The Physical Destruction Component
of Information Operations
in Peace Enforcement

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Army Information Operations (IO) are comprised of the three interrelated components of **Operations, Relevant and Intelligence (RII),** and **INFOSYS.** The Army uses three operations to conduct IO: (1) command and control warfare (C^2W), (2) civil affairs (CA), and (3) public affairs (PA). The Operations component of IO consists of PSYOP, Physical Destruction, Electronic Warfare, Military Deception, OPSEC (the five elements of C^2W), Civil Affairs, and Public Affairs. A peace operation information campaign will employ all these components to shape the battlespace. Through offensive IO, the peace operations force can target such things as adversary leadership, decisionmaking and C^2, with the goal of controlling adversary decision process tempo, and attack the adversary's centers of gravity through nonlethal means to:

- undermine the adversary's legitimacy or actions contrary to the provisions of a peace agreement;

- reinforce positive behavior in compliance with the peace accord;

- cajole compliance by stressing the responsibilities and actions required of the adversary under the provisions of the peace accord.[1]

In combat operations, the commander accomplishes the mission through the application of lethal combat power in combined arms operations. He uses IO to disrupt or destroy enemy information systems, primarily through EW and physical destruction.[2] Physical destruction is the most effective means for denying the enemy use of his C^2 systems and achieving an information advantage in the application of force.[3] In peace operations, however, the principle of restraint and the neutrality of the peace operations force mean that lethal power is rarely the means to mission accomplishment.

In peace operations, the enemy is not one of the warring factions, but the conflict itself. Diplomatic considerations predominate over purely military requirements and impose constraints on the force.[4] A common characteristic of peace operations has been the necessity to observe the principles of legitimacy and restraint. Although U.S. forces in a Peace Enforcement operation may have to apply lethal combat power during the initial stages, or as the result of acts which violate the terms of the imposed peace, the principles of restraint and legitimacy limit the efficacy of lethal combat power. The principle of restraint requires that forces "apply appropriate military capability prudently," with due regard for collateral damage.[5] 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."[6]

Of the five elements of C^2W listed above, physical destruction may seem outside acceptable constructs for use in a peace operation where lethal force is used only as a last resort. However, physical destruction is "the application of combat power to destroy or neutralize enemy forces and installations."[7] It is primarily in the neutralization of adversary C^2 functions and processes that physical destruction is manifested in peace operations. "One can 'target' a (C^2) system without designating it for actual destruction;" effective C^2W aims to defeat the adversary C^2 system, "whether by physical destruction or effective nullification."[8] The destruction of a target means that the adversary capability is degraded or shut down, either permanently, or for a specified period of time.[9]

Although SFOR did not physically destroy any of the FWFs' ability to command and control their elements, IO were aimed at influencing their C^2 decisionmakers. In Operations JOINT ENDEAVOR and JOINT GUARD, C^2W also aimed at co-opting the FWFs' C^2 apparatus to facilitate their compliance with the Dayton Peace Accord and to monitor that compliance as well.[10]

FWF C^2 facilities were targeted for destruction during early NATO air operations supporting UNPROFOR in the autumn 1995, known as Operation DELIBERATE FORCE, during which there were 3,515 sorties against Bosnian Serb military

positions.[11] This NATO air campaign is credited for having pushed the Bosnian Serbs to the peace table at Dayton Ohio. During the siege of Sarajevo, the combination of attacks by NATO aircraft delivering precision air strikes against Bosnian Serb Army (VRS) positions, and an attack with 13 Tomahawk land attack missiles against VRS C^2 facilities, disrupted VRS C^2 systems and achieved the termination of the bombardment of Sarajevo and convinced Serb troops to remove their heavy weapons.[12]

Physical destruction operations in peace operations focus on the neutralization of adversary capabilities. In determining whether or not physical destruction operations apply, the IO planner must identify the adversary's means to effect the situation, and then target those means for neutralization. Tactics employed to neutralize the adversary's ability to effect the situation or exercise C^2 include:

- Occupying or controlling access to facilities used by the adversary for command, control and communication (C^3) and early warning;

- Shutting down power sources for C^3 and early warning systems;

- Delaying groups or individuals of the adversary's support base attempting to mass;

- Arresting or detaining key individuals and instigators of the adversary support base to prevent them from fomenting disturbance at "hot spots."

Physical occupation of, or controlling access to, adversary C^3 and early warning facilities is a means of temporarily denying the adversary use of those capabilities. If the peace operation force cannot occupy the facility or control access to it, cutting off its power may provide a less-intrusive means of temporarily depriving the adversary use of the facility's functions. Examples of C^3 and early warning facilities that could possibly be targeted for physical destruction include: TV and radio transmitting towers and stations, police stations, air raid sirens, and radio frequencies used to transmit radio or telephone communications.

If the adversary attempts to conduct demonstrations by massing angry crowds, then delaying the movement of adversary supporters through the use of checkpoints and roadblocks denies the adversary the ability to mass. Typically, demonstrations carried out in Bosnia by the FWFs involved busing in crowds of supporters from outlying towns and villages to achieve a mass. The demonstrators sought to dominate the situation by stretching the peace operations force and forcing them to spread their forces thinly as they attempted to monitor and control the situation. Roadblocks need not be formal, and ruses may be used to send the inbound mobs on detour after detour.

Crowds need leaders and instigators to be set into action. Detaining key leaders and instigators before the crowd assembles removes the volatile agent from the combustible mix. If the crowd has already assembled, it may be possible to remove instigators and agitators attempting to ignite the crowd into action.

PHYSICAL DESTRUCTION OPERATIONS IN TFE

Seizure of Bosnian-Serb Radio/Television Towers

Following the civil war in Bosnia, much of the communications media lay in ruins. At the cessation of hostilities, newspapers and magazines were few, expensive, and had limited circulation. In such circumstances, broadcast media were extremely influential, despite the small number of operating transmitters. The broadcast media of the FWFs were politically driven and controlled. Reporting was biased by either omission of the truth, distortion through emphasis on only those elements of information which reinforced a political view, or outright disinformation, i.e., fiction-based propaganda. In May 1997, the North Atlantic Council granted authority to SFOR to take actions against any media undermining the peace accords.[13]

During the early summer of 1997, a power struggle erupted between the rival factions of the Bosnian Serb (Republika Serpska, or RS) leadership, that is, the RS President Bijlana Plavsic and the Bosnian-Serb member of the Bosnian presidency, Momcilo Krajisnik (loyal to the former RS President and indicted war criminal Radovan Karadzic). The struggle began when Madame-President Plavsic decided to dissolve the RS parliament and called for new elections in November 1997. The struggle caused a split within the RS state television, with journalists and editors from the Banja Luka studio deciding to split away from Pale direction after Pale manipulated a broadcast on SFOR searches in police stations. SFOR and OHR tried to

exploit these developments to their advantage. SFOR and OHR encouraged SRT Pale to tone down its anti-Dayton, anti-NATO campaign and air programs on the DPA sponsored by the international community. In exchange for their cooperation, they would remain open, whereas noncompliance would bring military action.[14]

The pro-Karadzic, or Pale faction and its politically-controlled media continued the barrage of anti-SFOR propaganda and hate. SRT television stations for example, referred to the Muslim head of Bosnia's Presidency as "Alija Izetbegovic, Muslim murderer."[15] These same stations televised anti-SFOR propaganda to the Bosnian Serb audience attacking the legitimacy of SFOR and its mandate. One anti-SFOR propaganda item accused SFOR of using "low-intensity nuclear weapons," during the 1995 attacks on VRS positions around Sarajevo, Gorazde, and Majevica in 1995.[16] In another propaganda piece, Serbian Radio Television (SRT) showed alternating images of World War II German Army and present-day NATO forces while the commentator drew the comparison, likening SFOR soldiers to a Nazi occupation force.[17] NATO officials have expressed concerns that such "venomous propaganda" threatens the safety of the NATO-led peace operations force.[18]

Despite the efforts of both the High Representative and the OSCE, the dissident RS faction repeatedly refused to cease or moderate their broadcasts. After SRT Pale heavily edited a tape on the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) war crimes mission, using it to spread disinformation, the international community took direct action. Under the authority of the GFAP and orders from the NATO Council and the Office of the High Representative, SFOR seized four SRT transmission towers, considerably reducing the footprint of SRT. The seizure of these towers was a physical destruction mission in that SFOR targeted the TV transmitter towers for neutralization, which is a condition achieved by physical destruction operations. Within TFE, U.S. soldiers secured several transmitters used by media elements loyal to the pro-Karadzic faction. On 1 October 1997, TFE units executed the physical destruction operation, securing the Bosnian-Serb television/radio transmitter complexes on Hill 619 in Duga Njiva, Hill 562 near Ugljevik, Trebevica (near Sarajevo) and Leotar.[19] In pre-dawn raids, SFOR French, Polish, Scandinavian and American soldiers secured the sites and immediately fortified them against anticipated resistance.[20]

At Hill 619, U.S. Engineers operating Armored Combat Excavators (M-9 ACEs) constructed protective berms for the troops, and cleared fields of fire, while other engineers emplaced a triple-standard concertina barrier around the site.[21] At Hill 562, 200 Bosnian-Serb protesters staged a 15-hour confrontation in which the protesters hurled rocks and attacked with clubs, damaging several vehicles.[22]
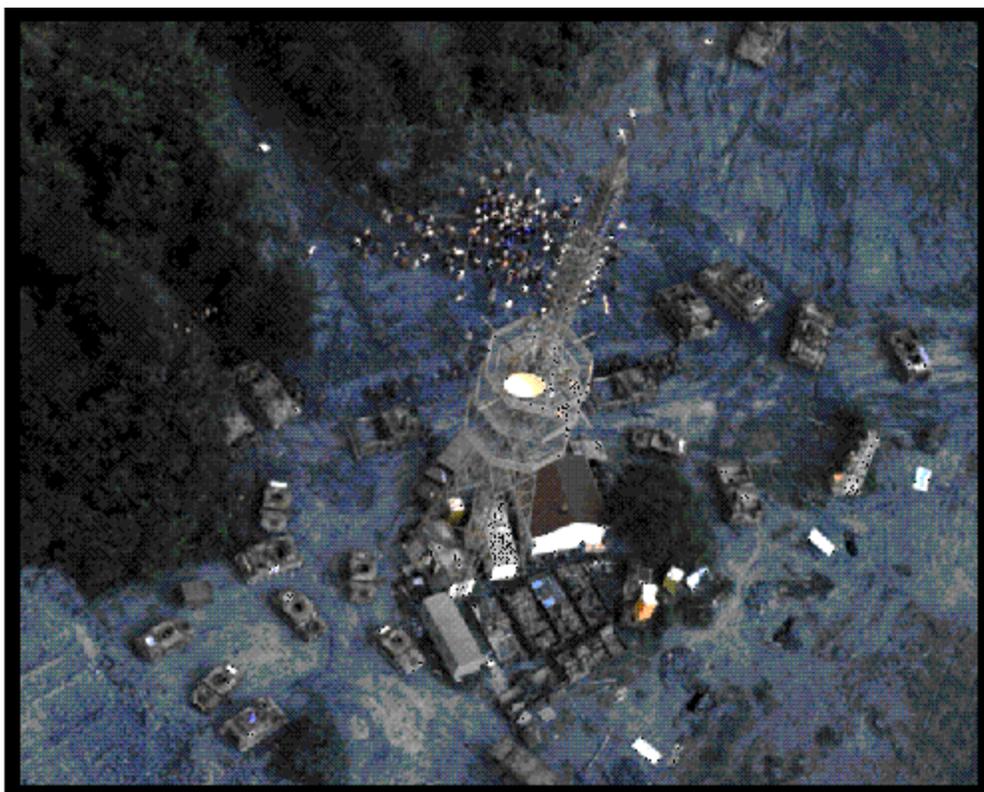
SFOR Seizure of the SRT Tower at Hill 619

Physical Destruction is easily understood when applied as one of five elements of C^2W in combat operations. However, the emphasis of C^2W during MOOTW shifts away from the warfighting orientation to take in the broader, and often political, considerations associated with interacting with a variety of actors in the Global Information Environment (GIE).[23] The accepted Joint definition of C^2W specifies that C^2W is "an application of Information Warfare in military operations."[24] Information warfare covers the range of actions taken during conflict or crisis to achieve information superiority over an adversary. Although the term warfare may seem to imply that IW applies only to combat operations, in fact, IW capabilities are employed in MOOTW to bring about the desired responses from several audiences to include the political and military leadership of the former warring factions, the populace, and other actors.[25] The peace operations force employs its IW capabilities "to preserve the peace, deter escalation of a conflict, and prepare the battlefield so that if a crisis escalated to conflict, the U.S. military can effectively employ (offensive IW) capabilities in a wartime scenario."[26] Following the principle of restraint, and applying IW capabilities selectively, physical destruction operations remain a viable option in peace operations intended to achieve information and situation dominance.

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Endnotes:

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7. Headquarters, Dept. of the Army, *Information Operations,* op. cit., p. 3-5.

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9. Headquarters, Dept. of the Army, *Information Operations,* **FM 100-6,** op. cit., p. 3-5.

10. 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.

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15. See Tracy Wilkinson, "Trying to Extract War from Journalism," *Los Angeles Times,* Sunday, October 26, 1997, p. 12A.

16. See Center for Army Lessons Learned, *B/H CAAT Elections, Initial Impressions Report,* (Unclassified, Distribution Limited), Fort Leavenworth, KS: CALL, March 1998, p. 83.

17. Larry K. Wentz, *IFOR C^{4}ISR Experiences,* National Defense University, Command and Control Research Program, op. cit., 1998, p. 5.

18. Philip Shenon, "U.S. and Allies Plan to Curb Bosnian Propaganda," *The New York Times,* 24 April 1998.

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23. Ibid., p. 4-3.

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