Supreme Allied Commander Transformation

Understanding NATO StratCom

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StratCom / PA Joint Ed & Trg O

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References

- PO (2009) 0141, NATO StratCom Policy, 29 Sep 09

- MCM-0085-2010 Revised, NATO Military Concept for Strategic Communications, 11 Aug 10

- IMSWM-0051-2011, NATO Strategic Communication Military Capability Implementation Plan (CIP), 21 Feb 11

- SHAPE ACO Directive (AD) 95-2, StratCom, 21 May 12
The Information Age

Global Economy
Interlinked networks
Information as critical as energy and capital

Global Audience
Real-time 24 X 7 news cycle; Blogs; Streaming TV; Smart Phones
Waning control over information movement / access

Global Society
Information crosses borders and creates groups
Erosion of traditional Nation-state system
Emergence of StratCom

Key Factors

- maturing of internet-based communications - video, net-based, access
- connectivity: social media is ‘force multiplier’
- ‘actions’ speak louder than ‘words’ philosophy - understanding that actions have comms impact..
- increasingly complex op environment
- increasingly saturated info battle-space
- increasingly sophisticated adversary comms
Video: The “three little pigs” narrative
StratCom.. What is it?

StratCom is a mechanism of influence!

Influence spectrum ranges from:

- informing as the most “indirect” form to..
- coercing as the most “direct” form of influence
“Objectivity” Revisited

« There are many ways to talk about television. But from a 'business' perspective, the job of [this network] is to help Coca-Cola sell its product. For an advertisement message to hit the mark, the brain of the audience must be available. Our programs’ vocation is to prepare the television watchers’ brain to become available: i.e. to entertain it, to amuse (or distract) it, to relax it so to prepare the brain between two advertisements… What we sell to Coca-Cola, it’s available human brain time… »

Patrick Le Lay, former CEO of TF1 (1988-2008)
The Cleric & the Rolex
“At the core of this strategy is the idea that there is no such thing as objective truth. This notion allows the Kremlin to replace facts with disinformation. The Kremlin’s goal is to control all narratives, so that politics becomes one great scripted reality show. The way it wields power illustrates and reinforces this psychology..

Peter Pomerantsev, *Nothing Is True and Everything is Possible: The Surreal Heart of the New Russia* (2014)

“The majority of Russians are subject to intensive, intelligent propaganda coming from television 100% of which is controlled by Putin.”

Mikhail Kasyanov, PM of Russia (2000-2004)
Russian Propaganda

THIS IS NOT A BLACK AMERICAN INSTRUCTOR IN UKRAINE, SHOT BY A SNIPER AT A NUDIST BEACH

THIS IS A 2012 PHOTO FROM JOINT MILITARY EXERCISES "RAPID TRIDENT" IN UKRAINE

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**NEWSPortal**

Половина инструкторов уже запросилась домой

Уже к вечеру снайперы поразили более серьезную цель: купающийся в озере американский инструктор из числа тех, что были в плену, погиб в результате вражеского огня. Его соратники пытались найти место для его похорон, которое на гребне пляжа так и не нашлось, раненый американец устал и был отвезен на медицинскую помощь.

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**ИФОРМЦентР**

На Львовщине начались международные военные учения «Рапид Трайдент -2012». Фото

Сегодня во Львовской области стартовали масштабные украинско-американские военные учения с привлечением войск «Рапид Трайдент-2012». Об этом сообщают корреспонденты."
The coordinated and appropriate use of NATO communications activities & capabilities – Public Diplomacy, Public Affairs, Military Public Affairs, Information Operations & Psychological Operations, as appropriate – in support of Alliance policies, operations and activities, and in order to advance NATO’s aims.

~ PO(2009)0141, dated 29 Sep 09
In cooperation with NATO HQ, the coordinated and appropriate use of Military PA, Info Ops and PSYOPS which, in concert with other military actions and following NATO political guidance, advances NATO’s aims and operations.

~ AD 095-002, 21 May 12
## Communications Functions

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<th>Info Ops</th>
<th>PsyOps</th>
<th>Public Affairs</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Intent</strong></td>
<td>Mil Staff function to <em>analyse / plan / assess &amp; integrate</em> info activities IOT create desired effects on will, understanding &amp; capability of adversary</td>
<td>Capability to <em>Influence</em> perceptions, attitudes &amp; behaviour</td>
<td>Capability to improve public awareness &amp; understanding, inform, enhance <strong>credibility</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Audience</strong></td>
<td><strong>Adversaries</strong>, potential adversaries and other <em>NAC-approved parties</em></td>
<td>NAC-approved target audiences within the AO</td>
<td>Allied, International, Regional, Local &amp; Internal, Adversaries</td>
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<td><strong>Scope</strong></td>
<td>Coordination/synchronisation, Info Ops framework, counter propaganda, intel/targeting, comprehensive approach</td>
<td>NATO owned or controlled media outlets and means of communication</td>
<td>Media, Internet, Social media, Internal/external communications</td>
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*ACT – Leading NATO Military Transformation*
StratCom..

- understanding & engaging audiences to advance interests & objectives by *affecting* perceptions, attitudes, beliefs & behaviours

- aligning actions, images, words to support policy and planning & *meet strategic objectives*

- appreciating that all operations & activities have a critical communication component: Everything NATO says & does, or fails to say & do, has *intended* & *unintended* consequences, with *intended* & *unintended* audiences..
The physical, virtual & cognitive space in which information is collected, processed, perceived, disseminated & acted upon. It consists of individuals, organizations & information systems as well as the information itself.

~ Annex B to MC 0422/4, 20 Jul 12
Communications “Then”

“Social Media”

- Own Population, International Community
- Own Soldiers
- Theatre
- Population
- Adversaries / Parties to Conflict

“Media”

- PD PA
- Mil PA
- PsyOps
- Info Ops

ACT – Leading NATO Military Transformation
With a StratCom view..

“Social Media”

PD
PA

StratCom

Mil PA

Info Ops

“Media”

PSYOPS

Consistent & Coordinated Communications
Working in Synch..

Theory of SC -- like an orchestra producing harmony

- Conductor (Senior Leader) coordinates and integrates the various elements of the orchestra based on the score (SC Guidance and Plan)
- All instruments retain their unique sound and specialty, but can communicate more effectively in concert

The selection, timing, and emphasis of SC instruments help orchestrate the message to stakeholders consistent with a desired effect or commander's intent. The Conductor must continuously adapt the score based on stakeholder feedback.
Ensure NATO audiences, in nations or within a region where the Alliance operates, friendly or adversarial receives **truthful, accurate & timely** information, allowing them to understand & assess NATO’s actions & intentions. This also seeks to **deter** aggression & **promote** NATO’s aims & objectives …

~ *NATO Military Concept for StratCom, 27 Jul 10*
Aim of NATO StratCom

StratCom aims to affect perceptions, attitudes & beliefs of key publics in support of Strategic / Political / Military objectives

In the domain of the mind, will & emotion

This is the cognitive domain in which perceptions affect attitudes & behaviours
All aspects of NATO activities have a critical communications component. StratCom is not an adjunct activity but an inherent part of the planning and conduct of all military ops & activities. As part of the overarching political-military approach to StratCom, the vision is to put Strategic Communication at the heart of all levels of military policy, planning and execution.

~ NATO Military Concept for StratCom, 27 Jul 10
Everything NATO & its partners say, do, or fail to do & say, has intended & unintended consequences. Every action, word, and image sends a message, and every member is a messenger.

Every action, even at the lowest tactical level can have strategic consequences.

Unintended audiences are unavoidable in the global info environment...

~ NATO Military Concept for StratCom, 27 Jul 10
From the Strategic Corporal..
To the Tactical Politician..
CNN -- U.S. troops pulled down a giant statue of Iraqi President Saddam Hussein hours after tanks rolled into Baghdad. Before the statue fell, a Marine draped a U.S. flag over the head of the statue...

...a gesture that drew a muted reaction from the crowd, gasps in a Pentagon briefing room, and anger from a commentator on the Arabic news network.

The Guardian -- A soldier climbed up the jib, hooked the chain around Saddam's neck, and produced a US flag, which he draped over the Iraqi leader's head... An Iraqi commentator on the BBC was aghast, and you could almost hear the shouts from CENCOM's PR department in Qatar: "Get that flag down, now!"
The major challenge is to expand the planning culture so that non-kinetic tools & the cognitive domain are consistently & completely addressed in every planning problem & throughout each phase of execution.
Summary

• StratCom is a mindset & a process. It is also COMMAND LED..

• StratCom is a fundamental & inseparable aspect of planning – the narrative should lead operational planning & execution

• All military actions & words effect the Information Environment – where perceptions matter. StratCom is key to achieving our goals

• Words & actions must be consistent (say-do gap)
“We’ve come to believe that messages are something we can launch downrange like a rocket, something we can fire for effect …

We need to worry a lot less about \textit{HOW} to communicate our actions & much more about \textit{WHAT} our actions communicate.”