

Unifying PHYSICAL and PSYCHOLOGICAL Impact During Operations

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PAINTING: Thomas Jonathan "Stonewall" Jackson and Sorrel, by David Bendann, 1913. (Library of Congress) Jackson was a master of mystifying his opponents through psychological manipulation.

THE PURPOSE OF THIS ARTICLE is to expand on some key ideas raised, but not fully developed, in my November/December 2008 *Military Review* article entitled "Re-Thinking IO: Complex Operations in the Information Age." That piece makes the argument that the core competencies of information operations (IO) are far less integrated and effectively employed than they should be. Psychological operations (PSYOP) and military deception (MILDEC) are two vitally important elements that are especially ineffective today because of the way we organize ourselves to use them.

Logic and experience suggest it will be more important to pursue *three* ever-present, but practical, mission needs than to pursue the grander, doctrinal, but over-ambitious task of achieving "information superiority" to "influence, disrupt, corrupt," and so on. These needs are:

- Win the psychological contest with current and potential adversaries.
- Keep the trust and confidence of home and allied populations while gaining the confidence and support of the local one.
- Win the operational and strategic, cognitive and technical "information-age applications" contest with current or potential adversaries.

It will be necessary to integrate core capabilities for meeting these needs into a combined arms pursuit of multiple objectives (rather than, as aforementioned, pursuing one separate IO LLO). As my earlier article notes:

Effective application already also requires expertise in very different disciplines. It will become even more important to reorganize IO capabilities into groupings for staff oversight that share common functional purposes, causal logic, and art- and science-based competencies. Leaving the collection of IO tools under the oversight of one staff officer has become an untenable option, and proper preparation and education will be increasingly difficult to achieve.¹

Here I am concerned only with the difficult challenge of winning the very complex psychological contest with current and potential adversaries. If this is

one of the things we want to do, our doctrine should provide the general causal logic and principles for getting it done. But neither the current Army and Joint IO doctrine nor the new Field Manual (FM) 3.0, *Operations*, provides useful guidance on this subject. (The coordinating draft of the new FM 3-13, *Information*, devotes an entire chapter to this need specifically; ideally the next FM 3.0 will expand on this subject as well.)

The psychological aspects of full spectrum operations ought to be as second nature to every commander and operations officer as psychology in general is to a sports team coach. Several decades ago the Army banished its psychological operators to the Special Forces. More recently, in the 1990s, the Army bundled PSYOP and MILDEC in an awkward conceptual construct called IO. The recent FM 3.0 returned MILDEC to the operations staff's responsibility, but re-bundled PSYOP into another awkward construct called "information engagement" that bridges the first two of the needs identified in the earlier article. The U.S. Army, as an institution, still does not appreciate the normality and utter necessity of the close relationship evinced by the fact that these specialists are today far more deeply engaged in public relations work than in leveraging the psychological impact of physical capabilities and actions. I argue the case for re-thinking this vital relationship by reviewing the logic for a natural blending of the physical and the psychological dimensions of war and by suggesting remedies on the road ahead.

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Military Power and Perceptions

Excellence in the use of firepower, armor, speed, precision, and armed physical presence to "create new facts on the ground" is less than half of the whole without excellence in intimidating, demoralizing, mystifying, misleading, and surprising at the same time (as well as leveraging that reputation for excellence to influence the decisions of real or potential adversaries not yet subject to physical force). The

great captains of history naturally employed these two facets of military power as one combined instrument. The holistic approach of a Caesar, for example, not only remains valid, but also has become *essential* to success in the information age. The less we can bring brute force to bear, the more we need to get the most psychological impact possible from any action or display of potential action. The more our application of force becomes precise and discriminating, and the more rapidly our capabilities advance (and thus may not be appreciated by others), the more artful we need to be in linking deeds, images, and words to leverage the psychological impact.

Deterrence. The chief purpose of military force is to achieve political and economic ends: sometimes through deterrence, other times through offense or defense, and occasionally through pacification. Deterrence is wholly psychological. What matters is the image, not what is real. As difficult as it might be to fully project psychologically deterring images, under the right circumstances they can exert power to influence events as usefully as any physical force. A properly constructed deterrent is the most economical use of military capability. The projection of deterring images plays an important complementary role in all other uses of military force (at all levels from grand strategy of nation-states down to single combat of armed individuals). A country could more easily pursue any other of its purposes merely by positioning a detachment of force just large enough to check several options of its opponent. The art, of course, is to know how to project the right image so that it is properly appreciated and sufficiently imposing.

Offense and defense. Offense and defense are also largely psychological. Success by either side in the physical clash hardens will. Early losses, however, have an opposite effect on defender and attacker. These can stiffen the will of the defender. The stakes are high and very personal while, being early, hope is very much alive. Early losses dishearten the attacker disproportionately because they suggest misjudgments about the defender's potential and cast doubt on other judgments yet to be tested. The defender must capitalize on these. Both winning and losing has a delayed effect on the will and subsequent leadership decisions on either side, and while both sides may perceive the results of physical clashes clearly, neither can read the mind of the

other. Neither side can know the reserves of will and courage still available to the opposing side.

In the contest of will, evidence of success or failure in the contest for the initiative weighs heavily in the balance. Such evidence indicates a trend and foretells the future. Seeing evidence of a coming culmination of the attack short of success emboldens defenders and depresses attackers, the converse is also true. In the contest of will, time is on the side of the defender and is the enemy of the attacker. The attacker needs to complete his business before the people at home tire of the effort. The defender merely needs to outlast the attacker and deny him the end he sought. Irregular defenders are usually more resilient than defending states because they can translate merely continuing to exist into success and hope for the future.

Pacification. Pacification is necessary because groups of people within a state have “gone to war,” and normal policing agencies can no longer enforce peaceful and lawful behavior by potentially hostile forces, warring factions, or violent criminals.

In the past, great powers always treated insurrections with overwhelming force, often exterminating offending cities, towns, villages, ethnic groups, tribes, or clans to eliminate the source of resistance swiftly, at least for a generation, and to advertise a deterring example. Pacifying the old fashioned way (e.g., the Romans in Palestine) does not work for modern democratic states that hope to remain influential and popular in this transparent, globalized world.

Weak states, though, are still compelled to wage war on their insurgents, and, of course, strong states have that option as well, but warfare with irregulars will become increasingly challenging. Because heavy-handed, surefire tactics of a previous age can backfire in the open 21st-century information environment, states must compensate in two ways:

- The armed forces of the state have to seize the initiative from the strategic level down to the tactical, and their application of force must be unusually focused and discriminating. These demands mean knowing your enemy very well, having commensurately good intelligence, and being more creative and strategically savvy than he.
- The state has to separate the enemy from the support of the people. This means knowing the people and retaining their trust.

The worst possible conditions for making war on irregulars is in the wake of changing regimes when

the fundamental choice of *legitimate* government is between a foreign occupier and a homegrown competitor. It gets back to the basic fact that people feel sovereign over their own soil. The key to regime change is not the knocking down of the regime and its forces, but the successful immediate pacification of the resultant power vacuum.

The next worse condition for making war on irregulars is in alliance with a weak and unpopular state, because both will be judged by the people in the middle on the virtues and the vices of the least of the allies. More often than not, advanced democracies will be supporting the actual counterinsurgent in weak or failing states, over whose virtues and vices they have very little control. The rule of thumb for state policing is, when in doubt, first do no harm. As an exact analog to the physician’s Hippocratic oath, this rule of thumb contradicts the nature of war. Yet this principle of policing violence should be absolute: to suppress it while categorically taking *careful* aim to avoid property damage and harm to innocents (in all its forms) and, at the same time, reinforcing the perception that perpetrators will face a high probability of being found out, caught, and prosecuted. Only conditions of *legitimacy* can transmit a credible psychological message that there is no honor in resistance.

Pacifying unruly, ungoverned space is very difficult to do, and there are no short-cuts. It takes keeping the people safe and getting them on the side of peace and is costly in trained, armed manpower. Some studies based on rare historical successes have judged the price to be no less than 20 security personnel per 1,000 citizens. (Malaysia and Northern Ireland, for example.) This includes police, paramilitary, and supporting military of all kinds. This approach also requires legitimate and efficient courts and prisons. Finally, it takes patience, time, even-handedness, and consistency of word and deed. (Malaysia took 12 years and Northern Ireland 25.) This is a heavy price. The benefit, however, is that the state decides when “normal” is attained, and warring factions as well as insurgents are eventually integrated into a peaceful society.

Far more complex, and more common today, is to be able to do “warring and policing” simultaneously in the same area of operations. Balancing them requires keeping separate who you are fighting (prisoners of war) and who you are bringing before

the law (criminals), because confusing them incurs great penalties.

If the definition of power is the ability to influence human decisions and behavior, then the real root of military power is not destructive force, but how to use force constructively and psychologically. Napoleon's maxim "the moral is to the physical as three is to one" is as valid in the 21st century as it always was.

Defeating the Will of Our Enemies

Gaining moral ascendancy over your opponent is fundamental to fighting and pacification at all levels, and across all time. But breaking the will of an opponent is more difficult to do than is commonly thought. What might intimidate one person may simply enrage some and inspire others to greater efforts. Human beings who willingly sacrifice life for perceived gains (ideal or real) are plentiful. Combatants risk life and limb, not because they fear punishment, but because they fear letting down their companions. These soldiers will not want to be the first to yield, and they will bear great hardship and deprivation as long as they have hope either in this life or an imagined other.



Alfred G.C. Comte d'Orsay

Napoleon on horseback, in the background: Battle of Wagram, dated 1843. Wagram was an example of a lapse in Napoleon's normal attentiveness to psychology.

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However, there are some time-proven fundamentals. Cold, hunger, fatigue, and lack of sleep sap human will. People who are isolated from their friends and allies, or who are among strangers, will become discouraged more easily than those who are among people they trust. When people who are esteemed by others quit, the collapse in collective will can be precipitous.

In the choice of when or how to quit, context matters. In the 1991 Gulf War, the Iraqi Army was deployed far from home and in an inhospitable desert. Leaflets dropped from the air advised them to surrender as coalition forces advanced toward them. When Iraqi soldiers gave up, they surrendered in mass and often to much smaller forces. They meekly walked in the direction of internment sites: toward food, water, and shelter. During the 2003 invasion of Iraq, the Iraqi Army was most often deployed nearer to villages, towns, and cities. Similar leaflets advised them to surrender. This time when Iraqi soldiers decided to quit—and they did in great numbers even before contact with ground forces—they melted into the population, taking with them whatever things of value they could carry. Combatants who are cut off from escape in sound defensive positions have historically fought fierce battles. Those who have been given an ostensibly honorable way out have given up their positions and withdrawn.

Winning and losing is not always defined by a uniform logic. There was no doubt within the coalition about who had won the First Gulf War. However, viewed through the lens of Iraqi culture and Islamic law, Saddam Hussein's forces had won a great strategic success in spite of their tactical losses when Allah intervened to prevent the invasion of Mesopotamia and the overthrow of the regime. Celebrations that ensued were not just a façade. In the current protracted struggle against committed Islamic fundamentalist groups, physical actions without a superbly well-informed and highly tuned psychological dimension will fail.

Mystifying, Misleading, and Surprising Our Adversaries

Mystifying, misleading, and surprising adversaries, as General “Stonewall” Jackson did repeatedly in the Shenandoah Campaign of the Civil War, will continue to be a most challenging art. But underlying this art is a rudimentary and ancient logic based mostly on historical experience and human psychology. Whenever military operations aim to defeat an adversary by force, operating on the line of least expectation and least resistance has always been a shortcut to success. Such a goal has often been an elusive one, especially against competent enemies, and the most elaborate deception can be undone by chance since we will always know less than would be ideal. Even worse, what we may think we know may be wrong. To paraphrase Sun Tzu: all warfare is based on deception, but success will still depend on the determined and capable application of superior force at the decisive place and time. Cautions aside, applying the time-tested simplicity of military deception yields significant advantages over an unprepared, unsuspecting adversary.

There should be no formulaic approaches to military operations, because such formulas would become predictable patterns, encouraging enemy preparedness. Competent adversaries are always learning from each other, and neither we, nor any of our adversaries, will ever be truly “pattern-less.” Because we are the most visible and most studied, we must become better at learning and learn faster than our adversaries in every new situation. We must also remain mindful of our reputation for competence and power. Adversaries will seek and find any hollowness and predictability on our part and exploit it.

The purpose of military deception is to further the aim of plans to operate on the line of least expectation and least resistance, or to deny such an advantage to an opponent. The U.S. military tends to assume that its physical power is the enemy’s only



General Stonewall Jackson

real concern and to base operational estimates solely on the physical facts of the case. But history teaches the necessity of expanding estimates into what Clausewitz calls the “moral dimension” as well. Enemy deployments may reflect concerns of internal insurrection, prior defeat or victory, or recent training or experience. An estimate of motives, and the commander’s confidence in that estimate, should form the basis for the entire plan of operation.

Dissuading another person from a highly probable expectation is much more difficult than confirming it. In the recent past, it was fashionable to formulate courses of action that required “throwing the enemy off his plan.” This aim is overly ambitious and failure prone. The enemy is likely to ignore early indications that his plan is not succeeding. Interpreting ambiguous signals as confirmation that his plan is working is natural, until the contrary evidence is overwhelming. One commits naturally—psychologically—to a planned course of action, especially within a hierarchical organization wherein a plan has been blessed by higher authorities. In such circumstances, commanders hesitate and seek more confirmation before admitting a plan’s failure. In fact, history shows leaders are predisposed toward keeping to an agreed upon but irrelevant plan rather than changing it to respond to the actual unfolding of events. Thus, trying to cause the enemy to change his preferred course because it inhibits one’s own most favored course likely will fail entirely or bear fruit too tardy for the desired effects.

Instead of attempting to dislodge an adversary from his predisposed course of action, masters of deception have aimed to confirm the enemy’s expectations while *concurrently* doing the unexpected. One of the principles of Eastern martial philosophy is to allow an opponent’s own physical momentum to propel him into a fall. Similarly, one of the ancient principles of deception is to allow the enemy’s expectations and psychological prejudices,

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attitudes, and tendencies to entice him into a trap. Hannibal did this repeatedly, achieving remarkable results at the Trebia, Lake Trasimene, and at Cannae. Even the most circumspect of Roman generals fell afoul of his studied deceptions; he had conditioned his mind to habitually exploit his enemies' qualities.

Efforts to inculcate habitual thinking about stratagem should enforce the idea that any attempt at deception must "degrade gracefully," as modern engineers would put it. There are times when it is appropriate to "dare much to achieve much," and often the most audacious courses of action are the least expected. But any organized attempt to mystify, mislead, and surprise adversaries must allow for the possibility of failure. The art of deceiving an adversary has always required overcoming many difficulties:

- Knowing how the other person, usually unknown, expects you to act and the situation to unfold.
- Knowing whether any image you portray or signal you send will reach the intended decision-maker.
- How that decision-maker will interpret your information or signal if he *does* receive it.
- Predicting what actions will follow, whatever the interpretation.

Because of these difficulties, success should never be held hostage to the enemy leadership's deciding some issue just one way.

Creating and maintaining ambiguity as long as possible—coupled with competent, agile, and relevant power and speed of execution—have often proven more useful than "daring much to achieve much." One historic stratagem for spreading risk is to place the enemy on the horns of a dilemma. Appearing to threaten two or more objectives simultaneously provides several options. A multi-pronged approach provides a way to test, learn, and rapidly reinforce opportunity uncovered in the course of operations, *while the enemy is unsure of the primary threat and holds back reserves*. Or, an initial approach feigns the main effort until the enemy reacts to it, and then the real main effort is revealed, thereby hastening a decisive result while the enemy is wrong-footed. There are many variations on these themes. But each variation has a common attribute: rather than depending on the enemy to make one particular decision for the friendly course of action to succeed, each variation produces success from multiple enemy decisions or

none at all. More importantly, rather than following a scheme in which one grand deception is followed by a grand exploitation of it, ambiguity and small deceptions which are more easily achievable combine to create the favorable condition for friendly action at significantly less risk.

Much emphasis has recently been placed on "turning inside the enemy's decision cycle." Far more important is that decisions be sound rather than rapid. Slower decision-making can sometimes lead to more rapid conclusions. The emphasis would be better placed on acting more rapidly and more *relevantly* than does the enemy. Acting relevantly means acting with the kind of force—both lethal and non-lethal, qualitatively and quantitatively—most appropriate to the situation.

Acting more rapidly and more relevantly than the enemy can be much more powerful by combining it with ambiguity and small-but-multiple surprises to create conditions for a chain reaction. Besides reducing indecision and hesitancy, the combination of surprise and strong relevant action also induces shock. Shock impairs rational thought and useful functioning, but is only temporary. In well-led, competent, cohesive, and experienced organizations, shock produces only a small window of vulnerability. A force prepared to exploit it can seize and retain the initiative with a cascading chain of events against which the adversary feels increasingly helpless. Bringing about such a cascade requires the synthesis of a chess master and the strength, determination, and agility to take advantage of the temporary paralysis. Preventing the adversary from recovering during the cascading chain of events is an imperative, lest he regain his operational and psychological equilibrium.

Less ambitious, but serial, approaches to mystifying, misleading, and surprising adversaries can be as potent as the best informed, grandest, and most elaborate deception. An additional advantage they bring is that detailed knowledge of the object of the deception is not as important. A simple understanding of human nature combined with the capability and competency to exploit the situation is enough.

The real challenge in the modern age is how to mystify, mislead, and surprise adversaries in today's open world, while at the same time not seeming deceitful and untrustworthy to neutrals that need to be won over. Two recommendations will help:

- People among whom military operations take place in grand deceptions should not be used either as the medium for transmitting false rumors to the adversary or to lend credibility to a deception story. Beyond the added difficulties of keeping the deception story straight, the attempt can backfire. Once the deception is revealed, the “credibility advantage” goes to the other side.

- The people in the organization who are identifiable as the principal practitioners of the art of deception should not also be identifiable as the principal agents for winning the trust and confidence of the media and the respect and support of the people among whom the fight against adversaries takes place.

Unifying the Two Arms of Military Power

Sun Tzu emphasized blending the “physical and moral dimensions” of military power in every line of effort of every military operation, regardless of purpose. Blending requires a disciplined coherence of words and deeds to carry one strong and clear message to all relevant audiences. The blending of acts, words, and images that influences a particular adversary in one instance (by establishing a reputation), will also influence potential enemies, irrespective of distance from the events. Both Bonaparte and Clausewitz formally endorsed this practice in their philosophies. Both extolled the advantages of attaining “moral superiority”—the psychological effect of anticipation of rewards on the one hand and fear of consequences on the other—in advance of physical action to ensure a more complete and rapid success.

Military actions may change facts on the ground, but they also change perceptions, attitudes, and subsequent behaviors. Actions speak louder than words, as the saying goes, and they also speak louder than any images a military spokesperson might deploy. Demonstrated professional competence and discipline engenders

respect and fear. Everything we do and convey in words and images must therefore resonate in harmony. Only with this resonance will words and images acquire a synergistic multiplier effect. Well-thought-out, facts-on-the-ground-changing actions remain the most convincing way to influence human behavior, but well-chosen, well-targeted words and images that build on such foundations can expand that sphere of influence. In this sense, maneuver is not just fire and movement, but also a bringing of force, a threat of force, to bear from an advantaged physical *and* psychological position to influence the behavior of specific audiences—whether to deter violence, enforce a curfew, force a surrender, or discourage further resistance.

Rather than bifurcating these dimensions into separate oil-and-water-like lines of effort, commanders should make every line of effort an integrated, cross-reinforced blending of physical and psychological effects. Blending so-called “kinetic” and “non-kinetic” and lethal and non-lethal effects is not the same as blending physical and psychological effects. Non-kinetic effects can include electronic warfare and computer network operations that still operate in the physical dimension according to physical laws. Lethal effects have psychological consequences as well as physical ones. Non-lethal



U.S. Army, SPC Davis Pridden

SSG David Ingram from PSYOP unit in the 1st Infantry Division questions locals about local activity in the area during a patrol in Baghdad, Iraq on 26 May 2007.

effects may have physical consequences but no psychological ones. We need to return to the classical view, remaining as effective as ever in the physical dimension, but gaining even more influence from the physical potential the unit possesses through deep knowledge of human and social psychology. The best outcomes depend on a comprehensive understanding of the relevant causal and influence networks in any situation in the design and planning of operations, and on skillful integration of deeds, images, and words. This is how skilled small units accomplish the work of much larger ones.

One must appreciate the difficulty of influencing desperate and creative people to do what they really do not want to do. Determined adversaries will try to avoid consequences they fear and pursue enticing rewards, and we can never presume to understand the fears of others or what rewards will entice them. Moreover, empty threats and illusionary rewards are increasingly difficult to mask in an increasingly transparent world. When life and death are at stake on both sides, and the purveyors of information are foreign, artfully employed messages may still *contribute* to mission success (i.e., influencing desperate and creative people to do what they really do not want to do). But only the artful and determined application of physical force, or the credible threat of it, can guarantee it.

Because one can never be sure how opponents will react to words and images, concrete actions designed to force choices must inevitably follow. The vital function of PSYOP is to help adversaries understand the inevitability of choice-forcing actions. Messages influence the enemy's choices to the extent they mystify, mislead, surprise, and intimidate in verifiable behavior. But, unless concrete actions limit his choices, one has no control over how the enemy chooses to respond. Conceiving of these two arms simultaneously is necessary because they have to act as one in order to produce the desired outcome. The daily operations of our

adversaries demonstrates this logic. While the insurgent enemy employs persuasion through carefully crafted messages and rewards to influence the choices of the population, he also deals harshly with those who fail to choose to cooperate. Being perceived as strong and capable enough to follow through on threats is essential to his winning. Having established his credibility, he can veil his threats. This logic is just as essential to the success of U.S. and coalition forces, and the gaze of the media will look for actions to correspond to values.

Adversaries must see such actions as relevant evidence of the futility of resistance, and the foreclosure of *every option* but the one we want them to accept. Current foes, while small in numbers, seem to be more implacable, and more enabled, than any the Nation has previously faced. At the same time, the United States faces more demands to pacify those who use force for political exploitation or mercenary gain. In pursuit of either politics or riches, they challenge the most fundamental bargain between a government and its people when they endanger indigenous populations and their property. Whether fighting political factions or organized crime, the blending of actions and words must speak with one voice. In addition, that one voice must be in the language of words and deeds understood from the unique cultural perspective of those that U.S. forces mean to influence. In every case, the *synergy* of words and actions is what counts.

Commanders and their planners must get the physics right as well. A properly sized and constituted force ensures the inevitable foreclosure of all options but the desired one, regardless of the enemy's perseverance. When countering an insurgent, such an appropriate force has to ensure its own security, build confidence amongst the local populace, and do so before perseverance and will is exhausted among the political leadership and voters at home. Too few of the right kind of forces will limit our ability to hunt down enemies, end terror tactics and indiscriminate murder, protect logistical lines of support, conduct aggressive patrolling operations, conduct community confidence building and infrastructure re-building efforts, and deliver the expected results to impatient publics at home. On the other hand, too many troops deployed for too long can fuel the insurgent cause, build complacency among the indigenous government, skew the local

The vital function of PSYOP is to help adversaries understand the inevitability of choice-forcing actions.

economy, grow an outsized logistical foot print, and drive up costs of blood and treasure beyond what home publics expect and will support.

Enduring Aspects of Sensemaking

Human psychology is a science all soldiers should understand better. Achieving competence in both the psychological and physical dimensions of the military art is the challenge. The art of mystifying, misleading, and surprising one's adversaries is based largely on psychology. So is the closely related and equally important reverse: how to prevent the enemy from defeating *one's own* will, and how to *avoid* being mystified, misled, and surprised. This enterprise is the province of commanders, aided by intelligence and operations officers at all levels.

Deeper knowledge of human psychology and culture is essential to all operations, thus should be much more widespread. An education in the psychological dimension of warring and pacifying should begin with learning how people make judgments and how to affect their choices. After a basic knowledge in this field, cultural knowledge becomes much more useful. Individual schooling and unit training must provide practice in combining the psychological with the physical at all levels and in all missions, and it should be achieved without losing rigor of thought and attention to detail in the physical dimension.

Considerations for Design and Planning

A unity of actions and words is a *sine qua non* for successful military operations in the globally connected world. It is human nature to think of actions first and supporting messages second. Conversely, insurgents and terrorists think of actions *as* the message. Military actions are a grammar in the discourses of the larger political context, as Clausewitz and Sun Tzu both teach. The images and implied messages of actions are so strong that they overpower messages sent by other means. Therefore, defining the message (to the U.S. public, to adversaries, to allies, and to the populations within operational areas) must begin as soon as any unit receives its mission from a higher headquarters. Such considerations are essential to a comprehen-

sive understanding of the situation and to framing the problems that action aims to solve.

Since selection of a course of action hinges on what messages need communication, each audience in the unit's operational environment has to be simultaneously considered. The collective impact of words, images, and implied messages (inherent in the chosen action) has to be carefully weighed. Since action is the strongest form of communications, the most potent voice to carry the basic message should lead off.

As aforementioned, the line of least expectation to the enemy's greatest vulnerability should be the controlling idea of campaign design. Considerations of how to mystify, mislead, and surprise should be at the core of framing operational problems. Effective deception grows from integrating all efforts of the command to portray a credible story. Today's greater transparency in the operational environment makes it harder to exploit the enemy's greatest vulnerability, the point at which there is least expectation. As such, a whole-of-staff approach requires creating synergy between words and deeds. Coordinating this relationship is as important as understanding decision criteria and the opponent's propensities and idiosyncrasies. Expertise in human behavior is paramount since war is a human enterprise that takes people to extremes of passion in understandably predictable ways. Crafting actions that speak clearly and appropriately to those expectations will reinforce the best military and political outcomes.

The campaigns of great captains of the past, notably Alexander and Genghis Khan, seamlessly integrated their psychological and physical interaction with adversaries. They always prepared meticulously for physical engagements by a thorough reconnaissance and psychological conditioning of their object of attack. They followed-up every maneuver with a psychological exploitation to extend the effects of their actions to the furthest extent possible. This should become the habit of all U.S. Army commanders at all levels.

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The psychological underpinning of the military art is well supported in military theory and the writings of experts going back to Sun Tzu in (c) 500 BCE. Wisdom that applies to maintaining morale and determination of our own troops can be turned on its head to defeat the morale and will of the enemy. Whatever the ancients advocated to avoid being misled, surprised, or deceived applies as well when reversed in logic. Such wisdom, helped by modern behavioral studies, helps in framing problems and conceiving approaches.

Clearly, success requires designs conceived in both the physical and moral dimension at once, and plans that integrate actions, images, and words along every line of operation taken together as whole. This

means that PSYOP officers—those most knowledgeable in the psychological dimension—should be integral to operational design and planning efforts from the start. The psychological aspects of full spectrum operations ought to be second nature to every commander and operations officer, and they ought to be masters of generating a combined physical and psychological impact. Specialists in human psychology ought to be advising them and not, as propagandists at work, be communicating and building relationships with the public. **MR**

NOTES

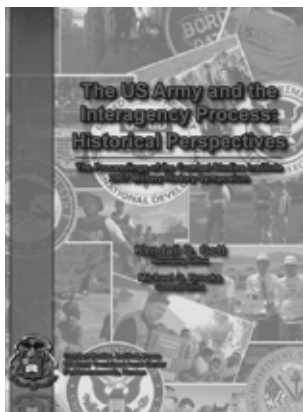
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