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**NAVAL WAR COLLEGE
Newport, RI**

**The Combatant Commander for Intelligence: Addressing the Operational
Intelligence Challenge**

By

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A paper submitted to the faculty of the Naval War College in partial satisfaction of the requirements of the Department of Joint Military Operations.

The contents of this paper reflect my own personal views and are not necessarily endorsed by the Naval War College or the Department of the Navy.

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17 May 2005

Abstract

This paper examines the proposed establishment of a Combatant Command for Intelligence (INTCOM), being advocated by Senators Saxby Chambliss and Bill Nelson. Their bill, entitled the “Military Intelligence Reorganization Act of 2005,” would have significant impact on joint intelligence operations. This paper examines the requirements for successfully designing an effective unified headquarters, which would improve intelligence support to operational commanders.

To be effective, INTCOM must be efficiently designed to support the specific requirements of the warfighting commanders. In this context, the paper will analyze the chain of command and responsibilities of the COMINTCOM; provide a detailed functional task analysis of the requirements for the INTCOM headquarters; study the requirements to reorganize intelligence forces and functions within the current unified command structure based on the establishment of INTCOM; and, finally, recommend a course of action for effective implementation of the legislation. This study concludes that given the current challenges involved in the execution of GWOT, as well as the lessons learned from current operations ongoing in Iraq, Afghanistan, and elsewhere, the formation of a centralized command and control element for intelligence has the potential to provide significant benefit to joint force commanders.

Introduction

Although intelligence has been important to American military commanders since the Revolutionary War, recent military operations in Afghanistan and Iraq highlight the elevated importance of intelligence in modern combat. Indeed, the “new defense strategy rests on a foundation of transformed intelligence capabilities.”¹

The inability of the US intelligence community to accurately predict and prevent the terrorist attacks of September 11, as well as the numerous intelligence “failures” connected to operations in Afghanistan and Iraq, have generated several inquiries and investigations of the intelligence agencies and systems. As a result, Congress has directed a host of changes to the national intelligence structure, the most prominent being the appointment of the National Director of Intelligence (DNI). Congress confirmed the first DNI on 21 April 2005, and his supporting staff and facilities are being established in the Washington, DC area. While the office has been established and leadership has been assigned, it will be some time before the DNI can execute his primary tasks or can practically effect any specific authorities, processes, and relationships within the intelligence community.

In addition to the national level inquiries that have focused on strategic level intelligence issues, a great deal of scrutiny has been directed at the operational and tactical levels of warfare. The Department of Defense (DoD) and military services have implemented a number of major changes to force structure and organizational procedures that are intended to improve support to combat operations. Congress has also examined a number of proposals addressing perceived shortcomings in operational intelligence; of these, none would have a greater impact on operational level intelligence than “S. 2778, A Bill To Amend Title 10, United States Code, To Provide For The Establishment Of A Unified Command For Military Intelligence; Military Intelligence Reorganization Act of 2005.”²

This legislation, being proposed by US Senators Saxby Chambliss and Bill Nelson, would direct the formation of a Combatant Command for Intelligence (INTCOM). As stated in their proposed bill, the primary reason for the formation of this headquarters would be to decrease the span of control for the DNI by providing a central DoD command to coordinate the activities of the military intelligence organizations. The need to reduce the span of control/coordination for the DNI appears to be the primary force motivating this initiative. The legislation does not provide any additional justification or benefit from the formation of INTCOM, nor does it provide much specific information regarding the intended functions for this combatant command.

When identical legislation proposing a unified intelligence command was proposed in September 2004, I argued that the formation of a combatant command for intelligence was an unnecessary action and one that did not specifically address the Congressman's concerns. I labeled the INTCOM an "unnecessary empire" and argued that the formation of this organization would be counterproductive and would degrade the effectiveness of the joint intelligence system. Rather than contending the need to establish INTCOM, this study will take a more positive approach and will examine the requirements for successfully designing an effective unified headquarters that would improve intelligence support to operational warfighters. There is ample justification for making changes to the current DoD intelligence process, and maintaining the focus on the operational commander's requirements should be paramount. As Anthony Cordesman writes in his latest study of the war in Afghanistan, "much of the U.S. combat experience in Afghanistan argues for . . . using ISR and C4I/IBM assets to improve support to the theater and tactical commanders."³ LTC(R) Peters made a more direct and critical assessment when he recently stated, "Military intelligence is broken. Despite some fine tactical

improvisation, it's undeniable that our military intelligence services, as presently configured, are incapable of providing the intense, incisive and imaginative support combat commanders require.”⁴

Considering the current challenges involved in the execution of GWOT, as well as the lessons learned from current operations ongoing in Iraq, Afghanistan, and elsewhere, the formation of a centralized command and control element for operational intelligence has the potential to provide significant benefit. In order to be effective, the command must be efficiently designed to support the warfighting commanders. Most critically, the chain of command and responsibilities of the COMINTCOM must be carefully considered. The role of the headquarters in relation to the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS), other combatant commands, the DNI, and its subordinate intelligence organizations must be specifically defined. Next a detailed functional task analysis of the requirements for the INTCOM headquarters must be completed and a critical comparison with existing functional commands (TRANSCOM, STRATCOM, and SOCOM) done to provide guidelines by which the INTCOM could be established. The INTCOM mission must be clearly specified, in DoD/Joint terms rather than vague political jargon; and the headquarters must provide “value added” to the current operational intelligence system. The relationship between the other unified commands and INTCOM and the specific allocation of forces associated with these relationships must be carefully designed and documented to provide optimal support to the primary consumer of operational intelligence, the combatant commanders conducting military operations. In addition, the current joint intelligence operations structure in the existing unified commands must be reorganized and intelligence forces and functions reassigned based on the establishment of INTCOM. Finally, a course of action for effective implementation of the legislation must be developed. While there are a number of feasible

potential structures, reorganization of the existing Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) would be the most efficient; and much of the necessary organization and informational procedures already exist in that organization.

Chain of Command

First, DoD, with input from all the military intelligence components, must define the chain of command and responsibilities for the COMINTCOM. This will be the foundation upon which procedures will be developed for the execution of the command's assigned intelligence tasks. As current joint doctrine and legislation directs, the combatant commanders work directly for the national command authority (NCA); the Unified Action Armed Forces specifically states that the NCA exercise authority and control of the Armed forces through a single chain of command which runs from the NCA to the COCOMs for missions and forces assigned to their commands.⁵ However, the wording of the proposed legislation specifies a direct relationship between the DNI and the COMINTCOM and includes the DNI in the defense intelligence system at the same level as the Secretary of Defense (SecDef) or CJCS. The bill, which would dramatically undermine the current unified command structure, directs COMINTCOM to:

Carry out intelligence collection and analysis activities in response to requests from the Director of National Intelligence and to serve as the principle advisor to the Secretary of Defense, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and the Director of National Intelligence on all matters relating to military intelligence.⁶

In order to maintain an effective military chain of command, and to ensure unity of both command and effort, the COMINTCOM should operate similarly to the other combatant commanders. The COMINTCOM would carry out intelligence collection and analysis, as directed by the NCA (President or Sec Def), in response to requests from the DNI through the Department of Defense. While COMINTCOM could assume the responsibilities as the primary advisor to the SecDef and CJCS for intelligence matters, the DNI has an assigned deputy

Director for Military Operations (a three star intelligence officer) who should act as his primary staff advisor. As the commander of the DoDs primary intelligence organization, COMINTCOM's chain of command must be established with the emphasis on conducting joint military intelligence support to the unified commands.

Once the chain of command is clearly established, the responsibilities of the COMINTCOM must be better defined and must be more in line with the primary responsibilities traditionally assigned to a combatant commander. Unfortunately, by design or through ignorance, the primary duties assigned to the COMINTCOM, as outlined in the proposed legislation are administrative support tasks and relate to the specified non-doctrinal relationship with the DNI, who is not in the INTCOM chain of command. The current proposal specifies that in addition to carrying out DNI requests and acting as an advisor, the COMINTCOM has responsibility for:

- Developing strategy, doctrine, and tactics; and establishing priorities for military intelligence in harmony with national priorities established by the Director of National Intelligence and approved by the President.

- Ensuring the interoperability of intelligence sharing within the Department of Defense and between the Department of Defense and the intelligence community as a whole, as directed by the Director of National Intelligence.

- Preparing and submitting to the Secretary of Defense and the Director of National Intelligence recommendations and budget proposals for military intelligence forces and activities.

- Validating requirements for military intelligence activities.

- Formulating and submitting requirements to other commanders of the unified combatant commands to support military intelligence activities.⁷

These primary tasks fail to adequately address the operational intelligence responsibilities of COMINTCOM. In order to more effectively articulate the warfighting tasks of the intelligence commander, his specified duties should be rewritten and should focus on the joint intelligence mission and support to military operations. Both current joint doctrine and existing combatant command headquarters provide the model for establishing the INTCOM

responsibilities. JP 0-2, describes the primary functions of the unified commander: Plan and conduct military operations; maintain the preparedness of the command; carry out assigned missions, tasks, and responsibilities; assign tasks to and direct coordination among subordinate commands; and communicate with service chiefs, Chairman of the JCS, and subordinate elements.⁸ For all other unified commanders, the responsibilities for their particular positions are based directly on the warfighting, joint military tasks that they are expected to execute. For example, the Cohen-Nunn Amendment to the DoD Authorization Act of 1987 states that the primary focus of the combatant commander for USSOCOM is responsibility for all special operations: “the commander of the special operations command shall be responsible for, and shall have the authority to conduct, all affairs of such command relating to special operations activities.”⁹ He has other duties, directly aligned with his primary command responsibility, the most prominent of which are developing strategy, doctrine, and tactics; preparing program recommendations and budget proposals for special operations; exercising authority, direction, and control over the expenditure of funds; training assigned forces; and ensuring interoperability.”¹⁰

In line with the current responsibilities of the other functional combatant commanders, COMINTCOM should have specified duties that focus directly on improving operational intelligence. The commander of the intelligence command shall be responsible for, and shall have the authority to conduct, all affairs of such command relating to ISR operations activities. In addition, COMINTCOM should be responsible for developing intelligence strategy, doctrine, and tactics, including the preparation of intelligence supporting plans (referred to as campaign plans); preparing and submitting to the Secretary of Defense program recommendations and budget proposals for intelligence forces and programs and for other forces assigned to the

intelligence command; exercising authority, direction, and control over the expenditure of funds; training assigned forces; and ensuring the interoperability of equipment and forces.

INTCOM Headquarters Functions

Once the correct chain of command is specified and precise responsibilities for the commander are outlined, the functional role of the INTCOM headquarters can be effectively addressed. Because the INTCOM is a functional rather than a geographic combatant command, the intelligence operational requirements must be carefully factored in the headquarters design. In establishing the INTCOM, DoD must carefully examine the operational/joint concepts executed by a functional combatant command, which are applicable to an intelligence organization. This will tailor the organization of the command around the exact tasks the COMINTCOM will be responsible for executing in support of military operations. Secondly, the specific national level tasks must be defined and structure provided to allow the effective support of national intelligence operations. As currently written, the MICOM functions are neither operationally focused nor are they consistent with the doctrinal role of a combatant command. In accordance with the Chambliss/Nelson amendment, the principle functions of the military intelligence command are:

- To coordinate the military intelligence activities that support the Director of National Intelligence.
- To represent the Department of Defense within the intelligence community under the Director of National Intelligence.
- To ensure that intelligence collection requirements for the armed forces are communicated to, and the fulfillment of such requirements are coordinated with, the Director of National Intelligence.
- To develop new military intelligence collection capabilities.¹¹

Rather than focus on the commands role in support of national level operations, which should be an important but secondary set of functions, the INTCOM must be assigned intelligence tasks similar to those specified for USSOCOM and USTRANSCOM, the two most

mature unified commands and the ones that have functions that are most comparable to

INTCOM. More doctrinally correct and operationally relevant functions for INTCOM would be:

- Plan, coordinate, and conduct military intelligence activities.

- Develop intelligence strategy, doctrine, and tactics.

- Prepare and submit to the Secretary of Defense program recommendations and budget proposals for intelligence forces and programs and for other forces assigned to the intelligence command.

- Exercise authority, direction, and control over the expenditure of funds for forces assigned to the intelligence command; and for intelligence forces assigned to unified combatant commands other than the intelligence command.

- Train assigned forces.

- Conduct specialized courses of instruction for commissioned and noncommissioned officers.

- Ensure the interoperability of equipment and forces.

- Formulate and submit requirements for intelligence support.

From this more effective functional alignment, the methods and procedures for operationalizing joint intelligence can best be formulated. In this regard, joint logistics doctrine and lessons learned from operations in Iraq and Afghanistan provide an effective model that could be applied to future intelligence operations. Directing current operations and planning future operations are the two most critical and essential functions of all unified commands. For INTCOM, directing intelligence operations in support of warfighting HQs and planning future intelligence operations will be the most important missions. Providing centralized planning and direction of operational intelligence will be the focus of the COMINTCOM in executing his unified command mission.

In establishing processes that will allow INTCOM to effectively control current operations, joint doctrine for logistics provides a useful framework that could be applied to intelligence. JP 0-2 includes the concept of directive authority for logistics, which allows the combatant commander to: “issue directives . . . necessary to ensure the effective execution of approved operation plans. Essential measures include the optimized use or reallocation of

available resources and prevention or elimination of redundant facilities and/or overlapping functions among the Service component commands.”¹² While this directive authority over particularly service specific capabilities exists only for logistics, granting similar authorities to the INTCOM would serve the same positive benefits for intelligence. This authority would empower the COMINTCOM to direct establishment of interoperable intelligence architectures, to control and effect high demand/low density intelligence force allocation, and to ensure joint interdependence in intelligence plans and policy.

The second essential task for INTCOM will be planning intelligence support to joint operations. Current doctrine and the Joint Operational Planning and Execution System (JOPES) includes intelligence concepts within the main operations order and in the functional annexes, but it does not provide for the execution of more complete and comprehensive process. As combat operations in Iraq and Afghanistan have proven, the type of war that the US is fighting now and will probably fight in the future will place an increasing burden on the intelligence system. While past historians and military pundits might argue that, “amateurs study strategy, professionals study logistics,” future war will place the same emphasis on intelligence planning and integration at the operational level. In this area, joint logistics doctrine and practice again provide a model for developing effective intelligence plans. JP 0-2 and other pubs indicate the necessity of developing separate functional support plans for operational joint logistics and mobility. This process mandates that a high level of emphasis is placed on logistics planning and support, and it ensures that the combatant commander’s operational concepts are logistically feasible. These plans are separate from the logistics portions of basic operational plans and are reviewed at the highest levels within DoD to ensure long-term viability and supportability. JP 0-2 requires the joint logistics system to:

Prepare joint logistic and mobility plans to support those joint operations and recommend the assignment of logistic and mobility responsibilities to the Armed Forces in accordance with those logistics and mobility plans.

Ascertain the logistics support available to execute the joint operation and campaign plans of the combatant commanders.

Review and recommend to the Secretary of defense appropriate logistics guidance for the military services that, if implemented, will result in logistics readiness consistent with approved plans.¹³

The same rigor and emphasis must be applied to the intelligence planning process and the INTCOM commander and staff must be empowered to execute the planning functions.

Requiring the COMINTCOM, assisted by the DoD intelligence community, to produce a comprehensive intelligence plan for supported combatant commands would ensure an effective use of scarce resources, would improve Intelligence Architecture and interdependence, would focus force development on combatant command requirements, and would improve planning for intelligence Unit deployments/forces allocation. In practical terms, this concept has already been exercised in the CENTCOM AOR with positive results. The Joint Staff J2 prepared an Intelligence Campaign Plan for Iraq with the support of the other combatant command J2s and under the supervision of the Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence (USD (I)).

Commenting on the success of the initial intelligence planning efforts, the Deputy USD (I), LTG William Boykin, stated: “An important step toward operationalizing intelligence is the development of intelligence campaign plans rather than relegating intelligence to an annex in the operational campaign plan.”¹⁴ This comprehensive intelligence support plan was written in collaboration with the CENTCOM and CJTF-7 intelligence staffs and has been in use since its completion on 14 June 2004. The process used to develop the plan and the techniques involved in its execution provide a useful model for implementing intelligence support for future operations.

DoD Reorganization

Once the basic operational and planning functions of INTCOM have been documented, the current joint intelligence operations structure in DoD hierarchy, JCS staff, and the existing unified commands must be reorganized in order to reallocate or reassign intelligence forces and functions based on the inclusion of INTCOM. This will be accomplished by modifying the current JCS and unified command process to incorporate the capabilities of the INTCOM; by reorganizing intelligence missions and forces to improve efficiency and unity of effort of the intelligence mission; and by purposely eliminating redundant or conflicting organizations and structure that are no longer necessary as a result of the formation of INTCOM. In order for the establishment of a combatant command for intelligence to be effective and to improve military intelligence operations (operationally and strategically) a number of critical changes must be made to the current DoD Intelligence structure.

As the higher echelon in the chain of command, the SecDef would maintain statutory oversight and command and control of INTCOM. Additionally, the USD (I) would still have responsibilities for dealing with the national level intelligence community and would be the more effective choice to become the day-to-day interface with the DNI's office. Establishing INTCOM would allow DoD to eliminate unnecessary redundancy in the current military intelligence structure directing operational support to the combatant commanders. While this primarily effects the JCS J2 organization, any concept of operations must incorporate DIA and such organizations as the National Military Joint Intelligence Center (NMJIC) into the INTCOM structure and reallocate task responsibility to the COMINTCOM. With the formation of INTCOM, functions could be transferred from the existing DoD or JCS J2 structure. For example, the office of the Undersecretary of Defense for Intelligence would still responsible for:

Providing oversight and policy guidance for all DoD intelligence activities
Advising the DoD leadership on the performance of national and defense intelligence capabilities
Ensuring these [intelligence] organizations support the missions of the Department and fully satisfy the needs of the DNI
Coordinating DoD intelligence and intelligence-related policy, plans, programs, requirements and resource allocations
Ensuring that intelligence activities of DoD are conducted jointly, as appropriate.¹⁵

The COMINTCOM could replace the USD (I) as the senior DoD agent representing the military in numerous interagency activities. Currently, in this capacity, the COMINTCOM could replace the USD (I) in:

Exercising authority, direction, and control over the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA), the National Imagery and Mapping Agency (NIMA), the National Reconnaissance Organization (NRO), the National Security Agency (NSA), the Defense Security Service (DSS), and the DoD Counterintelligence Field Activity (CIFA).

Advising the Combatant Commanders on the performance of national and defense intelligence capabilities

Ensuring these [intelligence] organizations are manned, trained, equipped and structured to support the missions of the Department and fully satisfy the needs of the DNI¹⁶

Once INTCOM is established, that HQ would provide the direction and control for all assigned military intelligence organizations while USD (I) would interface with external agencies, including the DNI. Reallocating primary responsibilities and tasks as illustrated above would eliminate redundancy and would improve operational efficiency. In addition to reorganizing the DoD structure, a number of the intelligence tasks executed by the JCS J2 would have to be assigned to COMINTCOM. Currently the JCS J2 provides the link between the joint force headquarters and DoD intelligence elements and acts as the central intelligence staff coordinator. The Joint Staff J2 works closely with the Secretary of Defense's staff, combatant commanders, and the services to provide staff oversight and coordination. The J2 has specific responsibility and authority relating to the conduct of military intelligence operations. "The J2 staff provides central interface with the combatant commands for all intelligence plans,

assessments, targeting, crisis management, and other intelligence specific requirements.”¹⁷

While the J2 would continue to provide much of the staff coordination, INTCOM would assume responsibility for the operational functions. The INTCOM staff would execute the planning tasks, interface with the supported combatant commands, and execute much of the intelligence operational coordination. It is likely that the INTCOM staff would subsume or incorporate elements of the JCS J2 into its operations section as a way to efficiently transition the joint intelligence system.

In addition to reallocating intelligence tasks internal to the DoD and JCS J2 staffs, there will be a requirement to eliminate duplication between INTCOM and the other two combatant commands with significant intelligence related missions. USJFCOM and STRATCOM have been assigned specific operational intelligence tasks that should be transferred to the intelligence combatant commander.

In the 2002 change to the Unified Command Plan, USSTRATCOM was assigned the mission of executing global ISR. To execute that mission, STRATCOM created a “component command in the Washington, D.C. area devoted to executing that new mission, which encompasses planning, coordinating, and integrating the Defense Department’s worldwide ISR operations”¹⁸ To execute planning and operational control of ISR, STRATCOM established the Joint Force Component Commander-ISR. As a central concept of their plan, they named the director of the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) as the JTF ISR commander. STRATCOM’s intent behind the centralization and C2 design was much similar to the intent behind the formation of INTCOM: “to integrate the operations and intelligence elements of the DoD ISR mission, provide a holistic view of DoD ISR, and to increase the synergy between the requirements, operations, and commanders.”¹⁹ Management and C2 of operational ISR would

clearly be a task assigned to the INTCOM commander and staff to plan and execute and STRATCOM would have to be relieved of this operational requirement.

In addition, INTCOMs relationship with USJFCOM must be codified and intelligence support roles delineated. While JFCOM has some unique training and doctrine development functions that INTCOM would not assume, there are a number of intelligence specific train and equip tasks that might be transferred to INTCOM in order to improve unity of effort and to reduce unnecessary redundancy. These tasks would include realigning tasks currently done by JFCOM's Joint Transformation Command – Intelligence. The tasks listed below would be shifted from JFCOM responsibility to INTCOM, centralizing intelligence proponentcy at one headquarters:

- Creating a joint intelligence environment for experimentation, training, and operations.
- Integrating intelligence concepts and enablers for prototypes such as the standing joint force headquarters (SJFHQ).
- Serving as the test site for intelligence products and tools. These tests ensure DoD, national, and allied security and interoperability requirements are satisfied.
- Operationalizing lessons learned including the Global War on Terror, Operation Iraqi Freedom, and Operation Enduring Freedom.
- Working on joint intelligence planning concept development.
- Conducting efforts with USJFCOM J2, in partnership with the director of the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence (USD-I) to bridge operations and intelligence.²⁰

Course of Action – Formation of INTCOM

Finally, reorganization of the existing DIA would be an efficient and relatively straightforward course of action for forming the core of INTCOM. The command structure including a majority of the functional entities necessary to conduct operational intelligence command already exist. The relationships between DIA and the other national and service intelligence organizations are in place and functional. The current JCS/DIA structure already provides the current intelligence functionality that would become the responsibility of

COMINTCOM if the proper task organization and functional responsibilities are established. As LTG Boykin stated in a recent conference, “We’ve got to operationalize intelligence . . . we’ve got to recognize intel as a war-fighting component.” Boykin further indicated that, “the Defense Intelligence Agency would become an operational unit, as the Joint Intelligence Operations Command for the national level, and there would be ‘tightly integrated’ joint intelligence operations centers at lower levels as well.”²¹

In addition, the current Director of DIA is already responsible for and executing a number of the duties that would be assigned to the COMINTCOM. Considering the current requirements of the office and the senior level leadership the position already provides, the DIRDIA would be a logical candidate to become the INTCOM commander. As the directive forming DIA states, the director already has primary responsible to carry out the following duties:

- Establishing, operating and controlling all organizations and activities assigned to DIA.
- Assigning tasks and issuing instructions and guidance to DoD Components.

- Having free and direct access to and communicating with DoD Components, the U.S. Intelligence Community, and other executive departments and agencies as necessary.

- Obtaining from any DoD Component such information as may be necessary for the performance of assigned functions.

- Entering into agreements on intelligence exchanges and cooperation with foreign military intelligence services as required to fulfill the DIA mission.²²

While the DIRDIA’s authorities are clearly administrative, the specified duties relate closely to the responsibilities envisioned for INTCOM and the position could be easily adapted to serve as COMINTCOM. In addition, incorporating the JCS J2 elements of DIA into the INTCOM staff would serve as the final integration requirement. The J2 is already organized with many of the structures that would be existent in the INTCOM HQ, and these staff elements would be well suited to assume the duties within the unified command. Specifically, the J2 contains elements that conduct Crisis Management, Crisis Operations, Targeting Support, as well

as Assessment, Doctrine, Requirements, and Capabilities;²³ these sections could be efficiently integrated within the INTCOM staff. Incorporating these existing offices, which are already conducting operational direction, plans, administrative functions, doctrine, and requirements development would be both efficient and effective in ensuring a smooth transition.

Establishing the “Intelligence Components” integral to the other unified commands would be the final requirement for forming the INTCOM organization. The process of developing these elements is already ongoing and the establishment of functional intelligence commands at each of the other combatant headquarters would create synergy of intelligence support and provide the component headquarters structure to ensure efficient command and control of intelligence operations. The concept, while not incorporated into the proposed plan for establishing INTCOM, is already being implemented and is another step forward in improving intelligence support to the combatant commanders. Under the current initiative, “each command will have a general or admiral directing an intelligence apparatus known as a Joint Intelligence and Operation Command, or JIOC, charged with gathering and analyzing intelligence collected in that theater of operations.”²⁴ The first JIOC has already been established at USCENTCOM and has been instrumental in providing intelligence support to multinational forces in Iraq and Afghanistan. Additionally, the combatant command J2 would be dual-hatted and would have “equivalent authority to the other senior Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine and special operations commanders.”²⁵ This dramatic step of giving component status and authority to the intelligence leadership would significantly affect intelligence support to the unified commander.

Conclusion

While the formation of INTCOM has the potential to improve operational intelligence support to the warfighting combatant commanders, I recommend that any additional major changes to the intelligence system be delayed until the DNI and corresponding bureaucracy are formed and have been functional for a period of time. This would allow the current chain of command and intelligence structures, which already provide adequate support to the operational commanders, time to establish procedures to operate with and support the DNI. Any major overall of the joint intelligence process should begin with an informed assessment of the requirement for INTCOM with a basis of knowledge supported by the DNI.

If Congress mandates the immediate formation of INTCOM, before the DNI is fully established, then DoD must take steps to ensure that no harm is done to the current system which is fully engaged in combat operations across the world. As the Congressional study examining intelligence reform for the 21st century indicates, many national policy makers will view the reorganization of intelligence in a way that would be extremely detrimental to combat forces. Most critically, the detailed execution plan for INTCOM must define very clearly those tasks that the INTCOM will execute in support of strategic/national missions. There will be tremendous pressure, particularly from politicians or national level policy makers unfamiliar with the scope of military intelligence requirements, to try to emphasize strategic intelligence requirements at the expense of the operational forces. As one study previously completed for the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence stated:

Support to the warfighter is the area of main interest for DoD and the IC at present. . . the use of the term "support to the warfighter" is extremely problematic. . . . Moreover, the term suggests that the primary focus of intelligence should be on the actual need to use force (i.e., "fight a war"), when we continue to believe that successful foreign and national security policy is designed to preclude such an event if at all possible.²⁶

Reorganization of the US intelligence apparatus has been ongoing since 1947, with newfound urgency since the attacks of September 11, 2001. While the establishment of the National Intelligence Director will have an impact on military intelligence operations, the establishment of an INTCOM would have a much more significant and practical effect on military intelligence at the operational and tactical levels. To truly provide “value added,” rather than just becoming an additional layer of bureaucracy, the functions and organization of INTCOM must be established with the focus on improving operational intelligence support to the other combatant commanders as the overriding priority. INTCOM must be established with an effective chain of command, proper functional design, and in coordination with an efficient DoD intelligence reorganization. If these factors are considered in building this organization, then the potential for INTCOM to significantly improve the effectiveness of joint intelligence operations is great. Establishing a unified command for intelligence would provide the solid foundation for “operizationalizing intelligence” and would enable a more effective integration of intelligence into joint operations at the unified command level.

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Notes

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