

GRAY ZONE WARFARE: GERMAN AND RUSSIAN
POLITICAL WARFARE, 1935-1939, AND 2014

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General Studies

by

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ABSTRACT

GRAY ZONE WARFARE: GERMAN AND RUSSIAN POLITICAL WARFARE, 1935-1939, AND 2014, by MAJ Collins Devon Cockrell, 143 pages.

Nation states face heightened threats from methods of warfare from other nation states traditionally viewed as unconventional or irregular. Understanding these methods is important to the study of warfare. “Gray Zone Warfare: German and Russian Political Warfare 1935-1939, and 2014” examines efforts by pre-World War Two Germany and the current Russian state to apply Political Warfare to achieve strategic foreign policy goals, short of Conventional Warfare. Political Warfare undermined institutions, influenced foreign and domestic populations and weakened and disrupted alliances. Using structured, focused comparison case study method, this thesis examines Political Warfare between these two widely separated periods.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

It is contrary to the basic principles of total war of the future to believe that the direction of actual combat, the waging of psychological and economic warfare to the furtherance of war aims and the organization of the fighting strength of the nation to the support of war can be separated.

— Generaloberst Wilhem Keitel, quoted in John Buschbaum,
German Psychological Warfare on the Russian Front, 1941-1945

Asymmetrical actions have come into widespread use, enabling the nullification of an enemy's advantages in armed conflict. Among such actions are the use of special operations forces and internal opposition to create a permanently operating front through the entire territory of the enemy state, as well as informational actions, devices, and means that are constantly being perfected.

— Gerasimov, Valery, "The Value of Science is in the Foresight:
New Challenges Demand Rethinking the Forms and
Methods of Carrying Out Combat Operations"

Purpose of Study

Influence and subversion are an essential part of warfare. Russia, as a primary example, is fighting to reclaim Soviet-era relevance and this has re-kindled Cold War era levels of conflict with the West. Political Warfare, executed by state actors like Russia, is again a critical concern for military planners and civilian leaders. These activities are targeting the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and member states.

Modern conceptions and methods of state-developed propaganda originated in World War One, were professionalized and refined in the inter-war years by countries such as Germany and the Soviet Union and matured into an organized discipline during

the World War Two utilized by all sides of the conflict.¹ The decades of the Cold War were defined by not just generations of guerrilla warfare and small wars across the developing world, but a worldwide battle of propaganda and ideology between the Western democracies and the Communist world utilizing subversion, sabotage, and black rumors.

General Joseph L. Votel, then commander of the United States Special Operations Command and his co-authors defined Political Warfare as operating “in that space between diplomacy and open warfare, where traditional statecraft is inadequate or ineffective and large-scale military operations are not suitable or deemed inappropriate.”² Contemporary Russia and Nazi Germany in the 1930s employed Political Warfare to achieve strategic goals without engaging in conventional levels of hostility. General Votel also described Political Warfare as a “population-centric engagement that seeks to influence, to persuade, even to co-opt.”³ Political Warfare is asymmetrical. These kind of actions include covert elements like subversion, sabotage, and Fifth Column activities.⁴

¹ Charles Roetter, *The Art of Psychological Warfare, 1914-1946* (New York, NY: Stein and Day, 1974), 3.

² Joseph L. Votel et al., “Unconventional Warfare in the Gray Zone,” *Joint Forces Quarterly* 80 (1st Quarter 2016): 102, accessed January 10, 2017, <http://ndupress.ndu.edu/Media/News/News-Article-View/Article/643108/unconventional-warfare-in-the-gray-zone>.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Sean Govan, “Pawns, Provocateurs and Parasites: Great Britain and German Fifth Column Movements in Europe and the Middle East, 1934-1941” (Thesis, University of Birmingham, Birmingham, AL, 2015), 13-14.

The Russian and German case studies will be evaluated to better understand the comparative usefulness of Political Warfare.⁵

This study examines the execution of Political Warfare by nation-state actors to achieve foreign policy goals. The term dates to the last years of the 1930s and the efforts by Nazi Germany to achieve dominance in Europe without Conventional Warfare. The British institutionalized the term in 1939 in the Political Warfare Executive. This organization executed Psychological and Unconventional Warfare in response to German strategic dominance and in response to Britain's weakness and need to fight asymmetrically.⁶

In 2015, United States Special Operations Command released the White Paper, "SOF Support to Political Warfare," an open source document that re-introduced the term to public view, analyzed current threats, and recommended the development of U.S. capabilities. The phrase was resurrected to describe the spectrum of coordinated unconventional methods used by Russia and other state and non-state actors. The paper's authors stated: "Political Warfare emerges from a persistent and purposeful synergy of diplomatic, economic, informational, and military efforts in unified campaigns where military contributions support the attainment of broader strategic end states."⁷

⁵ U.S. Army Special Operations Command (USSOCOM), "SOF Support to Political Warfare" (White Paper, Fort Bragg, NC: U.S. Army Special Operations Command, March 10, 2015), 1.

⁶ Max Hastings, *The Secret War: Spies, Ciphers and Guerillas 1939-1945* (New York: Harper Collins, 2016), 281.

⁷ USSOCOM, "SOF Support to Political Warfare," 1. See also Dan Madden, Dick Hoffman, Michael Johnson, Fred T. Krawchuk, John E. Peters, Linda Robinson, and Abby Doll, *Special Warfare: The Missing Middle on U.S. Coercive Options* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2014) for discussion of Political Warfare's return as a

As noted in the United States Special Operations Command research, this definition is directly influenced by the 1948 memorandum, “George F. Kennan on Organizing Political Warfare,” to the National Security Council. Kennan defined Political Warfare in this fashion:

Political warfare is the logical application of Clausewitz’s doctrine in time of peace. In broadest definition, political warfare is the employment of all the means at a nation’s command, short of war, to achieve its national objectives. Such operations are both overt and covert. They range from such overt actions as political alliances, economic measures (as ERP—the Marshall Plan), and “white” propaganda to such covert operations as clandestine support of “friendly” foreign elements, “black” psychological warfare and even encouragement of underground resistance in hostile states.⁸

Kennan’s definitions and his recommendations were for capabilities and authorities to respond to the Soviet Union’s actions in Central and Eastern Europe after the end of World War Two, and influenced by similar actions before and during the war. Kennan’s definition, informed by conclusions drawn from the 2015 White Paper, will be used to define Political Warfare with an addition. To be described as Political Warfare the goal of the aggressor should be to undermine and either annex or overthrow the government of the targeted state. Together, this provides the depth of concept that encompasses the asymmetric and unconventional nature of this kind of warfare.

concept and as an alternative to Joseph Nye’s “Smart Power,” with tactical to strategic actions and necessity of interagency coordination.

⁸ George F. Kennan, “George F. Kennan on Organizing Political Warfare,” Memorandum, April 30, 1948, Wilson Center Digital Archive, accessed December 14, 2016, <https://digitalarchive.wilsoncenter.org/document/114320>.

Research Question

Does Political Warfare, employed by Germany 1935-1939 and by Russia in the 2014 Crimea Annexation identify methods nation-states use to weaken targeted countries and undermine alliances?

Assumptions

State actions or decisions can be linked to actions attempting to influence, undermine, and weaken the targeted state. Political Warfare methods are often covert or masked within other efforts by their very nature. Using comparative questions for the case study, this thesis examines the two historical cases to determine the relationship of Political Warfare as a framework of analysis.

Limitations

This study has several challenges. The first is conceptual. Political Warfare can be clearly defined. However, Hybrid, Asymmetric, and Gray Zone Warfare cover overlapping conceptual terrain, which can lead to confusion among those attempting to describe and understand these effects. Another difficulty is isolating the effects of Political Warfare from other ongoing events. Any study of influence faces the problem of establishing a causal relationship between state or group actions and the Political Warfare campaign.⁹ Europe of the 1930s did not have robust survey research of popular opinion. That is not true today but the highly-fragmented information environment adds its own complications to attempts to make associations between influence campaigns and state

⁹ Christopher Paul et al., *Assessing and Evaluating Department of Defense Efforts to Inform, Influence and Persuade* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2015), xiv.

behavior. In this study, the author considers state action in the form of policy as a measure to indicate the effect of the Political Warfare campaigns to achieve their intended effects.

There is sufficient information available to examine relevant methodology and doctrine, though more constrained than expected. The research is limited to the writings and theories after World War One and World War Two to the present. Thanks to events of the past few years, a wide variety of official and non-governmental research organizations have analyzed Russia's methods of influence.¹⁰ In response to concerns over Russian aggression dating back to its war with Georgia in 2008 and more recently targeting Ukraine and other European states, high quality, open source research is being regularly produced by military organizations like NATO, national governments, research organizations and academic researchers. These research documents often use different methodologies and definitions. For Germany, the author will be covering less traveled research territory.

To the surprise of this researcher, pre-World War Two academic research of German Political Warfare activities is limited. There are several likely reasons. Research on and the study of propaganda was still in its infancy and the seminal works that would influence the wartime Political and Psychological Warfare effort were being written during this time. Concepts like Irregular or Unconventional Warfare were still to be developed. Contemporary writers looking at German actions used more anecdotal than

¹⁰ Keir Giles, "Russia's 'New' Tools for Confronting the West: Continuity and Innovation in Moscow's Exercise of Power" (Research Paper, Russia and Eurasia Programme, Chatham House, The Royal Institute of International Affairs, London, 2016), 3.

documented analysis and often characterized these actors as executing sabotage and operating as a Fifth Columns.¹¹ It is clear from the variety of writing, from journalists to political commentators, to anti-fascist organizations chronicling the rise of Germany's influence, that these activities were being credited with having a significant effect on targeted countries and their decision-makers.¹²

Appeasement, as a central issue of the 1930s will not be discussed, except where relevant for context. The justifications for inaction and reasons for the weakness and divisions of the countries that opposed Germany will be discussed, but the larger issue is beyond the scope of this work and has been exhaustively and better covered elsewhere. The Spanish Civil War, though a rich area of research, has been excluded from this examination. This study will only briefly reference events during World War Two. In the case of Germany, and the Allies' efforts at Political and Psychological Warfare, World War Two saw a revolution in methods and fully defined doctrine and organizations and has been extensively researched.¹³

Because of the decades long Cold War, a full review of Soviet Political Warfare is beyond the scope of this work. Where relevant, measures and methods adopted from the

¹¹ Long de Jong, *The German Fifth Column in The Second World War (Duitse Vijfde Colonne in de Tweede Wereldoorlog)*, trans. C. M. Geyl (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1956), 9.

¹² Clayton D. Laurie, *The Propaganda Warriors: America's Crusade Against Nazi Germany* (Lawrence KS: University Press of Kansas, 1996), 10. See also Joseph Bornstein, *Actions Against the Enemy Mind* (Cornwall, NY: Bobbs-Merrill Co., 1942); Harold Ettliger, *The Axis on the Air* (Cornwall, NY: Bobbs-Merrill Co., 1943), 9.

¹³ Paul Linebarger, *Psychological Warfare* (New York: Duell, Sloan and Pierce, 1948). See also Daniel Lerner, *Psychological Warfare Against Nazi Germany: The Sykewar Campaign D-Day to VE-Day* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1949). Linebarger's book is a version of an early Army Psychological Warfare manual.

Soviet era is referenced. In the case of Russia's predecessor state, the Soviet Union, decades of Political and Psychological Warfare against the West shaped current Russian activities. Development of methods during the Cold War will be referenced, to give context to current Russian practices.

Scope and Delimitations

Selection of the period of 1935-1939 allowed the inclusion of several examples of the larger German Political Warfare campaign prior to World War Two. This period covers Political Warfare actions by Germany to achieve the annexation of the Saar Valley, the Czechoslovakian Sudeten territory, the annexation of Austria and the efforts targeting Poland prior to September 1939. It also gives the opportunity for showing, over time, the development of the pre-war capabilities. Germany operated worldwide during this period using these methods.¹⁴ In a 1955 study by the U.S. Information Agency, Kideya Kumata and Wilbur Schramm argued that Germany achieved a series of foreign policy victories where from "1935 on, German diplomacy was a particular operation in which the Germans applied political, economic, and psychological pressure to accomplish their ends without actual warfare in the conventional sense."¹⁵

In recent years, Russia has engaged in an aggressive effort to undermine, weaken, and isolate other nations, from the Baltic States to central and southern Europe. Russia is a state in transition; economically weak, but politically unified under an authoritarian

¹⁴ Christopher Vasey, *Nazi Intelligence Operations in Non-Occupied Territories: Espionage Efforts in the United States, Britain, South America and Southern Africa*. (Jefferson, NC: McFarland and Company, 2016), 8.

¹⁵ Kideya Kumata and Wilbur Schramm, *The Propaganda Theory of the German Nazis* (University of Illinois: U.S Information Agency, 1955), 51.

structure. It retains an exaggerated strategic importance due to a combination of a significant conventional military force, backed by a massive legacy nuclear capability and significant natural resources. Russia has pursued an aggressive campaign against targeted states to counteract its economic and military weakness.¹⁶ In recent years, Russia has used Political Warfare to achieve foreign policy and security goals that it could not gain with conventional state power. Soviet era terms and methods like “active measures” and “reflexive control,” are again relevant descriptions of Russian actions. Under the *Gerasimov Doctrine*,¹⁷ Russia pursued a strategy of Political Warfare in an effort to restore previous relevance and position. It has also focused significant efforts on reclaiming dominance over former Soviet republics, like Georgia and Ukraine. Russia worked to divide Ukraine from allies in the West, preventing it from joining the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and annexed Ukrainian territory in the Crimea. Since 2014, Russia supported a war in eastern Ukraine with Russian troops and material supporting a separatist movement in an effort to take control of additional territory.¹⁸

It is an understatement to say that methods of dissemination of messages intended to influence behavior evolved in the time between the two cases studies. It is accurate to state that many of the tactics and methods used in the two widely separated cases share

¹⁶ Steve Abrams, “Beyond Propaganda: Soviet Active Measures in Putin’s Russia,” *Connections: The Quarterly Journal* 15, no. 1 (2016): 6-8.

¹⁷ Valery Gerasimov, “The Value of Science is in the Foresight: New Challenges Demand Rethinking the Forms and Methods of Carrying Out Combat Operations,” *Military Review* 96, no. 1 (January-February 2016): 24.

¹⁸ Maria Snegovaya, Russia Report I, “Putin’s Information Warfare in Ukraine: Soviet Origins of Russia’s Hybrid Warfare” (Institute for the Study of War, Washington, DC, Institute for the Study of War, 2015), 10-15.

significant relationships and that the tenets of Political Warfare continue to have relevance as an analytical and descriptive framework.

Significance of this Study

Events over the last several years highlight the importance of understanding Political Warfare. Russia is now a proximate threat to the United States, but it has not been the only competitor to U.S. influence to develop these methods. After the unprecedented victory by the United States in the Gulf War, some nations looked to other means to exert national power. China developed new doctrine in the 1990s in response to overwhelming U.S. dominance emerging from the victory in the Gulf War. Called “Unrestricted Warfare” and the “Three Warfares,”¹⁹ China’s strategies incorporate political, economic, and diplomatic elements, along with deception and subversion. Regional powers like Iran have also developed asymmetric and hybrid strategies to counter U.S. strength. Non-state actors like Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant and Al-Qaeda also rely on Unconventional or Asymmetric Warfare methods.²⁰ *The National Military Strategy of the United States of America, 2015* specifically addresses these hybrid threats “comprised of state and non-state actors working together toward shared objectives, employing a wide range of weapons such as we have witnessed in eastern

¹⁹ Larry Wortzel, *The Chinese Liberation Army and Information Warfare* (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, 2014), accessed December 19, 2016, <http://ssi.armywarcollege.edu/pdffiles/pub1191.pdf>, 29.

²⁰ USSOCOM, “SOF Support to Political Warfare,” 5-7.

Ukraine. Hybrid conflicts serve to increase ambiguity, complicate decision-making, and slow the coordination of effective responses.”²¹

During the period 1935 to mid-1939, while still developing a military capability, Germany avoided using conventional military force to achieve foreign policy goals. Germany’s military power was still outmatched, at least on paper, by France and other nations. After 2012, coinciding with Vladimir Putin’s return to the Russian presidency, Russia has become the number one threat to deter as described in the most recent 2015 *United States European Command Theater Strategy*.²² It can be argued that this evaluation has not changed since that time. The recent establishment of the NATO Strategic Communications Centre of Excellence in Riga, Latvia, is an institutional response to Russian and non-state threats posed by elements of Political Warfare targeting North Atlantic Treaty Organization members and allies. As recently as January 2017, then-Secretary of Defense nominee, retired General James Mattis stated that Russia was the number one threat to the United States with a continuing effort to “break the North Atlantic alliance.”²³ Today, as in the chaotic years of the late 1930s, these

²¹ Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, *National Military Strategy of the United States of America* (Washington, DC: Department of Defense, June 2015), accessed January 17, 2017, http://www.jcs.mil/Portals/36/Documents/Publications/2015_National_Military_Strategy.pdf, 4.

²² Commander, U.S. European Command, *United States European Command Theater Strategy* (Stuttgart, Germany: Headquarters, U.S. European Command, October 2015), 4.

²³ Missy Ryan and Dan Lamothe, “Placing Russia First Among Threats, Defense Nominee Warns of Kremlin Attempts to ‘Break’ NATO,” *Washington Post*, January 11, 2017, accessed January 19, 2017, https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/senate-set-to-question-trumps-pentagon-pick-veteran-marine-gen-james-mattis/2017/01/11/b3c6946a-d816-11e6-9a36-1d296534b31e_story.html?utm_term=.824924803d00.

activities are a threat to U.S. interests and the international order. Chapter 2 will review literature and definitions related to Political Warfare.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Political warfare is the logical application of Clausewitz's doctrine in time of peace.
— George Kennan, "George F. Kennan on Organizing Political Warfare."

This chapter explains the research for the case studies, explores related theories, and provides a focused review of literature and research. Finally, the origin and definition of Political Warfare is explored and related concepts are examined.

Scholarship on Political Warfare—Germany

This topic was researched by examining contemporary reports and writing. There is limited research on the specific actions by Germany against the described targets, involving elements of Political Warfare, during the 1930s. This complicated research and is an important consideration for future scholarship. In order to make up for this deficit, this study used contemporary writing about these events. That included key actors and strategists of Nazi German Political Warfare and propaganda strategies.

The scope of this thesis limits the consideration of writings and theories on what would become known as Political Warfare to the time after World War One, and to specific literature related to German, Russian, and where relevant, U.S. works. World War One saw use of new technologies like early radio, mass printing capabilities, and aerial dissemination of leaflets over enemy held areas, harnessed to early Psychological Warfare planning organizations that created targeted messages aimed at different military and civilian populations.²⁴ That conflict also created an origin-myth among the Nazi

²⁴ Philip Taylor, 189.

Party and German nationalists that their loss was because of Allied propaganda and subversion to the point where Clayton Laurie wrote, “one result of the Nazi fixation on a propaganda-induced stab in the back was the idea that propaganda constituted a kind of superweapon.”²⁵

In the 1930s, along with the spread of the influence of totalitarian states came a new interest in the study of propaganda. Writing about Psychological Warfare carried on during World War One focused to a great extent on an overall phenomena of mass influence then called propaganda. Harold Lasswell, who would produce several studies of Nazi and Soviet Psychological and Political Warfare campaigns over several decades, published the seminal work *Propaganda Techniques in the World War* in 1927. In 1938, an updated version was produced where he referenced significant new interest and concern about the subject.²⁶ The book describes the early process for planning campaigns of influence and subversion. Lasswell identified three elements of such campaigns against an adversary “military pressure, economic pressure,” and “propaganda.”²⁷ Lasswell’s book gave an early description of Political Warfare.

In the United States in the late 1930s, funding for research on mass influence came mostly through a private organization, the Rockefeller Foundation. Researchers brought together by the Rockefeller Foundation included Hadley Cantrill of Princeton’s Opinion Research Project/Listening Project, the Radio Research group at Columbia University, and the aforementioned Harold Lasswell, working at the Library of

²⁵ Laurie, 9.

²⁶ Lasswell, 2.

²⁷ Ibid., 9.

Congress.²⁸ Christopher Simpson's book, *Science of Coercion: Communication Research and Psychological Warfare, 1945-1960*, details how a significant amount of the social sciences in the United States, beginning in the 1930s and for decades after, were funded by the parts of the U.S. government military or intelligence agencies interested in understanding Psychological or Political Warfare. The center at Princeton originated after a researcher there, working out of Geneva, met with Edward R. Murrow in 1938. Murrow encouraged the formal study of the use of radio by Nazi propagandists and Cantrill and others organized the process of propaganda analysis.²⁹ Many of these key researchers would move into the wartime activities of U.S. Psychological and Political Warfare agencies through the Office of War Information, Office of Strategic Services, and the War Department's Psychological Warfare Divisions.³⁰

In 1935, Leonard Doob of Yale University published *Propaganda, It's Psychology and Technique*. Doob eventually became an important scholar and practitioner of Psychological and Political Warfare. His first chapter, "The Search for Weapons," discussed the power and dangers of weaponizing ideas. The book describes and defines propaganda types, from commercial to religious and political. Doob compared Nazi propaganda methods before and after their taking power in 1933. This analysis is one of the earliest academic examinations of Nazi propaganda and influence efforts. Doob analyzed methods of influence from print, radio, motion pictures, to

²⁸ Simpson, 22.

²⁹ Harwood L. Childs, and John B. Whitton, eds. *Propaganda by Short Wave*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1943, 1.

³⁰ Simpson, 26.

meetings, demonstrations, and rumors.³¹ U.S. research was influential in the development of Nazi propaganda theory and early doctrine.³²

German theories about propaganda and influence were based upon the foundations of Nazi Party philosophy and its origin as a radical organization, founded on political revolution. *German Psychological Warfare* was a multi-disciplinary analysis of the intellectual foundations of German Psychological and Political Warfare practices. Edited by Ladilas Farago and published in 1941, the sponsoring organization was the National Committee on Morale, with strong connections to the U.S. Government. The Farago book is especially useful thanks to extensive use of translated German language documents that were important in the development of Nazi propaganda practices. The other contributors included U.S. military officers, using their official titles, academics, and included Dr. George Gallup of the national polling firm. The book contains a unique and detailed analysis of the ideas that informed the German influence campaigns at the end of the 1930s. The most thorough and detailed analysis of pre-war German methods and practices, this unique book was written to educate the U.S. populace on Nazi Germany's threat due to its ability to execute Psychological and Political Warfare.³³ The essay, "German Propaganda; the Science of Propaganda as a Practical Social Science," written in 1922, described early German propaganda and counter-propaganda techniques. Farago also cites the German military theorist Mueller-Liebnitz, writing in the 1935 paper, "Politics and the Armed Forces as Means of Warfare." Mueller argued that

³¹ Doob.

³² Farago, 167.

³³ Ibid., vii.

Political Warfare, through its effort to “secure favorable political positions” increases the likelihood of success in a conventional war.³⁴ Finally, *Intellectual Warfare* was a Psychological Warfare textbook published in 1938 by a Wehrmacht Colonel with a career in advertising who lectured extensively and organized early Psychological Warfare units. Farago and others also noted the early theoretical writing about Nazi German applied propaganda methods by Professor Edward Banse, a Nazi academic who moved into the intellectual orbit and had theoretical influence on Nazi ideas through his influence in the establishment of the German Society for Military Policy and Military Sciences. Banse described the dissemination of propaganda and misinformation through foreign agents, using books, short pamphlets, the funding of public institutions (with subverted goals), including influencing media organizations through monetary investment.³⁵ Banse described the importance of understanding the “national psychology” of the targeted state, where “it is essential to attack the nation in its weak spot . . . to undermine, crush, break down its resistance and convince that it is being deceived, misled and brought to destruction by its own government.” Banse’s book-length version was translated by U.S. military intelligence in an internal report. The work, published as a book in 1934, which

³⁴ Farago, 258. “Politics and the Armed Forces as Means of Warfare.” Mueller-Liebnitz, 1935, advocated for Political Warfare to support conventional war. He was author of *Intellectual Warfare*, a psychological warfare textbook published in 1938 by a Wehrmacht Colonel with a career in advertising who lectured extensively and organized early psychological warfare units.

³⁵ Army Military Intelligence Division, *Germany’s New Military Doctrine - An Analysis of The Works of Professor Banse* (Washington, DC: U.S. Army Military Intelligence Division, 1934).

along with a Nazi Government conference organized by the society, caused an international controversy.³⁶

Hideya Kumata's 1955 essay, "The Propaganda Theory of the German Nazis," written under the sponsorship of the U.S. Information Agency, described the evolution and foundations of German internal and external propaganda characteristics.³⁷ It examined the nature of totalitarian propaganda and the necessary structures, including the Nazi Ministry of Public Enlightenment and Propaganda, that created domestic and international propaganda campaigns. Kumata described the views of Hitler on propaganda, which were extensive, and the organizational focus brought to the efforts by Joseph Goebbels, the ministry's chief, and identified 18 specific characteristics. These included the use of negative stereotypes of opponents, creating anticipation of crises, the instigating of a corresponding event or crisis, and importance of concealing the origin of propaganda aimed at foreign audiences.³⁸ In 1943, Derrick Swinton and Arthur Weidenfeld published *The Goebbels Experiment, A Study of the Nazi Propaganda Machine*, which remains one of the most cited works about the processes and organizations that made up the Nazi Ministry for Propaganda and Enlightenment,

³⁶ Edwald Banse, *Germany, Prepare for War! (Raum Und Volk Im Weltkreige)*, trans. Alan Harris (London: Lovat Dickson, 1934), 83.

³⁷ Kumata and Schramm, 33. Kumata and Schramm cited Gerhardt Niemeyer's *Commentary on Hitler's Theories on Propaganda* and Leonard Doob's 1950 work, "Goebbels's Principles of Propaganda," as the essential works.

³⁸ Kumata and Schramm, 54.

including its external efforts at influence.³⁹ It detailed the effect of party ideology on German foreign policy execution.

Throughout the 1930s, authors and organizations wrote with growing concern about other external activities of the new German regime. *The Brown Network, The Activities of the Nazis in Foreign Countries*, published in 1936, originally in German, was one of the earliest and most comprehensive studies of the overt and covert influence efforts by Nazi Germany targeting Europe, the Baltics and South and North America. Vividly describing the “widespread tentacles and vast resources of the Nazi organizations outside of Germany,” it named individuals, described the organization and activities of not just propaganda activities, but also “murder, kidnapping, espionage, sabotage and anti-Semitic agitation in foreign countries.”⁴⁰ It was widely referenced during this time by other writers as an attempt to publicize and thereby inoculate targeted states against already aggressive propaganda and clandestine Nazi actions.⁴¹ Edmund Taylor’s *The Strategy of Terror: Europe’s Inner Front* published in 1940 is a long discourse about the power and danger to Europe and the United States posed by Nazi Germany. This book

³⁹ Derrick Sington and Arthur Weidenfeld, *The Goebbels Experiment: A Study of the Nazi Propaganda Machine* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1943), 81. Lasswell, Kumata and modern writers also reference this work in the *Psychological Warfare Casebook*. See Robert E. Herzstein, *The War That Hitler Won: Goebbels and the Nazi Media Campaign* (New York: Paragon House, 1987) for another examination of Goebbels’s views on the use of propaganda.

⁴⁰ World Committee for the Victims of German Fascism, *The Brown Network: The Activities of the Nazis in Foreign Countries* (New York: Knight Publications, 1936). See Henry C. Wolfe, *The German Octopus: Hitler Bids for World Power* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, Doran and Co., 1938), 8.

⁴¹ World Committee for the Victims of German Fascism, *The Brown Network: The Activities of the Nazis in Foreign Countries*, 8.

was also cited by many other analysts and scholars during the 1940s who looked back at this period and German Political Warfare efforts and its action to undermine and weaken the states of Europe leading up to the start of the war. The clear argument that Taylor makes throughout the combination of propaganda analysis and reporter's diary is that the danger of the propaganda and other efforts by Germany was ultimately due to the susceptibility of the different societies and populations to these efforts as much as the aggressive Nazi strategies.⁴²

Another important book is the 1958 volume by William Daugherty, *Psychological Warfare Casebook*. This is a foundational research document for Psychological Warfare and Political Warfare. It was produced through a partnership of the Special Warfare Operational Research Organization and Johns Hopkins University.⁴³

Scholarship on Political Warfare—Russia

For the Russia case, and a more contemporary series of events, the author reviewed U.S military and civilian government reports, foreign military and government reports, and North Atlantic Treaty Organization research; all open source documents.

⁴² Edmund Taylor, *The Strategy of Terror: Europe's Inner Front* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1940), 1.

⁴³ William E. Daugherty and Morris Janowitz, eds., *A Psychological Warfare Casebook* (Baltimore, MD: The John Hopkins Press, 1958), 1. The volume is edited by Daugherty and Dr. Morris Janowitz, a highly respected social sciences academic researcher at Yale University and totals almost 900 pages of essays, research, and doctrine, covering Nazi, Soviet, U.S., British and Psychological Warfare actions in Africa, Asia and South America. Special Operations Research Office and Johns Hopkins continues to support the Special Operations community's research efforts to the present day. See also Daniel Lerner, *Propaganda in War and Crisis: Materials for American Policy* (New York: George W. Stewart, 1951) and the essay "Political and Psychological Warfare" by Harold Lasswell which defines Political Warfare as including Diplomatic, Propaganda and Economic Warfare.

U.S. military doctrine was also reviewed, though limited to public release documents. There is a rapidly growing body of research by the U.S. military, civilian agencies, allied governments, and civilian institutions. These organizations are producing extensive open source research that document Russian Political Warfare activities. The amount of research produced by government and non-government groups is a useful indicator of concern by policy makers across Europe. Reports and research from Poland, Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, the Czech Republic, Romania, and Germany have been produced over the last several years, all considering events surrounding Russian actions leading up to and after the events in Ukraine in 2014 and efforts targeting their countries.

Study of Soviet and Russian propaganda and influence campaigns is extensive. A full review of Cold War research on Soviet activities is beyond the scope of this work, other than to reference the actions and methods that have been adapted from that era and are relevant to the case studies. Research that focuses on Political Warfare and related practices narrows the literature to more specialized works. In addition to the Daugherty volume, a useful research work is the two-volume set, *The Art and Science of Psychological Operations: Case Studies of Military Application*, published by the U.S. Army in 1976 and was the most definitive collection of Soviet and U.S. activities to that date.⁴⁴ It extensively covered Psychological Operations planning and campaigns worldwide, with extensive focus on Vietnam, as well as Soviet doctrine and practices in the Third World. Other important works include the 1996 edited volume *Psychological*

⁴⁴ American Institutes for Research, Department of the Army Pamphlet 525-7-1-2, *The Art and Science of Psychological Operations: Case Studies of Military Application* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, April 1976). These two volumes are an excellent primer for Cold War era Psychological Operations and Political Warfare.

Operations: Principles and Case Studies,⁴⁵ and *Soviet Strategic Deception* published in 1987 with a forward by Andrew Marshall of the Office of Net Assessment.⁴⁶

Russia's use of Political Warfare has led to extensive scholarship in Europe and the United States analyzing these actions. One of the most valued scholars across the literature on Russian Political Warfare is Keir Giles, a fellow at the Royal Institute of International Affairs in the United Kingdom. Giles authored many products for the NATO Strategic Communications Centre of Excellence and the NATO manual on Russian Information Warfare. The NATO Strategic Communications Centre of Excellence has spearheaded analysis of Russian Political Warfare activities across Europe, including the Baltic areas, Ukraine, and Syria.⁴⁷

⁴⁵ Frank L. Goldstein and Benjamin F. Findley, *Psychological Operations: Principles and Case Studies* (Maxwell Air Force Base, AL: Air University Press, 1996), 153. An essay in this volume by DeWitt S. Copp provides a definition of "active measures" from the context of Psychological Operations. For an extensive look at one of the largest Soviet active measure campaigns to date see Fletcher Schoen and Christopher J. Lamb, Strategic Perspectives 11, *Deception, Disinformation and Strategic Communications: How One Interagency Group Made A Difference* (Washington, DC: Center for Strategic Research, National Defense University Press, 2012).

⁴⁶ Brian D. Dailey and Patrick J. Parker, *Soviet Strategic Deception* (Lexington, MA: Lexington Books, 1987). One of the best Cold War era analyses of Soviet "active measures" and "reflective control" as well as deception as a part of Soviet doctrine, which is directly influential to current activities. See Joseph S. Gordon, *Psychological Operations: The Soviet Challenge* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1998). It describes the use of clandestine radio and recommendations for expanding U.S. and allied capabilities. Also see Lawrence C. Soley, *Radio Warfare: OSS and CIA Subversive Propaganda* (New York: Praeger Publishing, 1989).

⁴⁷ Keir Giles, "Handbook of Russian Information Warfare" (Fellowship Monograph, Research Division, NATO Defense College, Rome, November 2016). See also other of his works: "Russia's Hybrid Warfare: A Success in Propaganda" (German Federal Academy for Security Policy, Berlin, Germany, February 2015); "Russia's 'New' Tools for Confronting the West: Continuity and Innovation in Moscow's Exercise of Power."

The large amount of new open source research originating from Latvia, Poland, Germany, and the Czech Republic is an indication of their concern about Russian intervention into their political systems.⁴⁸ Private organizations have contributed to the research on propaganda and elements of Political Warfare, which include the Foundation for the Defense of Democracies, Center for European Policy Analysis, RAND Corporation, and the Institute for the Study of War.⁴⁹ United States Southern Command has produced several open source reports in addition to the Political Warfare White Paper. The Russian Little Green Men report discussed the use of Political Warfare, especially the specific elements involving Unconventional Warfare. Recent military scholarship from the Naval Postgraduate School and the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College shows an increased interest in writing about Political Warfare and contributed to its use as a unifying and explanatory concept.⁵⁰

It is relevant to note Timothy Thomas's current research is just a part of his extensive work to detail Russian doctrine and practices regarding information,

⁴⁸ An example, Anna Visvizi and Tomasz Stepniewski, eds., *Poland, The Czech Republic and NATO In Fragile Security Contexts* IESW Reports (Lublin, Poland: Institute of East-Central Europe, December 2016), 10. Research co-financed by Poland and the Czech Republic, it focuses on Hybrid and information war threats.

⁴⁹ Snegovaya; Christopher Paul and Miriam Matthews, *The Russian "Firehose of Falsehood" Propaganda Model* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2016). Other examples of reports by these organizations are referenced elsewhere and in the bibliography.

⁵⁰ See Jeffrey V. Dickey et al., "Russian Political Warfare: Origin, Evolution, and Application" (Master's Thesis, Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, CA, 2015); Stephanie K. Whittle, "Conquest from Within: A Comparative Analysis Between Soviet Active Measures and United States Unconventional Warfare Doctrine" (Master's Thesis, U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 2015). These are two excellent examples of recent military scholarship on Political Warfare.

Psychological and Political Warfare. As a long-time researcher at the U.S. Army Foreign Military Studies Office, Thomas spent decades analyzing activities by Russia, China, Iran, and non-state actors. His work isolates essential elements that make up Information Warfare that include efforts to undermine and destabilize the targeted states. Thomas has produced extensive analysis of first-source Russian doctrine.⁵¹

A European think tank, the Center for European Policy Analysis's Information Warfare Initiative is part of a larger effort to catalogue and analyze Russian activities in Europe covering Russian Information, Hybrid and Political Warfare. Their work has characterized the efforts of Russia as more Disinformation Warfare, where the intent is not to inform, and instead of "agitating audiences into action, it seeks to keep them hooked and distracted, passive and paranoid."⁵² They identify the anti-Western and anti-U.S. focus of Russian messaging and the intent to "flood the news arena with nonsense."⁵³

⁵¹ Timothy Thomas, "Russia's 21st Century Information War: Working to Undermine and Destabilize Populations," *Defence Strategic Communications* 1, no 1 (2015): 12. See also Timothy Thomas, "Russia's Information Warfare Strategy: Can the Nation Cope in Future Conflicts?" *The Journal of Slavic Military Studies* 27 (2014): 101-130; Timothy Thomas, *Russian Military Strategy* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Foreign Military Studies Office, 2015); Timothy Thomas, "The Russian View of Information War." in *The Russian Armed Forces at the Dawn of the Millennium*, ed. Michael H. Crutcher (Paper presented at conference, February 7-9, 2000, Center for Strategic Leadership, U.S. Army War College, Carlisle, PA, December 2000).

⁵² Peter Pomeranzev and Edward Lucas, *Winning the Information War - Techniques and Counter-Strategies to Russian Propaganda in Central and Eastern Europe* (Washington, DC: Center for European Policy Analysis and Legatum Institute, 2016), 5.

⁵³ *Ibid.*

Political Warfare

Political Warfare is a demanding concept to research and to define.⁵⁴ The term itself is value-loaded and so requires an examination of its origin, evolution, and current meaning. It fell out of favor for much of the last 70 years, but recently returned to use as an attempt to describe Unconventional and Irregular Warfare actions by Russia against Ukraine and other European states.

Before it was described as Political Warfare, analysts of the events in the 1930s, like Christopher Simpson in *Science of Coercion* called these kind of activities and effects “enemy propaganda, fifth columns actions,” and “psychological warfare.”⁵⁵ This era of propaganda harnessed new technologies, like radio, new techniques and heightened sensitivities to covert as well as overt influence campaigns.⁵⁶ In Europe, the dominant authoritarian states, the Soviet Union, Nazi Germany, and Fascist Italy targeted the democratic or quasi-democratic states of eastern and western Europe using propaganda and other methods that their own domestic systems excelled at implementing.⁵⁷

⁵⁴ *Political Warfare* had been used throughout the Cold War and into the post-9/11 period at different times to describe activities that were more than just propaganda efforts. See Frank R. Barnett and Carnes Lord, *Political Warfare and Psychological Operations: Rethinking the U.S. Approach* (Washington, DC: National Defense University Press, National Strategy Information Center, 1989), 74; Brian M. Jenkins, “Strategy: Political Warfare Neglected,” *RAND Blog*, January 26, 2005, accessed February 9, 2017, <http://www.rand.org/blog/2005/06/strategy-political-warfare-neglected.html>; Max Boot, “Political Warfare: Policy Innovation Memorandum,” Council on Foreign Relations, 2013, accessed December 13, 2016, <https://www.cfr.org/report/political-warfare>.

⁵⁵ Simpson, 11.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 8.

⁵⁷ Keith Somerville, *Radio Propaganda and the Broadcasting of Hatred: Historical Development and Definitions* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 46.

In 2014, RAND Corporation produced *Special Warfare: The Missing Middle in Coercive Options*, which considered the elements of these campaigns as a proposed capability for the U.S. government. Identifying six features of Special Warfare, it included destabilizing the “targeted regime” by employing multiple government agencies. It identified Political Warfare as an essential part of Special Warfare. The authors described Political Warfare as including influence campaigns, economic warfare and “coercive diplomacy,” all aiming at “making and breaking coalitions.”⁵⁸ Finally, the 2015 “SOF Support to Political Warfare” White Paper is central to the analysis of this work; it formally (and publically, thanks to its open release) re-introduced Political Warfare into military conceptual analysis. This document described Political Warfare, as did Kennan in 1948, as much more than just Psychological Warfare as an overall whole of government effort that includes diplomatic, information, economic, and unconventional military elements.⁵⁹

In Germany, propaganda was an essential element of the Nazi state. For internal consumption, it was a fundamental tool of control in an authoritarian system. Externally, it was an inherent part of warfare based on Nazi ideology. The party was the state, and the state relied on the Nazi Party. Its governmental arm was the Ministry of Propaganda and Enlightenment. The ministry was responsible for organizing public opinion, and

⁵⁸ Madden, et al., 2.

⁵⁹ USSOCOM, “SOF Support to Political Warfare,” 1.

tasked with influencing those outside Germany's boundaries.⁶⁰ It is important to re-state that Political Warfare is less-than conventional war as George Kennan defined it.⁶¹

Fifth Column, referenced earlier, is the often-used term that originated during the Spanish Civil War, where it was stated in radio broadcasts by the Nationalists that four columns of troops were marching on Madrid and a fifth column of Nationalists were already inside the city, ready to rise up and fight.⁶² The term came to describe much more than just an isolated act. Fifth column actions are a key element, in the context of Political Warfare, for the German and Russian case studies. The term came to mean not just action by clandestine elements, but assassination, sabotage, and black rumors.⁶³ A monograph on the subject, written in 1949 by a U.S. Army Command and General Staff College student, defined it neatly this way:

The fifth column is composed of people, either individual or collectively, whose activities take place within a nation although planned and instigated by a foreign power. These activities are designed to weaken a country's political concept and structure, economic stability and military strength in order to destroy that country from within, to conquer it through itself, before and during an overturn of its

⁶⁰ Sington and Weidenfeld, 77.

⁶¹ Ben Connable, Jason Campbell, and Dan Madden, *Stretching and Exploiting Thresholds for High-Order War: How Russia, China, and Iran are Eroding American Influence Using Time-Tested Measures Short of War* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2016), 1. In discussing Political Warfare/Hybrid Warfare, "Measures short of war' is a term traditionally used to describe all national ways and means available to help policymakers achieve geopolitical objectives without crossing the line into major conventional or (since 1945) nuclear confrontation."

⁶² Govan, 13.

⁶³ de Jong, 16.

government, forces or by military operations directed against it by the foreign power.⁶⁴

A German Foreign Office memorandum in 1940 described Fifth Column responsibilities were to: “do everything to help the German forces to occupy the country in question; actual sabotage on well-ordered military plans; demoralization and confusion of public opinion and armed forces with a view to breaking the will of the people to resist; causing panic and confusion in order to make ordered resistance impossible.”⁶⁵ The term came back into use in the last several years because of its historical and evocative nature, but applied to Russian actions and the use of Russian ethnic populations as actors.⁶⁶ In 2015, in a speech to security officials President Vladimir Putin called domestic opponents of the annexation of Crimea “a ‘fifth column’ and a ‘disparate bunch of national traitors.’”⁶⁷

In the United Kingdom, purveyors of this kind of influence called these combined efforts Political Warfare. The German version of the term originated as

⁶⁴ Louis W. Pflanz, “Composition of the Fifth Column” (Student Paper, U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 1949), 12. MAJ Pflanz, though writing about Cold War applications, also referenced pre-war and World War Two events. For discussion of the displacement of the older term “Trojan Horse,” by Fifth Column see Dwight L. Bolinger, “Fifth Column Marches On,” *American Speech* 19, no. 1 (February 1944): 47.

⁶⁵ Govan, 14-15.

⁶⁶ Examples of the use of this term include Artis Pabriks and Andis Kudors, eds., *The War in Ukraine, Lessons for Europe* (Riga, Latvia: The Centre for East European Policy Studies, University of Latvia Press, 2015), 58; Agnieszka Pikulicka-Wilczewska, “Ukraine and Russia: People, Politics, Propaganda and Perspectives,” *E-International Relations Publishing*, June 4, 2016, accessed April 4, 2017, <http://www.e-ir.info/2016/06/04/ukraine-and-russia-people-politics-propaganda-and-perspectives>; Peter B. Humphrey, “The State of Play in Russia’s Near Abroad,” *Joint Forces Quarterly*, no. 55 (4th Quarter 2009): 45.

⁶⁷ Keir Giles, et al., “The Russian Challenge” (Chatham House Report, Chatham House, The Royal Institute of International Affairs, London, June 2015), 31.

weltanschauungskrieg, or worldview warfare. Christopher Simpson in *Science of Coercion* described the German and British concepts together as “a group of coordinated efforts that explicitly link mass communication with selective application of violence (murder, sabotage, assassination, insurrection, counter insurrection, etc.) as a means to achieve ideological, political or military goals.”⁶⁸ German Political Warfare consisted then of an early whole-of government approach, as the authors of *German Psychological Warfare* explained: “Since 1935, the entire German diplomacy has been a particular combination of military and political operations in which Germans applied political, economic, and psychological pressure to accomplish their ends without actual warfare in the conventional sense.”⁶⁹

During this time, the key element of Political Warfare centered on the term propaganda. It was a blanket term for influence, overt and covert. Dr. Harold Doob, one of first academics who studied propaganda campaigns and as with so many other researchers, later worked on U.S. efforts during World War Two, wrote in 1935 about efforts to use influence as a weapon. Doob studied Nazi Germany and Soviet Russia as authoritarian regimes that used state-led propaganda programs to target other states.⁷⁰ The related term black propaganda originated during World War Two, where deliberately false but specifically crafted misinformation was disseminated in order to confuse and deceive an enemy. These black campaigns were produced by the likes of Sefton Delmer,

⁶⁸ Simpson, 1994, 11. Nazi practitioners also referred to these actions as *Angstkrieg* or “fear war.”

⁶⁹ Farago, 132.

⁷⁰ Doob, 290.

the British broadcaster who used powerful transmitters that assumed the identity of pro-Nazi Germans. Broadcasting 80 percent or more pro-Nazi information, they salted their German language transmissions with information to undermine the commitment of the most hardline supporters. Though viewed as a successful and aggressive strategy to undermine an authoritarian regime, his was highly controversial within the British Political Warfare community because of its effectiveness in emulating Nazi rhetoric.⁷¹

The Soviet Union also was an authoritarian regime with Political Warfare as an inherent part of Russian warfare strategy.⁷² During the Cold War, Russian Political Warfare meant a variety of subversive political, economic, diplomatic, and informational activities against the West.⁷³ Current Russian doctrine includes Soviet style disinformation and Psychological Warfare campaigns known as reflexive control.⁷⁴ Martin Kragh and Sebastian Asberg, writing from the Swedish perspective, stated that active measures (*aktivnye meropriyatiya*) and disinformation (*dezinformatsiya*) “herald

⁷¹ As the classic book (though flawed) on the subject see Sefton Delmer, *Black Boomerang* (New York: Viking Press, 1962); also Ellic Howe, *The Black Game: British Subversive Operations Against the Germans During the Second World War* (London: Michael Joseph, 1982); Stanley Newcourt-Nowodworski, *Black Propaganda in the Second World War* (New York: Sutton Publishing, 1982). Dating to this period, propaganda was divided into Black (falsely attributed), Gray (non-attributed), or White (attributed) and current U.S. Army PSYOP units incorporate symbols with these three colors into their insignia.

⁷² Ellul, Jaque; “Propaganda and Ideology,” from *Propaganda: The Formation of Men’s Attitudes*, 1965, quoted in American Institutes for Research, Department of the Army Pamphlet 525-7-1-2, *The Art and Science of Psychological Operations: Case Studies of Military Application* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, April 1976), 1065.

⁷³ Barnett and Lord.

⁷⁴ Snegovaya, 10.

from the Soviet KGB lexicon on political warfare.”⁷⁵ Active measures has a stronger association with Political Warfare and is defined as an effort that includes these goals:

- influencing the policies of another government
- undermining confidence in its leaders and institutions
- disrupting the relations between other nations
- discrediting and weakening governmental and nongovernmental
- opponents.⁷⁶

Reflexive control is in some ways most comparable to Psychological Warfare, with elements of military deception. Keir Giles, writing in a North Atlantic Treaty Organization Strategic Communications Center analysis argued it involves the shaping of the information environment, “predetermining an adversary’s decision in Russia’s favour, by altering key factors in the adversary’s perception of the world . . . by causing him to choose the actions most advantageous to Russian objectives.”⁷⁷ Reflexive control is complex to define, likely complicated by the act of translation and the clinical psychological aspect of the Russian concept. A 2013 article in the Russian Army journal *Military Thoughts* described it as:

An analysis of the past experience in preparing and conducting operations, combat actions, engagements, and other tactical actions with the purpose of misleading the adversary in plans conceived by commanders shows that reflexive influence on the adversary was confined to forming a simulacrum, that is, false-real, information, and psychological images of objects, processes, and

⁷⁵ Martin Kragh and Sebastian Åsberg, “Russia’s Strategy for Influence Through Public Diplomacy and Active Measures: The Swedish Case,” *Journal of Strategic Studies* (2017): 7, accessed January 9, 2017, <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/01402390.2016.1273830>. See Abrams for a description of current Russian Political Warfare using Soviet era methods.

⁷⁶ Katri Pynnöniemi and András Rácz, eds., *Fog of Falsehood: Russian Strategy of Deception and the Conflict in Ukraine* (Helsinki, Finland: Finnish Institute of International Affairs, October 5, 2016), 38.

⁷⁷ Giles, “Handbook of Russian Information Warfare,” 19.

phenomena. Reflexive influence using simulacra paralyzes the adversary's (decision-makers) intelligent (creative) activity.⁷⁸

Russia's military strategy has been centered on the use of Political Warfare, based upon the 2012 Gerasimov Doctrine. The Gerasimov Doctrine is based upon Unconventional or Asymmetric Warfare and the creation of "internal opposition" within a state.⁷⁹ The term Little Green Men has become a term like Fifth Column, moving from news reports into more common usage to describe not only events in Ukraine, but elsewhere where unconventional forces operate without clearly identifying their identity or loyalty. As General Gerasimov stated: "The very 'rules of war' have changed. The role of nonmilitary means of achieving political and strategic goals has grown, and, in many cases, they have exceeded the power of force of weapons in their effectiveness."⁸⁰ Russian military strategy argues that stable countries can be rapidly destabilized using non-military actions. Timothy Thomas, a scholar at the U.S. Army Foreign Military Studies Office, defined these non-military efforts as including "involvement of the population's protest potential, special operations forces, and covert military and information warfare measures."⁸¹

⁷⁸ Thomas, *Russian Military Strategy*, 118. He references A. A. Prokhozhev and N. I. Turko, "The Basics of Information Warfare," from "Systems Analysis on the Threshold of the 21st Century: Theory and Practice," Moscow, February 1996, 119.

⁷⁹ U.S. Army Special Operations Command, "*Little Green Men*": A Primer on Modern Russian Unconventional Warfare, Ukraine 2013-2014 (Fort Bragg, NC: U.S. Army Special Operations Command, June 2015), 27.

⁸⁰ Gerasimov, 24.

⁸¹ Thomas, *Russian Military Strategy*, 238-239. Thomas details the multiple articles from 2009-2012 that show the evolution and rise to dominance of the ideas that would become the Gerasimov Doctrine.

Associated Concepts

It is important to explain other concepts that have been used interchangeably or overlap conceptually with Political Warfare. The first is Psychological Warfare. It was first used in 1920 by British military strategist J. C. Fuller writing about the shock effect of tanks in modern warfare.⁸² This term has shared some of the same meanings as Political Warfare and many writers and academics used it interchangeably with Political Warfare, especially during World War Two. In 1942, the U.S. government defined Psychological Warfare as:

the coordination and use of all means, including moral and physical, by which the end is attained—other than those of recognized military operations, but including the psychological exploitation of the result of those recognized military actions which tend to destroy the will of the enemy to achieve victory and to damage his political or economic capacity to do so; which tend to deprive the enemy of the support, assistance or sympathy of his allies or associates or of neutrals.⁸³

Within U.S. doctrine, Psychological Warfare remained the term for targeted influence campaigns against foreign audiences until the 1960s. Special Warfare strategies to support Unconventional Warfare and counter-insurgency campaigns led to a new emphasis in recognizing a different kind of warfare. Because of the prominence of counterinsurgency, the U.S. Government moved from referring those activities as a method of warfare to one where the target could be a friendly local population. In 1962, the Department of Defense renamed both units and the action from Psychological

⁸² William E. Daugherty, “Origins of PSYOP Terminology,” in American Institutes for Research, Department of the Army Pamphlet 525-7-1-2, *The Art and Science of Psychological Operations: Case Studies of Military Application* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, April 1976), 18.

⁸³ Alfred H. Paddock, Jr., *U.S. Army Special Warfare: Psychological and Unconventional Warfare 1941-1952* (Washington, DC: National Defense University Press, 1982), 11.

Warfare to Psychological Operations.⁸⁴ In 2010, the activity was re-branded as Military Information Support Operations to align with defense-wide efforts at influence.⁸⁵ For the purpose of this work, Psychological Warfare is used to emphasize a more aggressive version of the current definitions of Psychological Operations or Military Information Support Operations.⁸⁶ Psychological Warfare is a fundamental element of Political Warfare.

Writers and analysts generated a wide variety of terms to describe the different elements of Irregular Warfare that overlap with Political Warfare. A brief discussion of the major terms will explore the related and sometimes conflicting terms. These terms include Irregular Warfare, Hybrid Warfare and Information Warfare, Asymmetric Warfare, the Russian Next Generation Warfare, and finally Gray Zone Warfare. A concept interconnected to Political Warfare or Irregular Warfare is Unconventional

⁸⁴ Paddock, *U.S. Army Special Warfare: Psychological and Unconventional Warfare 1941-1952* Ibid., 11.

⁸⁵ Alfred H. Paddock, Jr., "PSYOP: On a Complete Change in Organization, Practice, and Doctrine," *Small Wars Journal* (June 26, 2010), accessed April 12, 2017, <http://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/psyop-on-a-complete-change-in-organization-practice-and-doctrineaddock>, 1. This details the evolution of the term from Psychological Warfare to PSYOP to MISO, while the meaning has not truly changed. See also Paddock's full history of U.S. special warfare strategy, both PSYOP and Special Forces in *U.S. Army Special Warfare: Psychological and Unconventional Warfare 1941-1952*.

⁸⁶ Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Publication 3-13.2, *Military Information Support Operations* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, January 7, 2010, incorporating Change 1, December 20, 2011). MISO are planned operations to convey selected information and indicators to foreign audiences to influence their emotions, motives, objective reasoning, and ultimately the behavior of foreign governments, organizations, groups, and individuals in a manner favorable to the originator's objectives.

Warfare, a doctrinal term in the U.S. military that denotes an organized campaign to undermine and overthrow an existing government.⁸⁷

The *Irregular Warfare Special Study* produced by the Joint Warfighting Center provided this definition in 2006: “Irregular warfare is a form of warfare that has as its objective the credibility and/or legitimacy of the relevant political authority with the goal of undermining or supporting that authority.” This definition stressed the use of all elements of government and military efforts to attack the enemies’ “power, influence, and will.”⁸⁸ In the United States, Irregular Warfare was not a part of doctrine until 2007, when the *Irregular Warfare Joint Operating Concept* was published. In the early 2000s Irregular Warfare replaced previous terms like low intensity conflict to describe these events. Irregular Warfare included aspects of counterinsurgency doctrine as well.⁸⁹ Irregular Warfare is defined in current U.S. doctrine as “a violent struggle among state and non-state actors for legitimacy and influence over the relevant populations. IW favors indirect and asymmetric approaches, though it may employ the full range of military and other capabilities, in order to erode an adversary’s power, influence, and will.”⁹⁰

⁸⁷ UW is defined as “Activities conducted to enable a resistance movement or insurgency to coerce, disrupt, or overthrow a government or occupying power by operating through or with an underground, auxiliary, and guerrilla force in a denied area.” Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Publication 3-05, *Special Operations* (Washington, DC: Department of Defense, 2011), GL-13.

⁸⁸ Joint Doctrine Group, Joint Warfighting Center, *Irregular Warfare Special Study* (Suffolk, VA: U.S. Joint Forces Command, August 4, 2006), II-2.

⁸⁹ Eric V. Larson, et al., *Assessing Irregular Warfare: A Framework for Intelligence Analysis* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2008), 15.

⁹⁰ Center for Army Lessons Learned, “Introduction,” CALL Newsletter 11-34, *Irregular Warfare: A SOF Perspective*, 1 (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Center for Army Lessons Learned, June 2011), quoted in Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Publication 1-02,

Hybrid Warfare is a term currently in favor to describe Political Warfare methods. Along with Information Warfare, Hybrid Warfare has become the term most often used by military and civilian analysts to describe Russian Political Warfare activities. U.S. doctrine as defined in 2010 Training Circular *Hybrid Threat* states, “a *Hybrid threat* is the diverse and dynamic combination of regular forces, irregular forces, and/or criminal elements all unified to achieve mutually benefitting effects.”⁹¹ Hybrid Warfare most closely resembles Political Warfare because it encompasses a larger strategy, often state versus state, with the inclusion of Unconventional Warfare activities and Irregular Warfare campaigns. The term arose out of examination of the 2006 Israeli-Hezbollah War, Israel’s defeat in southern Lebanon. There was a failure of contemporary theory to fully explain the events that occurred, which included a mixture of actions of state and non-state actors and irregular methods which alarmed U.S. observers because of Israel’s inability to counter what occurred.⁹²

In Russia, they do not describe their methods as Hybrid or Information Warfare. The 2015 NATO Defense College paper points out that inside Russia, it is often called Next Generation Warfare. Russian doctrine describes this as a method “to achieve

Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms (Washington, DC: Department of Defense, 2010). IW in this quote refers to Irregular Warfare.

⁹¹ Headquarters, Department of the Army, Training Circular No. 7-100, *Hybrid Threat* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, November 26, 2010), V.

⁹² Frank G. Hoffman, “Conflict in the 21st Century: The Rise of Hybrid Wars,” Potomac Institute for Policy Studies, Arlington, VA, 2007, 28. Hoffman is credited with originating the concept. For a counter-reaction to widespread use of the term, see Sven Biscop, Security Policy Brief No. 64, “Hybrid Hysteria,” Royal Institute for International Relations, Brussels, Belgium, 2015; Nicu Popescu, “Hybrid Tactics: Neither New Nor Only Russian,” European Union Institute for Security Studies, Brussels, Belgium, January 2015.

politically decisive outcomes, with if possible, no or only limited and overt use of military force . . . mixing hard and soft power tools.”⁹³ Through these efforts, Russia aims to destroy the opponent, using Next Generation Warfare from within to encourage the “inner decay” of the targeted state.⁹⁴ The main purveyors of these new concepts, whether referred to as Next Generation Warfare or Irregular Warfare are Igor Panarin, a member of the faculty of the Diplomatic Academy of the Russian Federation’s Foreign Affairs Ministry and the extremely influential Great Russian nationalist Alexander Dugin, ideologist of Greater Russia nationalism as advocated by Putin.⁹⁵ . Russian actions in Ukraine and elsewhere over the last few years were executed by what “Russian information warfare theorist Igor Panarin calls ‘information special forces’ (‘infospecnaz’).”⁹⁶ From these definitions, the meaning of Russian Next Generation Warfare is close to the meaning of Political or Hybrid Warfare.

Panarin’s and Dugin’s views about Next Generation Warfare are summarized by a report from the NATO Strategic Communications Center, headquartered in Riga, Latvia:

⁹³ Diego A. Ruiz Palmer, “Back to the Future? Russia’s Hybrid Warfare, Revolutions in Military Affairs, and Cold War Comparisons” (Research Paper No. 120, Research Division, NATO Defense College, Rome, October 2015), 2.

⁹⁴ Hanna Smith and Bettina Renz, “Russia and Hybrid Warfare –Going Beyond the Label” (Aleksanteri Papers 1/2016, Helsinki, Finland: Office of the Prime Minister, Aleksanteri Institute, University of Helsinki, Finland, 2016), 55.

⁹⁵ North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), *Analysis of Russia’s Information Campaign Against Ukraine: Examining Non-Military Aspects of the Crisis in Ukraine From a Strategic Communications Perspectives* (Riga, Latvia: North Atlantic Treaty Organization, Strategic Communications Centre of Excellence, 2015), 15.

⁹⁶ Anna Reynolds, ed., *Social Media as a Tool of Hybrid Warfare* (Riga, Latvia: North Atlantic Treaty Organization, Strategic Communications Centre of Excellence, May 2016), 18.

Information war, from their perspective, is influencing mass consciousness in international rivalry between civilization systems with the aid of media. It is waged through the manipulation of information, i.e., using real information in a way to create false impressions, disinformation, including the dissemination of manipulated or fabricated (false) information, lobbying, blackmail and the extortion of desired information. Panarin not only developed information-warfare tools (propaganda, interviews, analyses, organization), but also defined different stages of the management process: from forecasting and planning, organization, simulation, feedback, to adjusting information. Dugin, on the other hand, developed the Russian version of the ‘netcentric-warfare’ concept which should be led by a special group including senior officials, representatives of the special services, intellectuals, researchers, political science professors and ‘patriotically oriented’ journalists and cultural activists.⁹⁷

Some Russian strategists reject the Western concept of Hybrid Warfare and argue the outside description is not consistent with their doctrine. The first prominent Russian military officer to discuss the idea that Russia applied Hybrid Warfare in Crimea was Russian Army Lieutenant-General Oleg Makarevich who stated, “It is no secret that the Americans are now carefully studying our experience of operations from February through July 2014, when our troops accomplished the mission in Crimea, which subsequently came to be called a new Hybrid war, without a shot being fired.” The statement, “which came to be called a new Hybrid war,” is not necessarily a confession that the Russians call it that, just that it “came to be called” Hybrid—a distinctly Western term.⁹⁸

Information Warfare originated in the United States in the 1990s as a response to the new technologies in combination with Psychological Warfare campaigns. In addition to Psychological Warfare, it includes Cyber Warfare capabilities for disruption or

⁹⁷ Robert Szwed, *Framing of the Ukraine–Russia Conflict in Online and Social Media* (Riga, Latvia: North Atlantic Treaty Organization, Strategic Communications Centre of Excellence, May 2016), 10.

⁹⁸ Thomas, *Russian Military Strategy*, 86.

deception. As Edward Pomeranzev and Edward Lucas of the Center for European Policy Analysis wrote about the origins of current Russian Political Warfare:

Modern Russian information warfare theory directly derives from *spetspropaganda*, first taught as a subject at the Russian Military Institute of Foreign Languages in 1942, but with origins lying deep in Marxist-Leninist ideology. Agitprop—the combination of agitation (speech) and propaganda (words)—dates back to the years immediately following the Russian Revolution. Propaganda and *dezinformatsiya* [disinformation] efforts were familiar features of the Cold War, and, despite the contrary conviction in Western policy-making circles, they did not stop when it finished.⁹⁹

Keir Giles, a researcher who has worked for the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and several European government funded think tanks, looked extensively at Russian doctrine and practices in his 2016 NATO Defence College monograph, “Handbook of Russian Information Warfare.” The North Atlantic Treaty Organization’s concern, as summarized by Giles, were actions aimed to achieve strategic tasks, but do not trigger the treaty’s mutual defense requirements. Russian Information Warfare, as described by the Russian General Staff will entail multiple efforts:

Wars will be resolved by a skillful combination of military, nonmilitary, and special nonviolent measures that will be put through by a variety of forms and methods and a blend of political, economic, informational, technological, and environmental measures, primarily by taking advantage of information superiority.¹⁰⁰

Jolanta Darczewksa, writing from the perspective of Polish security, argued that Russian Information Warfare is a return to Soviet practices, the essence of Political Warfare:

⁹⁹ Pomeranzev and Lucas, 6.

¹⁰⁰ S. G. Checkinov and S. A. Bogdanov, “Forecasting the Nature of Wars of the Future,” *Russian Armed Forces Journal Military Thought*, 2015, quoted in Keir Giles, “Handbook of Russian Information Warfare” (Fellowship Monograph, Research Division, NATO Defense College, Rome, November 2016), 6.

The doctrinal assumptions about information warfare demonstrate not so much a change in the theory of its conduct (the changes mainly relate to the form of its description, and not the content), but rather a clinging to old methods (sabotage, diversionary tactics, disinformation, state terror, manipulation, aggressive propaganda, exploiting the potential for protest among the local population).¹⁰¹

Darczewska has written extensively about Russian Information Warfare doctrine, focusing on source documents. An important insight is how Russia's history and culture has shaped doctrine:

the Russians are guided by their own assumptions and logic in adopting Western notions, which they adapt to their own needs and traditions and their distinct strategic culture. When transplanting Western theories onto Russian soil, they deliberately confuse the concepts of attack and defence, adjusting them to Russia's own geostrategy of revenge.¹⁰²

Asymmetric Warfare first emerged in the late 1990s to describe warfare methods chosen by a weaker opponent to gain an advantage over a stronger opponent. It is not a part of U.S. doctrine but is a central idea of the study of Irregular Warfare. A 2000 study by the National Defense University looked at U.S. doctrine and strategies for its origin and found it was first used in 1997. The 2000 definition stated that it is where "adversaries are likely to attempt to circumvent or undermine U.S. strengths while exploiting its weaknesses, using methods that differ significantly from the usual mode of U.S. operations."¹⁰³ Adding to confusion, Asymmetric Warfare has been used in

¹⁰¹ Jolanta Darczewska, Point of View No. 50, *The Devil is in the Details: Information Warfare in the Light of Russia's Military Doctrine* (Warsaw, Poland: Center for Eastern Studies, May 2015), 12.

¹⁰² Jolanta Darczewska, OSW Studies No. 57, *Russia's Armed Forces on the Information War Front: Strategic Documents* (Warsaw, Poland: Centre for Eastern Studies, June 2016).

¹⁰³ Kenneth F. McKenzie, "The Revenge of the Melians: Asymmetric Threats and the Next QDR" (McNair Paper 62, Institute of National Strategic Studies, National Defense University, Washington, DC, 2000), 2.

conjunction with Irregular Warfare. Asymmetric Warfare is a term used to describe the 1994-1996 Chechnyan war with Russia and current strategies used by Iran and China, as well as non-state actors like Al-Qaeda and the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant, among others.¹⁰⁴

The last concept to discuss is Gray Zone Warfare. This is the newest of these concepts corresponding to Political Warfare. This term emerged from the U.S. Special Operations community and was explained in the 2015 white paper produced by Special Operations Command whose conceptual ancestry includes “monikers such as irregular warfare, low-intensity conflict, asymmetric warfare, Military Operations Other than War (MOOTW) and Small Wars.”¹⁰⁵ This model embraces the institutionalizing of persistent types of Irregular Warfare. The essential elements of this kind of warfare are ambiguity and aggression, and understanding that the challenges there are “perspective dependent” where goals and levels of commitment can be very different between opponents.¹⁰⁶ The Modern War Institute’s 2016 monograph defines Gray Zone conflict to be centrally informational and psychological. In fact, their definition is essentially Political Warfare, “gray-zone conflicts are those in which nation states and non-state actors use Hybrid threats/tactics, such as fusing Political and Information Warfare with non-violent civil

¹⁰⁴ USSOCOM, “SOF Support to Political Warfare,” 5-7.

¹⁰⁵ U.S. Army Special Operations Command (USSOCOM), “The Gray Zone” (White Paper, Fort Bragg, NC: U.S. Army Special Operations Command, September 9, 2015), 1. See also Frank G. Hoffman, “The Contemporary Spectrum of Conflict: Protracted, Gray Zone, Ambiguous, and Hybrid Modes of War,” The Heritage Foundation, 2016, <http://index.heritage.org/military/2016/essays/contemporary-spectrum-of-conflict>; Hoffman being the pioneer of “Hybrid Warfare” also attempted to clarify the multiple uses of these related terms.

¹⁰⁶ USSOCOM, “The Gray Zone,” 3.

resistance, to achieve strategic objectives without violating international norms or crossing established thresholds and leading to open war.”¹⁰⁷

In their 2016 article, General Joseph Votel and General Charles Cleveland argued that the Cold War itself was a “45-year Gray Zone struggle.”¹⁰⁸ Gray Zone Warfare is inherently ambiguous, and shifts between “the traditional war and peace duality” as well as obscuring the “nature of the conflict, opacity of parties involved and uncertainty of relevant policy and legal frameworks.”¹⁰⁹ Hal Brands, writing more recently at the Foreign Policy Research Institute identified the Gray Zone Warfare as comparable to Hybrid Warfare and Political Warfare. It is undertaken “below the threshold of conventional military conflict and open interstate war,” and that it is best utilized by states operating in the “province of revisionist powers.” Brands states that though definition of victory is the same as a conventional war, because it operates below that level, it has the benefit of achieving those “those gains without escalating to overt warfare, without crossing established red-lines, and thus without exposing the practitioner to the penalties and risks that such escalation might bring.”¹¹⁰

The Modern War Institute’s 2016 monograph attempted to bring clarification to the confusion used between Irregular Warfare, Unconventional Warfare, Hybrid, and

¹⁰⁷ John Chambers, *Countering Gray-Zone Hybrid Threats: An Analysis of Russia’s ‘Next Generation Warfare’* (West Point, NY: Modern War Institute at West Point, October 18, 2016), 13.

¹⁰⁸ Votel et al., 102.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 2.

¹¹⁰ Hal Brands, “Paradoxes of the Gray Zone” (Foreign Policy Research Institute, February 5, 2016), accessed January 25, 2017, <http://www.fpri.org/article/2016/02/paradoxes-gray-zone>, 2.

Gray Zone Warfare. They identify Gray Zone characteristics: “(1) Ambiguity, (2) Exploitation of Adversary Weaknesses through DIME, (3) Attacks in Five Domains, (4) Use of Criminal Organizations and Networks, and (5) Using Laws and Cultural Norms as a Weapons System.”¹¹¹

Conclusion and Relevance

This chapter examined Political Warfare, summarized the conceptual history, and looked at the complications of related concepts and evolving definitions. For the purposes of discussion of Political Warfare, the author views the concepts discussed like Hybrid, Asymmetrical, Gray Zone, and Information Warfare as terms that overlap at multiple locations. Research focusing on Political Warfare and related concepts increased due to the interest and concern among the United States and analysts regarding the threat of these activities to U.S. interests and the usefulness of Political Warfare to describe this phenomenon.¹¹²

The review of literature and concepts demonstrated the problems with a noisy and active area of research. Study and discussion of Political Warfare is difficult because of the slipperiness of many of these terms and the changing of terms to describe these actions. From “Hybrid Warfare” to “Gray Zone Warfare,” they share common aspects and are all population-centric aiming “to erode an adversary’s power, influence, and will.”¹¹³

¹¹¹ Chambers, 5. Diplomatic, Information, Military, and Economic variables refers to the U.S. Army analytical framework.

¹¹² Dickey et al.

¹¹³ Ibid.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

As discussed in the first chapter, the primary goal of this thesis is to consider whether Political Warfare, as employed by Nazi Germany and recently by Russia, and identify methods nation-states use to weaken targeted countries and undermine alliances. Is Political Warfare a useful concept for comparison between these case studies? The larger question is whether Political Warfare is a worthwhile way to categorize this kind of state action outside of Conventional Warfare. This thesis uses the qualitative case study method. Alexander George and Andrew Bennett described a case as a “class of events” which is “thus a well-defined aspect of a historical episode that the investigator selects for analysis, rather than a historical event itself.”¹¹⁴ Their “structured, focused comparison”¹¹⁵ method is used. For structured comparison, standardized questions were developed for comparing the cases. For focused comparison, “they are undertaken with a specific research objective in mind and a theoretical focus appropriate for that objective.”¹¹⁶ These comparative questions lead to a systematic comparison, focused on the specific elements of the case studies.

¹¹⁴ Alexander L. George and Andrew Bennett, *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2005), 17.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 67.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 69-70.

Comparative Questions

The comparative questions were developed through the influence and consideration of the following works: the United States Southern Command study “*Little Green Men*”: *A Primer on Russian Unconventional Warfare*,¹¹⁷ United States Southern Command “SOF Support to Political Warfare” White Paper,¹¹⁸ North Atlantic Treaty Organization’s publication “Russia’s 21st Century Information War: Working to Undermine and Destabilizes Populations,”¹¹⁹ and the Center for Policy Analysis Report *Winning the Information War - Techniques and Counter-Strategies to Russian Propaganda in Central and Eastern Europe*.¹²⁰ Two additional works referenced for this purpose were the edited volume *A Psychological Warfare Casebook*,¹²¹ and the 1941 book, *German Psychological Warfare*.¹²²

These works influenced the analysis of Political Warfare for case studies and facilitated the task of describing and defining Political Warfare. The four comparative

¹¹⁷ USSOCOM, “*Little Green Men*”: *A Primer on Modern Russian Unconventional Warfare, Ukraine 2013-2014*, 1. This report offers the best single source breakdown of elements of Russian Unconventional Warfare.

¹¹⁸ USSOCOM, “SOF Support to Political Warfare,” 4.

¹¹⁹ Thomas, “Russia’s 21st Century Information War: Working to Undermine and Destabilizes Populations,” 10.

¹²⁰ Pomeranzev and Lucas, 7.

¹²¹ Daugherty and Janowitz, 17. His definition also useful in describing the whole effect: “The basic aim of destructive political warfare is to weaken, and if possible, destroy the enemy by the use of diplomatic maneuvers, economic pressure, information and misinformation, provocation and intimidation, sabotage and terrorism, and by the isolation of the enemy from his friends and supporters.”

¹²² Farago, 132-147.

questions were developed in order to isolate common variables incorporated in Political Warfare. To re-state, Kennan defined Political Warfare as “the employment of all the means at a nation’s command, short of war, to achieve its national objectives. Such operations are both overt and covert.”¹²³

The first variable asks whether a *Psychological Warfare* campaign has been executed against the targeted state.¹²⁴ A central element of Political Warfare is Psychological Warfare or Information Warfare.¹²⁵ This should include a planned action to persuade, confuse or deceive a target audience through multiple means of dissemination, which can include any or all of the following: electronic transmission methods (radio, television, internet, social media, instant messaging), print products, or the use of human elements in the form of political or other organizations.

Second, Political Warfare should include Unconventional Warfare and asymmetric actions.¹²⁶ Political Warfare centers around activity below that of Conventional Warfare, but military personnel may be used during this phase. How they are used is the important distinction. These personnel may include uniformed personnel, performing Unconventional Warfare activities. The personnel will often be operating

¹²³ Kennan.

¹²⁴ Paddock, *U.S. Army Special Warfare: Psychological and Unconventional Warfare 1941-1952*, 11.

¹²⁵ Giles, “Handbook of Russian Information Warfare,” 6.

¹²⁶ David Maxwell, “Do We Really Understand Unconventional Warfare?” *Small Wars Journal* (October 23, 2014), accessed February 23, 2017, <http://smallwarsjournal.com/printpdf/16397>. UW is defined by the Department of Defense as “activities to enable a resistance movement or insurgency to coerce, disrupt or overthrow a government or occupying power through and with an underground, auxiliary, and guerrilla force in a denied area.”

either in deceptive uniforms or in civilian clothing, to conceal their allegiance. This provides deniability at the current stage of the activity, and sows additional confusion to the targeted state and to any outside observers. The Special Operations Command study *“Little Green Men”: A Primer on Modern Russian Unconventional Warfare* explains these personnel may include “armed civilian proxies, self-defense militias, and imported paramilitary units.”¹²⁷

The third element are efforts to weak national unity and undermine external alliances.¹²⁸ This is a necessary element of Political Warfare and an intermediate or final goal of the campaign itself. One indicator of such an effort would be actions to instigate or exacerbate ethnic divisions. It is useful to have existing internal divisions to exploit, and they can be ethnic, religious, economic, or regionally based. Those divisions can be manufactured or exaggerated through a Psychological Warfare campaign. It is helpful if there is a connection to the country engaging in Political Warfare to justify intervention or support of the internal group to mobilize or direct. This activity weakens the targeted state in several ways. It undermines the legitimacy of the government internally and externally. Importantly, it can delay, weaken, or prevent external security guarantees and the withholding of material support and training from allies.

Fourth, Political Warfare should include a strategic goal about the annexing of territory or the overthrow of the existing government. This can be considered a very

¹²⁷ USSOCOM, *“Little Green Men”: A Primer on Modern Russian Unconventional Warfare, Ukraine 2013-2014*, 1.

¹²⁸ Thomas, “Russia’s 21st Century Information War: Working to Undermine and Destabilizes Populations,” 13.

visible success of such a campaign by one state against another.¹²⁹ To achieve this, without the use of conventional force, provides a clear indicator of the effectiveness of the unconventional methods of Political Warfare.

For an Irregular Warfare campaign to be accurately categorized as Political Warfare, significant evidence of these four variables must be present in the effort aimed at the targeted state. Individual variables may be present, but this does not mean it is Political Warfare. Psychological Warfare or Unconventional Warfare/Hybrid Warfare campaigns may be present separately or in conjunction with each other. However, these variables could only be considered Political Warfare if the goal is to undermine and isolate the targeted nation and annex or gain control of territory, with the clear intent of avoiding the use of Conventional Warfare as the main effort to achieve the foreign policy goal.

Case Study and Time Period Selection

Political Warfare has been a phenomenon of long interest to the author, along with its related concepts of Psychological Warfare and the development of related theories and doctrine. For the first case study, the years leading up to declaration of war in 1939 have been written about extensively, but less rigorous work has been done on Political Warfare during this period. For the Russian case study, research is plentiful and ongoing. Russian efforts to influence and undermine other nations has dramatically increased since the events of the Ukraine, including efforts targeting France, Germany and the United States.

¹²⁹ Giles, et al., “The Russian Challenge,” 33.

This chapter considered the methodological framework that is used to evaluate the case studies through the related variables and through Political Warfare. New research and writings on Russian Political Warfare by many different organizations, public and private is constantly being produced due to current events. Alexander and Bennett stated that case study selection can be based on many different criteria, including relevance to intended research and whether the cases support the purpose of the research. Historical cases can also be selected due to the discovery of “well-matched before-and-after cases that fit a ‘most similar’ or ‘least similar’ case research design.”¹³⁰ These case studies were determined to be useful based upon a determination of “most similar” after research.¹³¹ The interests of the researcher understandably have an influence on selection. Actions by Russia over the last several years and a return of familiar tactics from the Cold War era, updated with modern technology, has led to a personal interest in understanding these events. The lack of a consideration of Germany’s pre-war Political Warfare campaigns and parallels to current events in Europe formed the basis for the reason behind this work and its boundary and focus. The use of these practices, by a middle-ranked international actor, to project influence beyond its conventional capabilities in the international system, associated with a rising nationalist movement seemed very familiar. Finally, a qualitative case study analysis of these events had not been performed considering Political Warfare, and using the case study method. Using the identified variables applied to the case studies in the next chapter provides a good opportunity to compare widely displaced events.

¹³⁰ Alexander and Bennett, 83.

¹³¹ *Ibid.*

CHAPTER 4

ORGANIZED POLITICAL WARFARE

Introduction

The rise of state-led Hybrid/Information Warfare, through the actions of Iran, China, and Russia, brought renewed focus on state-executed Political Warfare as a way to achieve foreign policy and security goals without resorting to Conventional Warfare methods. The elements of Political Warfare in both case studies share fundamental parallels, though operating in different historical environments and with different contexts. This chapter analyzes the German case study, and the events of the Russian case study using the comparative variables of Political Warfare as provided in chapter 3.

Germany

The events of the 1930s in Europe that led to the start of World War Two have been extensively discussed and studied. The nations of Europe faced multiple, simultaneous crises. In this environment, the strategies and actions of Nazi Germany were a logical method to exploit these societal vulnerabilities. Nazi Germany's foundation was as a regime based on revolutionary propaganda and agitation.¹³² A series of historical milestones marked the path to war. Germany utilized Political Warfare to influence the outcome of events and consistently succeeded without the use of conventional forces (though the use of military forces was a part of this effort). David Large identified the issues exploited by Nazi German's actions: White hot nationalism and ethnic disputes within new states that rose out of the rubble of the World War One,

¹³² Farago, 27.

the economic collapse of the Great Depression, and an existential crisis of confidence in representative government.¹³³

For this study, there are four key events in the German timeline. First, is the 1935 League of Nations plebiscite in the Saar Valley. The majority of the territory was ethnically German, governed by the League of Nations since 1920. The League of Nations scheduled a plebiscite on the status of the territory in January 1935, 15 years after the Versailles Peace Treaty.¹³⁴ The Saar territory, like the occupied Rhineland in the north, remained a rallying cry of German nationalism, under the Weimar and Nazi governments. It also served as a useful intermediate target for Germany towards establishing Greater Germany.

Events in the Saar gave momentum to Nazi efforts underway against the Austrian Republic. The Austrian Empire had long been the leading Germanic state in Europe. Prussia's defeat of France in 1871 and the unification and establishment of the Second German Reich by Kaiser Wilhelm I changed that. After World War One, the collapse of the Austro-Hungarian Empire led to the diminished Austrian Republic, as well as numerous other central European states with ethnic German and other minorities.¹³⁵ The years of organized violence from extremists on the right and left and the 1934 coup

¹³³ David C. Large, *Between Two Fires: Europe's Path in the 1930s* (New York: Norton, 1990), 18.

¹³⁴ Ian Kershaw, *The 'Hitler Myth': Image and Reality in the Third Reich* (New York: W. W. Norton, 1987), 546.

¹³⁵ F. L. Carsten, *The First Austrian Republic 1918-1938: A Study Based on British and Austrian Documents* (Aldershot, London: Gower, 1986).

attempt by Nazi Party members resulted in the murder of the chancellor and an enfeebled government.¹³⁶

Czechoslovakia, one of those former parts of the Austrian Empire, represented an ethnically divided democracy, but also one with a formidable military capacity and natural defenses. The Czechs made up roughly 51 percent of the population of the 14 million people in the nation. Almost four million ethnic Germans in Czechoslovakia, known as the *Sudentendeutsche* were the largest ethnic minority group on the continent and had been highly mobilized by German efforts.¹³⁷

German hostility towards Poland began in earnest in 1938. Though the Nazi regime initially moved towards working with Poland, signing a non-aggression pact in 1934, Germany's aggression towards Poland and the issue of the German ethnic minority was an increasing issue through the 1930s.

It is important to briefly discuss the instruments of state influence that Germany used after 1933 to action Political Warfare. In Germany, a propaganda-centered state, the critical organization for these efforts was the Ministry of Propaganda. Germany's systems for Psychological Warfare and early ideas about Unconventional Warfare stemmed from the overall Nazi Party structure that was part of the German government. Because of the aggressive nature of the German ideology and the view that war was an inherent part of society, Germany's foreign policy and rhetoric reflected that the nation was at perpetual war and that propaganda was an essential element of all warfare—internal or external.

¹³⁶ Radomír Luža, *Austro-German Relations in the Anschluss Era* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1975), 69-70.

¹³⁷ Govan, 14.

Joseph Goebbels created a structure for executing foreign influence through this ministry, established in 1933. One of the essential aims of this part of the ministry was foreign opinion, using radio and other methods of dissemination, still viewed at the time as cutting edge technologies for mass influence. Goebbels took from all other ministries any function that related to media, censorship, control of all reporting within the nation, travel agencies and parts of education. Goebbels was able to gain control over all external propaganda from the Foreign Ministry.¹³⁸ The Ministry of Propaganda's original statement of purpose included:

an expanded German news radio service; a similar service in thoroughly neutral guise; a clever radio propaganda service organized for overseas as well as home consumption; direct work on foreign press along lines to be fully described; the publication of German propaganda articles in the foreign press in a form not recognizable as propaganda; the formation of personal relationships with important foreign newspapermen and newspaper owners for the purpose of influencing them by personal favors.¹³⁹

Clayton Laurie wrote in *The Propaganda Warriors* the Nazi regime aggressively developed a “comprehensive state bureaucracy for the use of propaganda as a weapon to gain national goals through the destruction of governments deemed unsympathetic to Nazi policies and through the subversion of populations targeted for attack or annexation.”¹⁴⁰ The fear of the effects of these campaigns magnified their effectiveness, and the result was the strengthening of Germany's influence beyond its conventional

¹³⁸ Ernest Kohn Bramsted, *Goebbels and National Socialist Propaganda, 1925-1945* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1965), 51.

¹³⁹ World Committee for the Victims of German Fascism, *The Brown Network: The Activities of the Nazis in Foreign Countries*, 49.

¹⁴⁰ Laurie, 8.

national power.¹⁴¹ All press and media were centralized under the coordination of ministry for internal and external dissemination.¹⁴²

The Nazi Government was able to utilize the *Ausland* (Outlander) Organization of the National Socialist German Workers' Party, or *Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei* to support these campaigns. This *Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei* wing organized ethnic Germans, *Volkdeutsche* or *Reichdeutsche*, across Europe (and the around the world) towards supporting the political goals and objectives of the German state, which included violence and subversion.¹⁴³ This organization was an action arm of Nazi Fifth Column activities, and included political activity and media manipulation. As part of these efforts, German propagandists and Fifth Columnists looked to identify the *Stoerrungskerne*, meaning “kernel of disturbance” to exploit existing ethnic, religious, economic, divisions.¹⁴⁴ Germany used intelligence networks, operating out of embassies, to track, harass, and assassinate German anti-Nazi activists. Coordinated with Psychological Warfare campaigns, the *Ausland* organizations helped in silencing the opposition.¹⁴⁵

¹⁴¹ John B. Whitton and John H. Herz, “Radio in International Politics,” in *Propaganda by Short Wave*, eds. Harwood L. Childs, and John B. Whitton (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1943), 11.

¹⁴² John H. Buchsbaum, *German Psychological Warfare on the Russian Front, 1941-1945* (Washington, DC: Office of the Chief of Military History, 1953), 24.

¹⁴³ de Jong, 6-7.

¹⁴⁴ Farago, 143.

¹⁴⁵ Michael Sayers and Albert E. Kahn, *Sabotage: The Secret War Against America* (New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1942). Ernst Bohle led the Foreign Division of the Nazi Party beginning in 1934, made Gauleiter of the “District of Germans Abroad.” It was reported that Bohle’s organization had 548 groups in 45 countries with

Only limited Psychological Warfare capability existed in the German military structure until 1939 with almost all of those capabilities housed in Goebbels's ministry. According to a 1945 U.S. Army Psychological Warfare study, the leadership of the German Armed Forces were interested in Psychological Warfare, but even the press and Propaganda Chief of the Ministry of War was not fully convinced of its effectiveness as late as 1938.¹⁴⁶ Based on war plans, the German Army was responsible for influencing occupied foreign populations and militaries. The German military did not have the capability to do so at a tactical level until the start of the war in September 1939.¹⁴⁷ A significant amount of control of overt and covert influence activities remained in the Propaganda Ministry until the start of the war. Goebbels was able to set the strategic influence plan for all other parts of government, including the Foreign Ministry and Army Command or Wehrmacht.¹⁴⁸ Robert E. Herzstein in *The War That Hitler Won: Goebbels and the Nazi Media Campaign* described the propaganda division being responsible for political rallies, foreign demonstrations, "cultural-political propaganda . . . [and] propaganda among ethnic Germans outside the Reich." During these years,

25,000 propaganda agents and 2,500 clandestine operators. Concurrent reviews of this book questioned some of the claims regarding Mexico, etc. See Daniel Katz, "Review: Michael Sayers and Albert Kahn, "Sabotage: The Secret War Against America," *The Public Opinion Quarterly* 6, no. 4 (Winter 1942): 647-649.

¹⁴⁶ Buschbaum, 26.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid., 31-34. *Generaloberst William Keitel, Army Chief in April, 1938*. "The commander of combat troops must bring their psychological and economic warfare into line with military aims."

¹⁴⁸ Jay W. Baird, *The Mythical World of Nazi War Propaganda, 1939-1945* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1974), 27.

Herzstein stated, the Armed Forces were involved, but “only as tools in the hands of the civilian masters of political warfare.”¹⁴⁹

Russia

The operation that culminated in the annexation of the Ukrainian territory of the Crimea occurred in a rapidly executed operation from February to March 2014. The events that led to this action began much earlier. In 1999, President Putin publically addressed the previous decade of Russian decline after the collapse of the Soviet Union. His “recovery of pride” remarks identified that collapse as the “greatest geopolitical catastrophe of the century.”¹⁵⁰ In the *Military Doctrine of the Russian Federation* published in 2000 the government stated that the “Russians recognized the need/necessity for their armed forces to operate in the ‘information space’ and the existence of ‘information threats’ faced by the Russian army.”¹⁵¹ In 2007, President Putin’s speech at Munich declared that Russia would execute a foreign policy that no longer recognized a U.S. led, uni-polar system.¹⁵² In August 2008, Russia and Georgia entered into open warfare over South Ossetia and Abkhazia, two secessionist republics, whose

¹⁴⁹ Herzstein, 123. For a complete description of the complete Nazi radio propaganda structure, see Ernst Kris and Hans Speier, *German Radio Propaganda: Report on Home Broadcasts During The War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1944).

¹⁵⁰ NATO, *Analysis of Russia’s Information Campaign Against Ukraine: Examining Non-Military Aspects of the Crisis in Ukraine From a Strategic Communications Perspectives*, 7.

¹⁵¹ Darczewska, OSW Studies, No. 57, *Russia’s Armed Forces on the Information War Front: Strategic Documents*, 8.

¹⁵² Snegovaya, 9.

independence Russia actively supported. Georgia and South Ossetia saw Russia execute unconventional and covert campaigns in coordination with Conventional Warfare strategy.¹⁵³ By the end of August, Russia had recognized those two territories, claiming they were an essential part of Russian interests. The goals of Russia for that conflict “included de facto annexation of Abkhazia, weakening or toppling the Mikhail Saakashvili regime, and preventing North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) enlargement.”¹⁵⁴ Putin’s election to a third term as president in 2012 marked the next stage of the re-orientation of Russian foreign and security policy towards greater hostility to the West. Russia charted a course based on “a comprehensive narrative of grievance which rejected post-World War Two security principles, revived traditional Russian imperialistic themes, and promoted an aggressive interpretation of Russia’s status as the successor regime to the USSR.”¹⁵⁵ Part of the complexity and difficulties of the Russo-Ukrainian relations are because of the long history and deep connections between the two nations. This history gives context to Russia’s actions towards Ukraine and Russia’s view of the West as existential threat. As Jolanta Darzewska states, Russia’ war with Ukraine is about its place in the world: “This war has a geopolitical background: Russia, while building Eurasia as its vast sphere of influence (if possible, stretching from the Pacific to

¹⁵³ Connable, Campbell, and Madden, 17.

¹⁵⁴ Ariel Cohen and Robert E. Hamilton, *The Russian Military and The Georgia War: Lessons and Implications* (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, 2011), vii.

¹⁵⁵ Canadian Security Intelligence Service, *Russia and the West: The Consequences of Renewed Rivalry: Highlights from the Workshop* (Canada: Her Majesty the Queen in Right of Canada, 2015), 5.

the Atlantic), with Moscow in the centre, has faced the problem of a sovereign Ukraine, whose location has left it suspended between the East and the West.”¹⁵⁶

Ukraine gained independence in December 1991 as the Soviet Union dissolved. Russia viewed Ukraine as an inherent part of the Great Russian identity. Due to this long connection, there were predictions that Ukraine would join some kind of union with Russia. After independence their relationship grew complicated, due to the status of Russian minorities and the continued Russian manipulation of energy supplies as a form of control.¹⁵⁷ Ukraine became a nuclear-armed state upon independence, with more warheads than China, France, or Britain. To facilitate nuclear disarmament of these former Soviet states, Ukraine, the United States and Russia signed the Budapest Memorandum in 1994 that guaranteed Ukraine’s territorial integrity in exchange for their removal.¹⁵⁸ A decade of corruption and economic mismanagement followed, from 1994-2004 under President Leonid Kochima. Unlike Poland and other former Soviet countries, Ukraine showed indifference towards moving towards North Atlantic Treaty Organization membership until 2002. That same year, Ukraine sold radar systems to Saddam Hussein and reports of human rights violations became increasingly bad. When

¹⁵⁶ Jolanta Darczewska, Point of View No. 42, *The Anatomy of Russian Information Warfare: The Crimean Operation, a Case Study* (Warsaw, Poland: Centre for Eastern Studies, May 2014), 20.

¹⁵⁷ Colonel Sergiy Akulov, “Questions of European Security. Russian-Ukrainian Relations: Past, Present and Future” (Seaford House Paper, Royal College of Defense Studies, London, 2009), 5.

¹⁵⁸ Arun Rath, “The Role of 1994 Nuclear Agreement in Ukraine’s Current State,” *All Things Considered*, Transcript of interview with Steven Pifer. *NPR*, March 9, 2014, accessed January 24, 2017, <http://www.npr.org/2014/03/09/288298641/the-role-of-1994-nuclear-agreement-in-ukraines-current-state>.

President Kochima then indicated interest in joining the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, the process stalled.¹⁵⁹ The contested election of 2004 followed more years of economic weakness and corruption. In 2013, Ukraine moved to integrate with the European Union.¹⁶⁰ Russia made clear that this was unacceptable and offered economic incentives, as well as political pressure to force the decision. In November 2013, President Victor Yanukovych rejected integration with the European Union, triggering large-scale protests against moving towards Russia. Between November and February 2014, protests and violent reprisals increased until Yanukovych fled and was removed from office.¹⁶¹

Putin, the master of Russia since the early 2000s, subscribes to the expansionist and revanchist Russian geopolitical viewpoint of Alexander Dugin and Igor Panarin. In addition to Panarin's influence on Russian Information Warfare theory, he was a major advocate of the argument that the series of so-called color revolutions in the former Soviet states in the first decade of the 2000s were directly engineered by the United States. Dugin, also an advocate of Information Warfare, promoted an aggressive response to perceived Western attacks on Russia as a nation and a world power.¹⁶²

¹⁵⁹ Pabriks and Kudors, 136.

¹⁶⁰ Orysia Lutsevych, *Agents of the Russian World: Proxy Groups in the Contested Neighbourhood* (Research Paper, Chatham House, The Royal Institute of International Affairs, London, April 2016), 33.

¹⁶¹ Stephen F. Larrabee, Peter A. Wilson, and John Gordon IV, *The Ukrainian Crisis and European Security: Implications for the United States and U.S. Army* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2015), 5.

¹⁶² Darczewska, Point of View No. 42, *The Anatomy of Russian Information Warfare: The Crimean Operation, A Case Study*, 15-17.

Multiple factors caused Russia's dramatic escalation in the Ukraine, including a significant economic weakness and the fears of effective democratic reforms in Ukraine. Russia viewed Ukraine's status as an essential part of its ability to remain a Eurasian state. Indirect control of Ukraine is a central part of the Russia's conception of its place in the world, where "Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus are the three pillars of the Slavic Orthodox civilization."¹⁶³ Ukraine's choice of a path towards the West was a direct threat to Putin's "guided democracy" model of authoritarianism within the Russian sphere of influence.¹⁶⁴ Additionally, the danger of losing the warm water Black Sea Fleet port was a major strategic threat.

After 2012, Russia further developed Hybrid and Information Warfare strategy. Those methods were a return to older processes. For Russia, in the Ukraine, saw the use of Active Measures, defined as:

certain overt and covert techniques for influencing events and behaviour in, and the actions of, foreign countries. Active measures may entail the following objectives: influencing the policies of another government, undermining confidence in its leaders and institutions, disrupting the relations between other nations, discrediting and weakening governmental and nongovernmental opponents.¹⁶⁵

The foundation of Russian influence capabilities were decades of operations by the Soviets. The adoption of Soviet-era structures and practices gave the Russians an advantage in the era of Putin where the "proliferation of state supervisory mechanisms

¹⁶³ NATO, *Analysis of Russia's Information Campaign Against Ukraine: Examining Non-Military Aspects of the Crisis in Ukraine From a Strategic Communications Perspectives*, 6.

¹⁶⁴ Larrabee, viii.

¹⁶⁵ Pynnöniemi and Rác, 38.

under Putin, set up in accordance with the aforementioned doctrines, was aimed at broadcasting a standard propagandistic message over all of Russia.”¹⁶⁶ Russian Political Warfare is executed using civilian and military actors. Russian strategies for Political Warfare improved dramatically after the problems experienced in the war with Georgia. In 2014 to further improve coordination, the Russian Armed Forces established the National Command and Control Centre for State Defense to coordinate Hybrid Warfare efforts.¹⁶⁷ Each of the four variables will be now examined, beginning with Psychological Warfare.

Psychological Warfare

Psychological Warfare is a central element of Political Warfare. For Political Warfare to succeed, a targeted campaign to influence is essential. These actions encompass a planned action to persuade, confuse, or deceive a target audience through multiple means of dissemination. The methods of disseminating the message can include any or all of the following: electronic transmission methods (radio, television, internet, social media, instant messaging), print products, or the use of human elements in the form of political or other organizations.

Germany

In the 1930s, the use of radio, print and organized rallies were the main methods of external influence. Germany made extensive use of radio, including shortwave, as well

¹⁶⁶ Elisabeth Sieca-Kozlowski, “From Controlling Military Information to Controlling Society: The Political Interests Involved in the Transformation of the Military Media Under Putin,” *Small Wars and Insurgencies* 20, no. 2 (2009): 310.

¹⁶⁷ Smith and Renz, 55.

as using German-controlled or influenced newspapers and the spreading of rumor as a projection of narrative aimed at a non-German audience in each of these different cases. Louis de Jong, writing in *The German Fifth Column in the Second World War* argued the fear of German subversive activities were “essentially an international phenomenon. The free press and radio formed one organic whole in the regions we took our illustrative material—the countries surrounding Germany; Northern, Western, and Southern Europe and their respective colonies; the British Empire, North and South America.”¹⁶⁸

Nazi Germany was founded on propaganda. German contribution to the field of Psychological Warfare was viewed in retrospect by Paul Linebarger, “the perfect or perfect-seeming synchronizing of political, propaganda, subversive and military efforts;”¹⁶⁹ One early example of the coordination between the propaganda bureau and the state intelligence services set the stage for later Nazi disinformation campaigns throughout the 1930s. In the 1930s, groups organized to oppose and expose the actions of Nazi Germany. After anti-fascist groups published lists of opponents of the regime assassinated by Nazis to highlight Nazi atrocities, the Propaganda Ministry coordinated with German state newsreel producers to include falsified images of one of the murdered men in the film and insured it was widely distributed and shown outside Germany.¹⁷⁰ The Propaganda Division coordinated in whole of government approach, with offices such as the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the *Ausland* organizations, including all the student

¹⁶⁸ de Jong, 33.

¹⁶⁹ Linebarger, 41.

¹⁷⁰ World Committee for the Victims of German Fascism, *The Brown Network: The Activities of the Nazis in Foreign Countries*, 74.

overseas organizations regarding both the disseminating of messages and their effects.¹⁷¹

As will be discussed below, these *Ausland* organizations coordinated for clandestine actions within these countries.

As a contemporary observer wrote about Czechoslovakia and the National Socialist movement's spread from Germany across the Continent in 1938:

It would be difficult to overestimate the importance of the revolution, which had occurred, although it was often unnoticed by the casual visitor. It created a state of psychological war, fought with propaganda and the fear of actual war. Large sums of money were used, only upon armaments upon pamphlets and broadcasting. Attacks were launched, not yet against physical fortifications, but upon people's nerves—every effort was made to induce mass hysteria.¹⁷²

Foreign broadcasts were a central part of the Ministry of Propaganda's campaign for foreign interference. More than putting out information to other nations to advocate for German positions, the German government viewed these actions as a part of the revolutionary fight for the Nazi cause and a critical part of state power. Germany spent the 1930s building a massive capability to broadcast across Europe and the world through powerful shortwave transmitters.¹⁷³ This capability was an expression of the belief by the Nazi leaders, "obsessed with the importance of propaganda as a political force, had gained power, they could implement the theory on both the national and international stage."¹⁷⁴ The 1943 Princeton University Press essay on German international

¹⁷¹ Sington and Weidenfeld, 87.

¹⁷² Elizabeth Wiskemann and Royal Institute of International Affairs, *Czechs and Germans: A Study of the Struggle in the Historic Provinces of Bohemia and Moravia* (London: Oxford University Press, 1938), 197-198.

¹⁷³ Ettliger, 33.

¹⁷⁴ Horst Bergmeir and Ranier E. Lotz, *Hitler's Airwaves* (Cambridge, MA: Yale University Press, 1997), 3.

propaganda broadcasts argued the Nazi movement embraced “Clausewitz’s definition of war as the extension of policy—and go one step further by turning the definition around—peace is merely a period in which warfare is carried on without the use of military weapons.”¹⁷⁵

The Saar Plebiscite of 1935 was the first example where Germany planned and executed an effective Psychological Warfare campaign. Writing in 1943 researchers at the Princeton-based propaganda analysis group, the Listening Center, argued that the Saar plebiscite was the opposite of the performance of the democratic process in a divided Europe. Instead, they said it was an example of how “an unscrupulous party can attain a de facto monopoly of opinion.”¹⁷⁶ This campaign was noted as “the first international event in which radio broadcasting played a significant, and possibly decisive role.”¹⁷⁷ The 1935 vote on future control of the Saar Territory, with a population of 800,000, from League of Nations control, had an outsized impact across Europe. It changed the popular view of the direction of events in Europe’s and Germany’s position within the European order.

After 1933, the Saar territory was a different society than Germany, with greater civil and religious rights for the residents under League of Nations mandate. Voters in 1935 had three choices: for the territory to stay under neutral League of Nations control, for it to join France or to join Germany. There was little chance of a vote for France. The

¹⁷⁵ Philip E. Jacob, “The Theory and Strategy of Nazi Short-Wave Propaganda,” in *Propaganda by Short Wave*, eds. Harwood L. Childs and John B. Whitton (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1943), 53.

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 12.

¹⁷⁷ Bergmeir and Lotz, 23.

goal of the German Psychological Warfare campaign was to ensure that the Saar joined Germany and did not vote to stay under League of Nations control.¹⁷⁸

The Nazi Party began as far back as 1928 to organize in the territory. Nazi Party apparatus funded and organized these nationalist organizations. Because of violence by Nazi groups (and by Communists and Socialists), the governing Commission banned military uniforms and weapons by 1931 and military marches in 1932. Germany's propaganda campaign after 1933 included anti-Semitic messages and themes of persecution of Germans under "despotic" League of Nations authorities.¹⁷⁹ Goebbels was personally involved in the execution of the radio propaganda campaign, or *Westdeutscher Gemeinschaftsdeinst*, which consisted of major radio broadcasts and a thousand different programs targeting different groups in the population.¹⁸⁰ Hitler appeared at mass rallies to bring residents of the territory into Germany to mobilize the Saar based Nazi-front organization including a *Deutsche Front* rally involving 200,000 attendees in August 1934. Organizing the different pro-unification groups under one banner, massive funding was provided by Germany. This funding included organizations to disseminate the propaganda with speeches and printed material and rallies for speeches, often with Nazi leaders coming into the Saar.¹⁸¹ German propaganda organizations programmed specific radio stations to focus on the Saar territory with dedicated broadcasting. Targeted

¹⁷⁸ Whitton and Herz, 13.

¹⁷⁹ Frank M. Russell, *The Saar: Battleground and Pawn* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1951).

¹⁸⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 84.

programming, intended to influence specific groups and increase division included radio plays and stories of atrocities against Germans by the other ethnic groups present in the zone. The Propaganda Ministry crafted specific messages and programming targeting workers, youths and others.¹⁸² Printed material, radio broadcasts, and thousands of free radios sent into the territory by the Propaganda Ministry ensured the messages reached the specific groups.¹⁸³

Germany disseminated a narrative through radio, print and in mass rallies that the League of Nations authorities oppressed the local Germans. Attempts by the League of Nations' government to decrease violence between groups they described as brutality by an alien, Jewish, foreign authority. France had not had troops in the Saar since 1930, but Germany exploited the economic problems that affected the area in 1934-1935, blaming France. German propagandists preached a message of the benefits of returning to the "eternal Fatherland."¹⁸⁴ As the effects of the depression worsened in the Saar, Germany exploited this narrative in their propaganda to argue for return to Germany.¹⁸⁵ The League of Nations administration was exclusively German. These officials, from police to bureaucrats, were coordinated by the Nazi Front organization that formed after 1933. In the end, the 1935 vote was 90 percent for joining Germany. Germany created a

¹⁸² Whitton and Herz, 13.

¹⁸³ Nicholas O'Shaughnessey, *Selling Hitler: Propaganda and the Nazi Brand* (London: C. Hurst and Co., 2016), 39.

¹⁸⁴ Whitton and Herz, 13.

¹⁸⁵ Russell, 87.

Psychological Warfare campaign, and this success gave Germany momentum for future activities.¹⁸⁶

In Czechoslovakia, the Sudeten German minority was a group that was susceptible to Nazi influence because of their history, resentment to being subordinate to a Czech majority and perceived discrimination. After 1933, a constant flow of printed pro-Nazi material flowed into Czechoslovakia. Organizers disseminated these materials through local German language libraries and other institutions. Martial law was declared in border areas in 1936 in an attempt to limit the spread of the material.¹⁸⁷ The Psychological Warfare campaign that began in 1938 on behalf of the Sudeten Germans was titled “Return Home to the Reich” with rhetoric that focused on violence by the Czech majority against the Sudeten Germans, stressing that intervention was necessary to protect this group from destruction.¹⁸⁸ These efforts reinforced the need for the defense of the ethnic Germans and the right of Germany to act in their defense. The Propaganda Ministry established a new media unit targeting areas in the east with new transmitters just across the border, including Czechoslovakia with new transmitters, just across the border.¹⁸⁹ The entire German media, under Nazi control, supported this effort.¹⁹⁰ In May 1938, two party members were killed by police. Sudeten-supporting media and German

¹⁸⁶ Kershaw, 546.

¹⁸⁷ Edgar Philip Young, *Czechoslovakia, Keystone of Peace and Democracy* (London: V. Gollancz, 1938), 247.

¹⁸⁸ Somerville, 129.

¹⁸⁹ Frederick Elwyn-Jones, *Hitler's Drive to the East* (London: Victor Gollancz Ltd., 1937), 24.

¹⁹⁰ Hersztein, 173.

media exploited the event to further mobilize Sudeten Germans. Germany claimed that more than one hundred Sudeten had been killed by Czech authorities in anti-German violence. These events were part of the external campaign to justify that Germany had the legal responsibility to intervene.¹⁹¹

Czechoslovakia experienced a more limited propaganda campaign until 1938 because Germany still feared international reaction if the German minority staged an uprising.¹⁹² The narrative was that the Sudeten Germans were being massacred by the Czechoslovak authorities. Ernest Kohn Bramsted wrote in *Goebbels and National Socialist Propaganda* that media under German control reported, “bloody terror, unleashed mobs, massacre and looting,” with reports of widespread murder of Sudeten Germans.¹⁹³

Austria had long been a target of Nazi German plans for unification with Germany. Sean Govan described this in his thesis cataloguing German Fifth Column activities that in “official publications and speeches, the Nazis consistently refer to Austria as *Deutschösterreich*, German-Austria, highlighting the importance they placed on this idea of a Greater Germany forged through *Anschluss*.”¹⁹⁴ It would make sense that there would be a greater sympathy by Austrians to unite with Nazi Germany due to the connections of language and culture and witnessed by the triumphant crowds that

¹⁹¹ Govan, 49.

¹⁹² John Haag, “‘Knights of the Spirit’: The Kameradschaftsbund,” *Journal of Contemporary History* 8, no. 3 (July 1973): 133-153.

¹⁹³ Bramsted, 173.

¹⁹⁴ Govan, 19.

eventually welcomed Hitler to Vienna, but the size and complexity of the Nazi campaign against Austria complicated that picture. In 1933 Austrian Nazis, supported and organized from Germany, began a coordinated campaign of terror attacks and assassinations. Actions intended to disrupt Austrian society included the shooting of anti-Nazi government officials, the bombing of bridges and offices and a 1933 attack that killed police, leading to a ban of the Nazi Party.¹⁹⁵ Germany even planned to drop pro-Nazi leaflets across Austria in 1933, but scrapped those plans after international objections. Instead, local supporters disseminated printed material by hand across the country. German authorities broadcast pro-Nazi messages by loudspeaker across the Austrian border from Bavaria in a manner reminiscent of recent broadcasts across the Demilitarized Zone dividing North and South Korea today.¹⁹⁶

In 1934, Austrian Nazis staged a failed Austrian coup that served as a dress rehearsal for later activities. In the years prior to the event, Germany targeted Austria with propaganda efforts and economic actions. During the coup attempt in July 1934, German radio made pro-coup broadcasts from Munich, transmitting speeches of the coup plotters' message calls for a pro-Nazi uprising.¹⁹⁷ In the end, only a unified front of Britain and France and the direct action of Mussolini sending troops north ended the crisis, with the key members being exiled or arrested. The years after the failed putsch in

¹⁹⁵ Govan, 27.

¹⁹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁹⁷ World Committee for the Victims of Fascism, *The Brown Network: The Activities of the Nazis in Foreign Countries*, 50.

1934 were used to organize and coordinate with Germany.¹⁹⁸ After the announcement of the plebiscite in March 1938, vast sums of money were spent to fund meetings, print material, and organize rallies.¹⁹⁹ As Whitton and Herz wrote in 1943, “for the first time in its history, radio was employed to destroy a sovereign state by means of propaganda launched from outside.”²⁰⁰ The campaign involved more than that, including the diplomatic efforts by Germany to influence Italy to withdraw its guarantee of Austrian independence. Germany moved into overdrive to undermine the legitimacy of the Austrian Republic after the announcement of the vote by Austria on unification. German propagandists worked to create a narrative of an imploding country encouraging both Germany and the outside world to see “Austria as disintegrating into anarchy, a prey to Bolshevik mobs who, armed by the Czechs, rules the streets.”²⁰¹

The Psychological Warfare campaign targeting Poland was conducted at a lower volume until 1938 when German media and underground efforts began a full operation targeting Poland.²⁰² This campaign continued themes that had worked well previously: accusations of border violations—especially violations of the Polish Corridor, anti-German/minority violence and allegations of forced labor, with the overall narrative that

¹⁹⁸ Govan, 27.

¹⁹⁹ Luža, 69-70.

²⁰⁰ Whitton and Herz, 15.

²⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 18.

²⁰² Polish Ministry of Information, *The German Fifth Column in Poland* (London: Melbourne: Hutchinson and Co., 1941), 12.

Poland was a land of “disorder and slavery.”²⁰³ Germany used control of media, especially shortwave broadcast to sow disinformation or misinformation. Two major issues in German-Polish relations were Danzig and the Polish Corridor. The Free City of Danzig was another League of Nations responsibility while the Polish Corridor, a product of the World War One peace treaty, gave Poland access to the Baltic dividing Germany. Danzig and the corridor were exploited in propaganda by Germany and the Nazis elements that controlled the Danzig government as an assault on German sovereignty.²⁰⁴ Charles Rolo, author of *Radio Goes To War* identified these actions as *Angstkreig*, or “Fear War,” intended to “encourage cynicism and make the individual doubt the validity of his own normal judgements . . . This process of destroying the foundational belief systems then allowed for both uncertainty and false information to be planted for use by the propagandist.”²⁰⁵ In German language papers, headlines blared “Renewed Horrible Polish Acts of Terror” and accused Polish soldiers of firing on a German minister visiting the border.²⁰⁶ Once the war began, the broadcasts shifted to sending information to German agents and ethnic Germans assisting with their efforts. German operatives established transmitters in western Poland and provided intelligence to Germany on Polish operations.²⁰⁷

²⁰³ Hersztein 173.

²⁰⁴ Govan, 67.

²⁰⁵ Charles J. Rolo, *Radio Goes To War* (London: Faber and Faber, 1943), 63.

²⁰⁶ Baird, 42.

²⁰⁷ Polish Ministry of Information, *The German Fifth Column in Poland*, 95.

Russia

In 2013-2014, Russia used Soviet-style methods of disinformation and misinformation, with newer and more targeted methods of dissemination using the internet and other electronic methods. The campaign executed by Russia against Ukraine was multi-dimensional and far more sophisticated than that implemented in 2008 against Georgia. Robert Szwed argued in his report *Framing of the Ukraine–Russia Conflict in Online and Social Media*, in the Ukraine, “the disinformation campaign was coupled with cybernetic, ideological, political, and social-cultural diversionary, provocative, and diplomatic activity.”²⁰⁸

As the country became more and more authoritarian, the state took greater control over the information environment. This was in response to pro-democracy activists and part of Russian Irregular Warfare strategies like *Conceptual Insights into the Activities of the Russian Armed Forces in the Information Space*, published in 2011. Within Russia, major restrictions to Internet access were put into place since the large demonstrations against the Putin government in 2012. These new capabilities to control the Internet served Russia well in the campaign against Ukraine. The Russian government gained control of the popular social network *VKontakte* used in Russia and Ukraine. This capability allowed for the blocking of Ukrainian users before and during Crimean operations.²⁰⁹ Russia spent over two billion in U.S. dollars from 2005-2013 to build what today is called Russia Today. Russia Today targets the Russian language world, but

²⁰⁸ Szwed, 20.

²⁰⁹ Reynolds, 24. Within Russia, these operators are referred to as “political technologists.”

includes extensive programming in other languages. These funds have created a capability of a massive media company with worldwide reach across all media.²¹⁰ As

Keir Giles stated the Russian toolbox of influence in 2013-2014 was extensive:

This is a principle that has to be borne in mind at all times when considering Russian aims to extract, exfiltrate, manipulate, distort, or insert information, or just isolate a target from sources of information other than Russian ones. The channels available for doing this are as diverse as fake or real news media for planting disinformation; troll campaigns; official government statements; speeches at rallies or demonstrations; defamatory YouTube videos; direct messages by SMS, or even just walking up to somebody on the street and telling them something.²¹¹

Robert Szwed, writing for the North Atlantic Treaty Organization Strategic

Communication Center of Excellence explained that Russian planners used all the tools of influence and that a “propaganda, rumour and disinformation campaign was run on Russian TV channels, radio, magazines and new media. It was backed by politicians, representatives of science and culture, and journalists.”²¹²

To prevent coverage, international journalists were physically harassed during the invasion of Crimea and the aftermath of events. Russian elements attempted to seize the data of the *Outtake* platform so that pro-Ukrainian users in the area could be singled out by authorities.²¹³ Russian soldiers took over cell phone centers, radio and television

²¹⁰ Ibid.

²¹¹ Keir Giles, *The Next Phase of Russian Information Warfare* (Riga, Latvia: North Atlantic Treaty Organization, Strategic Communications Center of Excellence, 2016), 6.

²¹² Szwed, 20.

²¹³ Ulrik Franke, *War by Non-Military Means: Understanding Russian Information Warfare* (Sweden: Russian Studies Programme, Swedish Defence Research Agency (FOI), March 2015), 44.

stations (with no insignia to identify themselves). They dominated broadcasts to the area, using the Voice of Russia station to attack the Euromaidan movement. The overall message resurrected World War Two grievances and associated the actions of the Ukrainian government with Nazi Germany and the Ukrainians accused of allying with them. Internet, cell phone, and landline access were cut to the outside world to limit the ability of other news sources or Ukrainian authorities to combat the Russian narrative.²¹⁴ In March 2014, Russian blocked Internet access and the websites of Russian opposition leaders and groups identified as pro-Ukrainian. Russian media obtained recordings of cell phone calls from Estonian and U.S. diplomats with the story that these outside actors were active in Ukrainian internal politics.²¹⁵ The manipulation of information by Russia from within Crimea being broadcast into Ukraine from Russia had a specific message. The narrative was the illegitimacy of the new Ukrainian government and an attempt to sow confusion within the international community. Russia manipulated media coverage through its own networks, manufacturing atrocity stories of violence against Russians. As events in February and March 2014 unfolded, Russian actions with paramilitaries or the movement of Russian forces were organized to achieve a media narrative. A British reporter recounted that a “grim joke in eastern Ukraine goes: if you see a Russian camera, run—it means something is about to go off.”²¹⁶

²¹⁴ USSOCOM, “*Little Green Men*”: *A Primer on Modern Russian Unconventional Warfare, Ukraine 2013-2014*, 46.

²¹⁵ Franke, 45.

²¹⁶ Peter Pomerantsev, *The Menace of Unreality: How the Kremlin Weaponizes Information, Culture and Money* (New York: The Interpreter, Institute of Modern Russia, 2014), 30.

A recent RAND report on Russian actions in support of the Crimean operations identified the general themes targeting the Ukraine government and those regarding the U.S. and western nations as indicated in the table below. The study identifies that Russia created narratives for the different audiences and to achieve different effects, but all supporting the overall theme supporting the legitimacy of annexation.

General Themes	On the Ukrainian Government	On the Role of Western Countries
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Crimean land historically belonged to Russia. • The transfer of Crimea to Ukraine in 1954 was a historical mistake of the Soviet period. • Ethnic Russian and all Russian-speaking populations in Crimea were under imminent ultra-nationalist threat. • Russia was not involved in events in Crimea. • The March 16 referendum on independence was legitimate, demonstrating the will of the people of Crimea. • Ukrainian soldiers voluntarily gave up their weapons and pronounced their allegiance to Russia. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Ukrainian government acts in the interests of the United States and other foreign powers. • The Maidan movement is over-run by (violent) ultra-nationalists. • Ukraine's president was overthrown in an illegitimate coup d'état, backed by the West. • The pro-European population of Ukraine are ideological descendants of Nazi supporters and fascists. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Western countries, and especially the United States, are the core orchestrators of the events in Ukraine. • The primary U.S. motivation is the expansion of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and containing Russia. • The United States is pressuring Europe to impose sanctions against Russia and is the driving force of a policy of containment against Moscow. • Russian policy is not a departure from previous Western interventions to change borders and create new political entities, such as in Kosovo.

NOTE: Based on RAND research into the Russian information campaign led by one of the authors in 2015. See Appendix A for a more detailed analysis of the themes and tools used in Russia's strategic-communication campaign.

Figure 1. Themes of Russia's Communication Strategies on Crimea

Source: Michael Kofman, et al., *Lessons from Russia's Operations in Crimea and Eastern Ukraine* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2017), 14.

The dissemination of fake and manipulated news reports was the norm during the Ukraine crisis. In one example, the same distressed woman (or likely actor) appeared in

multiple news stories being identified as a “Crimean activist, resident of Kyiv, soldier’s mother, resident of Odessa, resident of Kharkiv, participant of Anti-Maidan,” and “refugee from Donetsk.”²¹⁷ In another widely-disseminated manufactured story it was reported in Russian media that an ethnic Russian child had been crucified by so-called Ukrainian fascists. An April 2014 story on Russia Today edited an interview with a Crimean rabbi to imply Jewish residents were fleeing Crimea due to Ukrainian nationalists. He had instead stated that he actually fled due to threats by Russian elements.²¹⁸ In a July 2014 interview, the Russian Deputy Minister for Communications was asked about these disputed stories and “showed no embarrassment and indicated that all that mattered were ratings . . . noting that viewers of the leading Russian TV channels had increased by almost 50% over the last two months.”²¹⁹

In today’s media environment, disseminating disinformation is easier and much less labor intensive, as Keir Giles stated, “the effective seeding of disinformation is vastly simpler.”²²⁰ The significance of these campaigns using Twitter or other social media is less about the dissemination platform than the overall strategy and the susceptibility of the audiences to the message. The goal of Russian Psychological Warfare turned out to be the same as the German effort during the 1930s—to sow uncertainty and undermine

²¹⁷ NATO, *Analysis of Russia’s Information Campaign Against Ukraine: Examining Non-Military Aspects of the Crisis in Ukraine From a Strategic Communications Perspectives*, 13.

²¹⁸ Pomerantsev, 31.

²¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 11.

²²⁰ Keir, *The Next Phase of Russian Information Warfare*, 8.

the truth in order to make it difficult to identify and respond to false information and subsequently easier to reframe the chosen narrative.

Russian Psychological Warfare exploits other methods of dissemination, using “automatically generated content, by spamming (e.g. ‘*Twitter*-bombs’—sending out thousands of similar messages at once) or fake identities (e.g. trolls, sock puppets, bots)” to suppress opposing messages and push a narrative.²²¹ For the Twitter media platform, Russia is a major source of manufacturing automated programs or bots that can take and forward messages thousands of times, reinforcing the validity through repetitions. Messages supporting the Russian narrative flooded Twitter and other platforms during the events in Crimea.²²² These Russian efforts were an attempt to exaggerate support for the Crimean annexation and provided disinformation about Ukraine activities towards ethnic Russians and its threat to Russia. The NATO Strategic Communications Center identified “hybrid trolls” that engage in the “same patterns of behaviour as the traditional troll, but operates in the context of a particular political or military agenda.”²²³ Russia also used fake websites that appeared to be independent sources of information. These sock puppet sites acted as news aggregators and were especially effective in influencing audiences outside of the Ukraine and Russia, especially when Western news organizations were downsizing and limiting international coverage. Speaking in 2014,

²²¹ Reynolds, 18.

²²² Giles, *The Next Phase of Russian Information Warfare*, 9.

²²³ Reynolds, 27.

Panarin described these actions as “defensive information warfare” executed as a planned and coordinated campaign, approved by and directed personally by Putin.²²⁴

Pro-Russian messages appeared on multiple websites and social media platforms across the West as the Ukraine crisis unfolded in 2014. The messages were passed across different platforms, pushing the same message in support of Russian actions and appeared to originate from countries outside of Russia like the United Kingdom, the United States, Germany, and Poland. Specific messages were created depending on whether the target audience was Russian, Polish, or Ukrainian. They all had the same intent: to justify the Russian annexation, accuse Ukraine of the persecution of ethnic Russians and associate the current government with modern and historical Ukrainian Nazis.²²⁵ De-legitimization, which also corresponds to the weakening and dividing of an opponent, was a main element of the Russian propaganda narrative.

Unconventional/Hybrid Warfare

An Unconventional Warfare campaign encompasses a significant number of elements, and covers much of the same tasks as Political Warfare.²²⁶ In the context of these two case studies, Unconventional Warfare consists of military and non-military factors; it can involve assassination, intimidation, agitation. The Unconventional Warfare

²²⁴ Darczewska, Point of View No. 42, *The Anatomy of Russian Information Warfare: The Crimean Operation, A Case Study*, 24.

²²⁵ Reynolds, 33.

²²⁶ U.S. Army Special Operations Command, “Counter-Unconventional Warfare” (White Paper, Fort Bragg, NC: U.S. Army Special Operations Command, September 26, 2014), 3. “activities conducted to enable a resistance movement or insurgency to coerce, disrupt, or overthrow a government or occupying power by operating through or with an underground, auxiliary, and guerrilla force in a denied area.”

can be carried out by local paramilitaries, political cadre, or clandestine military elements. They can be operating as a Fifth Column or through Little Green Men. Nazi Germany made extensive use of these actors before the start of World War Two. The Nazi revolutionary party structure embedded in the Nazi government enabled them to adapt the same methods that assisted in the takeover of the German political system. These tactics were applied through foreign policy to target states and execute what was in effect early Unconventional Warfare campaigns. These campaigns were not isolated events with minimal effect (either real or imagined), to the countries mentioned in this study, but had significant psychological impact in weakening the governments they targeted.

Germany

In the Saar, the League of Nations had the difficult task of governing a territory that was mainly German and included a mixed population with a growing number of refugees from Germany. Germany organized the Nazi groups into the Saar *Deutsche Front*.²²⁷ The Saar was run by the League of Nations and had a significant administrative system, which was staffed mostly by Germans. These officials, from the police to judges to bureaucrats, coordinated extensively with the Nazi Front out of a combination of loyalty to Germany and fear of the consequences after the expected re-unification. Nazi Germany used this network to organize and subvert the League of Nations authority by coordinating the actions of police, radio and telegraph operators, judges, mayors tax

²²⁷ Russell, 88.

collectors, even priests, and pastors.²²⁸ The Nazis acting through their agents created a shadow government to the League of Nations authority. Opposition newspapers and activists were attacked and printing equipment was destroyed to prevent counter-Nazi messages. The Nazi Front disrupted meetings with violence and facilities were threatened to prevent the renting out of locations for rallies. Nazi elements organized economic boycotts against the opposition media. League of Nations authorities soon grew powerless to fight the Nazi Front before the 1935 vote because of the effectiveness of these actions.²²⁹

Through what came to be known as the Brown Network, or German-led international fascist organizations, detailed in the 1935 book by the same name, the Nazi Party apparatus funded and organized nationalist organizations across the territory.²³⁰ Due to violence and instigation by Nazi groups (and Communist and Socialists), the governing commission banned military uniforms and weapons, specifically targeting Nazis, by 1931 and military marches by 1932. After 1933, the agitation increased, based upon the activities of the suppressed pro-Nazi organization. The Nazi organization received support from Psychological Warfare campaigns from Germany in the months leading up to the January vote. During 1934-1935, the territory was the center of a

²²⁸ Russell, 89.

²²⁹ Whitton and Herz, 15.

²³⁰ World Committee for the Victims of German Fascism, *The Brown Network: The Activities of the Nazis in Foreign Countries*.

massive political mobilization on both sides of the debate, often pitting pro-Nazis against anti-Nazi activists.²³¹

The July 1934 Austrian coup attempt was supported by a Nazi paramilitary cadre deployed from Munich.²³² Prior to that Austria was disrupted by a German-organized UW campaign targeting the Austrian government and public institutions. Using smuggled explosives, and with the intent of damaging Austria's economy and legitimacy, dozens of bombings were executed across the country in February 1934.²³³ This narrative of chaos was intended to demonstrate that Austria could not govern itself and to feed the necessity of German intervention to restore order. In this case, the 1934 coup failed as much due to the power of external forces. The international community, and especially Mussolini, objected with Italy massing troops on the southern border. The coup was a failure, but the event itself signified that Germany successfully disrupted the existing European order.²³⁴

Events in 1934 led to the outlawing of Nazi organizations in Austria. In response, they transformed into Fifth Columns, as political undergrounds, and preparing for a future opportunity. Key leaders in the armed forces were sympathetic to cooperating with Germany, making counter-efforts nearly impossible.²³⁵ Paramilitaries that originally were recruited to support the government became disgruntled and joined the pro-Nazis Fifth

²³¹ Russell, 89.

²³² Lindley Macnaghten Fraser, *Germany Between Two Wars: A Study of Propaganda and War-Guilt* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1945), 103.

²³³ Govan, 27.

²³⁴ *Ibid.*, 30.

²³⁵ Carsten, 239.

Column. These groups maintained the public front as a nationalist movement. Acts of terror increased over time executed by these hardcore Nazi elements. Resources were funneled through German state-run enterprises in Austria, which included travel agencies, and the German Embassy. Among the organizations operating in the country was the “Austrian Legion,” a Nazi Party element with thousands of members, some trained to assassinate, disseminate propaganda and support a German intervention.²³⁶ Organizers established a database to categorize as many key individuals as possible for their sympathy to the Nazi cause of overthrow of the Austrian government.²³⁷ As in the Saar, the Nazis infiltrated the Austrian government and bureaucracy. In 1934, Germany gained veto authority over the Austrian press, where few were willing to criticize Germany or expose Nazi violence and cementing Germany’s ability to control information in the Republic.²³⁸

Events in Austria in March further mobilized the Sudeten Germans, as well as other *Ausland* groups across Europe.²³⁹ In Czechoslovakia, Nazi methods included kidnappings and assassinations as a way of neutralizing opponents. These actions focused on outspoken German dissidents who had fled to Czechoslovakia and Czech opponents of the Sudeten German strategy. Targeted assassinations included a former Nazi activist

²³⁶ Govan, 27.

²³⁷ Martin Fuchs and Charles Hope Lumley, *Showdown in Vienna: The Death of Austria* (New York: G.P. Putnam’s Sons, 1939), 61.

²³⁸ *Ibid.*, 65.

²³⁹ Govan, 46.

who fled Germany and was operating an anti-German radio station.²⁴⁰ By the mid-1930s, activity by German Fifth Columnists and Germans operating clandestinely included a wide network of activities of espionage and propaganda dissemination across the parts of Czechoslovakia with ethnic German majorities.²⁴¹

Activities in Poland in the months before hostilities, though not an official part of the German Army's war plans, were prearranged by the Ministry of Propaganda to support the effort against Poland. The years of activity by Germany increased fear of the threat of Fifth Columns. Threatening actions from Germany towards Poland and propaganda aimed at the German minority contributed to their alienation from the Polish state.²⁴² From 1935-1938, 300 ethnic Germans were tried for espionage. From March to August 1939, more than 600 were arrested for Fifth Column activities. Coordinating with the German military intelligence services, the *Volkdeutsche* were actively involved in supporting or executing espionage on behalf of Germany as early as October 1938. During 1939, the *Volkdeutsche* were subject to greater and greater forces of radicalization, by actions by Polish authorities and German efforts to mobilize them through their social organizations, radio broadcasts, and organizers sent from Germany.²⁴³ Germans were smuggled into Poland in the summer of 1939 as preparation

²⁴⁰ World Committee for the Victims of Fascism, *The Brown Network: The Activities of the Nazis in Foreign Countries*, 188-189.

²⁴¹ Elwyn-Jones, 29.

²⁴² Polish Ministry of Information, *The German Fifth Column in Poland*, 41.

²⁴³ de Jong, 150.

for the attack and to coordinate with local elements.²⁴⁴ German networks instructed *Volkdeutsche* to not report for mobilization, and if in combat to not fire upon German troops. An insurgent group recruited from the Ukraine was organized for guerrilla fighting and sabotage within Poland. German espionage elements, coordinating with the *Volkdeutsche* were instructed to carry out sabotage and staged atrocities against ethnic Germans, specifically during August 1939 to raise tensions and justify war.²⁴⁵ As Germany moved towards executing the German war plan to invade Poland, an Unconventional Warfare campaign was developed. Explosives were smuggled across the border into German ethnic areas in preparation for war.²⁴⁶ In the final weeks before the invasion by Germany (and Russia from the East), German agents coordinated with ethnic Germans to act as spotters and collect intelligence on the movement of Polish forces. Once the fighting began, Polish authorities captured and identified agents disguised as civilians. Some were Germans, but others were local ethnic Germans who had helped with starting fires and damaging buildings.²⁴⁷

Russia

Russia's history of Unconventional Warfare and earlier versions of Hybrid Warfare dates to World War Two. Partisans fought behind the lines against the German invaders and had a major impact on German operations throughout the war. During the

²⁴⁴ Polish Ministry of Information, *The German Fifth Column in Poland*, 91.

²⁴⁵ de Jong, 150-152.

²⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 37-38.

²⁴⁷ Polish Ministry of Information, *The German Fifth Column in Poland*, 93-95.

Cold War, the Soviets supplied and trained insurgents across the developing world. Russia also faced Unconventional Warfare and uprisings within the Soviet sphere of influence in 1953, 1956, 1968 in Europe and in the 1980s in Afghanistan and Poland.²⁴⁸ While many modern Western observers refer to these Russian operations as Hybrid Warfare, Russian strategists instead refer to these activities as *spetsperatsii*, or “special operations.”²⁴⁹ Russian Chief of Staff Valery Gerasimov described Russia’s current view of these operations in this way:

The role of nonmilitary means of achieving political and strategic goals has grown, and, in many cases, they have exceeded the power of force of weapons in their effectiveness . . . All this is supplemented by military means of a concealed character, including carrying out actions of informational conflict and the actions of special-operations forces.²⁵⁰

Russia began the operation with significant advantages over Ukraine. As outlined by the Foreign Military Studies Office report on Russian use of military power in Crimea in 2014 these were substantial. The included the Black Sea Fleet’s location there, residents being conditioned to see Russian personnel and equipment move from location to location through numerous exercises, the overall weakness/lack of training of Ukrainian forces and bases located away from the combat areas and the penetration of Ukrainian military and intelligence agencies by Russian elements.²⁵¹ The military forces

²⁴⁸ USSOCOM, “*Little Green Men*”: *A Primer on Modern Russian Unconventional Warfare, Ukraine 2013-2014*, 7.

²⁴⁹ Giles, “Russia’s ‘New’ Tools for Confronting the West: Continuity and Innovation in Moscow’s Exercise of Power,” 11.

²⁵⁰ Pomeranzev, 29.

²⁵¹ Roger N. McDermott, *Brothers Disunited: Russia’s Use of Military Power in Ukraine* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Foreign Military Studies Office, 2016), 7-8.

in the area were important, but not the key to the speed and effectiveness of the actions. Though the success of Russian forces reflects upon the Russian military overall, the reliance upon special or irregular forces for the success in the Ukraine was central, and Keir Giles, writing for the Royal Institute for International Affairs argued the “purely military capabilities demonstrated in Crimea in early 2014 were misleading. The operation made use of selected elements of elite special forces units, which were in no way representative of the broad mass of Russia’s Ground Troops.”²⁵²

Actions on the ground began when uniformed but unidentified personnel took control of the Crimean Parliament on February 27, 2014. These forces installed a pro-Russian government and raised the Russian flag. An appeal went out to Russia to assist with bringing order to the territory by Sergei Aksyonov, the new Crimean leader after alleged attacks from Ukrainian elements. On March 1, in an operation that used conventional forces deployed to the Black Sea port facilities and other Russian bases in the area, Russian forces took control of the peninsula. To support the legitimacy of the action, a letter from the deposed Ukrainian president was provided that requested Russian intervention.²⁵³

The operations in Ukraine used military force, but as Ulrik Franke noted in the 2015 Swedish study *War by Non-Military Means: Understanding Russian Information Warfare*, the actions taken by Russia used Next Generation Warfare to succeed there.²⁵⁴

²⁵² Giles, “Russia’s ‘New’ Tools for Confronting the West: Continuity and Innovation in Moscow’s Exercise of Power,” 15.

²⁵³ Pynnöniemi and Racz, 95.

²⁵⁴ Franke, 44.

Pynnöniemi and Rącz in *Fog of Falsehood: Russian Strategy of Deception and the Conflict in Ukraine* wrote from the Finnish perspective on these events:

What we witnessed in Crimea is a curious new political technology—a military occupation that is staged as a non-occupation. These curious troops were designed to fulfil two contradictory things at once—to be anonymous and yet recognized by all, to be polite and yet frightening, to be identified as the Russian Army and yet, be different from the Russian Army. They were designed to be a pure naked military force—a force without a state, without a face, without identity, without a clearly articulated goal.²⁵⁵

The Crimean operations were executed quickly and based on existing Russian planning. In early 2014, the “Little Green Men” made their appearance, first in the Crimea and then in Ukraine’s eastern areas.²⁵⁶ Though described as covert or unknown by some outside observers, those on the ground were able to figure it out due to their “unmarked Russian military uniforms, Russian regional accents, and Russian-made weapons.”²⁵⁷ These elements operated without insignia with their faces masked and refusing to identify themselves to outsiders. They were used to seize key structures and then departed when friendly forces arrived to consolidate the gains.²⁵⁸ They took over essential buildings and facilities across the Crimea and later in eastern Ukraine. On February 28, the airport and television broadcast center were under control by these elements. The same forces locked down Ukrainian bases, preventing forces from moving

²⁵⁵ Pynnöniemi and Racz, 91.

²⁵⁶ Maksymilian Czuperski, et al., *Hiding in Plain Sight: Putin’s War in the Ukraine* (Washington, DC: Atlantic Council, 2015), 4.

²⁵⁷ Ibid.

²⁵⁸ Julio Miranda Calha, *Hybrid Warfare: NATO’S New Strategic Challenge?* (Brussels, Belgium: Defence and Security Committee, North Atlantic Treaty Organization Parliamentary Assembly, 2015), 4.

out of the facilities.²⁵⁹ The Unconventional Warfare campaign was carried out using elements like Russian *Spetznatz* “irregular forces that operate covertly, providing the Russian government plausible deniability.”²⁶⁰ While outsiders and Ukrainians called them Little Green Men, the Russian media furthered the narrative of confusion and in an attempt to promote support for the action, referred to the mysterious soldiers as “polite people.”²⁶¹ Military attacks by Russian-controlled forces against Ukrainian military and security forces were executed in the Crimea just as the political leadership in Kiev was still in chaos from the change in government and disruptions from the Euromaidan movement that ousted the pro-Russian president.²⁶²

In Ukraine, local *Spetznatz* cadre was recruited from “among the local populations within target countries, including pro-Russian nationalists, minorities, political dissidents, and criminals.”²⁶³ Proxy organizations that assisted Russian forces included the Russian Orthodox Army, Night Wolves motorcycle gang (of which Putin is an honorary member), and Chechnyn and Cossack irregulars. These local forces specialized in political activity and other “non-kinetic activities in support of Russian goals.”²⁶⁴

²⁵⁹ McDermott, 11.

²⁶⁰ USSOCOM, “*Little Green Men*”: *A Primer on Modern Russian Unconventional Warfare, Ukraine 2013-2014*, 43.

²⁶¹ McDermott, 11.

²⁶² Czuperski, 4.

²⁶³ USSOCOM, “*Little Green Men*”: *A Primer on Modern Russian Unconventional Warfare, Ukraine 2013-2014*, 43.

²⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 43-45.

Deception and sabotage were an essential part of this operation as well. As Ukrainian facilities were neutralized Ukrainian troops were also detained and taken hostage. A U.S. Army War College study of Russian actions stated the whole operation was supported by a deception plan that “enabled the Russian invasion force to avoid detection by Ukrainian and NATO intelligence services.”²⁶⁵ The brazenness of the operations by these forces was astounding to observers, followed by months of denial by Russian authorities that they had any official involvement in events in Crimea. As late as November 2014, the use of Russian forces inside Ukraine was described as being part of training exercises.²⁶⁶ Russia further justified intervention into Ukraine by arguing that it was all within international norms that were established by the Iraq invasion and intervention in Kosovo in the 1990s.²⁶⁷

Weaken National Unity/Alliance Support

Germany

Nazi ideology is well known to have been inherently racist and based on the concept of Germanic ethnicity, with the National Socialist Party program calling for the union of all people of German race as early 1920.²⁶⁸ In this ideology, *Deutschesvolke* is a central concept, one where a German ethnic national identity exists for Germans inside or

²⁶⁵ COL Douglas Mastriano and LTC Derek O’Malley, eds., Project 1704, *A U.S. Army War College Analysis of Russian Strategy in Eastern Europe, an Appropriate U.S. Response and the Implications for U.S. Landpower* (Carlisle Barracks, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, 2015), 51.

²⁶⁶ Czuperski, 7.

²⁶⁷ Snegovaya, 7.

²⁶⁸ Farago, 264.

outside the German State, anywhere around the world.²⁶⁹ This concept of German ethnicity is central to their worldview. The Nazi regime's Greater Germany narrative centered on the tragedy of the dispersion of ethnic Germans across the post-World War One European landscape of nationalities. Figure 3, from the 1938 book *The German Octopus*, is an illustration of the distribution of ethnic Germans in the mid-1930s. It was in this environment, where the collapse of empires led to Germans who had been the majority or the dominant group in Germany or Austria, and were now a minority. All of this provided an exploitable sense of victimhood within the ethnic German communities. "Pan-Germanism" and the idea "Greater-Germany" resonated with dispersed ethnic German populations and provided justification of involvement by Nazi Germany in the politics of other states.²⁷⁰ The German coordinated media campaigns in countries with German minorities pushed the narrative that their fellow Germans were discriminated against and persecuted. Actual discrimination was not framed as an issue of just governance of Poland or Czechoslovakia, but as a method by Germany to generate outrage and justified intervention by Germany into those states.

Nazi ideology preached the concept of the Germans, *Deutschesvolke* "into a single state based on a shared linguistic, racial and national identity of Germanness . . . ethnic Germans owed their allegiance to the *Deutschesvolke* and not to the individual states that they were citizens of."²⁷¹ Nazi Germany's plans for foreign influence began work in 1933. In 1934, Ernst Bohle was made leader of the District of Germans Abroad

²⁶⁹ Ettliger, 31.

²⁷⁰ Wolfe, 19.

²⁷¹ Govan, 17.

or *Ausland* organization. It was reported that before 1939, Bohle had 548 groups in 45 countries with a reported 25,000 “propaganda agents, “tasked to spread Nazi crafted messages and 2,500 clandestine operators to perform other tasks.²⁷² The *Ausland* group also incorporated 8,000 schools and 24,000 local groups, with an estimated budget of 250,000,000 Reichsmarks for “propaganda and espionage abroad.”²⁷³ Germany used these huge sums of money to influence foreign media, throughout Europe, often focusing on France.²⁷⁴ Germany influenced foreign press through outright bribery. In the 1930s, the economic weakness made French media vulnerable to outside manipulation. Germany paid French journalists and entire newspapers in order to influence the French population. This was to undermine the resolve of an essential Continental power acting as a counter-balance to German actions.²⁷⁵

In Czechoslovakia, the German minority’s alienation could be dated to the establishment of the republic itself and the shift from living within the Austro-Hungarian Empire to a Czech majority state.²⁷⁶ Many of the ethnic Germans were members of the

²⁷² Sayers and Kahn. Concurrent reviews of this book questioned some of the claims regarding Mexico, etc. See Katz.

²⁷³ de Jong, 13.

²⁷⁴ See also Vincent Bignon and Mark Flandreau, Working Paper No. 09/2012, “The Price of Media Capture and the Looting of Newspapers in Interwar France,” Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies, The Graduate Institute, Geneva, Switzerland, 2012, 15, for the discussion of the influence of German covert funding influencing French newspapers to shape domestic opinion specifically on the Sudeten Crisis in Czechoslovakia.

²⁷⁵ Edmund Taylor, 70-71.

²⁷⁶ Robert William Seton-Watson, “The German Minority in Czechoslovakia,” *Foreign Affairs* 16, no. 4 (1938): 652.

local Nazi Party, under the leadership of Konrad Henlein. From 1935-1938 the Sudeten party organization functioned within the Czech system, advocating for greater autonomy and proportional representation of their numbers. Closely coordinated with Germany, a training school was established in Dresden to train locals to produce propaganda and perform agitation. Within a few months of the annexation of Austria, many of the Sudeten Deutsche had been both organized and politically mobilized. German propaganda outlets exploited every event of violence, real or imagined. The shooting of an ethnic German by a Czech policeman in mid-1938 further united the group, especially when German propaganda turned the single event into allegations of a mass murder of hundreds and leading to a formal demand by Germany for autonomy of the Sudeten areas.²⁷⁷

Poland was re-born out of the chaos of World War One. It also contained a German ethnic minority, which Germany exploited. An estimated 760,000 ethnic Germans lived in Poland in 1939, totaling less than 2.4 percent of the total population. Of those, 400,000 lived in areas bordering on Germany.²⁷⁸ According to the Polish Government reports published after Poland's defeat, German "diversionist", actions began long before September 1939. Clandestine operators were recruited from ethnic Germans, and *Hitler-Jugend*, Hitler Youth members in Poland and in German language schools in that country. These groups were given specific training in German controlled Danzig or Germany itself. They acted as collectors of intelligence for Germany and were

²⁷⁷ Govan, 49.

²⁷⁸ Polish Ministry of Information, *The German Fifth Column in Poland*, 21.

trained to perform espionage and provide briefings to arriving German troops.²⁷⁹ A 1942 U.S. Army Counter Intelligence report on Fifth Column activities identified the pre-war organization of these groups to support the “greater Germany” doctrine.²⁸⁰ These groups included the *Deutschtumbrund*, or German Patriotic League, the *Volksbund*, tasked with youth indoctrination, the *Deutsche Vereinigung*, or “German Union” made up of Germans holding Polish government offices and the *Jungdeutsche Partei*, “youth party,” that organized young people into the Nazi Party in Poland.²⁸¹ Specially selected youth were sent outside Poland to be given training “for a campaign of sabotage and combat fifth column action.” At these schools “specialized courses were given in the use of the several forms of sabotage, the technique of panic-spreading, the handling . . . of small arms, parachute training, and the means of communications.”²⁸² The overall effect of these activities on the operational environment in Poland was noticeable, as indicated by the different resources, including reports from the Polish Government. German Fifth Columns were a major concern for military and civilian leaders in Poland.²⁸³

²⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 82.

²⁸⁰ Army Military Intelligence Division, Counterintelligence Branch, *Lessons to be Drawn from Fifth Column Activities in Europe* (Washington, DC: U.S. Army Military Intelligence Division, Counterintelligence Branch, 1942), 3-6. The report provided to U.S. intelligence agencies background on these activities through “depositions by government officials, officers, noncommissioned officers and civilians, as well as information obtained through other channels, [where] some of the establishment and operation of this pattern has been learned.”

²⁸¹ Army Military Intelligence Division, Counterintelligence Branch, *Lessons to be Drawn from Fifth Column Activities in Europe*, 3-6.

²⁸² *Ibid.*

²⁸³ Polish Ministry of Information, *The German Fifth Column in Poland*, 40-41.

Russia

Russia's decision to intervene in the Ukraine was likely related to the crisis in the Ukrainian political system and Russian fears of movement to the West. The Crimean Government within the Ukrainian State had a long history of advocating to return to Russia, dating to the 1990s and the Russian Government had been working for years to agitate the Russian population towards supporting that end.²⁸⁴

In the Ukraine, the west of the country is the most Western-oriented area. Most of the Russian speakers live in the Crimea and the southern and eastern provinces of the country. A total of 17.8 percent or 7.5 million persons are identified as ethnic Russians, the second largest percentage of any post-Soviet state.²⁸⁵ Russia's leaders view the end of the Soviet Union as an existential crisis to the concept of Russia itself. Russian actions throughout the 2000s are an attempt to re-establish Great Russian nationalism. As an important part of this movement, Russians living outside of Russia proper are legally identified as Compatriots Living Abroad. Viewed by Russia to be legally connected to the mother state, these persons are entitled to receive Russian Government identification documents.²⁸⁶ First recognized in the 1990s under Boris Yeltsin, compatriot status provides rights outside of whatever national citizenship the self-identified Russian may

²⁸⁴ Vera Zakem, Paul Sanders, and Daniel Anton, "Mobilizing Compatriots: Russia's Strategy, Tactics, and Influence in the Former Soviet Union" (CNA Occasional Paper, Center for Naval Analyses, Arlington, VA, November 2015), 27.

²⁸⁵ Zakem, Sanders, and Anton, 6-7.

²⁸⁶ NATO, *Analysis of Russia's Information Campaign Against Ukraine: Examining Non-Military Aspects of the Crisis in Ukraine From a Strategic Communications Perspectives*, 9.

be entitled to hold. Compatriots' rights were broadened in 2000, 2009, and 2013.²⁸⁷

Russia's definition of dual nationality has other uses. Russia used this network of ethnic Russians and Russia supporters, referred to as the *Ruski Mir* or Russia World as a way to exert pressure and influence into other countries. This is a response to increased independence from Russian influence by states such as Moldova, Ukraine, and Georgia. The Compatriots are viewed by the Russian Government as a "instruments" to further Russian foreign policy with political activity and act as agents of Russian interests in those countries, especially Ukraine.²⁸⁸

Compatriots can be used as "Proxy Groups" on behalf of Russian interests. If they actively support Russian policy, this can be used to give the impression that there was local support for Russian actions. They can serve as on the ground witnesses to events and support the narrative of an existential threat to ethnic Russians in Ukraine and Georgia. The proxy groups were modeled on non-governmental organizations, which are now banned in Russia for advocating for human rights or issues of religious freedom. The proxy networks are used to spread the message that a better future for the Compatriots means returning to something like the Soviet Union model of a Russian led multi-state structure. These proxy groups include Russian language fraternal organizations, Russian Orthodox associations, and paramilitaries like the Gray Wolves motorcycle club.²⁸⁹

In Crimea, where all of these elements were in play, Russia was able to exploit several factors in influencing the Russian population. The 2015 Chatham House report

²⁸⁷ Zakem, Sanders, and Anton, 14.

²⁸⁸ Ibid., 18.

²⁸⁹ Lutsevych, 19.

identified Russian that proxy groups were an important part of the success of Russian operations in the Ukraine.

Actions by the central government to limit or not fully provide the demanded autonomy to the Crimea, especially on language, continued to be a major issue from the 1990s on. Additionally, Ukraine did not establish a strong national identity to unite the country though it gave full citizenship rights to these minorities. A significant part of the Russian population had long advocated for a return to Russia, calling for secession back to the early 1990s.²⁹⁰

The 2000 *Information Security Strategy of the Russian Federation* was an early Putin-era statement of the Russian Government strategy. It established as the policy of the Russian government that there was a direct interest to act on “violations of the rights of Russian nationals and legal persons abroad and the spread of misinformation on Russia’s foreign policy.” It also identified the Russian language as the unifying force for Russian nationalism throughout the then Commonwealth of Independent States.²⁹¹ The 2010 Russian military doctrine described a wider number of situations where their policy justified the use of force to defend ethnic Russians, especially Russian speakers. In February 2014, the Russian Community of the Crimea wrote directly to Putin, and the Russian Ministry of Defense “asking for protection in view of the ‘risk of genocide of the Russian people’ in the peninsula.” In March 2014, the Russian Council of Federation

²⁹⁰ Zakem, Sanders, and Anton, 11.

²⁹¹ Darczewska, OSW Studies No. 57, *Russia’s Armed Forces on the Information War Front: Strategic Documents*, 14.

voted to authorize “Russian armed forces to protect millions of Russians and Russian-speakers in Ukraine.”²⁹²

Russia aggressively pushed a narrative of Ukrainian illegitimacy since February 2014 based on an accusation of anti-Semitism and accusations of fascist associations by the new government. Russian propaganda targets the leaders of Ukraine and the legacy of the Euromaidan revolution as “Bandera-followers,” connecting the new government to a World War Two Ukrainian insurgent who fought against the Soviets after the war ended.²⁹³ Russia’s “coup d’état” narrative emphasized the illegitimacy of the Ukrainian government in order for Russia to tap into the heroic legacy of World War Two that was shared with Ukraine.²⁹⁴

The Russian success can be measured by the lack of actual resistance Ukraine was able to demonstrate to the Russian takeover, as well as the surprise experienced by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and the West. Russia effectively overmatched a divided and weak Ukrainian state and effectively deceived the international community and militaries. Because of the speed of Russian operations, Ukraine was unable to respond to the level of support of local elements, the use of unconventional forces, a

²⁹² Pynnöniemi and Racz, 91.

²⁹³ Dr. Vladimir Sazonov, et al., *Russian Information Campaign Against the Ukrainian State and Defence Forces*, ed. Dr. Vladimir Sazonov, M. A. Kristiina Müür and Dr. Holger Mölder (Tartu, Estonia: North Atlantic Treaty Organization, Strategic Communications Centre of Excellence, 2016), 19,

²⁹⁴ Pomeranzev and Lucas, 18.

fractured chain of command and an overwhelming Psychological Warfare and Unconventional Warfare campaign.²⁹⁵

Annexing of Territory/Overthrow of Existing Government

The last variable of Political Warfare is the ultimate goal/end state of the previous variables. The annexing of territory or the overthrow of a government to one subservient or supportive of the aggressor state is an essential part of Political Warfare and an indication of the success of the campaign.

Germany

The Saar plebiscite was the first test of Germany's ability to influence and organize this kind of action. The 15-year delay on the vote postponed the decision to a time when Germany was resurgent, France and Britain un-concerned or distracted, and the League of Nations unable to stop Nazi efforts. Germany exploited the German population's interest in returning to Germany and exploited the League of Nation's attempt to hold fair elections. The vote was overwhelming for joining Germany. This was achieved by targeted propaganda, violence, and a coordinated political organization supporting these efforts. It gave momentum to Germany's continent-wide campaign to unify ethnic Germans. The Saar vote justified and strengthened the arguments made about self-determination regarding ethnic Germans (where it benefitted the Nazis). The important element of the Saar vote was the preparatory work done by Nazi-aligned

²⁹⁵ McDermott, 15.

groups, the massive media campaign, mass rallies, and campaigns of intimidation aimed at political opponents.²⁹⁶

In 1938, the Sudeten German area was taken from the Czechoslovakian Republic in an action supported by Britain and France.²⁹⁷ Supported by external propaganda from Germany alleging atrocities, Germany used these events to justify their actions towards the multi-ethnic republic, against Britain and France willing to sacrifice the country to avoid war. In Czechoslovakia, the annexation of the Sudetenland had been a goal of the Nazi movement since taking power. The theme of the Nazi's message stressed the illegitimacy of the multi-ethnic Czechoslovak state. For the majority of ethnic Germans that the Sudeten organization represented, the compromises to provide additional autonomy in German majority areas changed after the annexation of Austria in 1938. The public goal of the Nazi regime changed from protection of the German population to an argument that they should be physically joined to the German nation.²⁹⁸

In the months prior to the execution of Plan White and the attack on Poland, many ethnic Germans supported German efforts. Poland was not a democratic state, having authoritarian trappings throughout the 1930s. Poland was an anti-Nazi German state after 1938. Many in the *Volkdeutsche* were upset by the loss of Silesia and Danzig to Poland and their minority status in that state. The "Fifth Column" in Poland played a smaller, but important role in efforts to weaken Poland prior the start of the war.²⁹⁹

²⁹⁶ Russell, 90.

²⁹⁷ Large, 54.

²⁹⁸ Govan, 45.

²⁹⁹ de Jong, 36-37.

Russia

Russia's annexation of the Ukraine in 2014 was a shock to the West. An extremely popular act within Russia, it sent a message to the rest of Europe that formerly settled issues were no longer settled. The Russian government gave multiple justifications for its taking of the Crimea and maintained that the legitimate government of Ukraine had been overthrown. The Ukrainian Government repealed Russian as an official state language on February 23, 2014 and Russia argued that the Ukrainian regime was a direct threat to the safety of Russian minorities.³⁰⁰ Russia attempted to establish legitimacy through the referendum in March 2014. This vote passed overwhelmingly, but counted only Russian-registered residents of Crimea.³⁰¹ As of March 21, 2014, Crimea was legally a part of the Russian Federation, though not recognized by the international community. Russia promptly demanded the withdrawal of all Ukrainian forces from the territory. Since 2014, constant fighting has occurred in the eastern region of the country as Russia has attempted to take control of more of Ukrainian territory using Russian troops defined as volunteers supporting the Russian-backed rebels.

Conclusion

Nazi Germany achieved a great deal from 1935-1939 using Political Warfare. Germany won elections, gained control of territory and divided its enemies without resorting to Conventional Warfare. Germany benefitted from the economic and political chaos of this era and the attempts at appeasement. The divisions that wracked Europe

³⁰⁰ McDermott, 10.

³⁰¹ Pynnöniemi and Racz, 97.

during this period and the legacy of the massive death toll from World War One contributed to an environment successfully exploited by the Germans. Using methods developed in the political wars of Weimar, Germany, Nazi planners identified the elements to use for their campaigns, the susceptibility of their target audiences and the weaknesses of their opponents. Together, the overall coordinated strategy of propaganda and the use of organized clandestine forces was a new and as discussed earlier, terrifying strategy for those being targeted.

Russia used Political Warfare in concert with military power to achieve the goal of taking Crimea from the Ukraine. The policy of *Russki Mir*, Russian fears of former allies and dependent states choosing the West over a Russian-dominated system were a clear motivation for this action. The purported oppression of Russians in the Ukraine was exploited to provide justification for annexation of the Crimea. The greatest surprise was not only the action itself, but also the speed and efficiency of the action by Russia and the lack of effective opposition by Ukraine.³⁰² Next, chapter 5 presents a summary and conclusion.

³⁰² McDermott, 12.

CHAPTER 5

ANALYSIS AND CONCLUSIONS

Our strategy is to destroy the enemy from within, to conquer him through himself. Mental confusion, contradiction of feeling, indecision, panic—these are our weapons.

— Adolf Hitler, quoted in Charles Rolo, *Radio Goes to War*

When George Kennan drafted his policy paper on creating a U.S. capability for executing Political Warfare in 1948, his plan was a recognition and response to the massive efforts by the Soviets across Europe to undermine the emerging post-war governments. He saw first-hand an aggressive and expansionist Soviet Union and the beginnings of the long Gray Zone Cold War.³⁰³ Kennan defined Political Warfare as “the employment of all the means at a nation’s command, short of war, to achieve its national objectives. Such operations are both overt and covert.”³⁰⁴ This definition and this perspective on aggressive state-executed Irregular Warfare is at the core of this paper.

The research question and the scope of this paper were defined in chapter 1. The literature review in chapter 2 described Political Warfare, Psychological Warfare, and different kinds of Irregular Warfare. The discussion focused on concepts related to Political Warfare as a distinct method of war. It considered the different perspectives and evolution of concepts covering terms like Hybrid, Irregular, Information and Next Generation Warfare. Chapter 3 defined the methodology of approaching the case studies using structured, focused method. Chapter 4 covered the case studies for Germany and

³⁰³ Votel et al., 102.

³⁰⁴ Kennan.

Russia. Finally, this chapter considers the case studies and the usefulness of the methodology and variables in comparing the two widely separated periods.

To restate the research question: does Political Warfare, as employed by Germany 1935-1939 and Russia in 2014 identify methods nation-states use to weaken targeted countries and undermine alliances? Does Political Warfare, as defined through the four variables from chapter 3 and explored in chapter 4 effectively describe these activities? To approach this, consider table 1. This table compares the four variables across the two case studies. To make the comparison more straightforward and because of the complexity of this period, the German case study is divided into four different events. These four sub-cases are contrasted with the Russian case study.

Table 1. Political Warfare Variable Comparison Chart

Variables / Case Study	Germany- Saar 1935	Germany- Austria 1938	Germany- Czechoslovakia 1938	Germany-Poland 1939	Russia-Ukraine 2014
Psychological Warfare	Radio broadcasts, free radios distributed, newspapers, flyers, mass rallies, and nationalistic organizations	Extensive campaign, printed material, cross border broadcasts, preparatory action began in 1931	After 1933, printed material, cross border broadcasts. Shorter aggressive campaign, more active cross border broadcasts after 1938, radio broadcasts, accusation of mob attacks on Germans, terror, looting	Limited media campaign through 1938, cross border radio broadcasts, accusations of mob attacks on Germans, terror, looting	Long term campaign targeting Ukraine, short term escalation, focus on international audience: radio, t.v., social media accusations of anti-Semitism, violence attacks on ethnic Russians
UW/HW	Violence/intimidation against opponents, underground/shadow government using League of Nations administration Organized/mobilized ethnic group, began in 1928 - Fifth Column	Intimidation, violence, extensive bombings, terrorism underground shadow government - Fifth Column	Intimidation, violence, underground movement, assassinations - Fifth Column	Violence, underground movement, espionage, resistance, subversion of military service - Fifth Column	Fifth Column/Little Green Men, paramilitary organizations/Proxy Groups, Russian-based forces (with/without insignia), shadow government within Crimea
Weaken/Divide	<i>Volkdeutsche</i> : Organized/mobilized ethnic group	<i>Volkdeutsche</i> : Underground anti-Government, unite with Greater Germany	<i>Volkdeutsche</i> : Messages of attacks Organized/mobilized ethnic group, unite with Greater Germany, <i>Sudeten Front</i> , accusations of killings of ethnic Germans by Czech authorities	<i>Volkdeutsche</i> : Organized/mobilized ethnic group, unite with Greater Germany	<i>Russki Mir</i> “ <i>Compatriots</i> ” Organized/mobilized Proxy Groups/ethnic group -accusations of Ukraine Government with Nazi/Fascist
Annex/ Overthrow	90%+ vote, first major German foreign policy success	Annexed, vote after Anschluss to validate action, 99%+ approval	Annexed by Germany, remnant of nation became Reich Protectorate	Defeat in war, divided between Soviet Union and Nazi Germany, nation ceases to exist	Annexed by Russia, vote after takeover to validate action, 96%+ vote in favor

Source: Created by author.

Political Warfare, as defined by the four variables referenced above, is a useful way to describe these types of events. Looked at without this framework, Germany’s actions could be viewed as a series of activities that supported the Nazi ideology of German conquest. An observer could also just conclude that the success of Germany was because of British and/or French weakness. This conclusion would miss the coordinated nature of Germany’s actions. Germany’s campaigns of influence and division were

intentional and built upon each other and the success of the previous events. Beginning with the Saar election, the actions were coordinated and planned to mobilize, divide, disrupt and influence. Therefore, were the actions taken by Germany Political Warfare? Germany engaged in a coordinated campaign across the four events examined for the case study. Russia used Political Warfare against Ukraine, as defined by Kennan's 1948 article with the added condition to weaken a state and then annex territory.

In both these cases, actions were researched, planned, and then used to exploit existing grievances of targeted populations, with existing kernels of disturbance to exploit with messages and actions.³⁰⁵ For actions to be described as Political Warfare, it is argued that the performance of each of these four variables should be present and the events should culminate in a coordinated effort to undermine and isolate the targeted nation and annex or gain control of territory. Based on this matrix of analysis, these elements existed in the German and Russian case studies with significant evidence to support each of the variables.

Were the Political Warfare campaigns effective? The Nazi Government applied many of the methods used to establish an authoritarian state inside Germany to implement an external campaign of influence. The events led to the start of World War Two and ended in the destruction of the Nazi state. Prior to the establishment of a unified opposition to German actions, German Political Warfare was overwhelmingly successful in support of Nazi German strategic goals from that period.

The method of dissemination of the message, whether by radio, television, the Internet, in the form of misinformation or rumor is less important than the effectiveness

³⁰⁵ Farago, 143.

of the effort to reach the targeted audience and have the desired effect. This applies to the organization of the Unconventional Warfare campaign and subsequent efforts to exacerbate division, sow confusion, or assist with the execution of conventional military operations. In the German and Russian case studies, the campaigns targeted susceptible populations and used existing divisions. The medium of dissemination can make the task easier or more successful, but the message and the actions must be the right ones for the human terrain being targeted. Was Germany's use of Political Warfare the only factor in that success? Absolutely not. Many elements contributed to what Germany was able to achieve, from the appeasement by France and Britain to the benefit of Hitler's consistent good luck. Much has been written about Nazi Germany's foreign policy efforts and the failures of Britain and France to oppose the actions of Nazi Germany at key moments.³⁰⁶ However, looking at the application of Political Warfare methods to these case studies, those actions had significant effects on the targeted states as well as the international community. First, Germany actually used these methods to sow chaos, terrorism and violence across Europe, prepping the battlefield, as it were, for further actions. Second, Germany established a reputation as the source of instability and terrorism, through real and imagined Fifth Column elements. Germany (and the fascist movement) was seen as the source for these forces of chaos, undermining and weakening internal unity within these newly established states, thereby magnifying the effects of these actions through what contemporaries called Germany's "Strategy of Terror."³⁰⁷

³⁰⁶ Large, 15-18.

³⁰⁷ Edmund Taylor, 2.

More than seven decades later, Russia used Political Warfare, coordinated with selective uses of military power to achieve the goal of seizing Crimea. President Putin and the worldview shared by Russia's leadership provided multiple justifications for their actions, which upon consideration, were, and are remarkably similar to Germany's justifications in the 1930's. Russia justified these actions through the nationalist ideology of founded on the concept of the Russki Mir, with an international population that must be protected from persecution and subjugation.³⁰⁸

For Russia, was the use of Political Warfare effective? As vividly described in the Center for Strategic and International Studies report *The Kremlin Playbook: Understanding Russian Influence in Central and Eastern Europe*, Russian influence and corruption has an effect like a disease, where "Malign Russian influence can be likened to a virus that attacks democracies."³⁰⁹ Julio Miranda, author of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization report *Hybrid Warfare: NATO'S New Strategic Challenge?* argued that for decades, Russia has used methods against European states using "asymmetrical tactics to probe for and exploit domestic weaknesses."³¹⁰ Russian aggression towards Ukraine achieved Russia's goal of re-claiming a territory with a Russian population, which sent a loud message to other former client Soviet states. The speed of the annexation and the subsequent election and a so-called treaty with the secessionist Crimean Government were an attempt by Russia to apply traditional international legal norms to Russia's

³⁰⁸ McDermott, 12.

³⁰⁹ Heather Conley, et al., *The Kremlin Playbook: Understanding Russian Influence in Central and Eastern Europe* (Washington, DC: Center for Strategic and International Studies, 2016), 26.

³¹⁰ Calha, 3.

aggression. The events of 2014 were the beginning of a Russian war with Ukraine. Russia is fighting to annex the eastern provinces of Donetsk and Luhansk. Russia's action and prevarications continued with the July 2014, Malaysian Flight 17 shoot down. This was later confirmed to be an action linked directly to Russia through an international investigation. Russia conducted an extended campaign of denial and disinformation about its involvement. Russian on-line trolls swarmed Western press, in one case pushing 40,000 anti-Ukrainian comments in just one newspaper in one day, as Russia continues to try to shape the narrative as well as confuse observers. Another consistent disinformation narrative even accused mysterious actors of flying the aircraft remotely, filled with corpses from Amsterdam.³¹¹ As with the attack on the Eastern Ukraine, the war continues to the present day. Russia uses its extensive international media network of Russia Today and countless social media proxies to shift the blame for events in Ukraine to non-Russian connected actors.³¹²

The larger significance for the United States and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization of Russia's attack upon Ukraine is what followed that success since 2014. Russia's use of Political Warfare did not end with its effort against the Ukraine, but the successes saw its expansion of its application across Europe.³¹³ Russia recently attempted

³¹¹ North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), *Analysis of Russia's Information Campaign Against Ukraine: Examining Non-Military Aspects of the Crisis in Ukraine From a Strategic Communications Perspectives*, 27.

³¹² Pomerantsev, 31. *The Guardian* reported that during this period that tens of thousands troll-derived comments per day made their site unworkable.

³¹³ Stephanie Pezard, et al., *European Relations With Russia: Threats, Perceptions, Responses and Strategies in the Wake of the Ukrainian Crisis* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2017), 60.

to foment a coup in Montenegro, which would have culminated in the murder of the prime minister in order to prevent its joining NATO in October 2016.³¹⁴ In the Baltics, multiple examples of intimidation and staged actions of violence aimed at inciting the ethnic Russian population and portraying deployed North Atlantic Treaty Organization troops as rapists and rioters have occurred.³¹⁵

The long-term effects on Russia's successful annexation of Crimea is more complicated to evaluate. Because of Russia's actions, which now include a large-scale attempt to influence the 2016 U.S. elections, Russia has been designated as the primary threat to U.S. national security interests.³¹⁶ The international community has made significant efforts to punish Russia for these actions through sanctions and targeting of institutions and individuals in the Russian leadership. Significant economic sanctions by the United States and Europe continue against the state, specific Russian businesses, and individuals.³¹⁷ The sanctions have had a measurable impact on Russia's economy, though it seems to have had limited effect in modifying Russia's behavior.³¹⁸ In the end, Russia

³¹⁴ Milena Veselinovic and Darran Simon, "Montenegro: Russia Involved in Attempted Coup," *CNN*, January 26, 2017, accessed April 26, 2017, <http://www.cnn.com/2017/02/21/europe/montenegro-attempted-coup-accusation>.

³¹⁵ Tom Porter, "British Soldiers' Latvia Brawl 'Was Set Up as Part of Russian Propaganda Sting'," *International Business Times*, November 2, 2016, accessed April 24, 2017, <http://www.ibtimes.co.uk/british-soldiers-latvia-brawl-was-set-part-russian-propaganda-sting-1589457>.

³¹⁶ Ryan and Lamothe.

³¹⁷ USSOCOM, "*Little Green Men*": A Primer on Modern Russian Unconventional Warfare, Ukraine 2013-2014, 52.

³¹⁸ Edward Christie, "Sanctions After Crimea: Have They Worked?" *NATO Review Magazine* (2016), accessed March 26, 2017, <http://www.nato.int/docu/review/2015/Russia/sanctions-after-crimea-have-they-worked/EN/index.htm>.

has elevated its international influence to something closer to its Cold War role as a counter-balance to the United States. As with actions in the Ukraine, Russia continues to attempt to influence and manipulate elections, populations, and economies both in Europe and the United States.³¹⁹

Further Research

Because of the complexity of events in this work, the case studies had a narrowed research focus. For the German case study, the aim was to bring together a useful collection of contemporary or near-contemporary research on this period. Many of these events and actions had not been cited within the same work, especially as a part of a discussion of pre-World War Two German activities defined as Political Warfare. For the Russian case study, even the limited events surrounding the Crimea were challenging to analyze and discuss.

Additional research could be done referencing additional primary documents of observations from U.S. and allied embassies during these crises, as was done by the Govan thesis.³²⁰ This would require a different research strategy to obtain those documents or visit different national archives. For Russia, including a deeper consideration of its extensive networks of corruption and bribery could be useful.

³¹⁹ Eugene Rumer, “Russian Active Measures and Influence Campaigns,” Testimony to the U.S. Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, March 30, 2017, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, accessed April 15, 2017, <http://carnegieendowment.org/2017/03/30/russian-active-measures-and-influence-campaigns-pub-68438>.

³²⁰ Govan.

Because of constraints in time and content, there was a limited focus on those effects, though several examples of excellent research detail its importance.³²¹

The research completed in this work can provide a useful starting point for further recommendations on strategies to combat and resist Political Warfare campaigns. Unlike the Cold War when the Soviets were partially constrained by their ideology and poor messaging skills targeting the West, Russia is now able to reach into Western societies through multiple channels. As Giles described Russian disinformation efforts (and their coordinated actions): “It is often not even seeking to be believed. Instead, it has as one aim undermining the notion of objective truth and reporting being possible at all. In some respects, this emulates Soviet campaigns that had no direct target other than destabilization and weakening the target society.”³²²

To counter Political Warfare, several major approaches should be pursued. These brief recommendations are only a framework, which must be expanded and grounded by analysis based on the specific situation, aggressor activity and the particulars of the targeted country. First, the threat and actions by the aggressor actor must be recognized by the government as real, and that recognition must be shared by the population of that country. This is essential to creating counter-campaigns intended to educate and expose the activities. It is critical that the government and political opposition support this effort.

³²¹ See Conley et al.; Pomerantsev.

³²² Giles, *The Next Phase of Russian Information Warfare*, 6.

Next, societal resilience must be improved. This requires understanding and existing societal vulnerability to the attacks.³²³ The problem with countering Russian efforts today is the same faced in the 1930s: it is very difficult to successfully oppose disinformation campaigns or acts of terror using truth as the response. In the 1930s, these campaigns of propaganda and coordinated terror had an existential effect on European societies. In the United States, they drove the efforts funding research by organizations like the Rockefeller Foundation and the recommendations referenced earlier from Edward R. Murrow to understand the power of mass propaganda. In 1939, The Institute for the Study of Propaganda, an early research institution dedicated to identifying disinformation wrote guides to be distributed to educational institutions to improve critical thinking in response to the threat of propaganda. The researchers who wrote these books and pamphlets argued that the U.S. population was vulnerable to authoritarian propaganda campaigns because of insufficient critical thinking skills that would enable them to withstand outside manipulation.³²⁴

Finally, a coordinated campaign of aggressive response from the United States and Europe must be a part of any strategy. The U.S. Information Agency was closed in 1999 at a time when the United States thought it won the war of ideas against the Soviet Union. Throughout the 2000s and up to the present, this lack of a coordinated message and effort across the U.S. Government has been highlighted and identified as a major

³²³ Urve Eslas, “Kremlin Mind Games and How the West Can Change the Rules,” European Center for Policy Analysis, Washington, DC, 2017.

³²⁴ Institute for Propaganda Analysis, Alfred McClung Lee, and Elizabeth Briant Lee, *The Fine Art of Propaganda: A Study of Father Coughlin’s Speeches* (New York: Harcourt Brace and Company, 1939). One of the most comprehensive of their publications.

problem for the United States. In January 2017, then Director of National Intelligence James Clapper advocated for re-establishing the U.S. Information Agency but “on steroids,” as an organization that could better achieve whole-of-government coordination of information and disseminate persuasive arguments to foreign audiences.³²⁵ A dynamic Psychological Warfare campaign is necessary to respond to Russia’s aggression towards the United States and her allies. Expanded media production similar to Cold War Voice of America levels of effort should be instituted, focusing on key parts of Russia’s population to influence.

The United States and her allies should develop a counter-narrative exploiting Russia’s own significant weaknesses. The campaign should include an effort to emphasize the death and injuries of Russian soldiers fighting in Ukraine and in other former Soviet states, detail the economic and human cost of Russia’s aggressive policy to the average Russian, and make clear the anti-democratic nature and lavish lifestyle of Russia’s governing clique.³²⁶ Within legal constraints of free societies, Russian media penetration into the West should be monitored and where possible, constrained, based on national security justifications. The best way to limit Russian effectiveness is to publically identify agents of Russian influence operating in the West, including proxies

³²⁵ Nicholas J. Cull, “What the U.S. Can Learn from its Cold War Fight Against Kremlin Propaganda,” *Washington Post*, January 13, 2017, accessed April 12, 2017, https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2017/01/13/will-steroids-help-u-s-counter-propaganda-bigger-isnt-always-better/?utm_term=.4612d8784663.

³²⁶ Volodmyr Ogrysko, *Russian Information and Propaganda War: Some Methods and Forms to Counteract* (Riga, Latvia: North Atlantic Treaty Organization Strategic Communications Centre of Excellence, 2016).

like WikiLeaks.³²⁷ As discussed earlier the 2015 “SOF Support to Political Warfare” White Paper provides a useful blueprint for aggressive U.S. efforts to respond to this threat in Europe and worldwide.³²⁸ In 2016, a new effort to move in this direction began with the establishment of the Global Engagement Center at the State Department.³²⁹

One success, which like its world-renowned educational system is very difficult to repeat elsewhere is in Finland. A small, ethnically homogenous country, Finland has been successfully resisting Russian efforts through a multi-pronged response strategy. There was a national recognition by the country’s leadership of Russian efforts dating to 2015 and a fully coordinated intra-governmental campaign to identify and respond. The overall strategy centered on utilizing the “critical thinking skills among the Finnish population and a coherent government response.” To Finland, Russian actions are viewed by government policy as a threat akin to actual war.³³⁰ Finland developed a narrative of national opposition to counter that put forth by the Russians. The Finnish population has a shared understanding of the existential threat it faces based on the long history of conflict with Russia. The Baltic states of Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia have a similar

³²⁷ Office of the Director of National Intelligence, Background to “*Assessing Russian Activities and Intentions in Recent U.S. Elections*”: *The Analytic Process and Cyber Incident Attribution* (Washington, DC: Office of the Director of National Intelligence, January 6, 2017), accessed May 4, 2017, https://www.dni.gov/files/documents/ICA_2017_01.pdf, 2.

³²⁸ USSOCOM, “SOF Support to Political Warfare,” 1.

³²⁹ U.S. Department of State, “Global Engagement Center,” accessed April 20, 2017, <https://www.state.gov/r/gec>.

³³⁰ Reid Standish, “Why Is Finland Able to Fend Off Putin’s Information War?” *Foreign Policy*, March 1, 2017, accessed March 10, 2017, <http://foreignpolicy.com/2017/03/01/why-is-finland-able-to-fend-off-putins-information-war/>.

shared understanding of the threat. They have also shown a fierce resistance to Russian Hybrid Warfare attacks. The recent French elections may show how to resist Russian efforts. The May 2017 French presidential election witnessed a massive effort by Russia and her allies to influence the election, but this effort was widely reported in domestic and international media. On social media, Russian “twitter bots” or “active amplifiers” were extremely active, spreading anti-Macron and pro-Le Pen messages.³³¹ The moderate, anti-Russian candidate Emmanuel Macron won over the Russian-financed extreme Right candidate, Marie Le Pen.³³² Multiple factors contribute to this victory, but there was wide awareness of Russian activities among the public and media and those efforts were reported and identified prior to the vote.

Any strategy to combat a state or non-state led campaign of Political Warfare must be based on ability by the population and a free media to differentiate disinformation or propaganda from actual news. It is also critical that free societies respond to this aggression by developing campaigns in response, illuminating the hypocrisy of the aggressor authoritarian states. Political Warfare is warfare. It is intended to operate below that of conventional hostility to not trigger normal responses to attack. Nations and their citizens must understand and respond to these actions with the same level of coordinated efforts as was seen during the Cold War.

³³¹ Atlantic Council’s Digital Forensic Research Lab, “The Kremlin’s Audience in France,” Medium Corporation, accessed April 14, 2017, <https://medium.com/dfrlab/the-kremlins-audience-in-france-884a80515f8b>.

³³² Gabriel Gatehouse, “Marine Le Pen: Who’s Funding France’s Far Right?” *BBC*, April 3, 2017, accessed April 4, 2017, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-39478066>.

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