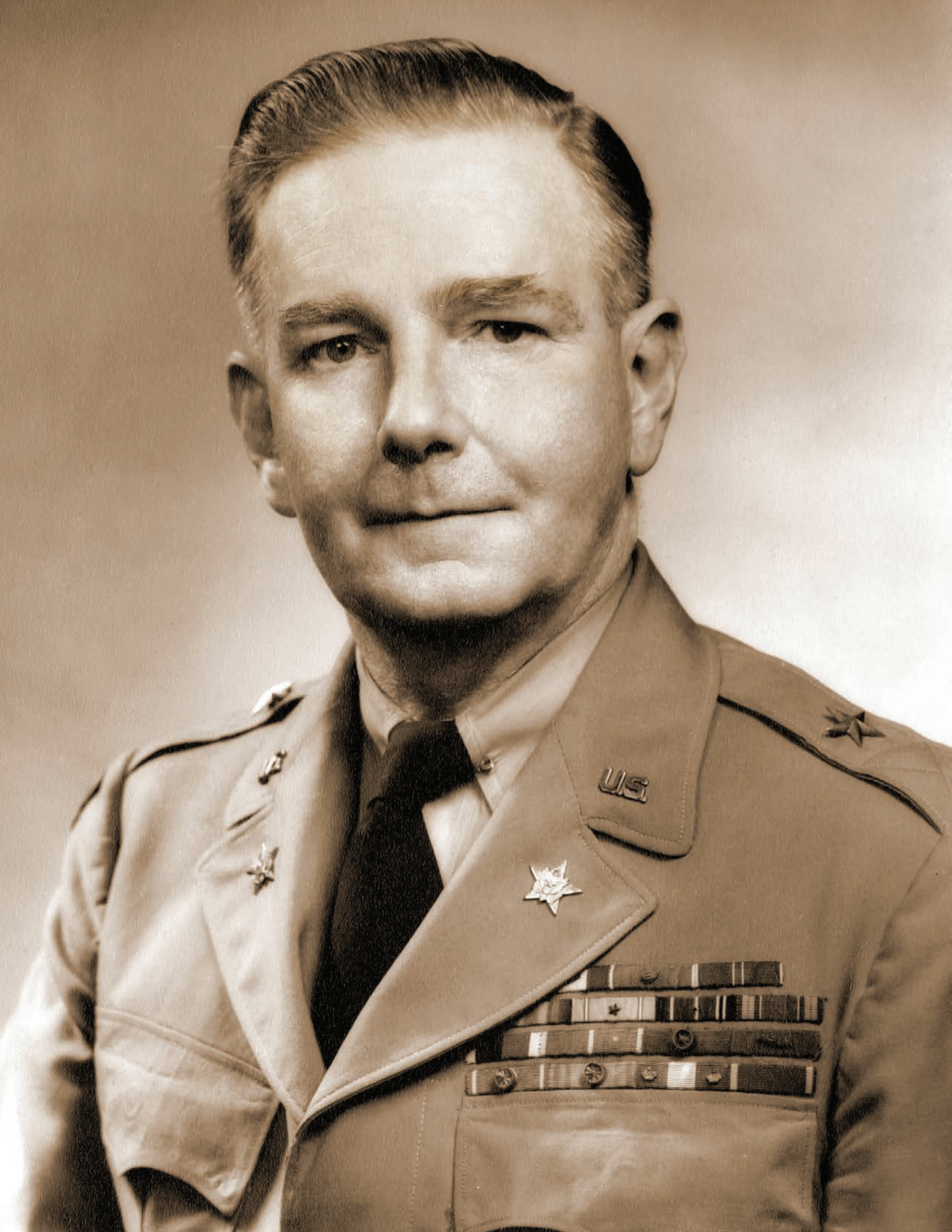
The PSYOP Core Task TM Series does more than repackage previously developed doctrine. This series expands the base of applied behavioral and communicative science, provides more granular detail and needed clarity, and addresses topics of development and delivery related to the new media age of computer mediated communications.

The PSYOP Commandant's Office actively solicits input from the community of interest as we continue to refine, expand and increase the relevance of the total body of materials available to our PSYOP Force. Comments and questions can be addressed to the author at aojk-dt-po@socom.mil 

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ROBERT ALEXIS McCLURE

FORGOTTEN FATHER OF ARMY SPECIAL WARFARE

BY DR. ALFRED H. PADDOCK JR.

Editor's note: This article originally appeared in the Fall 1999 issue of Special Warfare.

Where is the monument to honor the man who provided the vision and the impetus for establishing U.S. Army special warfare? Most special operations soldiers are unfamiliar with his name. Robert Alexis McClure is the forgotten father of Army special warfare.

McClure was born March 4, 1897, in Mattoon, Illinois. After graduating from Kentucky Military Institute in 1915, he served with the Philippine Constabulary as a second lieutenant. On Aug. 9, 1917, he earned a Regular Army commission and was promoted to first lieutenant. From then, until the eve of World War II, he served in a variety of Infantry and service-school assignments in China and in the United States. During the interwar years, McClure, like other career officers, found promotion excruciatingly slow: he served in the rank of captain for 17 years.

By 1941, however, McClure was a lieutenant colonel with orders to London, where he was to serve as the assistant military attaché. In swift succession, he earned promotions to colonel and brigadier general, and he became the military attaché to the American Embassy in London. As an additional duty, he served as military attaché to nine European governments in exile. In September 1942, General Dwight D. Eisenhower appointed McClure to his Allied Forces headquarters as Chief of Intelligence for the European theater of operations. During the next three months, McClure's career took a new direction — one that would immerse McClure in a new and different field for most of the rest of his life.

In December 1942, from "somewhere in Africa," McClure wrote to his wife, Marjory: "My new job — for which I was called by Ike — very hurriedly — is a continual headache — I have what I call the INC Section — I am just creating it." In preparation for the North African landings, Eisenhower had put McClure in charge of the Information and Censorship Section, or INC, of the Allied Forces headquarters. It was McClure's job to consolidate several functions for which most Army officers had little preparation: public relations, censorship and psychological warfare. As McClure colorfully stated, the job also carried with it a "slop over into Civil Affairs."

The INC was, indeed, an ungainly organization that included military and civilian personnel from the U.S. Office of War Information; the U.S. Office of Strategic Services; the British Political Warfare Executive; and the U.S. Army. McClure vividly outlined the scope of his new responsibilities in a September 1943 letter to Marjory:

"We operate 12 high powered radio stations — 6 of them are stronger than WLW in Cincinnati. My Psychological Warfare staff — radio, leaflet, signals, front line, occupation, domestic propaganda personnel, exceed 700. In censorship — troop, mail, and cables, civilian mail, radio, press, cables, telephone for all of North & West Africa, Sicily, etc., over 400 personnel & supervising 700 French. Public relations — press and correspondents — 150 correspondents — 250 personnel — a total "command" of 1500 in an organization never contemplated in the Army."

By the end of the North African and Sicilian campaigns, McClure believed that psychological warfare had become, for him, the "big job," and he felt good about its contribution: "Our propaganda did a lot to break the enemy — as their emissaries admit — now we have to turn it on the Germans," he wrote to Marjory. But the "big job" was to become even bigger.

In early 1944, General Eisenhower authorized the establishment of the Psychological Warfare Division of the Supreme Headquarters, Allied Expeditionary Force, or PWD/SHAEF, to support the European campaign against Nazi Germany. McClure, as its director, controlled and coordinated psychological warfare in continental Europe. For years afterward, he emphasized that PWD was built upon the trial-and-error experience of his ordeal in starting up and running INC in North Africa — in particular, the Psychological Warfare Branch. In North Africa and in Europe, McClure's definition of psychological warfare was quite concise, yet inclusive, by today's standards: "The dissemination of propaganda designed to undermine the enemy's will to resist, demoralize his forces and sustain the morale of our supporters."

In Europe, PWD made radio broadcasts from OWI transmitters and over the British Broadcasting Corporation; conducted loudspeaker broadcasts on the front lines; and conducted large-scale leaflet operations using specially designated aircraft squadrons. PWD even provided leaflets to be dispersed by the then-novel method of specially designed artillery shells. McClure had four deputies, each representing a civilian agency that contributed personnel to PWD: OWI, OSS, PWE and the British Ministry of Information. By the end of the war in Europe, PWD controlled the activities of more than 2,300 military and civilian personnel from two countries. As he had in the North African and Italian campaigns, McClure demonstrated his ability to manage personnel of quite different backgrounds and temperaments. It was one of his most successful leadership traits.

But even after V-E day, McClure's job was far from finished. Eisenhower once again called upon McClure, directing him to participate in planning for the occupation of Germany. McClure jubilantly wrote to Marjory on May 8, 1945:

The shooting war is over, here! Signed yesterday. Paris is wild with excitement. ... With one phase over I am now up to my neck on the control phase. We will rigidly control all newspapers, films, theatre, radio, music, etc., in Germany! My division now publishes 8 newspapers in Germany with 1,000,000 circulation and sends 2 million+ language papers each day by air for displaced persons and POWs. Biggest newspaper enterprise in the world.

Essentially, McClure's Psychological Warfare Division changed names, becoming the Information Control Division, which took on a new role as a key player in the reorientation and de-Nazification of Germany. The change was not totally abrupt — during the combat phase PWD worked closely in support of Civil Affairs with its “consolidation propaganda,” the purpose of which was both to gain the cooperation of the German population in restoring essential services, and to create a public opinion favorable to post-war Allied aims. The division became an integral part of the U.S. military-government (or Civil Affairs) effort in the U.S. portion of occupied Germany. McClure reported to General Lucius D. Clay, the U.S. military governor.

The reorientation of the German population was a formidable task. McClure undertook it in three phases: first, the complete shutdown of all media; second, operation by U.S. forces of selected instruments of information (radio, newspapers, etc.); and, third, a gradual turnover of these instruments, by licensing them to carefully selected Germans. McClure's aims were to cause individual Germans to renounce Nazism and militarism, and to help them take their place in a democratic society. McClure's ICD organization mirrored the German media, with five “control” branches for radio, press, film, theater and music, and publications. A sixth branch, intelligence, focused on public-opinion research, with emphasis on German bureaucracies, youth and the church. ICD had a wide-ranging charter, indeed, as McClure wrote to his friend and vice-president of Time-Life, Inc., C.D. Jackson, in July 1946:

"We now control 37 newspapers, six radio stations, 314 theatres, 642 movies, 101 magazines, 237 book publishers, 7,384 book dealers and printers, and conduct about 15 public opinion surveys a month, as well as publish one newspaper with 1,500,000 circulation, three magazines, run the Associated Press of Germany, and operate 20 library centers. ... The job is tremendous."

In the summer of 1948, the Army decided that McClure's experience could best be used in a similar assignment in the U.S. As chief of the New York field office of the Army's Civil Affairs Division, McClure was responsible for supporting U.S. reorientation and re-education efforts in the occupied countries of Germany, Austria, Japan and Korea. He reported to Major General Daniel Noce, chief of Civil Affairs in the Pentagon, whose office serviced and



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controlled all military government in occupied areas. As he had done in his previous assignment in Germany, McClure organized the New York field office into sections for press, periodicals, motion pictures, radio, theater, music, arts, exhibits, libraries and book rights.

There was, however, another aspect of McClure's activities during the postwar period that would prove important to the future of Army special warfare. After the massive demobilization of U.S. military forces during 1945-1946, American concerns about the Soviet Union's intentions grew in intensity, ushering in the Cold War.

For four years, McClure engaged in a dialogue with a number of high-ranking officers and civilian officials in an effort to rebuild the military psychological-warfare capability that had essentially been dissipated during the general demobilization. In a letter to the War Department in early 1946, McClure advocated the integration of material on psychological warfare into service-school curricula, stating, “The ignorance, among military personnel, about psychological warfare, even now, is astounding.” In June 1947, McClure sent a memo to his old boss from World War II — now Army Chief of Staff Dwight Eisenhower — urging, “Psychological warfare must become a part of every future war plan.” In November of that year, McClure gave Eisen-

IN JUNE 1947, McCLURE SENT A MEMO TO HIS OLD BOSS FROM WORLD WAR II — NOW ARMY CHIEF OF STAFF DWIGHT EISENHOWER — URGING, “PSYCHOLOGICAL WARFARE MUST BECOME A PART OF EVERY FUTURE WAR PLAN.”



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Robert A. McClure as a cadet at the Kentucky Military Institute in December 1912.

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General Dwight D. Eisenhower presents the Distinguished Service Medal to Brig. Gen. McClure in 1944. The award recognized McClure's accomplishments as chief of psychological warfare, Supreme Headquarters, Allied Expeditionary Force.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE
USASOC HISTORY OFFICE

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hower a list of former PWD/SHAEF staff members that he recommended for forming a psychological-warfare reserve.

McClure continued his correspondence, consultations and exhortations with the War Department, but it was not until the North Korean invasion of South Korea in June 1950 that his efforts bore fruit. Shortly after that shocking event, Maj. Gen. Charles Bolte, the Army Staff G3, requested that McClure report to Washington for a few days to help him determine, with respect to psychological warfare, “the further organizational steps necessary to meet the operational requirements of the Korean situation or of a general war.” The latter contingency was key: Even during the Far East crisis, the Army believed that the greater threat lay in a potential invasion of Western Europe by the Soviet Union, and it wanted to create an unconventional-warfare capability primarily for the conduct of guerrilla warfare in Europe in the event of a Soviet invasion. Bolte added, “I know of no one better qualified to assist us in that respect.” For McClure, “a few days,” became the formative years of Army special warfare.

On the basis of McClure’s recommendations, the Army first established a psychological-warfare division in the G3, with McClure as its first chief, and then made it a special staff office reporting directly to the Army chief of staff. Because of his association with the OSS during World War II, McClure appreciated the potential of unconventional warfare, and he lobbied for, and received, staff proponentcy for UW as well. On Jan. 15, 1951, the Army formally recognized the Office of the Chief of Psychological Warfare, or OCPW — the first organization of its type in Army history. Although McClure’s new office

started out with a staff of only five men, that number eventually grew to more than 100.

OCPW’s mission was “to formulate and develop psychological warfare and special operations plans for the Army in consonance with established policy and to recommend policies for and supervise the execution of Department of the Army programs in these fields.” McClure organized his office into three divisions: Psychological Warfare, Requirements and Special Operations. The latter was particularly significant, because it formulated plans for the creation of the Army’s first formal unconventional-warfare capability: Special Forces.

Realizing that his firsthand experience was basically in psychological warfare and Civil Affairs, McClure told his staff early on that he was “fighting for officers with background and experience in special operations.” He brought into the Special Operations Division several officers who had World War II or Korean War experience either in guerrilla warfare or in long-range-penetration units.

Two officers who played particularly key roles in developing the plans for the creation of Special Forces were Col. Aaron Bank and Lt. Col. Russell Volckmann. Bank had fought with the French Maquis as a member of OSS. Volckmann had organized and conducted guerrilla-warfare operations in the Philippines during World War II; during the Korean War, he had planned and directed behind-the-lines operations in North Korea.

Volckmann later remembered that McClure had approached him in Walter Reed Hospital (where Volckmann had been evacuated from Korea) with a request to help organize the Special Operations Division. It was only

after being assured that the Army was interested in organized behind-the-lines operations that Volckmann agreed to take the job. Bank later gave Volckmann considerable credit for the “development of position, planning and policy papers that helped sell the establishment of Special Forces units in the active Army.”

McClure assumed a leading role in “selling” the need for an unconventional-warfare capability to the senior military and civilian leadership. In the face of fierce resistance, not only within the Army but also from the CIA, Special Forces became a reality largely through the persistence of McClure and through the efforts of Bank and Volckmann. With personnel spaces available from disbanding the Ranger companies in Korea, the Army chief of staff approved the activation of Special Forces in early 1952.

Creating an unconventional-warfare capability was not the only challenge on OCPW’s plate. When the Korean War broke out in June 1950, the Tactical Information Detachment at Fort Riley, Kansas, was the only operational psychological-warfare troop unit in the Army. After its deployment to Korea, the detachment became the 1st Loudspeaker and Leaflet Company, and it served as the 8th Army’s tactical-propaganda unit throughout the conflict. By April 1951, McClure had requested the activation of the 1st Radio Broadcasting and Leaflet Group to assist the Far East Command, in conducting strategic propaganda; the 2nd L&L company at Fort Riley, a prototype unit; the 5th L&L Company at Fort Riley, scheduled to be sent to FECOM; and the 301st (Reserve) RB&L Group, to be trained at Fort Riley and then shipped to Europe. Thus, while he was in the process of staffing his own unprecedented office — OCPW — McClure moved quickly to assist FECOM in its organization and conduct of both psychological warfare and unconventional warfare, while he concurrently helped the European Command prepare for the employment of both capabilities in the event of a war with the Soviet Union.

One other part of McClure’s vision remained to be accomplished — centralizing the functions of what he called, “the whole field of OCPW.” Psychological warfare possessed a formal lineage and a tradition in the Army, which unconventional warfare did not, and McClure believed that the two capabilities should be combined under a single headquarters.

During that period of postwar budgetary austerity, McClure encountered considerable resistance to this idea, but he was able to convince the Army chief of staff, General J. Lawton Collins, that a central organization was necessary for consolidating the training activities for psychological warfare and Special Forces. Accordingly, in May 1952, the Army formally announced the activation of the Psychological Warfare Center at Fort Bragg, North Carolina. Its mission was:

“To conduct individual training and supervise unit training in Psychological Warfare and Special Forces Operations; to develop and test Psychological Warfare and Special Forces doctrine, procedures, tactics, and techniques; and to test and evaluate equipment employed in Psychological Warfare and Special Forces Operations.

As it was originally established, the Psychological Warfare Center consisted of the Psychological Warfare School, the 6th RB&L Group, a psychological-warfare



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board (to test materiel, doctrine, techniques and tactics for psychological warfare and for Special Forces), and the 10th Special Forces Group. Colonel Charles Karlstad, former chief of staff of the Infantry Center at Fort Benning, Georgia, was the first to serve as commander of the Center and Commandant of the Psychological Warfare School. The Psychological Warfare School’s organization reflected the Center’s mission. It consisted of a headquarters staff and two instructional divisions — one for psychological warfare, the other for Special Forces.

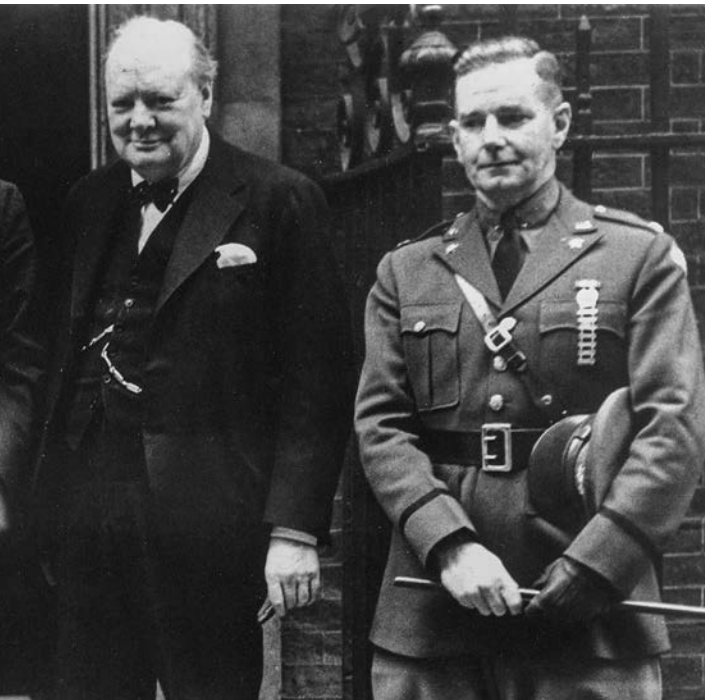
Initially, the 6th RB&L Group was the largest unit in the center’s force structure. Formed at Fort Riley and then shipped to Fort Bragg in June 1952, the 6th consisted of a headquarters company, the 7th Reproduction Company, the 8th Mobile Radio Broadcasting Company and the 2nd L&L Company. In May 1953, OCPW activated the 12th Consolidation Company under the 6th RB&L Group. The organizational concept of the 6th RB&L Group, the forerunner of today’s psychological operations group, was first employed in Korea. The ancestry of the mobile radio company, however, can be traced to McClure’s PWD/SHAEF, which used several such companies to support frontline combat forces in Europe during World War II.

McClure selected Col. Bank from the OCPW staff to command the 10th Special Forces Group. Bank’s “command” in June 1952 consisted of seven enlisted men and one warrant officer — a rather inauspicious beginning. But by April 1953, with the aid of vigorous OCPW recruiting efforts throughout the Army, the 10th had increased to 1,700 officers and enlisted men.

Essentially, the 10th Special Forces Group represented a pool of trained man-power from which units or combinations of units could be drawn to execute specific unconventional-warfare missions. At the heart of the group’s organization was the operational detachment, or “team,” established along the same lines as the OSS operational group. Commanded by a captain, the team, with a first lieutenant execu-

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As a brigadier general, McClure was assigned as military attache to the American Embassy in London. Here, he stands outside No. 10 Downing Street, next to British Prime Minister Winston Churchill.

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE USASOC HISTORY OFFICE



MCCLURE ASSUMED A LEADING ROLE IN "SELLING" THE NEED FOR AN UNCONVENTIONAL-WARFARE CAPABILITY TO THE SENIOR MILITARY AND CIVILIAN LEADERSHIP. IN THE FACE OF FIERCE RESISTANCE, NOT ONLY WITHIN THE ARMY BUT ALSO FROM THE CIA, SPECIAL FORCES BECAME A REALITY LARGELY THROUGH THE PERSISTENCE OF MCCLURE AND THROUGH THE EFFORTS OF BANK AND VOLCKMANN.


tive officer and 13 noncommissioned officers, was capable of infiltrating behind enemy lines to organize, train and direct friendly resistance forces in guerrilla warfare. Early training focused on the individual skills of the various members of the team: operations and intelligence, light and heavy weapons, demolitions, radio communications and medical. Each man trained thoroughly in his particular specialty, then participated in cross-training to learn the rudiments of the other skills.

By early 1953, most of McClure's major programs had been launched; nevertheless, he was surprised to learn that he was being assigned to Iran as chief of the U.S. Military Mission. The rationale was that he had been in a specialized activity too long. The Army chief of staff, General Collins, implied that McClure's chances for promotion would be enhanced by the new assignment.

In Iran, McClure formed close associations with the Shah and the Iranian senior military leaders. As Collins had predicted, McClure was promoted to major general. In 1956, McClure retired from the Army, ending more than 39 years of continuous active service. While driving cross-country with Marjory to San Clemente, Calif., where they planned to build their dream home, McClure became seriously ill. He died of a heart attack at Fort Huachuca, Ariz., on Jan. 1, 1957, two months prior to his 60th birthday.

Robert A. McClure's position as the founder of Army special warfare seems indisputable. Over a critical period of 10 years, he made vital contributions to psychological warfare, to Civil Affairs, and to the creation of Army Special Forces, but his most important legacy may have been the establishment of the Psychological Warfare Center. From its humble beginning, that institution grew, becoming the Special Warfare Center in 1956 and later evolving into the U.S. Army Special Operations Command and the U.S. Army Special Warfare Center and School. Yet despite the fact that McClure made all these things possible, his

role has gone largely unrecognized. Robert A. McClure remains the forgotten father of U.S. Army special warfare.

*Author's note: I first read about Major General Robert A. McClure during the 1970s, while I was conducting research in the National Archives for my Ph.D. dissertation on the origins of the Army's special-warfare capability. Having served several tours with Special Forces during the 1960s without ever reading or hearing about him, I was amazed to discover the central role that McClure played in the creation of a permanent psychological- and unconventional-warfare capability. This article is drawn from that dissertation in history at Duke University; from my subsequent book, *U.S. Army Special Warfare: Its Origins* (National Defense University Press, 1982); and from my more recent research in General McClure's personal papers. I am deeply indebted to Colonel Robert D. McClure, U.S. Air Force (Ret.), and his wife, Betty Ann, for giving me complete access to General McClure's papers. *

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dr. Alfred H. Paddock Jr. completed his 31-year Army career as a colonel in October 1988. His military career included command and staff assignments in Korea, Laos, Okinawa, Vietnam and the U.S. He served three combat tours with SF units in Southeast Asia. Among his varied assignments, Paddock was an instructor of strategic studies at the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College; he served in the Politico-Military Division of the Army Staff in Washington, D.C.; he commanded the 6th PSYOP Battalion and the 4th PSYOP Group at Fort Bragg; and he was the military member of the Secretary's Policy Planning Staff, Department of State. Paddock completed his military career as the Director for PSYOP, Office of the Secretary of Defense. A graduate of the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College and the U.S. Army War College, he earned a B.A. in political science from Park College. Paddock also holds M.A. and Ph.D. degrees in history from Duke University.



—BLACK KNIGHTS— BACK FROM THE BRINK

A potential approach to redefining
the profession of Psychological Operations.

BY LIEUTENANT COLONEL TRENT HICKMAN

“If everyone is thinking alike, then somebody isn't thinking.”

— *General George S. Patton, Commander,
First United States Army Group*

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Soldiers interact with indigenous role players during exercise Black Knight, the culmination exercise for the Psychological Operations Qualification Course. Students must demonstrate interpersonal adaptability, interact and negotiate effectively with diverse individuals and cultures. U.S. ARMY PHOTO BY SGT 1ST CLASS JACOB BRAMAN

I think we can all agree that the profession of influence has suffered a considerable degradation of perceived efficacy on the modern and future battlefield, while the threats psychological warfare would hope to combat have lately become profoundly salient. Russia, China, Iran and many others have long realized that they must use asymmetric means to oppose our will on the global stage, and few capabilities are more asymmetric than those which directly affect an adversary's will to fight.

In this light, it is more important than ever that we do whatever it takes to make the regiment as effective as possible. But what perceptions and skills must change and how can we address them? As supposed branding experts, we have taken very little proactive interest in how our customers perceive us, and seemingly even less interest in the quality of support they receive. This vacuum of direction and concerted effort has left us open to hostile takeover by leaders from outside our community who have limited vested interest in the quality of our wares and the future of what we offer. Inevitable discussions of adding us as generalists to the Special Forces military occupational specialty toolkit have become commonplace in a time when the technical tools of influence become shockingly more specialized by the day.

Rather than rehashing the woes of the past, I would like to concentrate on some general modifications our community might undertake in order to structure a way forward in service to the demands of quickly changing global challenges. In my opinion, a good start would be to focus on four specific pillars of change: *knowledge, specialization, structure and semiotics.*

KNOWLEDGE

It is consistently evident from newly minted practitioners attending training at the Joint Readiness Training Center at Fort Polk, Louisiana, that the primary (if not singular) skill being taught to both special operations forces and conventional forces support elements at the schoolhouse is the oft lauded *Seven Step Psychological Operations (PSYOP) Process*. This process is extremely important to understand and

practice; however, it is also critical that we as practitioners, and leaders, fully understand the context which fostered its genesis in the first place:

This process was created in order to protect a commander from the risks posed by injecting products into an environment that endure beyond his/her tenure.

What this means is the process is meant to govern our activities and mitigate risk where pear-shaped products may pop up later requiring defense. The process does not actually teach us how to influence a target audience's behavior, because it does not begin and end with behavior. It begins and ends with dialectic and rhetorical product and therefore lends itself to measures of performance with less regard to measurable outcomes. But how do we fix this without throwing the baby (seven-steps) out with the bath water?

We need to take our Black Knights back to the basics of influence psychology in order to make them better.

In 1936, a German-American analytic psychologist named Kurt Z. Lewin found that he could analyze two virtually identical patient personalities that manifested with vastly different behaviors. In discovering why that was, Lewin came up with what became "Lewin's Heuristic Equation" and the founding principles of social psychology were born. It reads as follows:

B = f (P,E)...where, **B**ehavior is a **F**unction of the **P**erson/Population and the **E**nvironment.

In other words, if we are talking about psychological operations, we first must fully define our TA behavior to the binary level in order to fully define our measures of effectiveness into a "Yes" or "No" answer. Once defined, we can change one of the two functions above in order to affect behavioral change. Since often we cannot feasibly change a person/population without time, trust and probably a couch, we have to focus our activities and the activities of our supported units on what we have available to inject into the environment. We do this, however, with a clear understanding of the population we intend to influence. This is the foundation of our profession and craft.

Notice, I mentioned nothing of "messaging" or "products" or "loudspeakers", or "radios", or "social media", or "SOF/CF", etc. This is a method for thinking

about problems concerning behavior with a targeted eye on simply *solving* them. The *Seven Step PSYOP Process* can be used to leverage product and information tools into that framework, but that process is far from the only way to influence. With a robust understanding of this methodology, we allow ourselves to apply influence in *any* environmental context, regardless of tools or authorities available. We allow ourselves the freedom to see beyond a prescribed process designed to limit our exposure to risk to a place where we may use all resources immediately available to influence behavior on the battlefield. Instead of sending out radio messages, leaflets and whispers to keep a population from using a bridge, maybe just build a new one and blow the old one up, for example.

To their credit, the curriculum developers at the John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School's 5th Battalion are working to incorporate this science of influence back into their curriculum. In addition to Lewin's Equation, they should bring back studies on the Theory of Planned Behavior (for long-term effects) and Social Judgement Theory (for dialectic and rhetorical product focused work). Those changes cannot happen quickly enough.

SPECIALIZATION

For decades, we have treated and trained our practitioners as generalists, despite the unassailable assertion that the tools available to influence a TA have broadened to the point we can scarcely any longer enumerate them. Only one other branch has as few career fields as we do (Armor) and they really only have one tool to work with — tanks. In nearly every other field, from Special Forces, Infantry, Aviation, Medical Service, and Logistics, to Artillery, Air Defense, Intelligence, etc., new technology and capabilities have always required specialization.

To that end, what sorts of tools are available? Today, a 37F must learn how to operate tactically, in an embassy, and as a planner from various tactical and operational contexts, all the way to the strategic. The tools out there to influence various targets are no longer limited to loudspeakers, face to face, print and broadcast media. Perhaps we should consider new career structures to match new approaches and capabilities of influence. For example: a 37B to operate tactically, a 37C to conduct cyber attacks and social media injects, a 37E to fabricate special effects for deception, a 37F to analyze human factors for consumption, a 37M for graphics design, a 37V for audio and visual effects. Of course, these are just spitballs. The point is to have a baseline understanding of influence and deception for each to apply using their various tools and within their respective sub-disciplines. This would create a critical level of flexibility on the modern battlefield necessary for what I will discuss below.

STRUCTURE

In 2008, the 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment and its two attached battalions controlled Mosul, the second largest city in Iraq. Strategists based the size of the elements required to control that area on the space they needed to control. Just like any maneuver unit might, they considered how many boots were required to control how many square miles of ground. Doctrinally, in parallel to the two battalions fielded, their support requirement

WE NEED TO TAKE OUR BLACK KNIGHTS BACK TO THE BASICS OF INFLUENCE PSYCHOLOGY IN ORDER TO MAKE THEM BETTER.

from PSYOP was no more than two Tactical PSYOP Teams. The problem with this was that maneuver and PSYOP each has a completely different focus. Maneuver focuses on geography, while PSYOP focuses efforts against population concerns and demographics. This left six personnel (only two above the rank of E5) responsible for manipulating the behavior of 2.3 million people, basically door-to-door under often intense fire. Effects were difficult to achieve.

Recently, delayed force-design upgrade plans sought to answer this glaring shortfall in coverage by increasing the level of support from a detachment to a company of PSYOP for a Brigade Combat Team. Although notionally a step in the right direction, effectively quadrupling the support level from before, it too



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would have inevitably fallen far short of success, because it still fails to consider the things that PSYOP does. Doctrine needs to change fundamentally to accept models such as that outlined in Michael Aquino's *Mind War* or as practiced in Russia's Gerasimov Doctrine. We need to practice influence nested with, but apart from, force of arms in terms of planning considerations, where manning is concerned. We need to become modular.

If we develop the capacity to tailor the level of support to consider things like population dynamics, demographics, level of information sophistication, literacy, mission parameters and other TA characteristics, we can influence the modern battlefield far more efficiently. Our structure must consider these effects and behavioral objective based attributes of mission sets in order to maximize the results from influence efforts. Fortunately, the fix will not be too much of a challenge, once the other three pillars are implemented.

SEMOTICS

A pathological sense of humility has not served us well; we have been the Quiet Professionals since the term was coined and exceedingly too quiet, long enough.



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The moves toward selectivity when choosing future Black Knights is a success story of fairly recent changes; however, running a selection process alone is only half the equation. The other half is drawing enough candidates to the selection process to actually *be* selective against force generation needs. In this regard, our Special Forces brothers again outperform us. Psychological Operations formations recognize the need for something to signal its identity, but also fear ridicule, because deep down, whether we are willing to admit it or not. Soldiers fear being seen as frauds in a SOF community most view as experts. And if we are really honest with ourselves and each other, we actually will be seen that way... for a while. Ask any Security Force Assistance Brigade soldier. The trick is to eventually back it up with quality, and to ensure that everyone who completes, has completed or will ever complete the qualification pipeline receives the tab/hat/whatever. All must have that expert image, whether active or reserve, even us "paper tabber" dinosaurs before we are out to pasture. Building unity and posterity through legacy is another tried and true path to legitimacy.

Ostensibly, Black Knights are experts at the marketing and branding skills used to change images and behaviors. Branding is something with which we should be intimately familiar, yet we have seemed unconcerned with our own, time and time again. Whenever any organization makes sweeping



01 Soldiers prepare for an early morning challenge as part of the Psychological Operations Assessment and Selection course at Fort Bragg, North Carolina. The course assesses Candidates through psychological, intellectual, physical and problem-solving (dilemma-based) team events. U.S. ARMY PHOTO BY SGT 1ST CLASS JACOB BRAMAN

02 Psychological Operations Qualification Course Students review messaging products with indigenous role players during exercise Black Knight. U.S. ARMY PHOTO BY SGT 1ST CLASS JACOB BRAMAN

03 Students work through a PSYOP planning exercise during the PSYOP Support to Interagency phase of the Qualification Course. This phase immerses students in the military information support operations mission of interagency-intergovernmental support efforts to shape and influence foreign decision-making and behaviors in support of U.S. regional objectives and interests. U.S. ARMY PHOTO

changes, if they fail to change the semantics of that organization or product offering, the changes will be unsustainable. They fall flat and flaccid, because consumers cannot see the hallmarks of changes in the offering. Said organizations are also unable to be as selective within their ranks without a necessarily larger pool of recruits required to sustain the changes in their value offering. We need to differentiate ourselves among SOF capabilities with a visible and easily recognizable representation of our capability, especially once we begin making changes in the knowledge and skills Black Knights possess.

This, for good or ill, means a change in the accoutrements of our daily uniform. The regiment goes back over the span of a century of warfare and includes such storied units as the 23rd HQ Special Troops *Ghost Army* among its legacy. Give us some kind of hat or tab or heck, make us the only capability that requires no hat, at all! It does not matter. But potential recruits for selection should all be able to see Black Knights apart from other Quiet Professionals at a glance, or why would the highest quality recruits choose to become one of us over the prestige of the Green Beret. Why would supported units put us to good use if they cannot understand us and we demonstrate no mystique to make them want to? Surely, there is something in our history we can hang our metaphorical and literal hat upon.

In conclusion, we must do a better job educating all our Black Knights, but



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in order for us to reach a level of quality and sophistication within those ranks required to organically maintain and perpetuate that education and training, we need to become more selective. Selection is a first step, but we need a robust pool of candidates with breadth of experience and depth of sheer numbers to close the equation. That requires us to showcase our brand in ways we have failed thus far to do. We need to more appropriately structure our force for the flexible nature of a very complex world, but in order to do that, we need to specialize that force in such a way as to modularize it, equipped with the vast number of tools with which we might influence variable TA sets in mind. Changing any one of these pillars will result in a negligible improvement at best and more likely no sustainable improvement over the long haul. If we truly care about the future of the regiment, each one of these problems must be considered, regardless of how we address them. **SW**

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Lt. Col. Trent Hickman has a master's in human behavioral psychology specializing in deception psychology, and is currently the Chief of SOF and CF PSYOP for USASOC at the Joint Readiness Training Center (JRTC), Ft. Polk, LA. He has numerous combat deployments running various special access programs, and nearly 15 years of experience in the community. Additionally, he was an advanced PSYOP skills instructor and doctrine writer at the U.S. Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School, Fort Bragg, North Carolina.

WHAT SHOULD PSYOP DO NEXT?



BY ERINN McQUAGGE, SHAWN CHENOWETH
AND RUSS CHADICK

With the first 100 years of psychological operations officially in the history books, it is a suitable time to ask, “What do we do next?” Revolutionary events within the past 20 years and their follow-on effects have fundamentally altered the information environment, giving an asymmetric advantage to small networks (e.g. extremist organizations), and competitor states (e.g. Russia). The pace of these alterations is blindingly fast, and larger democratic hierarchies struggle to contest the information space while balancing legitimacy, transparency, responsiveness and volume.

REVOLUTIONARY CHANGES IN THE INFORMATION ENVIRONMENT

Five revolutionary changes over the past 20 years have fundamentally altered the information environment. Understanding these changes is necessary to provide a prescriptive conclusion (i.e. what should PSYOP do next?) because PSYOP functions within this medium. For this article, a revolutionary change is defined as an event that upends the status quo or introduces an unprecedented method of information exchange. These revolutionary changes

are significant because they enabled state and non-state actors to challenge U.S. influence.

The Internet Revolution of the late 1990s connected average citizens across the globe in real time — a phenomenon in communication.⁰¹ The advent of email and chat rooms are memorable products of these early days, connecting geographically disparate peoples in an unprecedented way. As the capabilities expanded, global trade migrated to the digital space, bringing finances into the picture. The combination ushered in an ability to interact on a global scale and a com-

mensurate requirement to be proficient or risk falling behind in society. This was especially evident in developed nations with robust IT infrastructure where business made a rapid transition to the online space. The developing world was similarly impacted, with people and business gaining rapid access to markets and information outside of their immediate spheres. The Internet café was a ubiquitous symbol of connectivity in the United States, Canada and Europe by the mid-1990s, and central African nations before the end of the decade.

Serious discussion of the changing information environment must also include the role of the democratization of technology. Consumer access to technology, in terms of both availability and price-fueled significant changes in the digital landscape, affording the ‘everyman’ an ability to be an influential communicator. Manufacturers, competing to connect the world, introduced computers with annually declining prices and expanding capabilities. Email supported fundamentally new pathways to share multimedia content. Complementary tech developments in digital cameras and scanners appeared on shelves, and prices continued to decline while increasing content generation capabilities in the digital space.⁰² Average people could take digital photos or scan their traditionally developed photographs. Before the end of the 20th Century, people could create their own magazine⁰³ or web page on a home computer; at the beginning of the 21st Century, the same person could edit movies, create computer graphic effects, and distribute them on DVDs or CDs. Not only could people communicate across the world, they could also create and distribute more content than ever.

After 9/11, Islamic terrorism expanded into the cyber realm, creating the third revolutionary event. The expansion allowed al-Qaeda to move bin Laden’s influence further and faster through the Internet and the increase in technological consumer peripherals. The 2003 invasion of Iraq advanced the usage of another step with insurgent groups filming their attacks on digital cameras and exploiting the imagery to

build material and financial support, and communicate tactics to global audiences. Finally, the most recent step is inspiring people abroad, with little to no physical connection to a terrorist group, to conduct attacks wherever they are and against whomever they have access. Individuals or small groups, who are ideologically aligned, are replacing the close-knit terrorist cells of the pre-9/11 era.

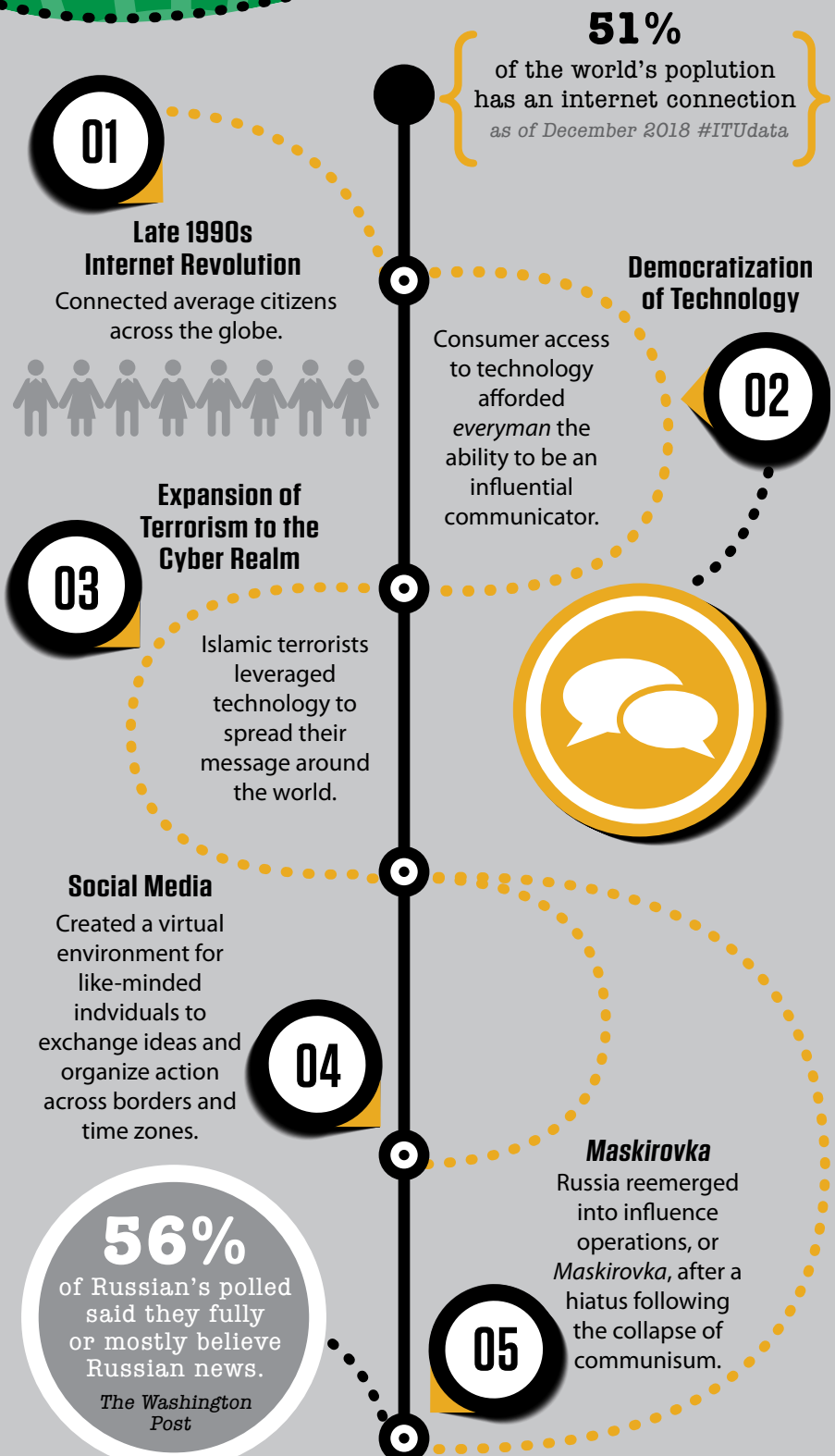
The rise of social media (YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, etc.) is the fourth revolutionary event. Unlike email that moves from point to point, social media is network-based, media heavy and interactive. It created a virtual environment for like-minded individuals to exchange ideas while transcending national borders and time zones. Anyone or group could organize for action online. The most visible impact was the 2011 Arab Spring where bands of activists traded information and organized events largely via social media across North Africa and the Middle East.

Finally, Russia's reemergence into influence operations altered the information environment, because they have a formidable history of the craft, significant national assets and critically, a willingness to aggressively participate at a scale that dominates enough of the media share to have measurable effects. Russia's long history of influence operations, known as *maskirovka*,⁰⁴ began well before their October 1917 Revolution.⁰⁵ Russian influence operations took a hiatus after the collapse of communism but they are a focal point of contemporary Russian national strategy. Russian Information Operations strategy is generally focused on undermining institutions and fostering divisions to weaken transatlantic partnerships and consolidate Russian geopolitical gains.⁰⁶ Furthermore, Russian IO campaigns are coordinated to degrade or deny decision-making through frequent use of disinformation. Russia fuels debate amongst western populations that inhibits risk-adverse western leaders from taking decisive actions. Russia's concerted efforts to manipulate cyberspace and enthusiastic usage of troll farms to shape social media platforms have produced outsized results.

5 REVOLUTIONARY CHANGES

in the Information Environment

{ over the last 20 years }





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WHAT SHOULD PSYOP DO NEXT?

— Initiate change at the detachment level.

Change should originate at the detachment level to influence the current information environment, since they are the building blocks of PSYOP. Planning and implementing PSYOP occurs within detachments and feeds upwards to higher echelons. Changing the building block and allowing the shift to flow upwards is more effective than starting at the top and implementing change downward.

— Become better at the craft of PSYOP.

Improving at the craft of PSYOP requires a combination of education and experience. Education alone produces a soldier without practical skills. Experience alone requires

extensive time and experimenting to learn techniques. There is no guarantee that the techniques are correct. A soldier could become proficient with ineffective techniques.

PSYOP is comprised of social sciences, marketing and some statistics, thus ongoing education within the regiment should include these fields. Each supports the overall mission, meaning as skills in each field increase, there should be a corresponding increase in effectiveness. The Target Audience Analysis Worksheet draws on political science, sociology, economics and psychology to develop a concise understanding of the target audience. Series and product development is marketing renamed, but with a couple differences. Evaluation is heavily reliant on statistical data to test effectiveness. These fields are common courses at local community colleges, making access easy for any soldier.

Gaining experience is more difficult than education given dwell time requirements and limits on deployment lengths (179 days). Both contribute to continuity issues because PSYOP officers⁰⁷ can only deploy at the detachment level for a limited time and short deployments limit the amount of change a detachment can

observe. Maintaining continuity on deployments maximizes the use of the limited time to gain experience. Under the current model, entire detachments rotate out requiring a couple months of on the ground experience before the incoming detachment is familiar with the situation. The initial months are lost. To remedy the issue, PSYOP could adopt an overlapping deployment model- eliminating the need for Relief in Place. Individuals or small groups could intersperse their deployment dates while still maintaining 179 days. The difference is that experienced soldiers would always outnumber newly arriving ones. This would assist in continuity and allow the soldiers with greater time on the ground to assist newer ones, instead of spending the first two months becoming situated.⁰⁸

— Expand the MTOE at the detachment level to Cyber and Intelligence soldiers.

PSYOP occurs mostly at the detachment level, with higher echelons maintaining the force and directing aggregate efforts. Aggregate efforts are only as good as the detachments' operations. Thus, improving the ability to execute operations will pay dividends to higher echelons.

While the PSYOP soldier can improve their ability at the craft, there

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Psychological operations teams pitch civic engagement plans to role-players during Operation Warrior Anvil, a validation exercise held in Key West, Florida, by 7th Military Information Support Battalion, 4th Military Information Support Group. The exercise validated teams through unparalleled training with joint, inter-agency, and civic partners in real-world urban environments that reinforced PSYOP fundamentals, fostered teamwork, and strengthened character. U.S. ARMY PHOTOS BY CAPT. STEPHEN VON JETT



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IMPROVING AT THE CRAFT OF PSYOP REQUIRES A COMBINATION OF EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE. EDUCATION ALONE PRODUCES A SOLDIER WITHOUT PRACTICAL SKILLS. EXPERIENCE ALONE REQUIRES EXTENSIVE TIME AND EXPERIMENTING TO LEARN TECHNIQUES.

is a distinct need for more specialized skills due to technological advancements and demands on the regiment as a whole. Internet access and social media are expanding in Africa and other regions that were previously disconnected. The result is an information landscape unlike any other media that PSYOP employs. While the potential and capabilities are substantial, the technical knowledge required to navigate the Internet⁰⁹ and social media requires a specialized set of skills. Adding MTOE¹⁰ slots at the detachment level for a cyber operations specialist (MOS 17C) meets that requirement with an existing pool of soldiers.

Second is greater fusion of operations and intelligence at the detachment level. Historically, detachments rely on Intelligence soldiers at the battalion or company level, but they often lack familiarity with the unique requirements of PSYOP and the specific needs of the detachment. Consequently, intelligence assets are often unused for operations. Assigning Intelligence soldiers to detachments alleviates this problem. Like Cyber, this is a field best left to already existing practitioners.

— Match competitors on the Internet.

The Internet is a terrain greater than air and land for PSYOP, yet PSYOP has not ventured into it with persistence. Competitor states, such as Russia, along with non-state actors (e.g. ISIS, al-Qaeda), are en route to dominating cyber terrain.

Al Qaeda was an analog organization before 9/11. Osama bin Laden's 1996 and 1998¹¹ fatwas, where he declared and justified war against the U.S., were originally published in a small London newspaper.¹² CNN's Peter Arnett was the first Western journalist to interview bin Laden and introduce the English-speaking world to him in 1997.¹³ When the U.S. military eliminated his safe haven in Afghanistan, the simultaneous loss of physical space, and rise of cyberspace, provided a venue to continue their jihad. Al-Qaeda did not conduct cyber terrorism, but information operations where bin Laden's messages could be disseminated to millions in chat rooms (the precursor to modern social media) that connected ideas across physical space.¹⁴ The recruit who had to be found, vetted and transported to training camps in Afghanistan was dying. In his place was a loosely connected adherent to

the ideology who was less trained, but inside the West.¹⁵

Conversely, competitor nation states utilize synchronous efforts in the digital environment to frame information for global audiences. Competitors desire a sort of 'tactical parity' in cyberspace, to counterbalance the overwhelming lethal superiority of the U.S. Frustratingly, this arena is comparatively uncontested by U.S. PSYOP forces, with regard to countering malign state actors' storylines and narrative. Whether due to inexperience, apathy or misplaced concern over the sensitivity of IO in the diplomatic space, in general, U.S. PSYOP forces have not implemented effective strategies for countering competitor states messaging in cyberspace.

To match competitors online, PSYOP will need to have a long-term presence. Although conventional means (e.g. TV, radio, leaflets) remain effective, the Internet and social media now dominate how many people receive and pass information. Allowing any competitor to propagate their agenda and recruit to their cause without opposition is foolhardy.

— Master the Relief in Place.

The majority of PSYOP missions are long-term efforts with a sizable investment in time to produce results. The

transition to the incoming unit is the most critical event of a deployment. During this period, the gains of the outgoing unit (normally six months) can either be passed to the incoming unit or lost in transition.¹⁶ A successful transition bolsters continuity and makes use of gains from the outgoing unit's deployment at no cost to the incoming. In contrast, an unsuccessful transition wastes the gains from the outgoing unit and leaves the incoming with little understanding of their situation and disposition. As a result, the incoming unit may waste time figuring out and recreating the gains.

From observing transitions between PSYOP units, two factors influenced the success: the total time of the transition and the attitude of the incoming unit. The time of the transition should consist of regular communication between units, while the incoming unit is preparing for deployment. Regular communication ensures that the incoming unit understands the situation before it deploys. Once the unit deploys and begins the RIP, it can focus its time on minute details required for success, versus understanding a complex situation. At a minimum, RIPs should be two weeks, allowing the incoming unit to observe and lead with a counterpart from the outgoing. Better techniques for RIP include redeploying key leaders to assist the incoming unit with pre-mission training and having some key leaders remain with the incoming unit for one to two months in theater. As overlap increases between units, so does continuity, making a long-term effort achievable.

The second factor, the attitude of the incoming unit, is abstract by comparison to transition time. The best attitude for incoming units is humil-

ity in understanding that they will not "win the war" during their deployment, but rather make progress toward long-term goals; and respect for the programs and progress made by the outgoing unit. Done right, the incoming unit assumes control of established plans and programs. Any gains from the outgoing unit transfers to the incoming unit, who then continues progress before their own transition out of theater.


— Read and Write.

PSYOP should reinvigorate professional reading to increase comprehension, critical thinking and writing skills. The Army in general lost a lot of analytical prowess due to the past 17 years of constant combat and increasing reliance on PowerPoint.¹⁷ Training for deployment, combat operations and redeployment occupied a lot of previously free time.¹⁸ Combined with increasing hardware capabilities to create and distribute PowerPoint briefs, the bullet point replaced the paragraph. Distilling complex ideas into single sentences makes an efficient brief, but on that is missing pertinent details.

Writing is the desired result of professional reading; regular contributions to professional journals reflect the regiment's intellectual health. Writing requires research, organization of thought and analysis of evidence to produce. All of these are vital skills that benefit PSYOP soldiers regardless of rank or time-in-service. Additionally, the regular rotation of troops in and out of jobs limits continuity. Writing and publishing experiences, within the limits of security classifications, ensures one's experience can become another's knowledge. Finally, publishing in professional journals makes PSYOP a contributor

to strategic-level discussions within the military. As more PSYOP soldiers become the source of discourse, the overall regiment increases its control over the PSYOP narrative.

CONCLUSION

Psychological Operations has progressed a long way since its beginnings. As we continue to move forward, it is always prudent to ask, "What should we do next?" Continual improvement, with debate involved, is crucial to progress. Not everyone will agree with the prescriptive conclusions, but the larger debate of what to improve, how and why should be brought to the forefront. 

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02

THE NEXT CENTURY OF PSYOP

Psychological Operations and the 21st Century Operating Environment.⁰¹

BY ADAM L. SILVERMAN, PhD

As Psychological Operations enters its second century, the global system, international relations, foreign affairs, the global operating environment and the U.S. standing in the world are vastly different than they were in 1918. In the post 9/11 era, the U.S. remains the sole superpower in a global system that is in many ways a legacy of the Cold War world. Its two closest great power challengers are an aspirant to that status in China, and the claimant to the Soviet Union's legacy in Russia. Neither China nor Russia currently have the capabilities to militarily challenge the U.S. for hegemony. And there are a number of non-state actor threats that, while they certainly present a nuisance to the U.S., its allies and its partners, do not actually present an existential threat. ISIS or al-Qaeda do not now, and never had, the capabilities to bring down the U.S.

There is, however, one constant between 1918 and today. As World War I was ending, or perhaps, more accurately transforming into a series of low intensity conflicts that would simmer until reigniting into World War II,⁰² the great power competition was changing. Specifically it was adding a major new complication: a clash of ideas. These ideas were about how to better

organize state and society. And they placed the ideas of liberty and liberal democracy in all of its various types in direct conflict with the totalitarian ideas of fascism on the extreme right and communism on the extreme left. Just as different forms of liberal democracy would develop, so to would different variations of fascism and communism. These clashes of ideas, of how states, societies, and even the global system should best be structured, would lead to both World War II, a long Cold War, the Korean and Vietnam Wars, and a number of conflicts fought by the proxies of the two post World War II superpowers. That Psychological Operations as a military occupational specialty would grow up and mature in this war of ideas is not surprising. As fighting bad ideas with better ones is part of the core mission of Psychological Operations.

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Given that so many of the dangers and threats that we face in the 21st Century Operating Environment are asymmetric, irregular and unconventional attempts to leverage terrorism and offensive cyber operations to convey information for effect, the 21st Century should be the new Psychological Operations' century.

U.S. ARMY PHOTO BY STAFF SGT. CHAD MENEGAY

As Psychological Operations enters its second century, the world is once again faced with a war of ideas. The ideas of liberty and its expression in the different types of liberal democracy are once again facing off against totalitarian ideas from both state and non-state actors. Vladimir Putin challenges the U.S. and its European Union and NATO allies and partners with his promotion of managed democracy as a façade for the kleptocratic organized crime state he has created in Russia.⁰³ Xi Jinping, recently declared as President for Life, promotes his fusion of Maoism, state-controlled capitalism, and Chinese nationalism through his One Belt and One Road Initiative.⁰⁴ ISIS continues to promote an extreme version of *tawheed*, the Islamic theological understanding of the unity of the Deity, which includes violently imposing its doctrine on believers and unbelievers alike.⁰⁵ There is one major difference, however, between the 20th Century



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war of ideas that stretched from World War II through the post-Cold War period. In the 21st Century Operating Environment, the theater of operations is as likely, if not more likely, to be the cyber domain than the Land, Sea, or Air domains. The Cyber Somain, which is everywhere and nowhere, exists within and without the continental United States at the same time, is perfectly suited for Psychological Operations. As a result, the 21st Century Operating Environment should be the new Psychological Operations century.

THE 21ST CENTURY OPERATING ENVIRONMENT

*The National Security Strategy*⁰⁶ released in December 2017, focused on a return to great power competition as the core of instability in the global system and the 21st Century Operating Environment. Without always being explicit, it conceptualizes a great deal of



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the relations in the global system as being part of the interactions between the U.S. as the legacy superpower from the Cold War, China as a rising and emerging power, and the attempts of Russia to function as the great power legacy of the Soviet Union despite not actually having the capacity to do so aside from its nuclear arsenal. *The National Security Strategy*, by using this characterization of the 21st Century Operating Environment as both a return to an earlier period of great power competition melded to 21st Century concerns, such as the abuse, manipulation and weaponization of the Cyber Domain, provides us with a good starting point for considering where Psychological Operations should go in its second century.

The great power competition that *The National Security Strategy* delineates is not simply a recreation of the late 19th and early 20th centuries' great game. Rather it recognizes that America's competitors are approaching this competition, and will continue to do so, through asymmetric, irregular and unconventional means; though not always in the way that we doctrinally define these terms. In many ways, just as the core of the 20th Century's dispute was a battle of ideas — between liberty and totalitarianism on both the right (Fascism) and left (Communism) extremes, between democracy in its different variations, Fascism, and Communism — so too, is the 21st Century Operating Environment a war of ideas. A war of ideas between the real liberal democracies, whether a Republic like the U.S. and France or parliamentary democracies like



the United Kingdom and many of the EU and NATO member states, Putin's idea of managed democracy — a democratic facade running in front of a kleptocratic organized crime state, China's blend of Maoist Communism and state controlled capitalism, or ISIS's extremist understanding of *tawheed* — the radical unity of the Deity. The major difference, however, is our technological advances have moved ever more of these battles from the physical battlefield into the Cyber Domain. The campaigns in the 21st Century war of ideas will not be fought at the Somme, Belleau Wood, Normandy, Remagen, Pelilue, Guadalcanal, Cho Sin, Khe Sanh, Tora Bora or Ramadi. Rather, more and more of them will be fought on Facebook and Twitter, 4Chan and Reddit. And unlike people, ideas are almost impossible to kill; especially so with weapons. Bad ideas can only be killed with better ones. As Bernard Fall stated in *The Theory and Practice of Insurgency and Counterinsurgency* (emphasis mine):

One can't fight an ideology; one can't fight a militant doctrine with better privies. Yet this is done constantly. One side says, "land reform," and the other side says, "better culverts." One side says, "We are going to kill all those nasty village chiefs and landlords." The other side says, "Yes, but look, we want to give you prize pigs to improve your strain." These arguments just do not match. Simple but adequate appeals will have to be found sooner or later.⁰⁷

Because of the improvements of technology and their effects on great power competition, as well

THIS NEW FORM OF GREAT POWER COMPETITION FOR THE 21ST CENTURY IS PRIMARILY UNCONVENTIONAL ... IT LEVERAGES OTHER FORMS OF NATIONAL POWER TO ACHIEVE ITS STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES. IT IS ALSO PRIMARILY NON-LETHAL.

as their own internal limitations, America's great power competitors are both unable and/or unwilling to challenge the U.S. using lethal means. They are also unable and/or unwilling to challenge using conventional means. China is not yet prepared, despite naval challenges in the South China Sea, to actually challenge the U.S. for the role of military hegemon in the Asian-Pacific area of operations. The People's Liberation Army's Navy is still not ready for that confrontation. Nor is China ready for, let alone trusted by its neighbors to, secure the sea lines of communication and commerce. This has resulted in China continuing its long-term strategy of heavily investing in building up the PLAN while also funding the U.S., through the purchase of about 8 to 11 percent of our foreign-held debt, so that the U.S. will have the funding to continue in this role until China is ready to challenge it for that role. The One Belt and One Road initiative is also part of this strategy. One of the objectives of the initiative is an attempt to generate good will within China's neighbors and partners, through investment and development,⁰⁸ which will be needed in order for China to one day challenge the U.S. The attempt by China to change the attitudes and feelings towards it through the Belt and Road initiative is a good example of the Psychological Operations' effects they have built.

Russia, as the other great power challenger, is simply unable to challenge the U.S. directly. Russia isn't even in the top 10 largest economies in the world.⁰⁹ Even if we don't count individual U.S. states as independent economies. Both California and Texas have larger economies than Russia's, and unlike Russia's, theirs' are more diversified and growing. Russia's military, despite Putin's buildup over the past several years,¹⁰ is still a pale shadow of the Soviet military. Russia's one aircraft carrier, after a month's long deployment in support of Russian interests and operations in Syria, is now in dry dock for refit,¹¹ where it will remain until 2024. While China is not yet ready to challenge the U.S. military, Russia is not able to. This has led to the development of a different strategy: the weaponization of the Cyber Domain for psychological, information and cyber warfare, as well as a return to classic Soviet-style network.

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Road development in Nepal is a major concern for the underdeveloped nation as it seeks to meet the need for connectivity, creating employment and increasing trade.

A 2017 memorandum of understanding between Nepal and China helped fill the financial and material void the nation faced in bridging the infrastructure gap and will ultimately connect Nepal to China, Central Asia and Eastern Europe as part of China's One Belt and One Road Initiative. The U.S. National Security Strategy recognizes that America's competitors, such as China, are approaching the power competition through asymmetric, irregular and unconventional means. As a long-term strategy, China is using Psychological Operations by leveraging this initiative to generate good will with its neighbors and partners, through investment and development, achieving its strategic objectives through non-lethal means.

U.S. ARMY PHOTOS BY
JENNIFER G. ANGELO

This new form of great power competition for the 21st Century is primarily unconventional, but not necessarily how we define unconventional warfare. It leverages other forms of national power to achieve its strategic objectives. It is also primarily non-lethal. Or it is non-lethal in how we usually and doctrinally define lethal action. For instance, it was reported that Russia's cyber operators hacked into, and interfered with, the operations of Saudi petroleum facilities in March 2018.¹² Russia didn't put steel on steel, but they achieved a physically lethal result — taking down Saudi petroleum operations — by leveraging expertise in the cyber domain. The Russian cyber attack on Saudi Arabia leveraged expertise in the Cyber Domain, just as it leveraged that same expertise in pursuit of its psychological operations against the U.S., the EU and NATO. These operations are estimated to have cost Russia approximately 1 percent of its military budget.¹³

The 21st Century Operating Environment is not simply one of great power competition. We still face ongoing threats from non-state actors. These threats are, as they have been since before 9/11, both asymmetric and irregular. As an example, the ISIS attack on the Paris suburb of St. Michael in late 2015 used the irregular, low-intensity warfare tactic of terrorism in pursuit of what is actually a psychological operations strategy.¹⁴ St. Michael is known for being the suburb for immigrants in Paris. In the 1920s and 1930s it welcomed and integrated Italian, Spanish, and Portuguese immigrants into the political, social, and economic life of the community. It did the same thing for Algerian immigrants in the 1950s and 1960s. More recently it has done it for immigrants from the Middle East, Central and Southeast Asia — all predominantly Muslim. St. Michael was not picked by ISIS because it was a particularly soft target, or a softer target than others in/around Paris in 2015, it was picked in an attempt to achieve specific psychological operations effects as a result of the attack.¹⁵

ISIS's stated strategic goals include forcing Muslims to make a choice between ISIS's understanding of Islam, which requires all Muslims to either relocate to the caliphate or fight against non-Muslims and apostates where they reside outside the caliphate, and to force non-Muslim majorities to turn on their Muslim minorities. The intention of the attack was to turn the other residents of St. Michael, as well as the French, other Europeans and Americans against Muslims.

Specifically, so that there would be restrictions on taking in refugees from ISIS's war in the Levant and to crackdown on immigration from Muslim majority countries. The goal was to collapse one's citizenry or resident legal immigrant or refugee status into the binary of Muslim versus non-Muslim. ISIS targeted St. Michael in the attempt to demonstrate to the Muslims it seeks to influence that even a welcoming place like St. Michael was not Dar al Islam — the House of Peace, but actually Dar al Harb — the House of War. And, as a result, they had to either flee to the caliphate or fight. The targeting of St. Michael was also intended to convey to their non-Muslim fellow citizens that their Muslim neighbors cannot be trusted; that any one of them could be an ISIS sleeper agent. ISIS pursues this strategy for its terrorist operations in the U.S., EU and NATO member states because it doesn't have the ability to achieve its objectives directly. So it uses terrorism as a tactic in a psychological operations strategy that uses the information conveyed by the terrorist attacks in St. Michael, Florence, London, New York, etc., for effect against the French, the British, Americans and other EU and NATO partners and allies so they will provide ISIS with outcomes that it has no ability to achieve on its own.¹⁶

PSYCHOLOGICAL OPERATIONS AND THE 21ST CENTURY OPERATING ENVIRONMENT

Given that so many of the dangers and threats that we and our allies and partners face in the 21st Century Operating Environment are asymmetric, irregular and unconventional attempts to leverage terrorism and offensive cyber operations to convey information for effect, the 21st Century should be the new Psychological Operations century. Whether it is aspiring or fading great powers, like China and Russia, or non-state actors like ISIS, al-Qaeda, Boko Haram, etc., using the non-military elements of national power, weaponizing the Cyber Domain or utilizing terrorism and other forms of low-intensity warfare to convey information for effect, part of the solution to these challenges is more Psychological Operations.

Psychological Operations professionals will need to be proficient in offense, defense and maintenance operations to provide the U.S. with a robust resource against these state and non-state threats in the 21st Century Operating Environment. The Psychological Operations community must continue to engage in

AND THIS STRANGE NEW WAR WE FIND OURSELVES IN WILL NOT BE WON, BECAUSE IT CANNOT BE WON, SIMPLY THROUGH HACKING, PLANTING VIRUSES AND MALWARE, AND TIGHTENING DOWN CYBER SECURITY PROTOCOLS TO MAKE AMERICAN AND ALLIED SYSTEMS MORE SECURE AND RESILIENT. IT CAN ONLY BE WON BY UTILIZING PSYCHOLOGICAL OPERATIONS.

proactive Psychological Operations, but these cannot simply be transplanting the existing and historical capabilities and trying to apply them to these newer threats. For instance, it was reported in October 2018 that U.S. Cyber Command was going on the offensive against the Russian cyber operators — military, civilian and contract — who have been targeting the U.S. and our EU and NATO allies.¹⁷ The reporting indicated that our cyber operators have been sending direct messages to the Russians we seek to check, letting them know that we know who they are. While this is an important action to take, just as other more offensive and defensive cyber operations are and will continue to be, it is simply insufficient to successfully deal with the problem. Russia's weaponization of the Cyber Domain to attack the U.S. and our EU and NATO allies is not the key center of gravity in this new type of 21st Century warfare. And this strange new war we find ourselves in will not be won, because it cannot be won, simply through hacking, planting viruses and malware, and tightening down cyber security protocols to make American and allied systems more secure and resilient. It can only be won by utilizing Psychological Operations.

The key centers of gravity in this new form of war are not Russia's computers or the Internet or social media. These are the theaters of operations. Rather the key centers of gravity are Russia's leadership — specifically Vladimir Putin; the leaders of Russia's co-mingled intelligence, organized crime and wealthy oligarchs that both support his actions who are under his control; and the Russian citizenry. If we want Russia to stop what it is doing, then eroding support for the kleptocratic organized crime state that Putin is running under the label of managed democracy is both a necessary and a sufficient condition to seeing

real change. This is not to diminish the importance of both offensive cyber operations that do damage to Putin and his inner circle of oligarchs, intelligence and foreign affairs leadership, and organized crime leaders — often the same people fit into more than one of those categories — and defensive cyber operations to harden targets thereby reducing the ability of Putin to achieve his goals. These are all exceedingly important. However, the reality is that these cyber operations cannot and will not resolve the problem. What will is Letting Psychological Operators do what they do best will have the biggest impact. In this case, leveraging the Cyber Domain to deliver information for effect to change the attitudes of Russians themselves so that the corrupt, kleptocratic, organized crime state they are living in, as well as Putin's leadership of it, become intolerable to them. This is what Putin fears. It is why he has destroyed a free press. It is why he has invested so much in his attempts to demonize the promotion of civic society and good government development within the former Soviet states that Putin claims as his sphere of influence and near abroad, often centered around non-government organizations leveraged by U.S. Agency for International Development.

To hearken back to some of the doctrinal language that General Odierno liked to use when he was the Chief of Staff, part of Psychological Operations role will need to be using information for effect to shape the 21st Century Operating Environment to prevent conflict whenever possible, and when that fails to leverage that shaping to win when it is necessary to fight in the and, Sea and/or Air domains. While we normally, especially within the conventional force, talk about and understand setting the theater in terms of the physical and geographic theater; where camps, bases, and outposts,

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Soldiers participate in the third annual AvengerCon, a hacker-style training event, at Fort Meade, Maryland. Psychological operators must leverage the Cyber Domain as a means to deliver information for effect to change the attitudes and perceptions of targeted populations. DoD PHOTO BY STEVEN STOVER



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phase lines and main supply routes will be placed and situated, we need to broaden that understanding for the 21st Century Operating Environment. Psychological Operations continues to have a major role to play in understanding the social behavioral nuances of both potential, actual and virtual theaters of operation. It must also continue to used to leverage the traditional Information Domain, as well as the informational components of the cyber domain, to actively set the socio-cultural and social behavioral aspects of that theater.

This is especially important given the type of conflict that has emerged over the past several years. So much of it is not taking place on regular battlefields or even by adversaries utilizing what is traditionally considered weaponry. The key battlefield of the 21st Century operating environment is the Cyber Domain and one of the two major weapon systems is Psychological Operations. If we want Russia to stop trying to rip American, British, French, German, Austrians, Greeks, Spanish and many other of our allies and partners civil societies apart, then they cannot just be deterred through offensive and defensive cyber operations. These informational threats have to be countered through offensive Psychological Operations delivered through the various information systems of the Cyber Domain. There is a need for offensive Psychological Operations to deliver information that effects actual change to Chinese and North Korean behavior. This also applies to countering the ability

for ISIS to both utilize terrorist attacks as part of a Psychological Operations strategy to get the U.S., the EU, and NATO to change their own policies, but also to utilize information for effect to prevent ISIS from radicalizing parts of the Muslim minority communities in the U.S. and our EU and NATO partners into weapons.

The Psychological Operations community also has an important defensive role to play. The nebulous nature of this 21st Century theater of operation requires senior leaders in the U.S. military and the Interagency to engage with the Psychological Operations community to develop a 21st Century form of counter-Psychological Operations. As important as it is for the U.S. military to be expeditionary, to be out in the world engaging with our allies and partners and peer competitors, it is as important to respect the Posse Comitatus Act and limit U.S. military operations within the U.S. to times of genuine emergency, much of the conflict so far in the 21st Century Operating Environment cannot be neatly divided into continental versus outside the continental U.S. New rules of engagement and accommodations for how, when, and where Psychological Operations, as a weapons system to counter these 21st Century threats, must be developed. The members of the Psychological Operations community are the American subject-matter experts on using information for affect in order to influence the emotions, motives, objective reasoning, and ultimately the behavior of foreign governments,

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Brig. Gen. Khalil Essam Mohamed Elsayed, commander, Egyptian Human Development and Behavioral Sciences Center, listens intently as a 4th Psychological Operations Group Soldier explains the capabilities of the group's graphics section during a visit to Fort Bragg, North Carolina. Information exchange, in order to coordinate training programs and synchronize efforts with NATO allies and other partners is an important factor that will help shape the battlefield of the 21st Century operating environment.

U.S. ARMY PHOTO BY STAFF SGT. KISSTA DIGREGORIO




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organizations, groups and individuals.¹⁸ There is no one better to turn to now than the Psychological Operations community to combat both the great power and non-state threats that seek to leverage both the cyber and terrestrial domains to deliver information to effect American behavior, as well as of our EU and NATO allies and partners. Your expertise in developing and delivering those simple appeals, to use Fall's formulation, to increase our resiliency to withstand and ward off the signals and messages and ideas directed at us and our allies is essential to successfully emerging from this new era of great power and non-state actor competition.

The expertise-based contributions of the Psychological Operations community extend beyond just offensive and defensive operations. It is also necessary to leverage the power of providing information for effect to maintenance of the steady state in the 21st Century Operating Environment so that it does not become an overgrown garden. As Hannah Arendt explained in *The Origins of Totalitarianism*:

*The ideal subject of totalitarian rule is not the convinced Nazi or the dedicated Communist, but people for whom the distinction between fact and fiction (i.e. the reality of experience) and the distinction between true and false (i.e. the standards of thought) no longer exist.*¹⁹

In the 21st Century Operating Environment, especially in this new 21st Century War of Ideas, Psychological Operations are a powerful tool in both shoring up the distinction between fact and fiction, between true and false, as well as ensuring that we can all tell the difference. 

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

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A Solider monitors exercise progress during a cyberspace training scenario. One of the key 21st Century theaters of operation is cyberspace. Unlike the more traditional theaters of operations, cyberspace is everywhere and nowhere all at the same time. The nebulous nature of this 21st Century theater of operation requires senior leaders in the U.S. military and the Interagency to engage with the Psychological Operations community to develop a 21st Century form of counter-Psychological Operations. U.S. ARMY PHOTO BY BILL ROCHE

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A MISSION OF ATTRITION

The 7th Psychological Operations Battalion's PSYOP Campaign against the Lord's Resistance Army.

BY MAJOR JONATHAN EASTER

The U.S. Army Psychological Operations community, particularly 4th Psychological Operations Group (A), has received considerable acclaim for its role in the campaign against the Lord's Resistance Army in central Africa as part of Operation Observant Compass from 2012-2017. This effort was an effective, yet humanitarian, approach to a complex conflict by pursuing the objective of depleting the rebels' strength through surrender rather than solely by killing them. This emphasis on defection was largely due to the LRA's use of abducted child soldiers to fill its ranks, along with the recognition that these same child soldiers were trapped within the organization by the brutal indoctrination methods of the LRA's leader, Joseph Kony. These defection efforts contributed to reducing the LRA's strength from roughly 400 fighters in 2011, to fewer than 80 in 2017 when U.S. forces withdrew.⁰¹ The overall result was highly successful from the Ugandan perspective. The LRA was effectively isolated from the local population and forced to flee far from Uganda; former insurgent activity has vanished. Uganda's amnesty policy toward the former LRA rebels also continues, and thousands of

former rebels now live peacefully among the very people they once abused. All of this was completed by executing a mixed approach of lethal military operations with non-lethal appeals for defection, blended with a political strategy of local reconciliation. Praise of the U.S. mission's success has included articles from national publications, public recognition by U.S. Africa Command's commanders, and invitations to speak on the subject at the annual Association of the United States Army conference.⁰² But what made PSYOP so effective in this instance?⁰³

ORIGINS OF THE CONFLICT

The war that became known as the "LRA Conflict" in the western world began as a series of insurgencies against the current government of Uganda. The state of Uganda, a former British colony, was divided for decades by regional and ethnic rivalries.⁰⁴ Since its independence in 1962, all of the former presidents of Uganda, from Milton Obote to the infamous Idi Amin, were from Uganda's north. The northern ethnic groups were genetically, culturally and linguistically distinct from Ugandans of other regions. Northerners dominated not only the administrative government, but also the military and police ranks. Among these ethnic groups (or tribes, as they are known in Uganda), is the Acholi, who formed the core of the LRA. When current president, and western Ugandan, Yoweri Museveni and his National Resistance Army, composed primarily of westerners and southerners, seized power in 1986 he upended the status quo. The economy of underdeveloped northern Uganda depended heavily on revenues from the government bureaucracy, and many northern Ugandans feared retribution from Museveni's NRA.⁰⁵ During the Bush War that preceded Museveni's rise to power, the previous regime had been responsible for the killing of an estimated 300,000 civilians in the Luwero Triangle of southwestern Uganda.⁰⁶

In response to these fears, the Uganda People's Defense Army was formed in August 1986 by former Uganda National Liberation Army officers. The UPDF launched a guerrilla war against Museveni's new regime that was soon joined by other groups, including Joseph Kony's followers in 1987. In 1988, the government of Uganda offered amnesty to any rebel who would lay down arms. The NRA conducted talks with the UPDA leadership and signed the Gulu Peace Accord on June 3, 1988.⁰⁷ During the peace talks, government representatives brought the northerners to the capital of Kampala to see the development taking place. They showed them new hotel buildings and the airport at Entebbe, in an effort to persuade them that the north could be similarly developed if the rebels would stop fighting.⁰⁸ Kony and his LRA rejected amnesty and the results of the peace talks, taking refuge across the border in Sudan where they received material support and training from the Sudanese government.

Uganda's forces launched a deliberate counterinsurgency campaign against the LRA in 1991. Initially, many local Acholi were arrested under suspicion of aiding the LRA and there were many allegations of abuse. Despite this, the local population began to side more and more with the government. Northern leaders encouraged participation in local defense units to assist the NRA against the rebels and there was a high rate of participation.⁰⁹ Local Acholi were placed in positions of authority in the government and in the NRA units assigned there. The NRA made deliberate efforts to improve its relationship with the Acholi, including civic action projects such as drilling wells.¹⁰ The LRA's support from the Acholi began to wane. According to one former LRA commander:

"In the early days, the population was very supportive of the LRA and leaked information until the UPDF [NRA at the time] began apologizing and showing that it wanted peace with the north, to rebuild, and then the population started changing its mind. Then the population's information to the LRA was cut and turned against the LRA due to the approach the government used. Then they joined hands with the UPDF to bring peace to northern Uganda. The civilian population turned against Kony and he took revenge. The UPDF provided real information to the population and the people tired of the war and realized that the UPDF could end it."¹¹

One UPDF veteran of this period, who was a platoon commander in Gulu from 1989 until 1995, described the discipline of the NRA troops as a major factor in winning the support of the population:

"The most important weapon is the discipline of the forces formed by political education. The soldiers are taught the history of Uganda, of the kingdoms, of the tribal structures, and even the LRA were using it. So you cannot only use the tribal thing; you will fail. You cannot punish one who is opposed [insurgent] and the entire tribe with him. You must punish individually. So these tactics and strategies were applied, but the important one is the discipline. They [soldiers] must be considerate of the victims. Our conduct turned the people against Kony. Kony wanted to start an Acholi war. He wanted a Luo republic, wanted it to go to the Nile. People turned against him. When they said 'no', he punished them. He said, 'these ones are contaminated. Now they are no longer Acholi.'¹²

Following its loss of popular support, the LRA began to rely on a new form of recruitment: the abduction of children. Kony had never been comfortable with LRA troops who had previous military experience. According to one former LRA commander, "Former military men were not easy for him to control because they knew more than him about the military

and some were escaping. So, in [the] 1990s he started abducting young people that he could train in his own way."¹³ Thousands of children were abducted in northern Uganda; the LRA rousted them from their homes during hours of darkness. The abductions of Acholi alone occurred at such high rates that, by 2008, 48.8 percent of the residents of Acholi communities surveyed by Pham, Vinck and Stover reported having been abducted by the LRA, including at least 25,000 children.¹⁴

The Acholi people, having lost so many children to the LRA, had a strong interest in seeing them safely returned. This, combined with Acholi cultural practices of reconciliation, motivated a grassroots political appeal to the Government of Uganda to grant amnesty to the LRA. The residents of other parts of Uganda sympathized with the Acholi for the loss of their children and use of their youth as child soldiers, which made gaining political support from their fellow Ugandans a feasible goal.¹⁵

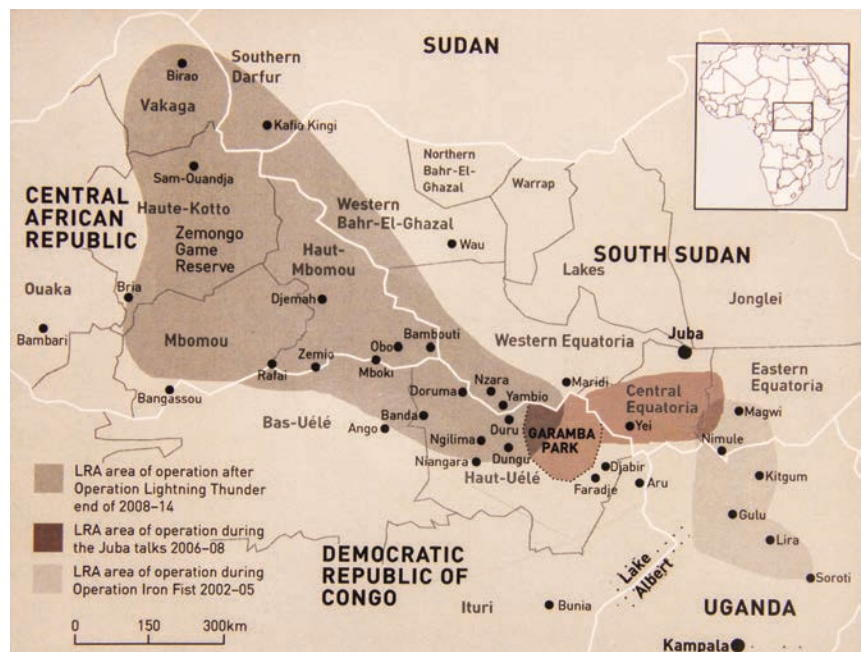
The concept of granting amnesty to the LRA rebels was rooted in traditional Acholi customs. The ritual of *mato oput* provided for complete forgiveness for an offender and reconciliation with the community, regardless of the severity of the crimes committed.¹⁶ Children, in Acholi tradition, are not held fully responsible for their deeds. Children are only considered *odoko dano* ('morally and socially mature persons') when they are old enough to contribute to society and have children of their own.¹⁷ Thus, the availability of rites of reconciliation, along with general condemnation of the LRA's use of child soldiers, combined to make amnesty an attractive option for Acholi Ugandans.

Perhaps due to a long history of warfare between neighboring villages, the Acholi had elaborate systems of conflict resolution to contain violence and prevent costly acts of retribution. They had many customs of reconciliation, of which the most widely known is *mato oput*. This was a ritual performed by an elder with spiritual authority in which two parties, with a mediator, met together and shared a bitter drink made from the bark of the *oput* tree. During the ritual, both parties agreed to forgive one another. This ritual culminated in an oath called *gomo tong*, or 'bending the spear', in which both parties agreed never to turn weapons on each other again. These rituals, along with the underlying acceptance of reconciliation, played a significant role in the conflict between the LRA and the Ugandan government forces and was further exploited by RPTs to promote defections.

The NRA/UPDF disseminated amnesty leaflets and pamphlets beginning in the year 2000. Many viewed them as effective, since some rebels reported to the NRA with the amnesty literature in hand.¹⁸ The prominent Acholi radio personality John Baptist "Lacambel" Oryema reported that

01 A U.S. Army Psychological Operations Soldier drops leaflets over the Lord's Resistance Army's area of operations. The leaflets announced amnesty would be granted to any rebel who would lay down arms. U.S. ARMY PHOTO

02 The Lord's Resistance Army's primary areas of operation from 2002-2014 in central Africa.



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he prepared leaflets to advertise the Amnesty Statute and the subsequent Amnesty Act and carried them to rallies in northern Uganda. He also accompanied NRA military convoys into the bush to personally disseminate the leaflets. He took other initiatives as well:

"I had a small office of information and it would also assist the army. I encouraged them to approach the rebels in a spirit of forgiveness. I opened a small place with some of my colleagues close to the barracks [NRA 4th Division] to take in the defectors. We would train those boys on what amnesty was all about. There were no NGOs in those days so we did this our own way. I would go to the market and say, 'how many of you have met your children in the bush? I want to see you, one by one.' So, I would give them this small piece of paper called 'Amnesty' and told them 'this is something very important and do not share it with anyone you do not trust.' They would give these leaflets to the youth in the bush. I started talking to wives of those UPDF fighters and started drilling them on what to say to their husbands to tactfully sensitize them. They reported back to me and then I reported back to the government."¹⁸

One former senior LRA commander describes the effects of amnesty this way:

"What the Ugandan Government did was very effective. It almost coincides with what was said in the Bible 'feed your enemy.' Those that left the bush and those that remained, their minds were changed to support the government. Those that left, they forgot the LRA with all their hearts."²⁰

In 1996, Lacambel approached UPDF spokesman Colonel Bantariza and asked him for access to the government radio station. Bantariza gave Lacambel one hour of airtime per day. Lacambel used a cassette player to transmit pre-recorded messages designed for the LRA rebels and their family members. "That hour was like gold. We were limited by the Ministry of Information to the time they gave us. They [local people] used to call it Radio Lacambel. Then we asked for two hours." The program began airing interviews with former rebels, as well as family members of the abducted. Lacambel named it "Amnesty" around the time that the Amnesty Statute was passed to promote awareness. He noticed that LRA defections increased in response to the program. Lacambel also interviewed UPDF officers so that they could tell their story to the local population and the rebels, confronting Kony's propaganda directly. "So the truth came out," one source said.²¹ The UPDF also began leaving small radios in places for the LRA to find so that they could tune into the programming.

Lacambel's radio program, later called *Dwog Paco* ('come home'), began broadcasting messages to individual LRA fighters by name. These messages made use of family members or former rebel comrades to increase credibility and arouse a sense of nostalgia. One former LRA commander responded to these messages directly, stating:

"These [messages] shook the foundation of the LRA and these commanders started to wonder if they should come out. The minds of many people, even the troops, started to change. We started hearing of many escapes. Those that came before me were calling my name. I called and did the same thing when I came out [in 2004] and called Sam Kolo²² and told him, he was a brigadier at the time, and he came out. That is the thing, the friend calls you and you believe him."²³

By the middle of 2004, more than 5,000 former LRA fighters had defected and applied for amnesty.²⁴ The Ugandans' three-pronged approach to the insurgency was yielding results: political appeals and reconstruction for northern Uganda, amnesty for rebels willing to surrender, and "military pressure" to pursue the rebels and deny them safe haven.²⁵

U.S. INTERVENTION

International awareness of the situation in northern Uganda built slowly in the 1990s and early 2000s and increased greatly after the advent of advocacy campaigns launched by NGOs such as Resolve Uganda (later called the Resolve), the Enough Project, and Invisible Children in 2007. These groups initially focused on the suffering of northern Ugandans as a result of the conflict



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and the difficulties of life in displaced persons camps. However, after 2009, they advocated for U.S. military intervention as the only realistic means of stopping Kony and the LRA.²⁶ These advocacy campaigns included the viral "Kony 2012" social media campaign, and ultimately resulted in Operation Observant Compass. The objectives of the operation were simple:

1. Increase the protection of civilians.
2. Apprehend, or remove from the battlefield, Joseph Kony and his senior commanders.
3. Promote the defection, disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration of remaining LRA fighters.
4. Increase humanitarian access and provide continued relief to affected communities.²⁷

The advantage of these objectives was that they could be validated; they were clearly measurable and attainable through quantifiable means, not as qualitative abstractions. Their progress was tracked throughout the life of the mission, especially on promoting defections and removing senior leaders from the battlefield, and demonstrable results encouraged continued support from AFRICOM, even though the ultimate objective of removing Kony from the battlefield was never realized.

SOCAFRICA established a joint special operations task force (later called SOCFWD-CA) in Entebbe, Uganda to command and control the operation that stretched from Uganda, through the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo, into the Central African Republic, and across South Sudan. SFODAs served as advisors to African Union Regional Task Force partners at locations throughout the area, approximately



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Former Lord's Resistance Army fighters provide feedback on PSYOP products in Gulu, Uganda, in order to help create effective products to encourage more fighters to seek amnesty. U.S. ARMY PHOTO

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A community bulletin board promotes acceptance of defectors in Nabanga, South Sudan. U.S. ARMY PHOTO



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the size of California. The Regional PSYOP Teams deployed to the mission designed products, advised partner forces, liaised with IGOs and NGOs, planned operations and augmented the ODAs.

U.S. forces routinely had problems understanding the environment in central Africa in contrast to more familiar, recent operational settings such as Iraq or Afghanistan. The densely-forested terrain, biological threats, distances between resupply points, obscure languages and cultures and lack of a common information infrastructure (such as cellular phone towers) challenged the tried-and-true model of find, fix, and finish. The LRA did not routinely use conventional communications systems such as cell phones or satellite phones. When they did, they used them sparingly and observed strict discipline to avoid detection of their radio signals; their communications were conducted in short bursts of coded language within prescribed windows defined by cryptic SOPs. The rainforest also provided two or three canopies of cover that made aerial surveillance difficult. Inhabitants of the region were sparse and those who lived there often spoke languages unknown to the SOF linguists. To reach these villages after LRA attacks took as long as nine hours based on the distances and aircraft available. Finding the LRA was difficult. Fixing them was unlikely. Finishing them appeared nigh impossible.

THE INDIGENOUS APPROACH

Once killing or capturing Joseph Kony proved a more difficult task than initially expected, OOC's objective of promoting defections of LRA combatants

became the mission's primary measure of success. The role of PSYOP (also called MISO) in the operation grew more involved as time went on. As successes mounted, the Ugandan and U.S. field commanders grew more confident in employing PSYOP against the LRA in innovative ways. This led them, the U.S. Embassy - Kampala, and even the partner NGOs to develop a steady stream of activities based on an understanding of the indigenous populations. These activities can be synthesized into five general lines of effort:

1. Broad messaging to LRA fighters to promote defection.
2. Broad messaging to surrounding civilian populations to promote the peaceful acceptance of LRA defectors.
3. Tailored messaging to promote internal divisions within the LRA.
4. Targeted messaging to promote the defection or surrender of specific members of the LRA.
5. The development of improved dissemination channels and methods appropriate for the target audiences and the operational environment.

The first line of effort was already being conducted through several media, but required reinforcement. The UPDF had conducted operations to promote defection as early as 1988 to reduce the strength of Kony's forces and weaken the morale of those fighters who remained. These efforts were largely supported by regional FM radio stations which still broadcasted testimonials by former abductees and fighters, as well as appeals by family members of those who were still assumed to be fighting for the LRA. In 2012, the same original radio stations, Mega FM and UBC, were still involved in broadcasting defection messages, but the broadcasts were made over shortwave frequencies so that they could be received by LRA members hundreds of miles from Uganda. To refine these efforts, the RPT worked with the most recent defectors to develop radio messages and interviews with their voices used as proof of life to detractors still within the LRA. The team developed print products from these same defectors using their names and recent photographs on small, laminated leaflets and disseminated them by air over known LRA trails. Whenever a new defector reported to the AU-RTF or UN, the team repeated this process to demonstrate that the defector had reached safety and that the opportunity remained for oth-

ers to follow. The teams even went so far as to disseminate pictures of the defectors feasting or enjoying simple treats they could not get in the bush, such as traditional foods and soda. The LRA by this time was such a small organization that any Ugandan LRA member was well-known to the others, and news of a successful defection spread rapidly.²⁸

This effort wasn't only conducted by the U.S. military, but also by the UN Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo, and Invisible Children. Both organizations conducted independent leaflet drops from their own aircraft and made efforts to synchronize their targeting and messages with USSOF. The RPT and Invisible Children, in particular, shared photographs of defectors and concepts for messages, to include the leaflets themselves, with Invisible Children often providing assistance with graphic design and translation. Throughout the course of OOC, the U.S. disseminated more than one million leaflets.²⁹ One U.S. veteran of the operation described this as a "massive littering campaign," but qualified that statement further:

"The goal wasn't just to litter, it was to send a signal to the LRA. Where the leaflets dropped, and we started using crossing points, watering holes, traditional rat lines, etcetera, either the foraging [LRA] group commanders had to avoid the area or risk their troops learning of the [defection] program... and if they avoided the traditional places, their soldiers knew something [was different] just by that avoidance. [LRA] commanders had to decide whether to inform Kony and company [that] there were flyers [leaflets] in the area and risk him having them killed for exposure to those things. [LRA] commanders had to decide what to tell their people, and even when they didn't tell their people [about the leaflets], info leaked... and [LRA] commanders had to decide for themselves

WE HEARD MANY MESSAGES ... WE HEARD VOICES OF DIFFERENT PEOPLE WHO WERE WITH US BEFORE, WE EVEN SAW PICTURES WHICH WERE DROPPED USING THE HELICOPTER. ALL OF THEM WERE TELLING US TO COME HOME. OTHERS ASKED US TO PUT OUR WEAPONS DOWN. FOR ME, I HEARD MY MOTHER'S VOICE AND SAW HER PICTURE, TOO.

*what to do with the information they had about the defection from these leaflets... to take advantage of it or risk losing more than they already had."*³⁰

Another technique the U.S. employed was the use of aerial loudspeaker systems. These loudspeakers were mounted on helicopters and flown over the bush to broadcast messages over a range of approximately one mile on either side of the aircraft. These systems were used to broadcast pre-recorded messages as well as live broadcasts from well-known communicators such as Lacambel and former LRA commander Caesar Acelam. One former LRA fighter recalls:

*"We heard many messages. Since we were in Garamba [National Park, DRC] we could listen to radios and Dwog Cen Paco ['Come Home'] program. Then on helicopter we heard voices of different people who were with us before, we even saw pictures which were dropped using the helicopter. All of them were telling us to come home. Others asked us to put our weapons down. For me, I heard my mother's voice and saw her picture, too."*³¹

This second line of effort was perhaps more challenging. To get a formerly victimized village to the point of willingly, and peacefully, accepting former LRA defectors was a complex task and required a series of preparatory measures. The first step in sensitizing populations to the idea of receiving LRA defectors was to identify which villages were the most supportive of the idea and also identifiable by the LRA as landmarks. It is no small thing to ask a population to receive a former fighter with open arms when those same fighters likely maimed, raped and killed members of that village in the very recent past.

Several of the partner NGOs were involved in sensitization efforts, to try to help the communities to understand the value of receiving defectors. This was especially true of Invisible Children, which sought to convey that by receiving defectors, villages would encourage further defections, which would weaken the LRA and reduce its ability to fight and sustain itself through pillaging. The coalition of military forces and NGOs called the villages that joined this initiative "safe reporting sites" or SRS, and they were usually co-located with AU-RTF contingents or the COFCs. The RPT advertised the location of these SRS through leaflets, radio and loudspeaker messages broadcast from helicopters. The AU-RTF provided security details to prevent the SRS from being attacked in reprisals. Invisible Children provided a network of high-frequency radio transmitters to the SRS villages and neighboring settlements to both provide early warning of attacks and to alert the community when LRA defectors arrived.

Once defectors arrived at the SRS, the local volunteers (civilian villagers) would contact AU-RTF and U.S. Special Operations security forces, who would debrief them. NGOs would provide medical aid and counseling, as well as help to locate the

defectors' places of origin and families. The entire process was decentralized and ran delicately; it was dependent on the goodwill and shared objectives of all parties involved. If a group of villagers attacked defectors in retaliation for their past acts, the attack would have the potential to stifle further defections for months. The system was admittedly fragile, but functioned very effectively.

Promoting internal divisions within the LRA served two purposes. The first is that it weakened the effectiveness of the LRA as an organization by undermining the morale of its leadership. The second is that it created additional internal pressures on its members that could lead to additional defections or the loss of manpower to internal conflict.³² The RPT worked toward these ends by disseminating certain types of information to the LRA. The most prominent was the advertisement of cash rewards programs. Because Kony and his most notorious officers had been indicted by the International Criminal Court, the Department of State's War Crimes Rewards Program offered a reward of up to \$5 million for information leading to their capture. The U.S. Department of Defense also had



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A solar-powered FM radio station constructed in the Central African Republic. Radio stations like this were established in remote villages to extend the range of clear signals that could reach the Lord's Resistance Army.



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02
A United Nations mobile radio team in Bangadi, Democratic Republic of Congo, promotes defection through broadcasts aimed at armed rebels.

03
A Soldier from the 7th Psychological Operations Battalion drops leaflets into the dense jungles where the LRA operated.

U.S. ARMY PHOTOS



03

a rewards program in place. By advertising these rewards for the capture of an LRA member or information on their whereabouts, the AU-RTF could effectively motivate thousands of people in the area of operations who were familiar with the territory. This was intended to convey a sense of area denial to Kony. It was also a potential means to motivate individuals within Sudan who had access to Kony to give him up.

With the aid of local partners, the RPT translated messages advertising these programs into seven languages (Acholi, Arabic, French, Lingala, Pazande, Songo and Swahili) and used leaflets, radio and loudspeakers for dissemination throughout the LRA's range.³³ These messages were intended to increase the psychological pressure on Kony and his commanders, to convey the sense that he was being hunted and make him feel that he could trust no one; for instance, even the Sudanese might give him up for a handsome reward. Interviews with one former LRA commander indicated that Kony was aware of these rewards as early as 2005, and that they caused him to be increasingly concerned over his security and diminished his trust in subordinates.³⁴

These efforts were very successful in many respects. Reports from defectors indicated that the LRA were concerned by "bounties" for Kony, and residents of surrounding areas sought additional details from the US-SOF advisers. In October 2013, a rural hunter in the DRC, motivated by rumors of these cash rewards, shot and killed an LRA commander whom he caught at a river crossing. The RPT subsequently broadcast the death of this commander over partner radio stations and over Voice of America's Africa shortwave network, which led to yet another defection from the deceased LRA commander's group.³⁵

The fourth line of effort, which employed precision targeting for defection of specific members of the LRA, was perhaps the most complex. Crafting effective messages for individuals with whom the outside world has had no contact for 5-15 years took a great deal of time and consideration. The RPT conducted basic character studies of these targets based on known family members or childhood histories and make an inventory of all available media to which the target would be susceptible. For instance, did the target have a wife or mother left behind or who had already returned to Uganda? Was there someone in Uganda whom he trusted? Did he have a favorite musician or teacher? Did he join the LRA for political reasons or had he been abducted? Essentially, the driving question was, what vulnerabilities did the target have that could be exploited to leverage his defection?


These improved, targeted messages resulted in several successful defections, including that of Michael Omona, Kony's signaler,³⁶ who defected in response to a series of messages crafted specifically for him in 2016.³⁷ Omona may have defected in part thanks to his privileged access to radio broadcasts given his proximity to Kony, but, according to interviews, Omona credits the content of the messages with influencing his defection.³⁸

The fifth line of effort was the expansion of media infrastructure and access. In the parts of central Africa where the LRA operated, there is very little in the way of civilian technological infrastructure and most villages in the area did not even have cellular phone service. The RPT identified which media the LRA were most susceptible to, and found through interviews with former LRA members that radio remained a highly effective medium. However, Kony feared his rank-and-file troops hearing radio messages, and only allowed his officers to listen to radio programs.³⁹ Despite LRA leaders' overall wariness of messages from the Ugandan government, they would still listen to the radio for information about the outside world and for the occasional bit of music once they had camped for the night or before they began moving early in the morning. Many of them still listened to Lacambel's program, *Dwog Paco*, despite Kony's prohibitions.⁴⁰

With this in mind, the RPT sought to improve broadcast radio network coverage to reach LRA-occupied areas and increase access to shortwave frequencies that could penetrate the entire continent of Africa. Thanks to the assistance of U.S. Embassy - Kampala, Voice of America granted access to the programming editors for its Africa division. The RPT then began providing VOA with scripts that conveyed messages meant for Kony, the LRA and surrounding populations in the DRC, CAR, and South Sudan. VOA broadcasted these messages over its four shortwave frequencies in English, French, Arabic and Swahili.

The SOCFWD also built new FM radio stations in the Central African Republic to extend the range of clear, FM radio signals that could reach the LRA. These stations were established in remote villages and all of the materials were flown in by air for assembly. Local operators in these villages were identified and trained by NGO partners on how to run a solar-powered radio station, including developing content in the recording studio and how to manage and implement the defec-tion messaging effectively on the stations' computerized scheduling systems. Existing FM radio stations in CAR, previously established by NGOs, were repaired or enhanced. The UN managed two radio stations in the DRC, supported by the NGO the Voice Project. The Voice Project provided FM stations with programming content and training for the stations' operators.⁴¹ The RPT coordinated directly with these NGOs, and with MONUSCO, in the effort to synchronize program-ming and share supporting programming content across the AO.

CONCLUSION

The effectiveness of U.S. PSYOP efforts in OOC were due to deliberate, and dedicated efforts to understand the operational environment and apply influence through an indigenous approach. The techniques employed by the RPTs were not necessarily new to the conflict, but many had been forgotten by the operational UPDF of the day or were out of their reach. By reincorporating and amplifying the kinds of appeals that the Ugandans had effectively employed in the previous 20 years of the conflict, U.S. Army Special Operations Forces, assisted by local partners and a dedicated group of civilian volunteers, improved the overall effectiveness of the combined counter-LRA effort and effectively neutralized Kony's forces. 

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Maj. Jonathan Easter deployed in support of Operation Observant Compass in 2013. In 2017, he traveled to Uganda to conduct research for his master's thesis on the lessons learned from the combined Ugandan/U.S. campaign against the LRA, published later that year by Naval Postgraduate School. MAJ Easter is currently the commander of A/7th POB (A), 4th POG (A), 1st SFC (A) at Fort Bragg, North Carolina.

NOTES **01.** Ledio Cakaj, "800 Million Later, Joseph Kony is Still a Threat," *Foreign Policy*, June 28, 2017: <https://foreignpolicy.com/2017/06/28/800-million-later-joseph-kony-is-still-a-threat/> **02.** Michael M. Phillips, "U.S. to Rebels: Listen to Mom - Commandos Wage Psychological Battle to Draw Last of Joseph Kony's Troops out of African Bush," *Wall Street Journal*, March 11, 2017; Patrick Tucker, "How US Special Operators Helped Take Down Joseph Kony's Army with Tailored Messages," *Defense One*, October 17, 2017: <https://www.defenseone.com/technology/2017/10/how-4-green-berets-took-down-joseph-konys-army-tailored-messages/141851/>; USAFRICOM posture statements 2014-2017. **03.** Much of this research was conducted as part of the author's master's thesis at Naval Postgraduate School with Major Benon Hatangimana of the Uganda People's Defense Force. It includes interviews with veterans of the conflict from both sides, interviews with other witnesses and experts on the LRA, and the author's own experience as a participant in the campaign. The identity of the majority of these interviewees, with few exceptions, remains confidential by mutual agreement. **04.** Fredrick Odoi-Tanga, "Politics, Ethnicity, and Conflict in Post-Independence Acholiland, Uganda 1962-2006," Ph.D. Dissertation (Pretoria: University of Pretoria, 2010), 11. **05.** Caroline Lamwaka, *The Raging Storm: A Reporter's Inside Account of the Northern Uganda War 1986-2005*, Kampala, Uganda: Fountain Publishers, 2016: 50-51. **06.** Ruddy Doom and Koen Vlassenroot, "Kony's Message: A New Koine? The Lord's Resistance Army in Northern Uganda," *African Affairs* 98 (1999): 9, 13. **07.** Doom and Vlassenroot, 15. **08.** Author Interview with John Baptist "Lacambel" Oryema, Gulu, Uganda, July 13, 2017. **09.** Doom and Vlassenroot, 23. **10.** Lamwaka, 104. **11.** Author Interview with a former LRA commander, Gulu, Uganda, July 11, 2017. **12.** Author Interview with an UPDF Officer, Gulu, Uganda, July 10, 2017. **13.** Author Interview with a former LRA commander, Gulu, Uganda, July 11, 2017. **14.** Phuong Pham, Patrick Vinck, and Eric Stover, "The Lord's Resistance Army and Forced Conscription in Northern Uganda," *Human Rights Quarterly* 30 (2008): 404. **15.** Author Interview with the Uganda Amnesty Commission, Gulu, Uganda, July 12, 2017. **16.** Ibid. **17.** Sverker Finstrom, *Living with Bad Surroundings*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2008: 225. **18.** Author Interview with an UPDF Officer, Gulu, Uganda, July 10, 2017. **19.** Author Interview with Lacambel. Lacambel also served as a mediator in the talks between the UPDA and the NRA according to Lamwaka, 146. **20.** Author interview with a former LRA commander, Gulu, Uganda, July 11, 2017. **21.** Author Interview with an UPDF Officer, Pader, Uganda, July 11, 2017. **22.** Sam Kolo was formerly the LRA's spokesman. **23.** Author interview with a former LRA commander, Gulu, Uganda, July 11, 2017. **24.** Janine Clark, "The ICC, Uganda, and the LRA: Re-Framing the Debate," *African Studies*, 2010: 145. **25.** Author Interviews with an UPDF Officer, Gulu, Uganda, July 10, 2017. **26.** Jonathan Fisher, "Framing Kony: Uganda's War, Obama's Advisers, and the Nature of 'Influence' in Western Foreign Policy Making," *Third World Quarterly*, 2014: 692-3. **27.** White House Office of the Press Secretary, "Fact Sheet: Mitigating and Eliminating the Threat to Civilians Posed by the Lord's Resistance Army, April 23, 2012. **28.** David Ocitti, interview with group of former LRA combatants, Gulu, Uganda, transcript provided by correspondence, October 11, 2017. **29.** Author Interview with AFRICOM Staff, Stuttgart, Germany, October 19, 2017. **30.** Author Interview with USSOF Operator, Monterey, CA, September 12, 2017. **31.** David Ocitti, Interview with Group of Former LRA, Gulu, Uganda, Provided by Correspondence, October 11, 2017. **32.** Initial defections provided what psychologists call "social proof" that encouraged later defections. **33.** For more information see Scott Ross, "Encouraging Rebel Demobilization by Radio in Uganda and the DR Congo: the Case of 'Come Home' Messaging," *African Studies Review*, 2016:38. **34.** Author Interview with a Former LRA Commander, Gulu, Uganda, July 11, 2017. **35.** See Voice of America, "Aiding Those Who Defect from the LRA," September 3, 2013: <https://editorials.voa.gov/a/aiding-those-who-defect-from-the-lra/1742782.html>. **36.** A signaler in the LRA is the equivalent of a radio-telephone operator (RTO) communications specialist in the U.S. Army. **37.** Author Interview with USSOF Operator, Fort Bragg, NC, June 14, 2017. **38.** David Ocitti, Interview with former LRA members, transcript provided by personal correspondence, October 11, 2017. **39.** Ledio Cakaj, *When the Walking Defeats You: One Man's Journey as Joseph Kony's Bodyguard*, London: Zed Books, 2016: 355. **40.** Ibid. **41.** Author interview with Staff of the Voice Project, September 15, 2017.

THE PSYCHOLOGICAL WAR FOR VIETNAM, 1960-1968

The Vietnam War is arguably one of the most heavily covered conflicts in American history. However, within that war is the little known story of psychological operations. A trained practitioner himself and a professor of history, Dr. Myevyn Roberts discusses PSYOP in a clear, concise manner. He begins with the struggle of the state to contend with a low-level insurgency that quickly deteriorated into a full-blown war. Hostile neighbors infiltrated forces and materiel in an attempt to forcibly unite North and South Vietnam under a Marxist regime.


Dr. Roberts begins his in-depth study by placing the emerging conflict in the context of post-World War II and post-French withdrawal and how the international community supported a temporary division of Vietnam into northern and southern states, pending eventual unification. However, the key to the impending conflict was that the free-world powers envisioned a peaceful, democratic, united Vietnam while the Soviet Bloc sought a Marxist united Vietnam. So the spark of war rapidly flared into an active insurgency where North Vietnam sought to cause the collapse of the south without risking active U.S. intervention. Dr. Roberts traces U.S. PSYOP participation in the southern Republic of Vietnam from its earliest days in 1956 with the establishment of the PSYWAR Center in Saigon until just after the Tet Offensive of 1968.

The author describes the start of U.S. efforts with the formation of a Vietnamese capability from virtually nothing in a special operations advise and assist role to a progressively more active role that increasingly consisted of operations with conventional forces. In the later years covered in this book, he relates how the organization of PSYOP forces changed from only a few units to battalions, then to the creation of the 2nd, 4th, and 7th PSYOP Groups in 1965 and 1967, showing how that brief period saw explosive demand for the capability, which led to the creation of much of the structure that exists today.

Operationally, Dr. Roberts describes how hit-or-miss techniques of previous warfare changed to more refined and accurate as phenomenal changes forced improvements in tactics, techniques and procedures. He also was clear in outlining impediments that prevented PSYOP from being as effective as it could have been. Many of those impediments are familiar to the current generation of practitioners and point to the necessity of heeding the lessons of history.

At the conclusion of the book, Dr. Roberts clearly states the overall success of both U.S. and South Vietnamese PSYOP in undermining Marxist efforts to bring down the southern government as well as significantly eroding any support among the southern population for North Vietnamese goals and objectives. The reasons he cited for the eventual collapse of the southern government and state were solidly political in that U.S. President Lyndon Johnson's political considerations overshadowed military requirements, severely inhibiting U.S. ability to not only conduct military operations, but to support and develop South Vietnam. This lack of U.S. fundamental support for the southern state eroded its strength, morale and eventually its ability to defend itself, and no PSYOP effort, however well executed, could save it.

The only real criticism leveled against this book would be a lack of any indication of a follow-on work that would cover 1968-1975 and the fall of South Vietnam. The lessons and other information this book

provides seems incomplete and not the whole story as it relates to PSYOP in Vietnam. However, as a stand-alone work, this book is very well written and documented. Most importantly, it covers an overlooked part of one of the most contentious conflicts this nation experienced — the role of psychological operations and what the soldiers did to fight a determined and formidable enemy. It is well worth the read. 



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