Army IO *is* PSYOP
Influencing More with Less

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THE PURPOSE OF this article is to briefly examine some of the root causes of the ongoing fracture of Army information operations (IO) in general and the dysfunctional friction between IO and the various Army agents of influence, in particular psychological operations (PSYOP) and public affairs (PA). The article will provide an overview of Army PSYOP today and possible constructs for tomorrow, suggest steps to mitigate friction or fracture between the sub-elements of IO to assure a greater unity of effort, and recommend the development of a strategic communication framework built on media and broadcast expertise secured by a culturally attuned and regionally aware cadre of professionals.

In both war and peace, success in the battle for hearts and minds hinges primarily on one side's ability to operate comfortably in the other side's human terrain. In such an emotionally charged, competitive communication environment, the ability to affect the psychological and informational battlespace of the adversary and the local population depends on the credibility of both the message and the messenger. Historically, the Army's PSYOP branch has been the U.S. military's principal foreign communications agent of influence. Using words and symbols, Army PSYOP has coordinated and executed influential actions and information programs specifically aimed at affecting foreign perceptions, behavior, and thought processes for over half a century. As a result, Army PSYOP as an institution has long consisted of a career force specially trained and equipped to formulate and conduct operations to inform and influence while using ideas and images to shape an adversary's attitudes and perceptions.

PSYOP has subscribed to the rule that words alone are not the only motivator of changes in perception, attitude, or behavior. Moreover, psychological operations are coordinated to synchronize with the influence potential of kinetic actions or the intended effects of the more deliberate and obvious military activities.

Apart from PSYOP, the U.S. military has, over time, developed an array of agents of influence with (non-kinetic) niche capabilities that also shape the perception and decision making of foreign neutral, friendly, and adversarial target audiences. These agents include specialists in deception operations, computer network operations (CNO), operations security (OPSEC), and

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PHOTO: SSG Rodney Taiclet, with 346th Psychological Operations Battalion, passes out newspapers around a local market during a patrol in Tikrit, Iraq, 11 June 2003. (U.S. Army, SGT Albert Eaddy)

electronic warfare (EW), as well as other related activities, to include civil affairs (or civil-military operations), and PA.

In the 1990s, the Army introduced a new functional specialty: IO. Ostensibly, the IO career field was created to better organize and integrate the aforementioned disparate agents of influence, which were widely perceived to be operating more or less independently and without sufficient integration and synchronization into an overall operational planning and execution scheme. Regardless of good intentions, IO has struggled to establish a legitimate presence in the Army and is still in the process of defining its mission and role within the context of planning, organizing, and conducting coordinated military information operations. Additionally, during this difficult developmental period, IO has generated a great deal of friction between itself and the various agents of influence, which have well-established, clearly defined, and fully integrated roles in force protection, information management, public communications, and so-called influence operations.[1]

Distinguishing between IO and PSYOP Roles

Army IO doctrine (as defined by the Combined Arms Center [CAC], Fort Leavenworth, which is currently rewriting it) and joint doctrine describe IO as the integrated employment of the core capabilities of EW, CNO, PSYOP, military deception, and OPSEC in concert with other specified supporting and related activities (such as civil affairs, PA, Combat Camera, and, when appropriate, combat operations).[2] The collective purpose of IO synchronization is to inform, influence, deter, degrade, deny, or disrupt adversarial human and automated decision making while protecting our own.[3] Under the current paradigm, PSYOP is a sub-element of IO on a par with the other sub-elements noted above. Under the Army IO doctrine rewrite, CAC proposes to re-assimilate four sub-elements of IO into the core staff (deception to G3, operations; EW to fires; CNO to G2, intelligence, and G6, information management; OPSEC to G2), leaving PSYOP and the related activity PA (with Combat Camera) as the only sub-element(s) to be coordinated and integrated by the IO staff officer.

The apparent intent of the new IO construct is to redefine Army IO not as a collection of actual operational capabilities (as in joint IO doctrine), but as a "niche-knowledgeable" staff integrator responsible for reconciling only the differences between PSYOP and PA targets of information or influence. Unfortunately, with this move the Army has accidentally created unnecessary and potentially dysfunctional overhead at the coordinating staff level. The Army IO staff officer might only plan, organize, and direct how PSYOP will create psychological effects against an enemy or targeted foreign population—tasks which were formerly done by the PSYOP staff officer or supporting tactical PSYOP unit. Likewise, the Army IO staff officer will coordinate PA activities, both foreign and domestic—here again an assignment Army PA officers and NCOs have been performing without issue until now.

The proposed changes to Army IO doctrine would eliminate any hope of maintaining a clear distinction between IO and PSYOP (and now possibly PA). Army IO will become a simple, single-niche integration activity of only one agent of influence—PSYOP. Fundamentally, Army IO will become an extension of PSYOP and possibly PA. While PA (like civil affairs) is doctrinally considered an IO-related activity, PA has serious concerns about associating itself directly with IO. Operational and policy restrictions complicate PA integration by IO staff officers, most of whom lack the bona fides to perform PA-specialized tasks and functions. Additionally, the association of PA with activities known to employ deception or use selective information or images to influence perceptions (i.e., PSYOP) is generally forbidden. In the event that the association between PA and IO becomes common knowledge, PA will risk damaging the integrity, truthfulness, and credibility of the sources and content of its messages. For years, long before the advent of IO, the integrity of the PA message was protected by

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unofficial coordination between PA and PSYOP professionals without incident or ill intent. So where or what is Army IO's niche, regardless of doctrinal change? And is it smart to dismantle the current Army IO doctrinal model when military operations are becoming more joint and full-spectrum?

Potentially, IO could ensure more potent and precise use of the elements of information operations in support of PSYOP themes and objectives. Army IO might also serve as a functional area or the next step in a more sophisticated and coherent Army career-force approach for former PSYOP and PA staff officers. Moreover, IO could be categorized as a military operation (like urban operations, MOUT) planned, synchronized, and directed by the PSYOP branch officer. In the end, CAC's proposed doctrinal concept has oversimplified IO to such an extent that IO is de facto or fundamentally PSYOP, at least at the tactical level. While our warfighters at corps and below require a greater ability to inform and influence audiences in their areas of operations than they do the means to degrade adversary communications or computer networks, Army IO still requires an ability to remain fully capable and interoperable in a joint, interagency, or multinational construct.

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U.S. Army SSG Bruce Johnson, left, and SGT Tyler Wheaton use digital recorders near Baghdad, Iraq, 24 January 2007, to broadcast a message to residents on how to cooperate during a cordon and search operation.

The Roots of Confusion between IO and PSYOP

Confusion over the IO coordination scheme is not just a product of the current doctrinal oversimplification of Army IO at CAC; it is likely symptomatic of self-defeating PSYOP tendencies as well. Unfortunately, in the current sociopolitical environment, "PSYOP" has devolved into a pejorative term both inside and outside our military. This is evident in the careful avoidance of its use by senior military and defense officials when publicly discussing activities aimed at influencing or informing enemies or foreign audiences. IO has been widely adopted as a euphemism for PSYOP. Consequently, the term "IO" is now commonly and erroneously used to discuss activities that are, by doctrine, PSYOP. For example, unified combatant command theater security cooperation plans now routinely use IO synonymously for PSYOP to describe regional security information programs, activities, and exercises with other nations, thereby wrongfully categorizing what should be PSYOP capabilities, themes, messages, and actions in the theater plans as IO.

The practice of mistakenly describing PSYOP activities as IO now permeates the Army's institutional lexicon. So thoroughly inculcated is this misuse of terms that it is now common to hear the military's most prominent leaders, including most flag officers, senior Pentagon officials, and others, routinely and improperly use IO and PSYOP interchangeably. For example, retired Major General David Grange, former commander of the 1st Infantry Division, has written that in Bosnia he used IO and PSYOP interchangeably.[4] Similarly, in his recent book *Plan of Attack*, Bob Woodward points out how then-Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld referred repeatedly to PSYOP as IO while describing leaflet drops and Commando Solo broadcasts as IO preparation weapons against Saddam and his cronies.[5] In another example, Nathaniel Fick, author of *One Bullet Away,* the story of his experiences as a Marine platoon leader in Iraq, stated that as he and his recon platoon crossed into the southern portion of the country, 9 out of 10 Iraqis surrendered without fighting, which he contends was the result of an "intense *IO* campaign that dropped leaflets and broadcasted surrender appeals from HMMWV-mounted loudspeakers."[6]

Such misuse of terms is prevalent in the IO community itself. For example, in an article published by 1st IO Command, the author argues that everything the Army does that fails to fit neatly or categorically elsewhere—which of course includes PSYOP—is information operations.[7] Unfortunately, this misuse of terminology masks the fact that IO planners cannot actually do PSYOP—they have neither the training, nor the operational experience, nor the authorities, nor the organic capability. If IO staff officers want to plan employment of PSYOP capabilities for an operation, they must requisition the services of personnel assigned to one of the Army's three PSYOP groups. How then can PSYOP continue to be referred to as IO?

In contrast, a case could be made that the Army's PSYOP branch, which possesses organized units from team to brigade composed of branch officers, NCOs, and junior enlisted specialists with appropriate equipment, linguistic ability, regional expertise, and experience in the art and science of foreign influence could easily and readily assume most, if not all, of the so-called IO coordinating functions. As a sub-element of the traditional C3/J3/G3, the PSYOP officer and/or NCO could logically assume the principal duty of staff coordinator for the other elements of IO tasked with achieving a desired influential effect using the other elements of IO to informational and psychological advantage. We would spare ourselves the involvement of another intermediate staff element—in this case, one with minimal practical experience, specialized training, education, and understanding of the influence mission—that degrades the speed and accuracy required to deliver a timely and relevant message to a foreign target audience.

In any case, the unfortunate consequence of using PSYOP and IO interchangeably is confusion about the proper role of each specialty. The near-universal misinterpretation that IO is PSYOP has also had the unfortunate tendency to raise expectations among commanders about the capability IO practitioners (i.e., staff officers) can actually deliver. For supported commanders and their staffs who envision the robust operational capabilities described by their newly anointed IO staffers, IO's inability to deliver credible and timely messages to audiences in the supported commander's area of responsibility has perpetuated frustration and disappointment.

To mitigate such perceptions, PSYOP and IO must form a single, unified capability to maximize the Army's potential to speak with one voice. The status quo cannot prevail, for in the near term, PSYOP and IO tensions will not be reconciled, nor will the potential for PSYOP, PA, or strategic communication coordination be maximized. It is inevitable that under the current construct, the Army might begin to view IO as duplicative, an unnecessary redundancy that increases neither the speed nor the accuracy of our military message. Moreover, an additional tactical staff coordinator adds little value to PSYOP, PA, or the other IO tools and techniques that might add potency and precision to the psychological-influence message or method.

Efforts to raise concerns about the operational utility of IO (i.e., questioning what value another layer of staff supervision and management actually adds) have not been well received. Somehow, all seem content to potentially establish another staff layer in an already robust "transformational" headquarters—despite PSYOP/IO comparisons and analyses of staff actions and critical tasks that clearly point to redundancies and inefficiencies. A strong contributing factor to the apparent intransigence is the fact that PSYOP expertise is not well represented at Headquarters, Department of the Army. Additionally, there is an ongoing shortage of company-grade PSYOP officers at the tactical and institutional levels. (The combined active and reserve force fill for captains is less than 30 percent.) The result has been misrepresentation and a lack of understanding about a capability critical to our Army today and in the future. A strong case can be made to reexamine the number of authorizations for IO and PSYOP staff officers and NCOs across our Army to fully appreciate the redundancies and inefficiencies of two career forces competing for similar assignments and performing many of the same functions (e.g., at what level do we need a specialist in PSYOP or a generalist in IO?).

Given its limited resources, PSYOP actually can and does do a lot. PSYOP assets habitually task-organize to give commanders the maximum capability possible in terms of media-development skills, analytical talent, foreign language expertise, cultural knowledge, linguistic skills, marketing techniques, and broadcast means. These capabilities can serve as the core component of an Army IO career force and

an information campaign to introduce U.S. ideas and images into the hearts and minds of foreign enemy, friendly, and neutral audiences.

Currently, such is the general satisfaction with PSYOP performance and contributions to the War on Terrorism that, despite known limitations, PSYOP has become DOD's recognized single-source "one-stop-shop" for analysis, media development, production, and dissemination of tactical and operational-level information intended to engage, inform, and influence foreign audiences.[8] Lessons learned from operations in Iraq and Afghanistan repeatedly echo the need for more PSYOP forces, as well as a greater ability to culturally and linguistically influence the local populace with ideas, images, and information consistent with U.S. political and military goals and objectives.[9] Likewise, Defense Science Board studies (2000, 2001, 2004, 2005), PSYOP master plans (1985, 1990), and a National Defense University study (2004) mirror the same point: we lack sufficient force, capabilities, and authorities to inform and influence to an adequate degree foreign populations when and where we desire.[10]

PSYOP by Necessity

Despite concerns by some regarding the appropriateness or legitimacy of military involvement in global PSYOP or strategic communication efforts, others see such as a necessity, essential given the lack of capability or willingness by other departments of government to fill the communication void. PSYOP expertise is regionally, culturally, and experientially based; it has skills and knowledge uncommon among the other agents of influence. Jerrold M. Post, a highly regarded scholar of the psychology of terrorism, contends that "there has been little attention to the potential of strategic PSYOP in undermining the enemy to prepare the battlefield . . . PSYOP should be the primary weapon in the war against terrorism." According to Post, if terrorism is an inherently psychological phenomenon, then it should stand to reason that psychological operations would and should be a primary method of attack or defense at the global planning level.[11] Since the War on Terrorism is less a shooting war involving guns, boats, or planes than a psychological war involving ideas, images, ideologies, information, and intentions, the first and most essential condition is to shape or prepare the psychological battlespace in a manner favorable to our intentions, an effort to which PSYOP is integral. To this end, the U.S. Army must regain the psychological advantage, retain the informational edge, and keep its message straight.

Owing to the sheer magnitude and scope of the information and influence effort, PSYOP units can no longer be trained and equipped in a one-size-fits-all proposition. The PSYOP force has only recently undergone a major realignment, the result being that the two reserve PSYOP groups formerly under U.S. Army Special Operations Command (USASOC) have been reassigned to Army Reserve Command (USARC). (The Army's only active group, the 4th, remains under USASOC). The PSYOP branch must now differentiate between active- and reserve-component tactical, operational, and strategic levels of foreign media operations, and public communications; and between conventional, special, and interagency operations.

The active-duty PSYOP force is uniquely suited to support special operations and sensitive operational and strategic-level foreign information and communication programs. Reserve component forces should assume the other mission of predominately providing support to the conventional Army (from brigade to corps level) and reinforce active-duty PSYOP efforts consistent with mission and intent. Although the pairing of active-duty PSYOP with special operations and reserve PSYOP with conventional forces should vastly increase the capabilities, scope, impact, and effectiveness of foreign-aimed communications programs and dissemination potential, the new paradigm prompts a reexamination of PSYOP doctrine, organization, training and education, leadership development, material and equipment, personnel management and force development, and facilities (DOTLMPF) authorizations to assure full operational effectiveness. Additionally, the distinction between PSYOP and PA operations at different levels must also be reassessed, keeping in mind that—

- The specialties of PSYOP and PA are mutually supportive in today's information environment, with policy and law in place that sufficiently protect the rights of American citizens.
- PSYOP and PA have complementary talents and techniques similar to foreign relations, media operations, public communications, mass communications,

marketing, advertising, sales, and public relations directed towards a foreign target audience.

- Tactical PSYOP engages in media production, development, and dissemination in partnership with foreign PA detachments (active and reserve).
- Operational-level psychological operations leverage IO and interagency tools and techniques to engage early, often, and accurately.
- Defense and interagency information programs must coordinate without friction.
- Strategic-level communication expertise must be harnessed to engage and influence states and macro-cultures.

Given that two-thirds of the PSYOP force (and PA expertise as well) now resides in the Army Reserve, we must also consider rebalancing the force, creating active-duty brigade-level authorizations, and reviewing proponent-led accessions, training, and retention strategies. Inevitably, a future strategic communication framework must account for tactical PSYOP and/or PA as the basis for "information for effect" that assimilates the skills of foreign journalists, videographers, and broadcasters with the talents of regionally experienced PSYOP specialists into foreign media operational constructs. These constructs would be supported by more specialized PSYOP regional/operational support sufficient to bridge the cultural gaps between U.S. and foreign target audiences and work the information seams between potentially neutral and friendly target audiences.

Finally, PSYOP's image must be rendered more acceptable so that it can be employed effectively in current and future information environments and strategic communication frameworks. The branch must lose its pejorative connotations both inside and outside the Army. References to it must simply roll off the tongue; it should be easy to mention and talk about. To rehabilitate PSYOP will require "Total Army" participation.[12] The active-reserve realignment of the PSYOP force cannot be allowed to widen the gap between message developers and disseminators.

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More generally, partnership among organizations responsible for strategic information development and dissemination has become a necessity rather than a good thing to do if convenient. If information is central to our ability to shape the future battlefield or geopolitical landscape, then unity of informational effort and purpose is vital. Moreover, doctrinal concepts of unconventional warfare and counterinsurgency, which critically rely on the ability of PSYOP and PA to inform and influence audiences across the globe where we are and where we are not, are notably central to our ability to succeed in the War on Terrorism. Therefore, PSYOP, PA, and public diplomacy stovepipes or firewalls must come down, and collaborative bridges must be built. PSYOP must leverage the full potential of IO tools (information applications), tactics, and techniques to maximize the influence necessary to isolate and eliminate aggressive non-state actors and transnational threats. We can no longer afford mistaken identities or dysfunctional relationships among PSYOP, DOD public affairs, State Department public diplomacy, and IO.

While some useful initiatives (e.g., realignment) are already underway, the realities of the foreign communication challenges we face demand even greater Army structural and organizational change. Such change should place at the center of campaign planning the integration of nonstandard special and conventional PSYOP-like forces able to operate across the continuum of warfare (peace to combat and back to peace). These forces must be precisely designed and efficiently echeloned to function and integrate informative multimedia operations at all levels of war. To achieve such capabilities, an amalgam of PSYOP and PA professionals would provide the required depth. Such a team would comprise a more transformational, better focused "inform and influence" investment; would ensure greater assimilation of pertinent skills (PSYOP, IO, and PA); and would enable increased collaboration with both the public and private sectors.

Information Mania: The Army's Persuasive Partnerships

Given the recent realignment of Army Reserve PSYOP forces from USASOC to USARC and their re-designation as conventional forces, the timing is

ideal for a formal reevaluation of the relationship between IO and PSYOP. Now that two-thirds of the PSYOP force works for the conventional Army, PSYOP should be more fully integrated into Army-wide planning, programming, exercises, and operations. Likewise, the increased presence of PSYOP in Army formations should greatly facilitate its effective synchronization with the Army's other key agents of influence, public affairs and civil affairs. This can only be good for the Army in both the short and long term. In contrast, the suppression and/or complication of the use of PSYOP and other information activities caused by the redundant IO staff proposed by future Army IO doctrine would be detrimental to the Army in part and to the credibility of the PSYOP and PA message as a whole.

The proper, untrammeled employment of PSYOP and its supporting agents of influence can provide the Army greater effects across the entire continuum of conflict and add greater full-spectrum potential to the Army's brigade combat teams. It can influence the psychological and physical aspects of the battle and information space in a manner that could lead to success in the War on Terrorism. There is no reason to consign ourselves to a less responsive, less efficient capability.

PSYOP Merger

As they are currently configured, the IO and PSYOP forces are improperly balanced. PSYOP has greater tactical potential than the other four sub-elements combined (EW, CNO, deception, OPSEC). The other sub-elements of IO—minus PSYOP—tend toward greater operational- and strategic-level presence and potential. Not surprisingly, PSYOP has the fewest assignments on staffs and in agencies at corps and above that are critical to the Army's effort to communicate consistently with foreign audiences anywhere, anytime.

Inevitably, there is a disparity between the planners (IO) and operators (PSYOP). If the operational environment changes and our threat becomes more or less symmetric, so too must the IO force adapt, rebalance, or assimilate into the tactical warfighter structure to assure operator-level confidence and responsiveness consistent with the scheme of maneuver. Understandably, the Army would want more operators than specialty planners. However, the way the IO force is configured, the ratio of planners to operators is skewed—there are simply too many planners and perhaps not enough operators.

Functional-area-designated IO staff officers (planners) responsible for planning and integrating IO capabilities (operators) at all levels are not necessarily well qualified in any one of the IO sub-components.

Another problem caused by the IO force configuration is that it almost works against the creation of expertise in the IO ranks. Commanders and their primary staffs must engage in capabilities-based planning, in the course of which subject matter experts or branch officers must accurately represent the capabilities they bring to the table. This accuracy is crucial to ensuring that intended effects and outcomes can be achieved. But, functional-area-designated IO staff officers (planners) responsible for planning and integrating IO capabilities (operators) at all levels are not necessarily well qualified in any one of the IO sub-components. Accordingly, PSYOP, EW, and CNO practitioners are often subordinate to planners or IO generalists less knowledgeable, experienced, or qualified in the capability (or capabilities) they are employing.

This imbalance is a feature unique to IO; tactically, our Army employs "fully qualified" branch officers and senior NCOs who are specialists in the field (subject matter experts) capable of planning, organizing, and directing the execution of capabilities they are uniquely familiar with and knowledgeable about. The Combined Arms Center's proposed changes to IO doctrine seem to address this inequity by returning the responsibilities for planning and integrating the capabilities of the IO sub-elements (minus PSYOP) to experts elsewhere on the staff.

Under the proposed doctrinal revision, the minority IO staff officer will be the integrator for PSYOP and possibly PA. Accordingly, we must have a more practical and pertinent framework from which to launch a professional career force dedicated to the tactics, tools, and techniques used to inform and

influence. The underlying rationale for reformulating the IO construct has everything to do with "doing" more and "planning" less, the intent being to provide the warfighter a ready, responsive, and reliable IO capability that has the capacity to inform and influence combatants and noncombatants in the commander's area of operations. A more appropriate model would show that PSYOP might be more useful tactically (at the brigade combat team level) than the other elements of IO. It would also show that there is no great intellectual leap required to add the other elements of IO, as supporting efforts, to a more potent and persuasive PSYOP effort.

Accordingly, the figure below reorients the IO model and sets PSYOP as the base for Army IO, forming the tactical "foreign media operations" center of attention and main effort at corps and below. The other IO sub-elements offer greater effectiveness if employed as supporting efforts along the PA and PSYOP axes of inform and influence. Furthermore, the figure portrays the more practical and precise method of employing PSYOP (and PA) as the Army's agents of inform and influence both today and tomorrow. IO practitioners or generalists, absent education and experience in either of the two disciplines, will lack sufficient credentials to contribute effectively and credibly to this mission.

These un-credentialed officers might find themselves assimilating into a future Army career force that encompasses the talents and techniques of PSYOP and PA, which could conceivably engage in unencumbered foreign media operations. PA and PSYOP are converging as the means and methods of informing and influencing foreign media and populations become remarkably similar and necessarily mutually supportive. Thus, the more pristine PA aimed at domestic audiences is delineated on the left (to inform) and the more sensitive, more compartmented PSYOP is at the right (to influence).

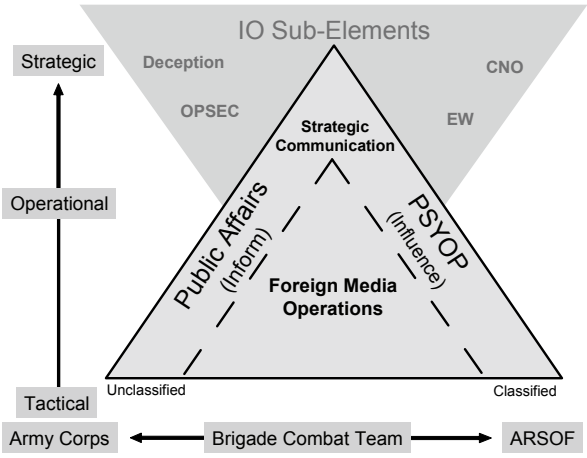

Figure: A better way to do IO business: PSYOP and PA in the lead.

Meanwhile, both PA and PSYOP professionals find themselves specialists in a career force committed to speaking with one voice in a manner that is consistent with commander and national interest and intent. In the figure, the two career fields converge at the triangle's pinnacle, "strategic communication." There, each field's "most qualified" officers will compete for service at the highest level as our Army's preeminent communication professionals.

Last Word

Going forward, we will need to reevaluate the IO and PSYOP assignments in every brigade combat team and maneuver headquarters, as well as in the Department of the Army, Training and Doctrine Command, Strategic Command, Joint Forces Command, Forces Command, the several combat training centers, and elsewhere. We must ensure that Army PSYOP has a fully sufficient structural, cultural, organizational, and institutional presence to be a successful combat multiplier and peacetime contributor now and in the future.

To achieve such influential capabilities, we need to secure a strategic communication framework (i.e., the figure) from the bottom up based on the policies, process, principles, and practices of psychological operations and public affairs. We must also incorporate into this framework the skills, talents, and tradecraft of public relations and marketing and advertising specialists with foreign culture and language expertise to complement the analysis, planning, and integrating talents of seasoned veterans from a career field that understands and can communicate our Nation's interests and objectives. The focus of this DOD "strategic communication framework" would be foreign audiences only.

Ultimately, to better employ PSYOP and PA in the future means we must invest now in an "IO" career force, one that is an easily recognizable and dominant feature on an operational roadmap that

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employs all the military's information weapons. This force must have a strong, active psychological and analytical base capable of operational preparation of the psychological, informational, and multimedia battlespace. It should be reinforced by a similarly well educated, knowledgeable, experienced, and expert reserve force. PSYOP in support of the maneuver commander disseminates information that appeals to the masses, generally to inform rather than influence. Meanwhile, PSYOP in special operations performs discreet and potentially classified missions. Designed to influence with potency for personal effect, special operations PSYOP purveys more sensitive, more protected and precise information to affect foreign target audiences of operational and strategic significance.

From tactical to strategic, one active-component group and two reserve-component groups proudly identifying themselves as PSYOP will continue to deploy to inform and influence target populations in support of U.S. operations. In OEF, OIF, and elsewhere in the War on Terrorism, as well as on hundreds of foreign deployments supporting unified combatant commanders elsewhere around the world, PSYOP teams, companies, battalions, and groups will be present to make an informative and influential difference.

Current and pending doctrinal and structural problems aside, DOD has recognized the importance of PSYOP to the Army of the future. PSYOP, the ability to favorably influence foreign audiences with information at the right time, place, and intensity in the "war of ideas" is perceived favorably within our military. Approved manpower increases that will double the active-duty PSYOP force and increase the reserve component by one-third indicate DOD confidence in PSYOP's ability to play a critical role in the War on Terrorism. Furthermore, the establishment of PSYOP as an official Army branch is a clear signal that we understand the importance of being able to influence foreign audiences with information and actions—two means that will promote U.S. interests and reduce the risk to American Soldiers well into the future. With so much at stake, we should be sure not to squander this considerable investment of the Army's resources in dysfunctional and redundant staff practices. PSYOP is the Army's IO force of choice; expeditionary, full spectrum, interagency-capable, joint interoperable, and a proven competitor in today's complex information environment. ***MR***

NOTES

1. For more on this topic see Susan L. Gough, "The Evolution of Strategic Influence," USAWC Strategic Research Paper (Carlisle, PA: U.S. Army War College), fas.org/irp/eprint/gough.pdf. See also Kim Cragin and Scott Gerwehr, *Dissuading Terror: Strategic Influence and the Struggle Against Terrorism* (Santa Monica, CA: Rand Corporation, 2005).
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6. Nathaniel Fick, "Economics of National Security" (oral presentation), Harvard University National Bureau for Economic Research, 7 March 2006.
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11. Jerrold M. Post, "Psychological Operations and Counterterrorism," *Joint Forces Quarterly* 37 (April 2005): 105-110.
12. For more discussion on the term PSYOP, see Lynne Duke, "The Word at War," Washington Post, 26 Mar 06, D1; Thomas H. Taylor, "By Any Other Name," Perspectives 5 (Spring 1989), 9; Fred W. Walker, "PSYOP is a Nasty Term—Too Bad," Air University Review 28 (September-October 1977).