

# REACHING THE POINT OF FUSION: INTELLIGENCE, INFORMATION OPERATIONS AND CIVIL-MILITARY OPERATIONS

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War in the 21st century is a volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous business in which Napoleon's maxim that "in war, the moral is to the physical as three is to one" takes on new meaning. The informational and cognitive dimensions have eclipsed physical factors in a flattening, non-linear world of instant, globalized communication and 24/7 media cycles, while shrinking decision cycles and increasing interdependent second- and third-order effects. In an increasingly integrated strategic and operational environment, intelligence, information operations (IO), and civil-military operations (CMO) have thus moved to the forefront of 21st century warfare. Since 9/11, "timely and actionable intelligence... is the most critical enabler to protecting the United States at a safe distance."<sup>1</sup> Meanwhile, more normal stability and counterinsurgency operations involve a "...confluence of military and non-military operations..."<sup>2</sup> In counterinsurgencies, for example, IO and CMO are two of three critical lines of operation in current Army counterinsurgency doctrine.<sup>3</sup> And "...because insurgency is a holistic threat, counterinsurgency must be integrated and holistic."<sup>4</sup> These parallel developments have, therefore, made synchronizing intelligence, IO and CMO under an effects-based systems approach at all levels critical to success across the full spectrum from peace to war. While there is some doctrinal recognition of this, the point of fusion has yet to be reached in ways that make this holistic understanding, applied integratively, the *modus operandi* of strategic and operational decision-makers.

There is plenty of evidence, both doctrinally and in recent operations, of the triangular connectivity between intelligence, IO, and CMO and the need for better synchronization in order to mitigate duplicative and counterproductive efforts as well as fill any gaps between them. Although the joint intelligence manual, JP 2-0, discusses very little

in terms of a connection to either IO and CMO, in the emerging strategic and operational environment, for example, most actionable intelligence is of the “human intelligence” (HUMINT) variety.

*The “high tech” Army remains engaged against non-traditional adversaries who cannot match its combat power. These adversaries, however, are able to engage the Army across the spectrum of the security and operational environments using unsophisticated, yet effective, human-based techniques, augmented with today’s technology. Cold War paradigms developed for operations conducted during peace and war do not adequately address the current and future complex environments in which the Army will be operating. Tactical and operational levels of war regularly take on strategic importance. Information is the key to winning this battle successfully, and to this end, HUMINT sources are critical.*<sup>5</sup>

Much HUMINT originates from open sources and comes through information and cultural or situational awareness and understanding derived from personal contacts and relationships through diplomacy, commercial activities, IO, and CMO. Intelligence, IO and CMO have effectively become an inherent mission for every soldier, coined in the phrase “every soldier is a sensor” (as well as a “sender”).

*The individual soldier is the most capable, sophisticated collector of intelligence in today’s Army... Every day, in the towns, cities and countryside, soldiers talk to inhabitants and observe more relevant information than all the combined technical intelligence sensors can collect. Soldiers also differ from other collection systems in that they interact with the populace. Clearly, soldiers are exposed to information that would be of significant value if collected, processed and integrated into a Common Operational Picture; hence the concept of “every soldier is a sensor.”*<sup>6</sup>

This leads to the now overriding role of culture. Concurrent to the rise of the importance of CMO and HUMINT has been the advent of the concept of “cultural intelligence.”<sup>7</sup> This concept, originating in the 1990’s, has taken off since 9/11, and been validated in successive deployment rotations to Afghanistan and Iraq.

*Cultural awareness and an empathetic understanding of the impact of Western action on a Middle East society were constantly at the forefront of all operational considerations, regardless of the complexity... Cultural awareness and understanding how*

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*insurgents support from the center of gravity became the important campaign consideration.*<sup>8</sup>

Likewise, the role of CMO in the intelligence preparation of the environment (IPE) process has accelerated with OEF and OIF, particularly with stability and support operations (SASO).

*IPB for SASO focused on the civilian population and the supporting infrastructure of the area of operations...CMO planning is part and parcel of warfighting in the 21<sup>st</sup> century...The ethnic, religious, and cultural make up of the civilian population at the beginning of hostilities and when they come into contact with U.S. forces... Cultural concerns must be identified to reduce friction between U.S. forces and the civilian population...The IPB must also identify the key locations for restoring a functioning society that will need protection such as banks, government buildings, public records, fire stations, police stations, court houses, jails/prisons and any other location that will have a significant impact on restoring the functions of a city/society. This identification enables commanders to determine risk and to allocate resources.*<sup>9</sup>

Doctrinal guidelines for the fusion of intelligence and CMO, however, are underdeveloped, whether in intelligence or CMO doctrine. (While there are both joint and USMC doctrinal publications on CM, ironically, or perhaps paradoxically, the U.S. Army has no CMO doctrine.<sup>10</sup>) Civil affairs (CA) and CMO doctrine have traditionally taken an arms-length approach to the relationship with intelligence operations. The operational relationship between intelligence and CMO is highly sensitive, yet for the reasons suggested above, now unavoidable. Historically, the CA community has insisted that, in order to protect the credibility of their operations and for force protection reasons, CA personnel should not be involved in intelligence-gathering in any way. While practically, intelligence operators in the field who delve too far into CMO-related tasks and operate openly and directly with CA may also place CA and other personnel in support of CMO as well as their mission at great risk. Regardless, these two communities need to establish doctrinal divisions of responsibility and robust yet discreet operational lines of coordination to help each other while staying out of each other's way. The way to do this may lie in the concepts of cultural intelligence and atmospherics under an effects-based approach.

The doctrinal and operational relationship between intelligence and IO is more robust, especially in the most recent joint IO doctrinal publication, JP3-13. An entire chapter is dedicated to “intelligence support to information operations”. Two key insights in this chapter are that “IO intelligence often requires long lead times” – a base understanding of the relationship-building nature of CMO. It also discusses the role of “human factors analysis” and “cultural analysis” – much of which originates from CMO and PSYOP activities. Many of these analysis factors, as well as the “cognitive properties of the information environment” discussed in the chapter, are found in CMO estimates and area assessments done by CA.<sup>11</sup> In another example: Military deception is essentially intelligence-centric, particularly with regard to its use of cultural factors analysis.

The relationship between IO and CMO is lightly treated, unfortunately, in the new IO doctrine. Other than a quote of the definition of CMO, it is mentioned that CMO is a related capability as is public affairs. It then refers to the joint doctrine on CMO, JP 3-57, which discusses that IO may “complement or support” CMO and that CMO planners should “take an active part” in the IO cell in order to deconflict activities and merge “capabilities and related activities into a synergistic plan.”<sup>12</sup> Still, there are plenty of examples of civil-military and interagency coordination in IO, such as the inclusion of the private sector, the Justice Department and other interagency partners in network operations.

Understanding the imperative to synchronize intelligence and IO with CMO lies first in understanding what CMO are. CMO have been applied, albeit not always in their currently recognizable form, by the Army for almost its entire history. CMO have since doctrinally matured, the latest joint definition being:

*The activities of a commander that establish, maintain, influence, or exploit relations between military forces, governmental and nongovernmental civilian organizations and authorities, and the civilian populace in a friendly, neutral, or hostile operational area in order to facilitate military operations, to consolidate and achieve operational U.S. objectives. Civil-military operations may include performance by military forces of activities and functions normally the responsibility of the local, regional, or national government. These activities may occur prior to, during, or subsequent to other*

*military actions. They may also occur, if directed, in the absence of other military operations. Civil-military operations may be performed by designated civil affairs, by other military forces, or by a combination of civil affairs and other forces.*<sup>13</sup>

Although the Cold War focus of CMO was on “minimizing civilian interference in military operations,” especially since Operations Enduring and Iraqi Freedom, commanders are better understanding the value of CMO to visualize and shape the civilian component of the integrated operational environment (the “C” in Army Field manual FM 3-0’s METT-TC – mission, enemy, terrain, time, troops available, and civil considerations). Joint and Army doctrine already acknowledge that CMO permeate all military operations at all levels across the full spectrum of conflict. CMO and civil affairs (CA), however, are not synonymous. Put simply, CMO are a concept or way, while CA is a means or capability.

Beyond what is discussed in both the joint IO and CMO doctrines, CMO and CA have considerable impact on IO and the “war of ideas,” not only due to “key leader engagement” of indigenous public opinion and decision makers and international civilian relief and reconstruction managers at the tactical and operational centers of gravity, but through generation of “good news stories” on relief and reconstruction progress gained through its civil-military coordination and information management activities, thus feeding both strategic communications and IO efforts at the tactical, operational, strategic centers of gravity.<sup>14</sup> Moreover, the growing civil information management (CIM) role of CA and its longstanding civil-military operations center (CMOC) and CMO estimate are tools, like the IO and effects cells, that can facilitate fusion among intelligence, IO, and CMO – if properly synchronized.

This is particularly true in non-kinetic intensive lines of effort – Phases 0 (Shape), IV (Stabilize), and V (Enable Civil Authority). Intelligence, IO, and CMO are not only synergistic, economy-of-force, non-kinetic ways and means to operationalize strategy, they are most effective when employed preventatively in theater security cooperation (TSC) strategies in conjunction with interagency activities. The Navy’s annual humanitarian relief exercise in Haiti, *Operation New Horizon*, synchronized cruises in the Caribbean and

Pacific under an interagency engagement effort, as well as EUCOM's Trans-Saharan Counterterrorism Initiative, are good examples of these synergies at work preventatively.

While it is clear that the holistic, systemic relationship between these behaviorally oriented lines of operation (vice "multipliers") is growing faster than doctrinal developments, it is important to insure that all three doctrines discuss not only the why's of this interrelationship, but as importantly the how's. In addition to doctrinal synchronization, primary intelligence, IO, and CMO operators need to be likewise co-educated and trained:

*Doctrinal changes are not the only way in which military organizations demonstrate learning, although the published nature of formalized doctrine makes it convincing evidence of change. Learning is also demonstrated in the curricula of military schools and training institutions...*<sup>15</sup>

In the information-dominated environment of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, applied national security strategy must now be at an unusual level of comprehensiveness, integration, and balance, from formulation through execution. Reaching the potential fusion of intelligence, IO and CMO is a natural progression of this overriding imperative. In addition to the constraints and restraints of the emerging strategic and operational environment, physical resource options to the United States are also becoming more costly and limited, while cognitive and psychological opportunities are only beginning to be exploited. We can no longer afford the compartmentalization of intelligence, IO and CMO. The margins of error are becoming too narrow, the consequences and stakes too high, and the opportunities too great to keep doing the business of national security as usual. It's time to think both inside and outside of the box.