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CANADIAN FORCES COLLEGE CSC 27

EXERCISE NEW HORIZONS

Could Information Operations Produce a

Greater Desired Effect during Peace Support Operations?

By Major Wayne Buck

Abstract

Canada is an aggressive advocate of the human security agenda resulting in a demand for participation on multiple peace support operations. During these peace support operations information, in and of itself, has become a quantifiable force multiplier. To meet additional human security demands, the Canadian Forces should shift emphasis from the deployment of a primarily physical presence in peace support operations to greater emphasis on production of the desired effect. The employment of a superior information operations capability, including psychological operations, can help to achieve this desired effect.

At this time Canada has no formal psychological operations capability. As a key component of the information operations process, the Canadian Forces must acquire and develop a psychological operations capability to have the most impact on peace support operations. The Army initiative of a Command Support Battalion is one vehicle that will allow information operations to be deployed early in operational theatres.

Could Information Operations Produce a

Greater Desired Effect During Peace Support Operations?

Introduction

Recent societal trends, including globalization and the disintegration of societies, are causing our world to become much more intertwined. Advances in computer and communications technologies are further interconnecting our world by allowing information to pass at the speed of light. This information often illuminates human security issues such as environmental imbalance, deadly disease infestations, and lack of food and water. These problems now inpact Canada because of this world "situational awareness." With Canada's large number of immigrants, they will be concerned presumably with the fate of their relatives and friends. Canada should expect that these immigrants will make their concerns known to the Canadian government as they try to positively influence the situation in their country of origin. Thus, Canada is involved to a large degree in international human security.

Canada has become an aggressive advocate of using the United Nations to promote international human security. It is unlikely that this posture will change anytime soon. To positively influence the human security agenda, Canada works in cooperation with other countries to promote stability along many lines of relief including economic and cultural lines. Usually the desired effect is achieved via diplomatic measures. If diplomacy fails, economic or other sanctions are often imposed. When all else has failed, Canada, again in cooperation with other countries, will use military intervention to safeguard human security. In the past decade, this position has caused the Canadian Forces to be involved in many human security missions abroad. With only a finite amount of human, materiel and financial resources available, the Canadian military is now in a weakened state. When a military force needs an advantage, it is

common to use a force multiplier[1] so that the same quantity of troops may have a ratio or capability advantage over an opponent.

Traditional force multipliers have included improved firepower such as tanks and artillery, improved mobility such as the horse and truck, and improved command and control using wireless radio and satellite. With the advent of the information age, information itself has become a quantifiable force multiplier. As Canada accepts more requests for involvement in peace support operations to enforce human security, the need to use information as a force multiplier will increase.

Aim

To respond to additional peace support requests, the Canadian Forces must shift emphasis from the deployment of a primarily physical presence in peace support operations to greater emphasis on achieving the desired effect. The employment of a superior information operations capability, including psychological operations,[2] can help to achieve this desired effect.

This paper will initially examine information operations as a mechanism that can be used to change perceptions and influence the development of human security. The fundamentals of information operations will be reviewed and put in context for use within peace support operations. The world human security situation will then be examined to determine if peace support operations conducted in support of security situations can be positively influenced by information operations. When the context of information operations within a peace support operation has been established, recent operations in Haiti, Bosnia, and Zaire/Uganda/Rwanda will be investigated to determine to what extent the use of information operations influenced the operations. Before the conclusions and recommendations, the concepof se00.air

Information Operations

Thus, those skilled in war subdue the enemy's army without battle.[3]

The exploitation of information operations techniques in peace support operations remains immature. Although the components of information operations have, for some time, been exploited separately during peace and conflict, the advent of the Information Age has highlighted information aspects of warfare. Thus, individual components now have to operate in a much more coordinated manner giving birth to the process known as "information operations." Although the entire information operations process is immature, commanders have recognized its importance as a powerful tool to influence local populations in human security situations.

Within the Department of National Defence, the strategic aims of information operations are to ensure peacetime national security objectives, to deter conflict, to protect Canadian Forces communications and information systems, and to shape the information environment.[4] Essentially, information operations are those activities that are undertaken to win the information battle fought as an integral part of the operational campaign. As a key component of the commander's campaign plan, information operations are unique because they can be implemented before a formal campaign commences. "Information" is a combination of content and meaning communicated or received, represented by symbols and media or conduit, used or usable in a particular context.[5]

To be aware of the usefulness of information operations in future peace support operations, it is necessary to understand current Canadian Forces information operations doctrine. Canadian Forces information operations doctrine has only been in existence since 1997. The Canadian Forces understands that information operations are not restricted to war but are also applicable in operations other than war, including peace support operations (although

there is no specific information operations doctrine for peace support operations at this time). The doctrine further accepts that Canadian Forces information operations do not exist alone but should be integrated with other information and intelligence agencies. These other agencies may include other government departments, allied governments, international cooperative ventures such as NATO and the United Nations, and non-governmental organizations such as the International Red Cross. Simply put, information operations must be a cooperative process that crosses boundaries in order to achieve a desired effect. This cooperative crossing of boundaries between domains may be particularly important in coordinating peace support operations.

Information is collected within domains that represent a set of related information. For instance, Canada has a National Information Infrastructure within which is the Defence Information Infrastructure including the Canadian Forces. Canadian Forces information operations can be defined as actions taken in support of political and military objectives which influence decision makers by affecting the opponent's information.[6] A key information operations function is to disrupt, and degrade an opponent's ability to use his information systems.

Information operations are divided into four support components: communications and information systems; relevant information including Intelligence, Surveillance, Target Acquisition, and Reconnaissance (ISTAR);[7] Civil-military Cooperation (also known by the American term Civil-Affairs); and Public Affairs. As well, there are the two action components consisting of offensive and defensive information operations. Offensive information operations are actions taken to influence actual or potential adversary decision-makers. This is done by affecting the adversary's use of information through psychological operations, deception, electronic warfare, computer network attack or physical destruction. (It should be noted that the

Canadian Forces do not have a formal psychological operations capability.) Defensive

information operations are actions taken to protect one's own information from the negative

effects of the adversary's offensive information operations. The common bond between

offensive and defensive information operations is the target set. Information operations can be

performed at every level of warfare and across the spectrum of conflict. "The employment of an

information operations strategy to influence a decision maker can yield tremendous advantage to

the Canadian Forces during times of crisis and conflict."[8]

Psychological operations are used to communicate selected information to adversarial

audiences, especially governments. They are specifically designed to influence emotions and the

behaviour of governments and their peoples. At the strategic level, psychological operations

could be implemented via announcement of a diplomatic position. At the operational level

psychological operations can be used to influence the population within a theatre of operations.

Electronic media such as radio or television broadcasts may be used to send perception

messages. At the tactical level, dropped leaflets have been used to influence enemy soldiers to

surrender. At the lowest levels in a peace support operation, commanders can influence the

situation by developing and issuing information themes that soldiers then highlight in their

dealings with the local population. Civil-military Cooperation activities are those military

activities that foster the relationship between military forces, civil authorities and the local

population. The ability to coordinate and synergistically use perception operations such as

psychological operations, Civil-military Cooperation and Public Affairs is what makes

information operations such a powerful tool in peace support operations.

The employment of information operations in peace support operations must necessarily

be different than in war. Peace support operations call for a more restrictive set of rules of

engagement than those that apply during wartime. There are political, legal, and operational

factors that influence how the process will be used. Recent developments in ISTAR and

psychological operations mean that information operations are not just restricted to war. The

components of information operations could have an even greater effect during times of human

security stress. Canada's involvement in and stance on the human security agenda shows that

there is potential for even greater use of information operations in the recognition, development,

implementation and resolution of international security problems. The next section of the paper

will examine the link between human security and the ability of information operations to

promote that security.

Human Security

> *It has belatedly begun to dawn on people that the industrial civilization is coming
> to an end. Its unravelling . . . brings with it the threat of more, not fewer, wars –
> wars of a new type.*[9]

Since the fall of the Iron Curtain, the end of the Cold War, and the dissolving of the

USSR, the international security environment has fundamentally changed. The purpose of this

section is to examine trends in international security that have come to light in the last decade.

The trends will be analysed with a view towards determining to what extent information

operations can be used to positively influence the resolution of conflicts.

The ending of the Cold War has had many consequences. It is generally believed that

three of the main consequences are the diffusion of power in world affairs, the disintegration and

failure of states, and the expansion in the meaning of international security.[10]

The US/USSR bipolar world has been replaced by one that is more complex and less

predictable. The US essentially won the Cold War by outlasting the USSR but at a huge cost to

its national infrastructure. The US now feels that it must now transfer its energy to national

economic efforts. This means that the US is less inclined to involve itself solely or as lead nation when a world crisis does not have an immediate bearing on US national interests. This "pick and choose your favourite conflict" condition has led to international coalitions of interest rather than preordained coalitions (NATO, etc) as in the past. The Balkans are a good example of this trend where the region went through a period of interventionist volatility. The Office for Security and Cooperation in Europe initially intervened in the Balkans but passed responsibility to the United Nations who then passed responsibility to the regional force of NATO. NATO then allowed non-NATO forces to join the effort making it a more international coalition.

The end of the Cold War has spawned many national, tribal, religious and ethnic conflicts that have led to the dissolving and failure of states. This post-Cold War effect combined with an increasing sense of democracy has spread the quest for self-determination and made populations willing to fight for their freedom with the accompanying turmoil. The pursuit of self-determination has also resulted in new sates that are generally smaller and perhaps not be able to sustain themselves in the future. The world trend is toward problems caused less by territorial aggression than by economic imbalance, civil violence and population increases with a growing demand for resources.[11] Add to this mix the fact that Soviet economic support is gone and it is easy to see that disaster is looming in the human security realm.

Canada is a lead nation in the development of an international human security agenda. The threats indicated in previous paragraphs are happening now and often demand an immediate response. However, for a successful response, there must be a consensus for resolution amongst military and aid agencies. A crisis precipitated by many distinct factors will often need a corresponding multifaceted response. As protection and as a first response for command and control the military is the best option nations have to satisfy their needs. The military can

provide response for a variety of threats, including immediate humanitarian relief, negotiation of

cease-fires, and establishment of interim governments. One of the most important assets that the

military can provide is coordination of information at the in-theatre operational level.

Information operations ensure that the strategic and operational messages are coordinated

amongst agencies and that the population can be influenced away from the mistruths of corrupt

governments and criminals. As Lloyd Axworthy said, "NATO's air campaign should serve to

dispel the misc25.6177s. As 626.15985 Tm(ssag7c597popuc25.6177s. As 91.430835 Tm(ssag7c597es andinter

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operations. If information operations were used a further examination will be made to determine if their use was successful and how it influenced the operational result.

In an attempt to put boundaries on the concept of peace support operations and try to understand it better, the United Nations has catagorized and defined these operations. The United Nations Secretary General in his report *An Agenda for Peace*[14] divided peace support operations into the three broad categories of preventive diplomacy, peacemaking and peacekeeping. Preventive diplomacy is the action to prevent disputes from arising between parties and to prevent existing disputes from escalating into conflict. Information operations can make a significant contribution to preventive diplomacy by ensuring the potential belligerents' population has the correct information they need to make informed choices. Peacemaking is action to bring hostile parties to agreement, normally through peaceful means such as those foreseen in Chapter VI of the Charter of the United Nations. Peacekeeping is the deployment of a United Nations presence in the field, with the consent of all the parties concerned. Information operations can be used effectively in all three categories of peace support operations.

The new world security situation offers significant challenges for Canada and the Canadian Forces. The Speech from the Throne in October 1999 offered, in general terms, assurance that the needs of the military in responding to the challenges of the new peacekeeping would be addressed:

> The Government will . . . continue to ensure that the Canadian Forces have the capacity to support Canada's role in building a more secure world and will further develop the capacity of Canadians to help ensure peace and security in foreign lands.

It was further noted by parliament that Canadian soldiers are involved in a new type of peacekeeping that must stress resolution of individual human security issues. In their seventh

report on *The New NATO and the Evolution of Peacekeeping: Implications for Canada,* the

Standing Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs said that:

> The new peacekeeping is no less demanding on Canada's military than the traditional type. Indeed, many of the requirements imposed by operations such as those in Kosovo are both more difficult in military and technical terms and more wide-ranging in terms of their human dimensions. It is sufficient to note at this point that the shift to a human security approach imposes a whole new set of roles on Canadian forces while in no way diminishing the traditional requirement that they be able to function as efficient fighting units.

One of the significant differences between peace support operations of the past and today's peace support operations is the availability of information to all parties, including intervening troops, belligerents, and the civilian population. This information can be fashioned to influence military interventionists, belligerents or civilians. In a complex multicultural and multiethnic environment, it is important to have a conceptual vision of not only the immediate situation of the peace support operation but of the future situation as well. All combat power of the force, including information operations, must be focused on shaping the future environment of peace support operations to achieve the political and military end state. In NATO doctrine the future environment is distinguished by immediate and distant environments.

The study of actual operations is one way to determine whether information operations can fashion the immediate and distant environment sufficiently to affect the quantity of soldiers deployed. Information operations used in peace support operations in Haiti, Bosnia, and Zaire/Uganda/Rwanda will be examined. In particular the information operations component of psychological operations will be examined. The examination will determine how each operation used information operations, whether the end state was affected, what effect was actually achieved, and if the operation did not use information operations then whether information operations may have been successful if it had been used.

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The Canadian Forces have not actually been involved in psychological operations since World War II. However, Haiti is an excellent recent example of where a small scale Canadian initiative using some psychological operations techniques has been employed recently. During the United Nations Transitional Mission In Haiti (UNTMIH) in 1997, the Force Commander used small groups called Military Information Support Teams (MIST). The MIST were considered a force asset and reported directly to the Force Commander. In this peace support operation, psychological operations were expected to contribute directly to the success of the mission by ensuring that the information themes developed by UNTMIH were disseminated. Brigadier-General Gagnon felt that information operations were a key element in the role of UNTMIH and that he could not accomplish his end-state without it. His campaign planstated that:

> The media line of operations is, above all, meant to shield our military C of G *(center of gravity.)* If we neglect to devote sufficient effort to its protection, we may expose ourselves to mission failure. This line of operation has to be viewed as our flank protection as we continue the advance on the battlefield. It is therefore a legitimate military activity, and it should be used to promote our accomplishments. [15]

The Canadian MIST was a 24-man team, 14 of which spoke fluent Creole. Assisted by Public Affairs, the MIST conducted the in-theatre information campaign. Canadian Forces Civil-military Cooperation doctrine, states that "the MIST provided a significant force multiplier especially in a crowd situation where MIST Tactical Dissemination Teams of three men each often used psychological operations techniques to calm or restore order in tense situations." [16]

In Haiti, the MIST was assigned a mandate that dealt with both the immediate and the distant information environment. The immediate information task was to provide commanders with an alternate tool to that of resorting to force in dealing with the local population. The distant information task was to inform the population of untruths from the criminal and

belligerent elements (this could actually be considered counter-psychological operations) and to develop radio messages to win the hearts and minds of the population.

The MISTs in Haiti were an operational and tactical success. On a small scale they were able to take the force commander's message and convince the local population that it was true. During a transitional operation from United Nations control to civilian control this is especially important to achieve the correct criteria for mission success. The NATO operation in Bosnia is another example where information operations were used successfully to set the perception tone within divisional sectors.

In only a minor way is Canada involved in information operations in Bosnia. Generally speaking, information operations activities, other than routine communications information systems and ISTAR, are directed by the sector multi-national division headquarters and the theatre headquarters. As a member of multi-national division southwest, Canada is allocated a psychological operations/public affairs team for its battle group. The use of information operations in Bosnia was first used and developed by the US who learned many valuable lessons that were used later in Kosovo.

The US used its Implementation Force Information Campaign as the nucleus of its information operations strategy in Bosnia.[17] Used primarily to put in effect its force protection goal of taking no casualties, the campaign also described the military option of the Dayton Peace Accords which deterred the local population from engaging in violence. The force protection aspects of the information campaign had its own problems. Civil-military Cooperation teams working with psychological operations teams during peace support operations was new for all the players in Bosnia, and thus there was no common understanding of the role that these perception operations could play. These cooperative efforts have now been resolved, and the

entire theatre is using information operations, especially perception operations such as Civil-military Cooperation and psychological operations, to the maximum extent possible. Such was not the case for Operation ASSURANCE.

Operation ASSURANCE focused on refugee and humanitarian activities along the Rwanda/Zaire border in October to December 1996. This peace support operation was an opportunity for Canada to shine as lead nation of an approximately 30-country force being assembled to rescue dying refugees returning to Rwanda from Zaire. The stage was Canada's to use information operations to influence world opinion to the plight of the refugees, to promote a stabilisation plan for the African Great Lakes region, and to aid the force commander in his operational plan. It did not happen that way.

Essentially, Canada blundered into the mission blind and stayed blind until the troops came home. Because no strategic assessment was done before accepting and starting the mission there was no initial intelligence base. None of the in-theatre information sources and outlets such as the Canadian Consulate in Kigali or the British Defence Liaison Team in Kigali were used to develop a high level picture. Furthermore, there appears to have been no strategic concept for intelligence operations or for an information campaign.[18] Public Affairs was recognized as a valuable asset and many resources were secured for it to function. However, there were no psychological operations resources and civil-military cooperation was a non-starter. With the exception of the successful deployment of a limited communications and information system, information operations during Operation ASSURANCE were a failure.

Command Support

> *It is expected that in the future the Command Support Battalion will be the most valuable asset in operations.*[19]

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Since Operation ASSURANCE the Canadian Army has recognized the importance of information to the conduct of operations. Now, the Army is being inundated with several new information projects such as the Tactical Command, Control and Communications System[20], the Athena automated command and control system for Battle Group and higher headquarters, and positional and situational awareness equipment and processes. In the next several years, even more equipment will be delivered, including new electronic warfare capabilities, an unmanned aerial vehicle, and target acquisition capability. The Army has recognized that the major role of all these new capabilities is to support the commander to make decisions. Thus the concept of command support has been created.

The Army has decided that it will invest in building command support battalions for each regular force brigade. The battalion will be responsible to support the commander and manage all of his information technology and information management needs. This management would include the four components of information operations. Furthermore the missing psychological operations capability will be provided by the Army Reserve under the umbrella of the Land Force Reserve Restructure project. Scheduled for inauguration in 2002, the first Command Support Battalion will be established in 2 Canadian Mechanized Brigade Group of CFB Petawawa and used to test the Command Support Battalion concept.

Conclusion

> *If the critical activity is information operations, then nations must commit as much resources to it as tanks, guns, etc. In this case it means printing presses, TV stations, and radio stations[21]*

Canada has a continuing need to be involved in resolving the world's human security problems. Situations catalysed by the dissolution of the USSR will continue to become less stable. Famine, civil wars, disease, and other international security problems will continue to

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worsen. As a result there will likely be a requirement for more rather than less peace support operations. Often the unstable situations are caused by incorrect perceptions afforded the local population. Corrupt governments and criminals use rumour and innuendo to misguide the populace for their own ends. A properly constructed and executed information operations campaign can bring significant positive pressure to the conduct of any campaign and is a force multiplier of extreme importance. To meet additional human security demands, the Canadian Forces should shift emphasis from the deployment of a primarily physical presence in peace support operations to greater emphasis on achieving the desired effect. The employment of a superior information operations capability, including psychological operations, can help to achieve the desired effect.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the Canadian Forces increase its deployable information operations capability and use it in all theatres to possibly reduce the physical presence of troops. As psychological operations are a key element of the information operations process, the Canadian Forces must acquire and develop this capability to have the most impact. To develop an awareness of the capabilities of information operations, the military should start an internal campaign to promote the perception altering capabilities of information operations. In particular, the Command Support Battalion initiative by the Army should be embraced by the Canadian Forces as a significant force multiplier and given the resources and encouragement needed to develop and grow.

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Endnotes

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[1] A force multiplier is a process or equipment that when used in conjunction with other systems can provide an influence on the battlespace out of proportion to its resource requirements

[2] Psychological operations are actions to convey selected information and indicators to foreign audiences. They are designed to influence emotions, motives, reasoning, and ultimately, the behaviour of foreign governments, organizations, groups, and individuals. Psychological operations have strategic, operational, and tactical applications, including support to deception operations.

[3] Sun Tzu, page 79

[4] CF-IO Ops, section 101

[5] Ibid, section 102

[6] Ibid, section 102

[7] Intelligence, Surveillance, Target Acquisition and Reconnaissance are those activities carried out in the battlespace to provide the commander with relevant information.

[8] CF-IO Ops, section 101

[9] Tofflers, page 18

[10] Smith/Downes, page 14

[11] MacKinlay, page 12

[12] Ibid

[13] Dag Hammarskjöld

[14] SecGen report

[15] UNTMIH, Anx D

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[16] Civil-Military Cooperation - B-GG-005-004/AF-023

[17] Wentz, page 9

[18] LLIW v.10

[19] Discussed with Major-General Dempster (Assistant Chief of the Land Staff) during a visit to Fort Hood, Texas, 27 February 2001

[20] The Tactical, Command, Control, and Communications System is the Army's communications means for division and below. Its main components are the Iris digital radio system, the digital microwave Land Tactical Area Communications System, and several satellite ground terminals

[21] A remark heard from a high ranking NATO officer during a visit to a NATO headquarters