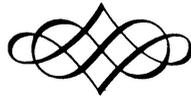


SECTION ONE



*Strategic Communication: Wielding the
Information Element of Power*



INTRODUCTION

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Strategic Communication has no overarching United States government definition...and no single governmental agency to provide oversight, direction, programs and resources. In fact there is no national communication strategy. But it is clear that effectively communicating the values and policies of the United States to the world, while increasingly important, is also increasingly difficult in today's global information environment. That environment enables non-traditional players who often use cheap, ubiquitous communications means to transmit their messages with immediacy and with world-wide coverage and impact. These actors, often uninhibited by the need to be truthful, are also devoid of a bureaucracy that demands clearance and approval of public statements. And so, the United States finds itself responding to adversaries' messages rather than proactively and effectively telling our own story. This while recognizing (according to the September 2006 National Strategy for Combating Terrorism) that we are currently conducting a "battle of arms and a battle of ideas" that is a long term effort.

The student papers in this section examine these challenges and dilemmas and recommend strategies, organizations and processes that are necessary to win this battle of ideas.

In the first paper, Colonel Jill Ludowese reviews past government initiatives to integrate strategic communication and analyzes which government agency would be best suited to craft our national communication strategy and lead the strategic communication interagency effort.

The second paper, written by Colonel Richard Leap, looks more specifically at the distinct functions generally considered to make

up strategic communication, i.e. public diplomacy, public affairs and military information operations and, based on that analysis, recommends improvements to U.S. strategic communication.

Lieutenant Colonel Greg Julian writes an interesting concept paper that provides the outline of a national communication strategy in the third essay. While a short piece, it lists the essential goals and objectives that can serve as a model to drive U.S. government strategic communication efforts.

Finally, Colonel Dan Baggio provides a first-hand account of his experience as a senior public affairs officer during the period leading up to and during the first Iraqi national election. Embedded in this interesting Personal Experience Monograph (PEM) are significant lessons learned on how to deal with the media to most effectively tell a good news story. The PEM is an opportunity for USAWC students to reflect upon their professional experiences and aspirations, and to record those experiences in written form and to do so with a focused sensitivity to strategic considerations. In that light, Colonel Baggio's personal experience, while different from the pure academic research of the other papers in this section, merits consideration.

These papers are insightful and address significant issues confronting our government and military...issues that are essential to winning the Global War on Terrorism. They add to the greater body of knowledge in a way that can hopefully influence decision makers to more effectively wield the information element of power in the future to the benefit of our Nation.