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14. ABSTRACT There is precious little in the way of formal guidance to the geographic combatant commanders (CCDRs) to manage and ensure synchronization of theater Strategic Communication (SC) initiatives with larger Department of Defense (DoD) and U.S. Government efforts. This paper explores the broad requirements to the CCDRs to link theater and national-level SC efforts. It further establishes the dearth of guidance to them on specific themes to emphasize, and how to coordinate themes and messages for emerging issues. Despite these gaps in guidance, CCDRs have continued to practice effective SC within their areas of responsibility fully in concert with larger DoD and USG initiatives. The efforts of some key CCDR staffs to craft organic processes and structures to bridge existing gaps in guidance are further explored. Finally, this effort concludes with an examination of forthcoming DoD and Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) initiatives to formally and permanently overcome current gaps in guidance.					
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**STRATEGIC COMMUNICATION AND THE
GEOGRAPHIC COMBATANT COMMANDERS:
THE CURRENT STATE OF AFFAIRS**

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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13 February, 2006

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Abstract

There is precious little in the way of formal guidance to the geographic combatant commanders (CCDRs) to manage and ensure synchronization of theater Strategic Communication (SC) initiatives with larger Department of Defense (DoD) and U.S. Government efforts. This paper explores the broad requirements for the CCDRs to link theater and national-level SC efforts. It further establishes the dearth of guidance to them on specific themes to emphasize, and how to coordinate themes and messages for emerging issues. Despite these gaps in guidance, CCDRs have continued to practice effective SC within their areas of responsibility fully in concert with larger DoD and USG initiatives. The efforts of some key CCDR staffs to craft organic processes and structures to bridge existing gaps in guidance are further explored. Finally, this effort concludes with an examination of forthcoming DoD and Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) initiatives to formally and permanently overcome current gaps in guidance. This paper recommends that DoD continue to press ahead in efforts to solidify its role within the overall USG SC effort, and that subordinate CCDR staffs continue to similarly press ahead in defining the limits of how SC can best support their overall theater responsibilities. Finally, those CCDR staffs still struggling to formalize effective SC processes and structures must both embrace the forthcoming guidance toward that end, and reach out to the CCDR staffs who have emerged in the lead thus far.

INTRODUCTION

“...there is much to be gained by the Department [of Defense] preparing, on a priority basis, to act as a full and essential partner in the reconstruction of a capable and effective U.S. Government process for re-capturing the strategic information high ground.”¹

At the operational level of war, the factor of space occupies a critical and essential role in theater campaign planning. Not only must today's combatant commander (CCDR) precisely weigh the complex effects of sea, air, and land features, he must additionally factor such nebulous spatial concepts as the global commons of “cyberspace” and the “information environment” into all planning efforts. Indeed, many argue that modern warfare has become as much about the effects of information and ideas as about the force of arms. By this reasoning, it is upon these newly-defined conceptual terrain features of the modern battle space that ultimate victory will be determined. With the nation currently engaged in a war of ideas covering a global battle space, each CCDR must ensure his strategic communication (SC) campaign -- his “joint operational fires” in the battle of ideas -- is not executed in a vacuum. Only through precise coordination and synchronization of SC themes and messages across and throughout the entire U. S. Government (USG) can global perceptions be managed and shaped to support national policy aims. The USG must speak with one credible, honest voice when communicating its foreign policy aims, goals, and intentions to the rest of the world.

THESIS

At present, there is precious little in the way of formal guidance to the CCDRs to manage and ensure synchronization of their theater SC initiatives with larger Department of

¹ Department of Defense, Report of the Defense Science Board (DSB) Task Force on Strategic Communication (Washington, DC: September, 2005), 82.

Defense (DoD) and USG efforts. This paper will explore the broad requirements for the CCDRs to link theater and national-level SC efforts. Beyond that, it will reveal the dearth of guidance to them on specific themes to emphasize, and how to coordinate themes and messages for emerging issues. Despite these gaps in guidance, some CCDRs have continued to practice effective SC within their areas of responsibility fully in concert with larger DoD and USG initiatives. The efforts of some key CCDR staffs to craft organic processes and structures to bridge existing gaps in guidance will further be explored. Finally, this effort will conclude with an examination of forthcoming DoD and Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) initiatives to formally and permanently overcome current gaps in guidance.

Former Commander of U. S. Central Command, General Anthony Zinni, once said of the broken USG interagency process, “we use chewing gum and bailing wire to keep it together.”² In the context of SC, today’s DoD and geographic CCDRs seem to have retained a bit of that tinkering spirit. If, as noted above, winning the war of ideas requires recapturing the strategic information high ground, the assault has indeed begun.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Although cumbersome, analysis of the topic of SC necessarily requires a common understanding of the associated terminology. Despite the necessity, producing an agreed-upon USG interagency definition remains an incomplete task. There is currently no single USG definition of SC. However, at the highest level the National Security Council (NSC) in February 2005 defined SC as, “the synchronized coordination of statecraft, public affairs, public diplomacy, military information operations, and other activities, reinforced by

² Dana Priest. “A Four-Star Foreign Policy?” Washington Post, 28 September, 2000, sec. 1, p. 1.

political, economic, military, and other actions, to advance U.S. foreign policy objectives.”³

Forged by the NSC, one could presume this to be the definition most likely to be supported by the Commander in Chief.

More significant to the CCDRs, however, are recent efforts within DoD to reach consensus on a definition for SC. Numerous definitions have been offered in various policy and doctrinal sources in recent years, to include: CJCS-approved National Military Strategy (NMS) in May, 2004, Change 1 to the Joint Strategic Capabilities Plan (JSCP) of January, 2005, the National Military Strategic Plan for the War on Terror (NMSP-WOT) of March, 2005, and the Contingency Planning Guidance (CPG) signed by the President in September, 2005. All offered slight variations in definitions and references to SC, contributing to an overall understanding within DoD of the general concept.

It was within the context of the just-completed Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR) 2005 process that the previous definitional attempts coalesced into a widely-accepted DoD definition. With the QDR Report just released, work continues on a supporting “Strategic Communication Execution Roadmap” to further plot required progress for DoD in internalizing the concept of SC. This roadmap effort defines strategic communication as, “Focused U.S. government efforts to understand and engage key audiences in order to create, strengthen or preserve conditions favorable for the advancement of national interests and policies through the use of coordinated themes, plans, programs, and products integrated with the actions of all elements of national power.”⁴

Though not yet finally approved, this definition is now uncontested within DoD.

³ Joint Chiefs of Staff, Strategic Communication...and the J-5 role...from a Joint Staff/J-5 Perspective (Brief). (23 March 2005), Slide 4.

⁴ Joint Chiefs of Staff. DRAFT Enclosure B to Joint Operation Planning and Execution System (JOPES) Volume I. DRAFT CJCSM 3122.01. (Washington, DC: 31 January 2006), 18.

Forthcoming JCS guidance⁵ (discussed below) envisions effective SC as the product of extremely close cooperation between Information Operations (particularly Psychological Operations), Public Affairs, and Defense Support to Public Diplomacy staff and planning elements. Therefore, complete understanding of SC requires formal definition of these critical component functions.

Information Operations (IO) are defined as:

“The integrated employment of the core capabilities of Electronic Warfare, Computer Network Operations, Psychological Operations, Military Deception, and Operations Security, in concert with specified supporting capabilities (information assurance, physical security, counter-intelligence and physical attack) and related capabilities (public affairs and civil-military operations) to disrupt, corrupt, or usurp adversarial human and automated decision-making while protecting our own.”⁶

Because of its specific applicability to SC, Psychological Operations (PSYOP) is further defined as:

“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. The purpose of PSYOP is to induce or reinforce foreign attitudes and behavior favorable to the originator’s objectives.”⁷

The second key component of SC is Public Affairs, defined as:

“Those public information, command information, and community relations activities directed toward both the external and internal publics with interest in the Department of Defense.”

Finally, SC includes Defense Support to Public Diplomacy. Public Diplomacy is broadly defined as:

“Those overt international public information activities of the USG designed to promote U S. foreign policy objectives by seeking to understand, inform, and influence foreign audiences

⁵ Ibid., 19-20.

⁶ Joint Chiefs of Staff. DRAFT Joint Doctrine for Information Operations (Final Coordination Revision). DRAFT Joint Pub 3-13 (Washington, DC: 5 July 2005), 2.

⁷ Ibid., 8.

and opinion makers, and by broadening the dialogue between American citizens and institutions and their counterparts abroad.”⁸

More specifically, Defense Support to Public Diplomacy (DSPD) comprises DoD’s support to USG public diplomacy efforts, and includes “the ability to understand, engage, influence, and inform key foreign audiences through words and actions to foster understanding of U. S. policy and advance U. S. interests, and to collaboratively shape the operational environment.” Examples include public information activities and information operations such as the operation of websites, radio, print, and television outlets to assist the Department of State and/or selected host nations in reaching foreign target audiences.⁹

In addition to the DoD-accepted definitions outlined above, a recently-published report by the Defense Science Board (DSB) on SC also included a fourth core instrument, namely International Broadcasting Services. These it defines as “services funded by governments to transmit news, information, public affairs programs, and entertainment to global audiences via AM/FM and shortwave radio, satellite television, and web-based systems.” Cited examples of U. S. international broadcasting include Voice of America, and the more recent Radio Sawa and Al Hurra Arabic language offerings.¹⁰ Although this additional category is not separately embraced within the current DoD definition of SC, its functionality is subsumed within the fields of Information Operations and Public Affairs. It is additionally worth noting because this DSB report was one of the few early formal publications on the topic, and as such served as the background primer on SC for many currently involved in formulating DoD SC plans and policies.

⁸ JCS. DRAFT JOPES Vol. I, Encl. B, 21.

⁹ Ibid., 21.

¹⁰ DSB Report, 12.

Prior to DoD universal acceptance of the QDR definition of SC, the Joint Staff Directorate for Strategic Plans and Policy (JS/J5) boiled down the then-working definitions to simply capture SC as “words and deeds designed to inform, influence, or change voluntary behavior of target audiences to achieve objectives.” Further, this is to be accomplished through “situational-based melding of key components,”¹¹ namely those defined above. In short, “what we do” must be coordinated with “what we say” in order to ensure all aspects of national power align towards satisfaction of strategic policy goals. This simplified working perspective, nested atop the more formal definitions offered above, succinctly enables further examination of the CCDRs’ efforts to synchronize SC messages and themes with those on the national level.

THE CURRENT STATE OF AFFAIRS

Examination of the role of the CCDRs in SC is best served by briefly touching on larger USG efforts to bring order to America’s overall SC effort. These efforts have largely been a story of starts and stops since the events of September 11th, 2001 created impetus behind a national SC effort. The White House Office of Global Communication, established in June 2002, and the NSC’s Strategic Communication Policy Coordinating Committee, formed in September of that same year, both sought to serve as the SC cornerstone upon which to anchor overarching USG efforts. However, neither organization quite lived up to its expectations, both proving “ineffectual in carrying out intended responsibilities relating to strategic communication planning, coordination, and evaluation.”¹²

¹¹ JCS/J5 Strategic Communication Brief, Slide 5.

¹² DSB Report, 26.

In tacit acknowledgement of the lack of momentum behind the national SC effort, in September, 2005, President Bush appointed long-time trusted adviser Ambassador Karen Hughes as Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs. In this role as the nation's "Public Diplomacy Czar," Hughes is chartered by the President to "coordinate the work of our administration in support of this vital mission." Further, the President stated, "Public diplomacy is the job of every member of my administration."¹³ Perhaps most significantly in this appointment, President Bush also firmly established the Department of State as the lead USG agency for SC.

Discussion of SC for the CCDRs would be incomplete without mention of early DoD efforts. Most notorious is the Department's Office of Strategic Influence (OSI), established in October of 2001 to orchestrate a "strategic information campaign in support of the war on terrorism."¹⁴ Much maligned in U. S. and foreign media as a potential source of disinformation, and amid accusations of the potential to execute psychological-type operations against U.S. citizens, Secretary Rumsfeld dissolved the office in February, 2002. If the CCDRs hoped for DoD-level guidance on SC theme and message synchronization from OSI in late 2001, they soon again found themselves left to their own initiatives.

A REVIEW OF THE CURRENT GUIDANCE...

As noted above, there is very little in the way of current guidance to the CCDRs in how to ensure theater SC messages and themes are aligned, integrated, and synchronized with DoD and USG overall efforts. This is not to say, however, that there is any doubt as to

¹³ President. Remarks at the Swearing-In Ceremony for Karen P. Hughes as Under Secretary of State for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs. Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents (12 September 2005), 1366-1369.

¹⁴ DSB Report, 26.

the requirement for ensuring such coordination occurs. The 2004 National Security Strategy and its subsequent 2005 National Defense Strategy set broad objectives for dissuading adversaries, and addressed the importance of building critical international and domestic partnerships toward that end. In slightly more detail, the 2005 Security Cooperation Guidance from the Secretary of Defense discusses countering “ideological support for terrorism,” and identifies key international partnerships within its regional annexes to guide such efforts. This document further references Defense Support to Public Diplomacy (DSPD) as a key security cooperation tool. Such broad, strategic themes provide critical theoretical underpinnings for the SC initiatives of the geographic CCDRs.

If such strategic-level guidance establishes a required foundation, it is the 2004 CJCS National Military Strategy (NMS) that goes beyond to include fairly detailed CCDR requirements for SC. Specifically, “Effective deterrence requires a strategic communication plan...The participation of combatant commanders is essential in developing a strategic communication plan that conveys U. S. intent and objective.” Further, it states, “...this strategic communications plan ensures unity of themes and messages, emphasizes success, accurately confirms or refutes external reporting on U. S. operations, and reinforces the legitimacy of U.S. goals. Combatant commanders must be actively involved in the development, execution, and support of this strategic communication campaign.”¹⁵ One could hardly consider such language anything other than a specified task.

Additionally, Change 1 to the Joint Strategic Capabilities Plan (JSCP) FY 2002, dated January 2005, also contains specific tasking to the CCDRs to conduct SC. Specifically, this document notes that the SC process must be incorporated into every phase of planning.

¹⁵ Joint Chiefs of Staff, National Military Strategy of the United States of America, (Washington, DC: March, 2005), 22.

Additionally, it states that “In accordance with the NMS, ongoing themes, messages, and actions (programs, products, and plans) should be established for all AORs and continuously updated to react to all possible contingencies and situations. These strategic themes, messages, and actions along with their proposed metrics will be closely coordinated with the Joint Staff, Office of the Secretary of Defense and when designated, the lead federal agency and/or entity for national strategic communication.”¹⁶

“CHEWING GUM AND BAILING WIRE?”

To comply with the aforementioned requirements for SC coordination and synchronization, certain geographic CCDRs have demonstrated masterful ingenuity in constructing organic staff processes and structures. Each of the five geographic CCDRs has pursued a slightly different course depending upon available resources, existing staff structure, and relative prioritization of SC within overall command efforts. Most notable are U. S. European Command (EUCOM) and U.S. Pacific Command (PACOM), who have both formally established effective staff positions, processes, and executive leadership to ensure complete synchronization of complex SC initiatives covering their expansive AORs with larger DoD and USG messages and themes.

The CCDR SC program most often cited as a “model” within DoD is that currently in place at EUCOM. Stemming from this command’s unique position as the only CCDR headquarters outside of the U.S., there is a long history of solid USG interagency relationships available to support current theater SC initiatives. This is especially true of the relationship between the EUCOM staff and Department of State (DoS) embassy personnel within each of the 91 countries within the AOR, who coordinate regularly on all matters of

¹⁶ JCS/J5 Strategic Communication Brief, Slide 13.

operations, planning, and theater engagement. These collegial relationships, coupled with the early initiative of the EUCOM staff to fully embrace the concept of theater SC in 2004 have given this geographic CCDR an enviable edge in the field.

The organic SC process in place at EUCOM further hones this edge. Staff officers representing both Information Operations and Public Affairs departments physically work in each other's offices to ensure these two critical SC components are internally synchronized on daily initiatives and activities. When daily activities sufficiently coalesce into the opportunity for a larger, cooperative SC initiative, a Strategic Communications Strategy is drawn up. These strategies, in a point-paper format and generally of a regional focus, define the purpose, target audiences, key communications points (messages and themes), delivery tactics, responsibilities, an implementation strategy, and the means for measuring effectiveness for the proposed strategy. The Draft Strategy is then tasked for staffing to all pertinent EUCOM directorates and offices, as well as embassy personnel within the proposed region for the strategy. Finally, following coordination, the strategy is reviewed at the executive level by the EUCOM Strategic Effects and Communication Council (SECC). This flag-level body is chaired by the EUCOM Chief of Staff, and includes senior level representation from across the EUCOM staff and components. Meeting bi-monthly, the SECC is chartered to synchronize and orchestrate command information activities to maximize their effectiveness. More than just a validation or approval step, the SECC additionally provides senior leader insight and feedback into proposed SC strategies, further ensuring complete synchronization of the overall effort.

The other CCDR effort most frequently cited as exemplary is that at PACOM. Here, SC coordination and synchronization is executed within the construct of the PACOM

Influence Working Group (PIWG). By definition, this body, “coordinates, synchronizes, and deconflicts strategic military communications with respect to theater activities in order to operationalize influence operations within the AOR.”¹⁷

The PIWG is organized under a three-tiered structure: Executive level, Action Officer level, and a full-time core PIWG staff. The Executive level body is chaired by PACOM J3 and J5 Flag Officers, and includes Division Chief representation from some 28 PACOM staff offices. All members of this senior body have directive authority within their respective offices. The Action Officer body includes lower-level designated representatives of the same 28 offices who work issues at a more detailed level. Finally, the core PIWG staff includes a cell leader, and a handful of planners with regional and functional expertise.

PIWG routine operations include regular AO-level meetings two to three times monthly to “plan, coordinate, synchronize, and assess full-spectrum theater influence operations.” At the discretion of the PIWG Cell Leader, SC themes and messages are elevated to the Executive body for vetting and approval, normally on a monthly basis. During times of crisis or conflict, all levels of the PIWG increase the frequency of their meetings in order to expedite theater influence activities towards resolution of the matter at hand.

The PIWG benefits greatly from its unique combination of breadth and depth across the gamut of PACOM staff expertise. With fulltime SC experts constantly steering the effort, backed up by the entire collection of diverse staff experts within the PACOM headquarters, all with the regular involvement of senior command leadership, the PIWG has structured itself for success in any influence challenge. Additionally, in codifying their efforts within a

¹⁷ Pacific Command, USPACOM Influence Working Group Terms of Reference and Synchronization Process. USPACOM Instruction 3100.8. (Camp H. M. Smith, HI: 21 September, 2004), 2.

formal command instruction, the organization has insulated itself from the whims of changing leaders and membership. This effective combination enabled the PIWG to manage the PACOM SC effort during the tsunami relief operation of early 2005 in a highly effective manner, in addition to the myriad diverse command missions occurring daily across this largest of AORs.

The successes of the EUCOM and PACOM theater SC efforts to date with such limited specific guidance from above are indeed noteworthy. Broad and multi-level mechanisms have been crafted within these two commands to not only devise organic theater SC messages and themes, but to ensure their full and complete integration with the larger efforts of the DoD and the USG as a whole. Whether resulting from the levels of resourcing available to these two prominent geographic combatant commands, or a true credit to the innovation and ingenuity of the individuals involved, the accomplishments of EUCOM and PACOM in the internalization of SC certainly rise above the level of a “chewing gum and bailing wire” solution.

FRESH AND FORTHCOMING GUIDANCE

It could be argued that the lack of specificity in formal DoD guidance on exactly how to ensure integration of theater SC messages and themes with larger efforts has given the CCDRs maximum leeway in crafting their own staff solutions. If true, it may appear that this luxury could be in jeopardy. Three key pieces of recently-released or pending guidance codify more specific direction for management of theater SC efforts for the CCDRs. Specifically, the just-released Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR), the Contingency Planning Guidance (CPG) of September, 2005, and a forthcoming revision to Enclosure B of

JOPE Volume I all define and amplify concrete SC requirements previously left out of guidance.

The hot-off-the-press QDR places much credence in SC as key to building the credibility and trust that is “essential to building trusted networks that counter ideological support for terrorism.”¹⁸ Of more specific importance to the CCDRs, the QDR pledges that DoD will strive to ensure the integration of SC efforts throughout the department, and to forge stronger links to broader policies, plans, and actions. The review also pledges to enhance tools and processes “with the goal of achieving a seamless communication across the U. S. Government.”¹⁹ Critical to achieving these QDR aims is a related “Strategic Communications Execution Roadmap” initiative within DoD that, as noted above, has resolved differences in DoD definitions of SC, but is otherwise still in development.

More specific forthcoming SC guidance to the CCDRs is contained in the Preface to the current Draft Contingency Planning Guidance (CPG). This document states, “The success of future plans depends on continuous strategic communication actions and campaigns...Combatant commanders should integrate strategic communication themes, messages, and supporting actions into planning for peacetime and contingency situations.”²⁰ More significantly, this document goes on to provide very specific guidance as to how the CCDRs will ensure synchronization of AOR-specific SC efforts with larger DoD and national efforts. The CPG states, “All plans should identify activities that support the broader USG strategic communication effort to influence foreign audiences. USD(P), in coordination with ASD(PA) will provide combatant commanders strategic communication

¹⁸ Department of Defense, Quadrennial Defense Review Report (Washington, DC: 6 February, 2006), 92.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ JCS/J5 Strategic Communication Brief, Slide 14.

guidance with interagency themes and messages to ensure planning for Psychological Operations (PSYOP) and Defense Support to Public Diplomacy are consistent with overall USG information objectives.”²¹

The most significant addition to forthcoming guidance for CCDRs relating to SC is contained in the Draft Enclosure B of the Joint Operational Planning and Execution System (JOPES), Volume I. This instruction, embracing the definition of SC carried forth from the QDR process, dictates that all CCDR SC plans and operations must include “appropriate synchronization efforts within the military chain of command, the interagency, and the Department of State.”²² It further outlines the establishment of Strategic Communication Coordination Groups (SCCGs) at the Joint Staff, OSD, and interagency levels to streamline this required synchronization. Per this pending modification to JOPES guidance, these SCCGs will be involved with requisite In-Progress Reviews of all CCDR planning efforts, ensuring appropriate integration of SC efforts across DoD and the USG as a whole.

The forthcoming JOPES guidance levies very specific SC planning requirements upon the CCDRs. By this guidance, all CCDR plans will be required to include an “Annex O” that clearly delineates the SC process supporting the specific overall plan. Additional details are included in the JOPES guidance for specific format and content requirements of this newly-created Annex O. Beyond inclusion of an SC-specific annex, the CCDRs will also be required under this guidance, if they have not already done so, to establish “readily recognizable” SC processes within their commands. Of note, specific structures and process formulation are left to the discretion of each individual CCDR.

²¹ Ibid.

²²JCS. DRAFT JOPES Vol. I, Encl. B, 19.

The Joint Staff effort in formalizing CCDR SC planning and staffing efforts through this forthcoming JOPES instruction is commendable in many respects. Firstly, it will fill a critical void in guidance required to codify SC within DoD. As the USG continues an overall effort to solidify structures and relationships for the synchronization of messages and themes, with this guidance DoD will stand ready to plug in to that effort as a “full-up round.” Rather than simply dictating from the top though, the Joint Staff has crafted guidance that borrows from the pioneering work by the lead geographic CCDRs, while enabling their continued freedom of action in managing their own SC processes. Specifically, the DoD-level Strategic Communication Coordination Groups remarkably resemble similar coordination structures already tried and proven at both EUCOM and PACOM. In allowing the CCDRs to design their own SC staff structures, the forthcoming JOPES requirements enable the robust efforts of these lead CCDRs to forge ahead, hopefully continuing to serve as examples to those CCDR staffs still working to solidify their own SC processes. The forthcoming JOPES guidance simultaneously fixes what was broken in the way of gaps in guidance, while not trying to fix that which had already been established as effective, namely the EUCOM and PACOM organic SC efforts.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The DoD must press ahead in efforts to solidify its role within the overall USG SC effort. Work to date on high-level policy concepts, as well as codification of specific guidance to theater CCDRs would seem to bode well towards that end.

Additionally, the subordinate CCDR staffs must continue to press ahead in defining the limits of what and how SC can best support their overall theater responsibilities. Through proper lateral and vertical coordination, CCDR staffs can continue to exercise a relatively free hand in making strategic information work for them. The Joint Staff has proven itself willing to listen, adopt, and codify those CCDR SC efforts that prove most efficient and effective to theater missions. This synergy and cooperation must continue to grow.

Finally, those CCDR staffs still struggling to formalize effective SC processes and structures must both embrace the forthcoming guidance toward that end, and reach out to the CCDR staffs who have emerged in the lead thus far. Numerous explanations account for why some CCDRs have mastered SC early, while others lag somewhat behind. There is no explanation, however, for not capitalizing on the gains of those who have thus far achieved the most.

CONCLUSION

As stated by President Bush himself, "...this war will not be won by force of arms alone. We must defeat the terrorists on the battlefield, and we must also defeat them in the battle of ideas."²³ Now over four years into this war, it has been this battle of ideas that has proven our most formidable long-term challenge. On a national scale, efforts to align this country's informational elements of power into a single, coordinated, synchronized SC framework offer the best hope for victory in an ideological struggle.

Toward that end, the DoD as a whole, and forward-leaning key CCDR staffs in particular, can rightly be proud of their efforts. Through early recognition of the potential of

²³ President, Remarks at Hughes Swearing-In Ceremony, Weekly Compilation of Presidential Documents (12 September 2005), 1366-1369.

effectively managed SC, and through organic staff efforts to operationalize seemingly-nebulous concepts, DoD is well postured to maximize its combat effectiveness in the battle of ideas. Work may well remain for the U. S. towards “recapturing the strategic information high ground,” but within DoD, and down through the combatant commands, there can be no doubt that the battle has been joined.

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