

PSYOP C²W Information Operations in Bosnia

by MAJ Arthur Tulak, Military Analyst, CALL

Information is one of four instruments of power (IOPs -- *Diplomatic, Informational, Military, and Economic*) that nations wield to influence events and actors during peace and conflict. The informational IOP in support of peace operations is the clear and honest expression of intent and motive, which can generate public support and goodwill at home and abroad.¹ To wield the informational IOP at the tactical through strategic levels of conflict and across the range of military operations, the Army has developed the concept and doctrine of *Information Operations* in Field Manual 100-6. Information operations are not new in that military forces have been conducting the component parts of IO for centuries. What is new, however, is the integrated approach to synchronizing all the various activities that comprise IO that had previously been "stove-piped" and independent of one another.²

The three interrelated components of information operations are *operations, relevant information and intelligence (RII), and information systems (INFOSYS)*. This article focuses on the operations component of IO, specifically on the PSYOP subset of that component. The *operations* component of IO is broken down into the categories of command and control warfare (C²W), civil affairs (CA), and public affairs (PA). C²W is further divided into C²-Attack (offensive) and C²-Protect (defensive). C²W is "the integrated use of operations security (OPSEC), military deception, psychological operations (PSYOP), electronic warfare (EW), and physical destruction, mutually supported by intelligence to deny information to, influence, degrade, or destroy adversary C² capabilities, while protecting friendly C² capabilities against such actions. Command and control warfare applies across the operational continuum and all levels of conflict."³ In Bosnia-Herzegovina (BiH), psychological operations (PSYOP) and public affairs (PA) have been the primary vehicles by which the informational IOP has been wielded in theater.

The multi-national coalition that comprised the implementation and stabilization forces (IFOR and SFOR) conducted a *peace enforcement* operation to separate the former warring factions (FWFs) and impose the peace accord approved by the FWF political leadership. General Wesley Clark, Supreme Allied Commander, Europe, recently announced that although the military tasks were "99 percent accomplished," the military force had to remain to enable the civilian agencies and organizations charged with the implementation of the civil aspects of the accord to accomplish their tasks.⁴ Although IFOR successfully established a zone of separation (ZOS) and the military provisions of the Dayton Peace Accord (DPA) have largely been achieved, the *peace enforcement* component remains, and SFOR must continue to be ready to apply lethal combat power to compel compliance.

The primary purpose of all operations in Bosnia remains the continued implementation of the DPA military provisions involving the Entity Armed Forces (EAF)⁵ and maintenance of the peace necessary for the diplomatic and economic instruments of power to operate. However, the emphasis on SFOR's military operations now is on facilitating the accomplishment of the civil provisions of the DPA, and in support of that effort, lethal combat power is not a tool that is easily applied.

The "battlefield" in Bosnia-Herzegovina is one of a struggle of ideas competing for legitimacy and supremacy. On this battlefield, information is the "weapon" that is wielded by many actors and through many forms to include propaganda, psychological operations, public affairs, and civil-military affairs. Although IFOR and SFOR did not face off against an "adversary" in Operation JOINT ENDEAVOR (OJE) and Operation JOINT GUARD (OJG), the FWFs were occasionally uncooperative and at times bellicose towards IFOR/SFOR. Presently, in Operation JOINT FORGE, *information operations* are one of the primary means by which SFOR is achieving effects in changing attitudes and reducing the barriers to implementing the civil aspects of the DPA.

The Multi-National Division-North (MND-N) often found information operations were the division main effort as they comprised the most effective of the non-lethal fires the division could employ. In operations other than war (OOTW), ". . . IO may be one of the most critical and acceptable means of achieving the assigned objectives because ROE [Rules of Engagement] may severely restrict the use of conventional military weapons."⁶ In peace operations lethal force is the instrument of last resort. "When force must be used, its purpose is to protect life or compel, not to destroy . . . the conflict, not the belligerent parties, is the enemy . . . the use of force should be a

last resort and, whenever possible, should be used when other means of persuasion are exhausted"⁷

Through the non-lethal capabilities of IO, SFOR is attacking the legitimacy of those leadership elements of the three entities who are blocking the further implementation of the DPA. Through non-lethal information operations, SFOR can target the adversary leadership's "decisionmaking and C2" and potentially "to control the adversary's decision-process tempo and even cause it to collapse."⁸ In addition, SFOR IO can target the popular support base of adversary leadership and persuade the general populace to support the peace agreement and SFOR objectives through a coordinated information campaign.⁹

In Operations JOINT ENDEAVOR and JOINT GUARD, C²W aimed at co-opting the FWF's C² apparatus to facilitate their compliance with the Dayton Peace Accord and to monitor that compliance as well.¹⁰ "C²-Protect seeks to maintain effective C² of friendly forces by negating or turning to a friendly advantage the adversary's efforts to influence, degrade, or destroy friendly C² systems."¹¹ Although no physical attacks were made on SFOR C² systems, the FWFs did engage in disinformation and propaganda counter to SFOR's objectives and interests. PSYOP was the main effort for C²-Attack operations directed at the FWF leaders and populace. PSYOP C²-Attack took the form of radio, television, and print products in a very sophisticated PYSOP campaign in a media-rich environment. Because information knows no boundaries in today's "information age," the MND-N PSYOP worked in tandem with Public Affairs (through its Coalition Press Information Center or CPIC) in C²-Protect to counter enemy propaganda and misinformation and to advance SFOR IO campaign themes to the FWFs.

"Public affairs (PA) provides objective reporting without intent to propagandize. As open sources to foreign countries and the United States, PA channels can be used to disseminate international information."¹²

Successful PSYOP "are based on projection of truth and credible message . . . [that serve to discredit] adversary propaganda or misinformation against the operations of US/coalition forces [which] is critical to maintaining favorable public opinion."¹³

"PSYOP are an essential tool in both C²-Protect and C²-Attack operations."¹⁴ PSYOP was an active element in C²-Attack operations in MND-N. PSYOP in the prosecution of the IO campaign were primarily via printed materials (handbills, pamphlets, newspapers, magazines, posters, etc.) and over the airwaves to the radio-listening and television-viewing public. The Military Information Environment (MIE) in Bosnia includes several Nonmilitary Information Systems including commercial and government-run news media, which are being plied by SFOR in its information operations.¹⁵

In support of combat operations, US PSYOP has the capability to broadcast PSYOP messages on adversary radio frequencies.¹⁶ US PSYOP also has the capability to transmit radio and television broadcasts anywhere in the world using the EC-130 *Commando Solo* aircraft as a broadcasting platform.¹⁷ However, in operations other than war (OOTW), such as the Peace Enforcement operations in Bosnia, PSYOP radio and television products are more subtle than the combat products designed to weaken the enemy's morale and induce him to surrender.

IFOR Radio PSYOP during Operation JOINT ENDEAVOR were initially broadcast over AM frequencies using the organic radio transmitting equipment available to US PSYOP forces. IFOR set up five radio stations located in the five most populated cities across the country: Sarajevo, Tuzla, Banja-Luka, Mrkonjic Grad, and Mostar.¹⁸ As much of the electro-magnetic spectrum media and telecommunications infrastructure were disabled or destroyed during the long Bosnian civil war,¹⁹ initial IFOR PSYOP radio operations were an important source of information to the Bosnian people.

SFOR PSYOP radio operations included using civilian commercial radio stations to air pre-recorded music programs that contained "infomercials" that reinforced PSYOP themes interspersed among the songs. TFE PSYOP products delivered over the radio waves consisted of PSYOP scripts developed from news releases and other truthful information to be read by the on-air announcer, and pre-recorded music shows with PSYOP messages interspersed in the music segments. Live interviews with MND-N

TF commanders and live talk shows involving the local people discussing themes important to SFOR were two more means of using radio as a way to support the IO campaign.

During Operation JOINT GUARD, in addition to the use of commercial radio stations, TFE PSYOP controlled its own radio station in MND-N, an FM radio station, called *Radio Mir* (MIR stands for Military Information Radio, and is the Serbo-Croatian for Peace). *Radio Mir* was established in the ZOS near Brcko at Camp McGovern to provide a radio platform under SFOR control that would provide the listening public on both sides of the ZOS a credible and unbiased source of information. Radio Mir consisted of an FM transmitting tower and equipment belonging to the Combined Joint Information Task Force (CJITF), supplemented with civilian sound equipment housed in a wooden building constructed by Brown and Root Services Company and sound-proofed with locally-purchased materials. Task Force Eagle purchased civilian sound-mixing equipment and sound-proofing materials and used contracted labor to construct the facility.

The CJITF executed the SFOR television PSYOP program from its production studio, TV-SFOR, in Sarajevo. TV-SFOR primarily broadcasted messages that targeted a wide audience with broad themes. These "infomercials" supported civilian organizations responsible for implementing the civil aspects of the DPA, such as Office of the High Representative (OHR), Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), and the UN International Police Task Force (IPTF). In support of a better peace, TV-SFOR produced de-mining and mine-awareness videos, election registration and democratization videos, and programs supporting the establishment of professional police forces. Additionally, TV-SFOR supported the military sustainment mission by producing and disseminating programs that directly involved the multi-national military force in country.²⁰



Figure 1. TPTs distributing mine awareness comic book.

The traditional PSYOP product, printed material, consisted of millions of copies of hundreds of fliers, brochures, handbills, and posters. The majority of these printed products were targeted to the general population and served to inform them about some aspect of the DPA, explained procedures for activities such as voter registration and elections or principles such as freedom of movement or life in a democratic society. Two very successful products were *The Herald of Progress* and *Mirko*.

The *Herald of Peace* was a weekly newspaper produced by IFOR, which subsequently evolved into a monthly, the *Herald of Progress* or "HOP," under SFOR. The HOP was a monthly journal with articles, color photos, and political cartoons and commentary printed in both Latinic and Cyrillic script.²¹ The German PSYOP unit, an OPINFO battalion assigned to the CJITF, produced a color magazine, *Mirko*, marketed to teenagers.²² Each edition of *Mirko* was designed to support selected PSYOP campaign objectives (PCO). This method reinforced PSYOP messages to the whole Bosnian population. *Mirko* served as an excellent vehicle for opening a dialogue between tactical PSYOP teams (TPTs) and the adult Bosnian population through the interests of their children.

PSYOP in C²-Protect. C²-Protect actions include "countering an adversary's propaganda to prevent it from affecting friendly operations, options, public opinion, and the morale of friendly troops."²³ In MND-N, the counter-propaganda effort is a coordinated one involving both PA and PSYOP. The Division Public Affairs Officer concentrated on the command-information program directed for internal consumption by the soldiers, while the Coalition Press Information Center (CPIC) concentrated on the external audience in cooperation with PSYOP, CA, and the other IO actors in the IOWG. Through the CPIC and media working groups aimed at the press, TFE PA conducted operations which aimed at "discrediting adversary propaganda or misinformation against the operations of US/coalition forces [which were] . . . critical to maintaining favorable public opinion."²⁴ The primary method used was the weekly press conference.

A "main objective in C²-Protect is to counter the adversary's hostile propaganda against the joint force. Discrediting the source of mass media attacks against the operations of the US/multinational forces is critical to maintaining a favorable world opinion of the operations. Countering adversary propaganda is a coordinated effort requiring centralized planning and synchronized execution at all levels. The corollary benefit of effectively countering adversary propaganda is in persuading the adversary's populace that US/multinational operations are legitimate and in driving a wedge between the adversary leadership and its populace in order to undermine the adversary leadership's confidence and effectiveness."²⁵

Conclusion. Information operations allow the peace operations commander to attack the adversary's centers of gravity of legitimacy and popular opinion and set the conditions that will lead to peace. PSYOP contribute to C²-Protect and C²-Attack operations in every information medium, resulting in information dominance, control of the situation, and victory in the battle of ideas on the peace operations "battlefield."

Endnotes:

1. Department of Joint and Multinational Operations, US Army Command and General Staff College, **Student Text S511, *The Nation and Military Power***, Lesson 1 (Fort Leavenworth, KS: CGSC Press, 27 March 1995), p. LSN 1-2-3.
2. Dan Kuehl, Ph.D., "Defining Information Warfare," *The Officer*, Vol LXXIII, No. 11, November 1997, p. 31.
3. Headquarters, Department of the Army, **Field Manual 100-6, *Information Operations*** (Washington DC: USGPO, 27 August 1996), p. 3-2.
4. Remarks of GEN Wesley Clark, SACEUR, as quoted in Steven Lee Myers, "Force in Bosnia Fails at One Task: A Pullout," *New York Times*, October 4, 1998, p. 1.
5. The Entity Armed Forces (EAF) are composed of the military forces and specialist police units of the two "entities" of Bosnia-Herzegovina--the Bosnian-Croat Federation and the Bosnian Serb Republic (Republika Serpska). On the Bosnian-Croat Federation side, this includes the Croatian Home Defense Council forces (HVO) and the Bosnian Army. The term "Former Warring Faction" (FWF) refers to the three entities of Bosniacs (Moslems), Serbs, and Croats.
6. FM 100-6, op. cit., p. 6-17.

7. Headquarters, Department of the Army, **Field Manual 100-23, *Peace Operations*** (Washington DC: USGPO, 30 December 1994), pp. v and 17.
 8. Maj. Gen. David L. Grange, USA and Col. James A. Kelley, USA, "Information Operations for the Ground Commander," ***Military Review***, March-April 1997, Vol. LXXVII, No. 2, p. 9.
 9. Lt. Col. Dennis M. Murphy, US Army, "Information Operations on the Nontraditional Battlefield," ***Military Review***, November-December 1996, Vol. LXXVI, No. 6, p. 16.
 10. For more details, see Center for Army Lessons Learned, ***Initial Impressions Report, Operation JOINT ENDEAVOR, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Task Force Eagle Initial Impressions*** (Unclassified, Distribution Limited, Fort Leavenworth, KS: CALL, May 1996), p. 61.
 11. FM 100-6, op. cit., p. 2-5.
 12. Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, **Joint Publication 3-53, *Joint Doctrine for Psychological Operations*** (Washington DC: USGPO, 10 July 1996), p. vi.
 13. FM 100-6, op. cit., p. 3-5.
 14. Ibid.
 15. Ibid., p. 5-5.
 16. Ibid., p. 3-7. US PSYOP units are equipped with AM radio transmitting units and have recently fielded FM transmitters to support PSYOP in Bosnia.
 17. Jeffrey P. Jones, and Michael P. Matthews, "PSYOP and the Warfighting CINC," ***Joint Forces Quarterly***, Summer 1995, No. 8, p. 31.
 18. Pascale Combelles Siegel, ***Target Bosnia: Integrating Information Activities in Peace Operations***, Command and Control Research Program (CCRP), National Defense University (Washington DC: NDU Press, January 1998), p. 74.
 19. Larry K. Wentz, ***Lessons from Bosnia: The IFOR Experience***, Command and Control Research Program (CCRP), National Defense University (Washington DC: NDU Press, January 1998), pp. 275-276.
 20. For more details, see Center for Army Lessons Learned, ***Initial Impressions Report (Draft), B/H CAAT 9, Task Force Eagle, Continuing Operations*** (Unclassified, Distribution Limited, Fort Leavenworth, KS: CALL, March 1998), Chapter 3.
 21. Ibid.
 22. Siegel, p. 73.
 23. FM 100-6, op. cit., p. 2-5.
 24. Ibid., p. 3-4.
 25. Office of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, **Joint Publication 3-13.1, *Joint Doctrine for Command and Control Warfare*** (Washington DC: USGPO, 7 February 1996), p. II-4. See also Headquarters, Training and Doctrine Command, **TRADOC Pamphlet 525-69, *Concept for Information Operations*** (Fort Monroe, VA, 1 August 1995), p. 16.
-