

SPEED VERSUS ACCURACY: A ZERO SUM GAME

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ABSTRACT

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Accuracy maintains the required credibility for an effective information strategy. Speed provides current, relevant information to inform and influence key populations. The requirement and role of speed and accuracy create a zero sum game in information strategy. With the importance of information in today's irregular warfare environment, an effective information strategy is based on decentralization. Operations planned and conducted and the daily interactions of the units and Soldiers on the ground must send the organization's message. Only then can an information strategy maintain the speed to enable and enhance action and bolster the organization's credibility due to enhanced operational effectiveness. This paper examines the requirement for and the role of speed and accuracy in informing and influencing key audiences. It provides an overview of how the enemy uses information; the enemy's strategy to disrupt U.S. operations; and the application of Boyd's OODA loop in defeating the enemy's strategy. It concludes with a recommendation for an information strategy developed to overcome the speed versus accuracy dilemma and increase operational effectiveness.

SPEED VERSUS ACCURACY: A ZERO SUM GAME

Credibility is required for an effective information strategy. Truthful and accurate messaging develops and maintains credibility; however, collection of correct information required for accurate messaging sacrifices speed. Speed is required to provide current, relevant information to inform and influence key populations. The sacrifice in speed to release messages results in the inability to “tell your side of the story” first. The constant reactionary story disputing initial published accounts reduces the ability to effectively inform and influence select key audiences and over time reduces source and message credibility. The dilemma of speed versus accuracy in messaging creates a zero sum game in information strategy that reduces operational effectiveness.

This paper examines the trade-offs between speed and accuracy in an irregular warfare information environment. It begins by establishing the requirement for and the role of speed and accuracy in informing and influencing key audiences. The paper provides an overview of how the enemy uses information; the enemy’s strategy to disrupt U.S. operations; and the application of Boyd’s OODA loop in defeating the enemy’s strategy. It concludes with a recommendation to overcome the speed versus credibility dilemma through developing and implementing an effective information strategy in which “actions and words” are congruent ensuring the accuracy and speed required to inform and influence key populations.

In March 2006, U.S. Special Forces and Iraqi Special Forces engaged and defeated a Jaish al Mahdi (JAM) force responsible for the murders of several Iraqi civilians and Iraqi Soldiers. Within an hour of leaving the engagement site, JAM had staged the bodies of the dead fighters to appear as civilians, photographed the scene,

and posted the images on the web along with a press release claiming U.S. forces had killed the men praying in a mosque. Although U.S. forces photographed and videotaped the action, it took three days to release the information.¹ The untimely U.S. release of information appeared as a reaction to enemy propaganda and resulted in loss of credibility for the U.S. effort.

In July 2008, U.S. led coalition forces in Afghanistan stated they conducted an airstrike that killed insurgents.² Locals claimed the air strike killed civilians. An investigation revealed the airstrike killed 47 civilians attending a wedding party.³ The speed of response by the U.S. forces resulted in inaccurate statements being made before the facts of the situation were known. The dissemination of misinformation damaged U.S. credibility and gave the enemy an opportunity to exploit against the U.S. effort.

In both examples, the misapplication of speed in disseminating information to key audiences damaged the credibility of the U.S. mission. With the importance of information in today's irregular warfare environment, how do you develop an effective strategy to overcome the speed versus credibility dilemma? An effective information strategy is based on decentralization. Operations planned and conducted and the daily interactions of the units and Soldiers on the ground must send the message. Only then can an information strategy maintain the speed to enable and enhance action and bolster the organization's credibility due to enhanced operational effectiveness.

Credibility and Speed

Accuracy is essential in an effective information strategy. Many simply believe presenting factual information guarantees credibility. However, does accuracy equal

credibility? Credibility is a condition based upon the audiences' perceptions of the message and source.⁴ Is the organization trustworthy and is the message believable?

The audience considers three factors in determining credibility: accuracy of message content, unbiased presentation, and the audience's reaction to the source.⁵ Any verified or perceived error in information presented is viewed as inaccuracy. Presenting only one point of view of the issues or omission of unfavorable information is considered bias. The audience's reaction to the source is based on the audience's past and present experiences (both actual and perceived) with the source.⁶ As a condition, credibility must be developed and maintained by the source with the audience. Because it must be developed and maintained with the audience, credibility must be oriented toward action and not based solely on words.

Credibility is developing the "cores of credibility" - integrity, intent, capability, and results - that make the communicator and the communicator's message believable with key populations.⁷ In *Speed of Trust*, Stephen Covey goes to great lengths to explain the "cores of credibility" because they are the essence of developing and maintaining the condition of credibility. Integrity is more than just honesty and a reputation of being truthful. It is being congruent with actions and words. Intent involves transparency – no hidden agendas or motives. Intent is derived from the behavior of the organization and is directly related to integrity. The audience must believe the organization has their interest in mind. Capabilities are displayed through professionalism (expertise and knowledge) of the organization. Lastly, the organization produces results. They are operationally effective. The organization is perceived by the audience to finish what it starts.⁸ The application of or lack of adherence to these "cores of credibility" in all

actions with the audience determines their past and present experiences either positive or negative. As stated earlier, these experiences determine the audience's reaction to the organization as a source – whether it is trustworthy and their message believable.

In determining the quality and credibility of information, timeliness of information is required to ensure it is relevant to the audience. The requirement for currency and the fact technology accelerates information delivery to the audience mean that speed is an important component of information strategy. As demonstrated in the introduction, speed is essential in releasing information to inform audiences of one's positive actions. This prevents the enemy from exploiting and discrediting one's action through the use of misinformation and disinformation.

Speed is important when reporting unfavorable news resulting from friendly forces' action. Releasing factual information related to negative events prevents the negative credibility effects that result from allowing the enemy to release the information first. Failure to apply speed in releasing news of negative action gives the appearance of a cover up, a lack of transparency. It enhances the enemy's propaganda campaign by allowing the enemy to release the information first. The delayed release by friendly forces becomes an endorsement or confirms the accuracy of the enemy's information increasing their credibility.⁹

Speed is most commonly associated with and seen as a requirement in crisis response communications. A crisis is "a significant threat to operations that can have negative consequences if not handled properly."¹⁰ A crisis causes an information vacuum. In crisis response, speed is required to allow the organization to tell its side of the story and fill the information void before the enemy can do so with misinformation or

disinformation. However, there are factors limiting the application of speed in responding to a crisis event. The size of the incident, the amount of confusion created by the incident, the location of the incident, and the ability to respond to the incident scene all affect the ability to collect factual information required to quickly inform audiences of the incident.¹¹

A February 2007 incident in Afghanistan provides an example of the risk associated with applying speed in response to a crisis event without collecting and confirming the facts and de-conflicting the message within the organization. A suicide bomber attacked a Khost hospital opening ceremony. Different U.S. elements and the local media participating in the ceremony immediately began to disseminate different accounts of the event. After several weeks of attempting to correct the initial misinformation disseminated, the end result remained unchanged. The local audience perceived the U.S. intentionally spread disinformation concerning the event.¹²

Dissemination of inaccurate information damages how the audience reacts to the organization as a source by adversely affecting the “cores of credibility” of integrity, intent, and capability. Inaccurate information damages the organization’s reputation of truthfulness and results in an incongruence of actions and words. It makes the organization look inconsistent and displays a lack of transparency. Disseminating inaccurate information requires retractions and corrections which in turn make the organization look incompetent.¹³ This does not mean speed should be sacrificed to mitigate the risk to credibility.

In *Ongoing Crisis Communication: Planning, Managing, and Responding*, Timothy W. Coombs presents speed in crisis response displays control of the situation.

He explains a quick response demonstrates the organization is taking action and is capable. A slow response displays incompetence.¹⁴ The proper application of speed in response demonstrates competence and increases the capability element of the “cores of credibility.”

The proper application of speed and its effect on credibility is not limited to crisis response. As discussed, it holds true for all situations related to an effective information strategy. This is the zero sum game of speed and accuracy in information strategy. In irregular warfare, this is the vulnerability the enemy attacks.

The Enemy's Strategy

In irregular warfare, the enemy understands he cannot defeat the military forces of the stronger opponent. Destroy the stronger forces' credibility and he destroys their ability to inform and influence key audiences to maintain the support necessary to succeed. This is the intent of the enemy's strategy.¹⁵ In order to accomplish this strategic intent and keep their message in front of their supporters and opponents, the enemy relies on action in the form of terrorism and intimidation. Terrorism and intimidation are acts of violence conducted by the enemy to influence audiences' perceptions, cognitions, and actions.¹⁶ In the *Accidental Guerrilla*, David Kilcullen labeled this use of physical action to achieve information effects as “armed propaganda.”¹⁷ These violent acts have little military value but send a message to the enemy's target audiences – their supporters and opponents. Because negative information more easily influences than positive information, these negative events have a greater impact.¹⁸ Additionally, because the enemy controls the timing, place, and manner of the violent acts, it increases their credibility as a source and provides a level

of legitimacy with the audience.¹⁹ “Armed propaganda” gains and maintains active and passive support of the population they are fighting for, erodes the political will of the opponent, and separates the opposing decision makers from the populace.²⁰ If terrorism and intimidation are designed to send a message, media is the messenger.

Richard Josten states “terrorism is strategic communication in the purest definition – message and action – utilizing the global communications network more to influence than inform.”²¹ Without the media, the enemy’s “armed propaganda” would be ineffective. It would not reach its target audiences. The question to be answered is why are national and international media so quick to disseminate the enemy’s message? Just as negative information is more apt to influence than positive information, violent action makes better news than peaceful, orderly behavior. According to Pratkanis and Aronson,

...editors and reporters tend to look for stories that 1) are new and timely, 2) involve conflict or scandal, 3) concern strange or unusual, 4) happen to famous or familiar people, 5) capable of being made dramatic and personal, 6) simple to convey in a short space or time, 7) contain visual elements and, 8) fit a theme that is currently prominent in the news and society.²²

The enemy has become adept at exploiting the media. The Taliban’s media campaign drives the news media and commands headlines, creating the perception they are stronger than they really are.²³ Their spectacular attacks gain media headlines and facilitate their immediate response to journalists to shape the story to their advantage.²⁴ The Taliban outpace the Afghan government in accessibility and speed with the media. They make regular calls and send text messages to journalists, often within minutes of attacks, to publicize their actions.²⁵

This “speed strategy” utilized by the Taliban makes use of gate keeping, priming, and framing.²⁶ Gate keeping involves intimidating community leaders and journalists in order to prevent them from making statements and reporting actions unfavorable to their cause or not giving them due prominence in the media. Priming involves the timing of “armed propaganda” to ensure the correct amount of space and time in the media is devoted to their message. It allows them to command the headlines in the media. This forces the audiences to focus on their issue and think about their message. The constant contact and immediate availability to journalists allow the Taliban to frame the information in such a way that it will influence the audience with the “facts” they provide.

The use of “armed propaganda” and “speed strategy” increases the enemy’s ability to control operational tempo and places U.S. forces in a reactionary state.²⁷ The loss of initiative by being in a constant reactionary state reduces operational effectiveness. “Armed propaganda” and “speed strategy” attack credibility – the intent of the enemy strategy – by reducing the opponent’s operational effectiveness.

Boyd’s OODA Loop

Many attempt to apply John Boyd’s OODA (Observe, Orient, Decide, Act) loop in response to the enemy’s “armed propaganda” and “speed strategy.” The application of the OODA loop is not incorrect in this environment. It is just the application of the wrong OODA loop concept developed by Boyd – his idea of the rapid OODA loop – for the situation (see fig.1). Boyd’s intent of the rapid OODA loop is to increase speed in decision making and execution of a kinetic action at the tactical level.²⁸ Tactical engagements require immediate action and results.

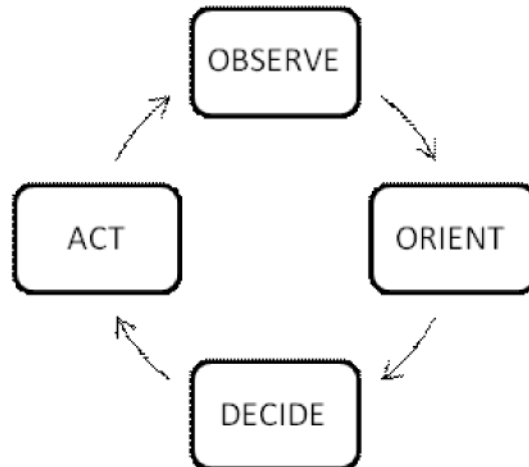


Figure 1. Traditional Rapid OODA Loop

In the information environment, the immediate response to a specific “armed propaganda” event is the release of public information. The application of speed in releasing public information provides the facts of the event to the media and information required to facilitate public safety. This limits the enemy’s ability to frame the “facts” of the incident with misinformation and disinformation and increases one’s credibility by showing control of the situation and caring for the local populace. Because the organization reacts to a specific event which is part of an overall strategy designed to influence, it is impossible to counter the influence aspect of the specific event after the fact. It is the same as directly refuting each piece of enemy propaganda produced.²⁹ One cannot “out-loop” and disrupt the enemy’s OODA loop by applying the rapid OODA loop in a reactionary state. The application of the rapid OODA loop in this environment causes a trade-off between speed and accuracy of information resulting in the inability to develop and maintain credibility. By pursuing this course of action, the enemy’s use of “armed propaganda” and “speed strategy” disrupts his opponent’s ability to produce long term effects. The opponent is in a constant reactionary state and cedes the

initiative to the enemy. The application of the OODA loop in effective information strategy goes beyond Boyd's idea of the rapid OODA loop to his later work concerning operational and strategic level strategies.

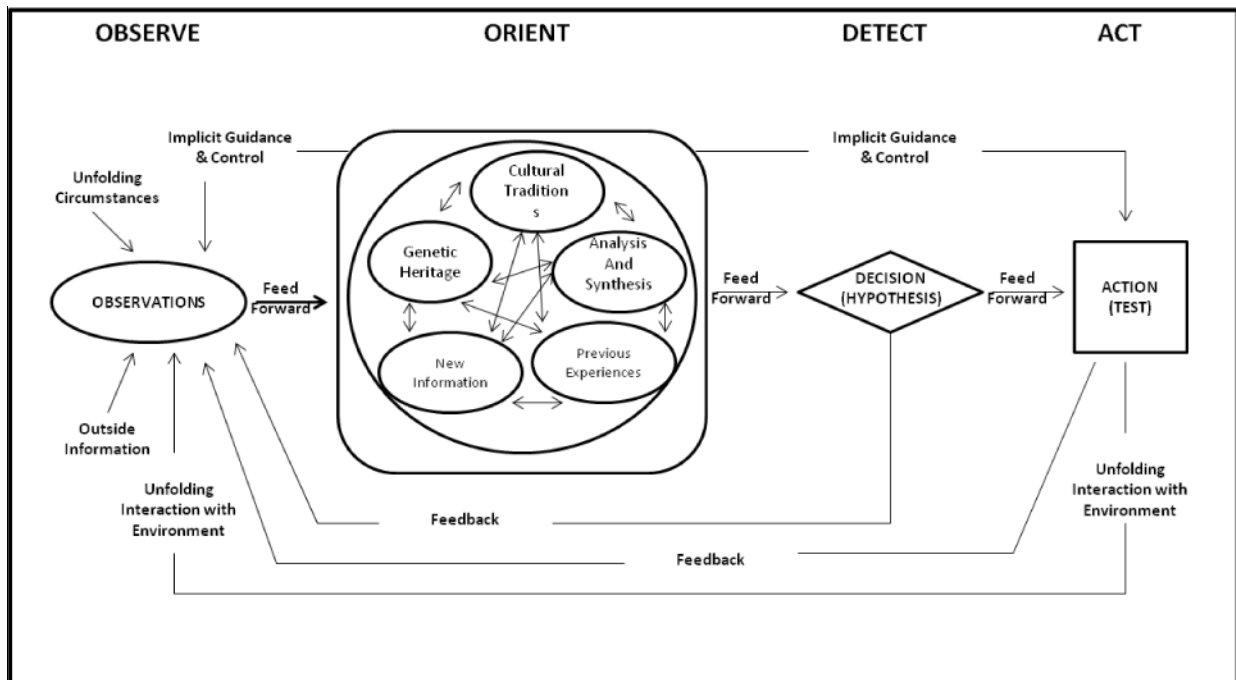


Figure 2. Boyd's OODA Loop³⁰

Boyd later expanded the OODA loop theory to support his strategic perspective (see fig. 2). As figure 2 depicts, Boyd's expanded OODA loop is much more detailed and complicated than his earlier rapid OODA loop concept. This expanded theory is based on interaction and isolation. Success depends on sustaining and improving the ability to interact within the operating environment and to isolate the enemy by limiting his ability to interact within that same environment.³¹

Boyd presents that interaction and isolation occur on three levels: physical, mental, and moral. Physical interaction occurs with the exchange of matter, energy, and information with others outside of the organization – friend and foe.³² The physical includes communication and actions conducted with the outside world. Mentally, an

organization interacts by gathering and assessing the information from varying sources in order to develop mental images and impressions and matching those with the events occurring around the organization.³³ It is properly identifying positive and negative trends and changes to those trends in the environment that direct appropriate action. Moral interaction occurs by preventing mismatches in words and deeds. It is abiding by the “code of conduct and standards of behavior one is expected to uphold.”³⁴ Sustaining and improving interaction with the environment is developing and maintaining credibility with key audiences.

Isolation limits the opponent’s ability to sustain and improve his interaction with the environment. In the physical realm, he cannot gain support from others; mentally, he cannot make sense of his surroundings; morally, he fails to abide by the code of conduct or standards of behavior deemed acceptable.³⁵ The opponent is unable to develop and maintain credibility.

According to Boyd, interaction with the operating environment is a constant loop that begins with observation. Observation provides the information necessary for interaction in the mental realm. It is the primary source of new information that influences decisions and action. As part of the constant loop, observation collects feedback in the form of assessment of friendly actions executed including the reactions of the enemy and reactions and perceptions of key audiences. However, all this information is meaningless without proper orientation.

Boyd’s expanded OODA loop places orientation in the central location influencing all other elements of the loop. Orientation provides the vision, focus, and direction to process the information gathered by observation and guide and control action.³⁶ It

dictates one's ability to interact in the physical and moral realms. Orientation is the adaptive portion of the loop. Because the environment is constantly changing, one's orientation must continue to grow, evolve, and adapt to interact with the environment. It detects changes in the environment and facilitates the necessary organizational adaptability to interact with the environment and operate within the opponent's OODA loop isolating him from the environment. Proper orientation facilitates speed in the physical level but more importantly it allows one to set a tempo that isolates the opponent in the mental realm and limits the opponent's ability to adapt to the changing situation.³⁷

Information Strategy

Irregular warfare doctrine, specifically counterinsurgency doctrine, stresses the importance of information and an indirect approach in winning and maintaining the support of key populations.³⁸ Current U.S. practice establishes Information Operations (IO) as a separate Line of Operation (LOO) or as a LOO encompassing all other LOOs.³⁹ The concept is correct – all action sends the correct message – but the application is incorrect. FM 3-24 describes all information requirements – public information, command information, expectation management, media engagement, influence operations, counter-propaganda, Soldier/leader interaction, etc. – as IO and activities within the IO LOO.⁴⁰ By definition and doctrine, IO, as a function, is an information activity designed to achieve specific effects – attack adversarial human and automated decision making and protect friendly forces' decision making – just as Psychological Operations (PSYOP) and Public Affairs (PA) are information activities designed to achieve specific effects in support of the operation.⁴¹

The misapplication of IO degrades the intended function of IO and limits the effectiveness and capabilities of other information activities by centralizing all information requirements under IO. Decentralization flattens the organization and increases operational effectiveness. Decentralization facilitates integrating all information activities into operational planning.⁴² Properly placing information requirements back under the appropriate information activities allows access of those trained and responsible for planning and executing those activities to the planning process and the commander. Properly defining information strategy and applying it as the all-encompassing LOO would increase operational effectiveness and provide the decentralization required to properly employ all information activities in irregular warfare.

Defining information strategy as *the planning, coordination, and execution of kinetic and non-kinetic operations in conjunction with all information activities (strategic communication,⁴³ PA, PSYOP, and IO) in order to send a consistent message to key audiences enabling the achievement of the military and ultimately the political end* facilitates decentralization and congruency in word and deeds. This decentralization and congruency would increase the speed of information dissemination and credibility of the organization, increasing operational effectiveness.

Effective information strategy (see figure 3) is a continuous process of analysis, coordination, planning, execution, and assessment. It and kinetic and non-kinetic operations require utilizing Boyd's expanded OODA loop to be effective. All actions must be based on the proper observations and orientation. Information strategy must be pre-active, pro-active, and reactive.⁴⁴ Although depicted on the chart as being sequential stages, pre-active and pro-active are continuous, overlapping functions.

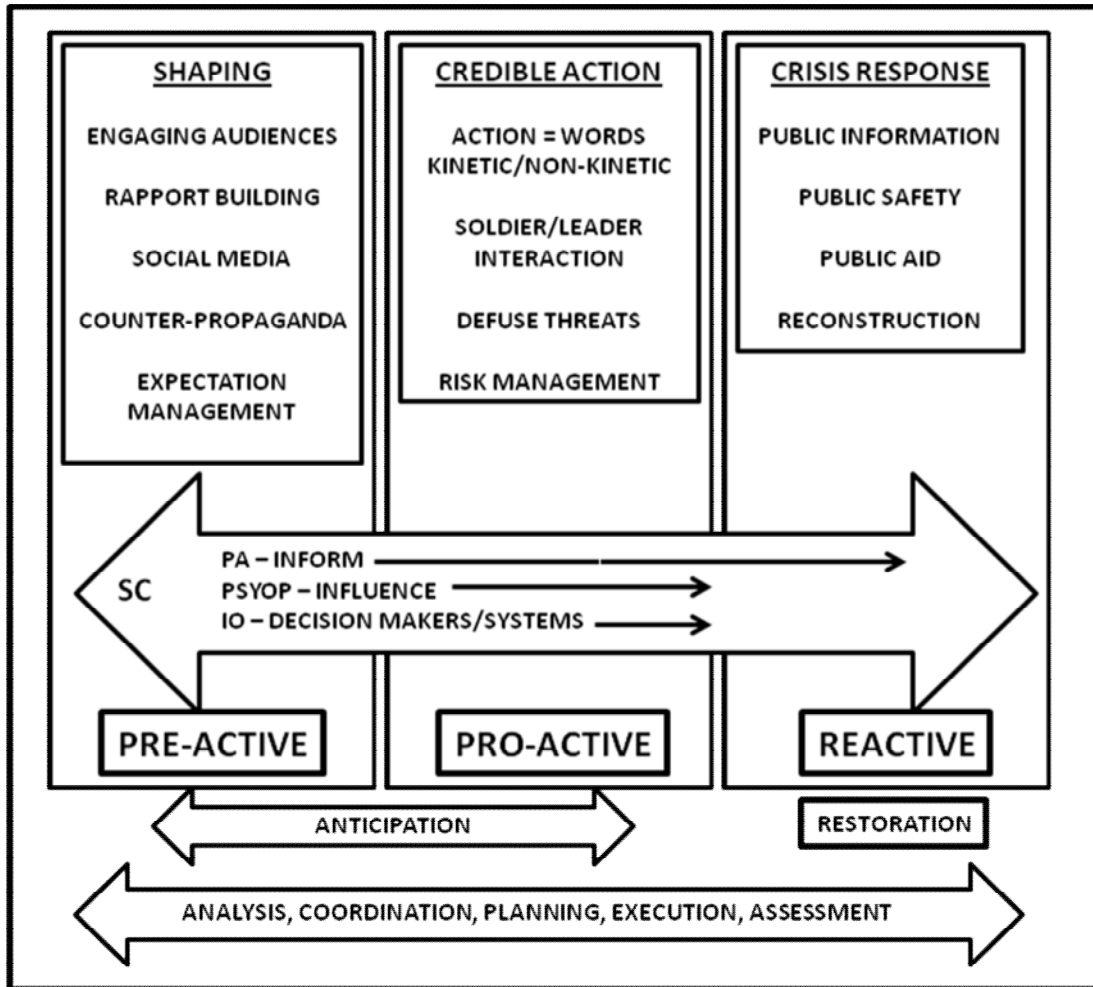


Figure 3. Information Strategy

Observation in the pre-active and pro-active stages identifies existing trends and changes to those trends within key audiences and in enemy activity. Proper orientation provides the flexibility and adaptability enabling effective exploitation, mitigation, and the ability to change established and developing trends in order to achieve the desired effects necessary to reach the military and political objectives. The pre-active and pro-active stages are designed to anticipate shock points in the established trends and limit the need for the reactive stage. Anticipation of shock points is not limited to potential events resulting from enemy action. The current civilian casualties situation in

Afghanistan provides an excellent example of a shock point resulting from U.S. forces action. The initial incident in early 2007 which made international media headlines can be considered the actual shock point. All of the following events are related crisis events exploited by the enemy. These events continue to generate negative consequences to U.S. operations.

Pre-active activities encompass Boyd's three levels – physical, mental, and moral. The organization interacts with the environment to gather and assess information. It matches the information with events occurring and identifies trends and required changes to those trends directing future, appropriate action. Pre-active activities shape the environment in favor of the organization.

Engaging audiences, engaging media, and rapport building provide the social networking necessary to shape the information environment. Engaging audiences involves two-way communication creating stable relationships, not just selling the organization or its cause. Engaging the media establishes contact with journalists and facilitates accessibility of the organization to the media in such a manner they will seek out information from the organization. It is congruent with rapport building. Rapport building develops the “cores of credibility” of integrity, intent, and capability with each audience. This, coupled with “actions equal words” pro-active activities, develops and maintains the organization's credibility.

Social media is an emerging form of media utilized to disseminate information outside of mainstream media sources. The use of social media increases speed of information and interaction with key audiences. Social media, in the form of blogs, e-mail, and sites such as YouTube, Facebook, Twitter, etc., decentralize the responsibility

of publishing information from organizations to the individual. Additionally, mainstream media are incorporating social media through their use of the sites listed above to encourage the “man on the street” to send information direct to local, national, and international news outlets. An effective information strategy must incorporate this technology into pre-active activities to inform and influence key audiences and maintain the initiative in the information environment. Implementation of this decentralized method of information dissemination will require efficient policies, training, and operational guidance to effectively use social media in information strategy.

Effective counter-propaganda does not get caught up in the reactive cycle of attempting to directly refute each piece of enemy propaganda. This reactive mentality only draws attention to the enemy’s action and propaganda. Effective counter-propaganda will isolate the enemy from interacting with key audiences by discrediting the enemy as a source and his message. Identifying the enemy’s propaganda themes enables counter-propaganda efforts to become part of planned PSYOP programs and public information. Routine PSYOP products, public information, and Soldier interaction with key audiences should counter the enemy’s themes without directly calling attention to the enemy’s propaganda products. An excellent example of counter-propaganda is the routine release of messages from respected Muslims denouncing the extremist use of suicide bombers, the killing of innocent Muslims, and other atrocities carried out under the banner of Jihad. It attacks the enemy’s theme of jihad, their legitimacy and creates a negative reaction in the audience when the atrocities are continued. It discredits the enemy with the key audiences.

Expectation management involves keeping all audiences informed of the actions and goals of friendly forces and the government. Transparency is a vital component of expectation management. Keeping the audiences informed limits rumors which feed the unrealistic expectations of the audiences. The organization must monitor perceptions and expectations of the populace and provide consistent messaging of future conditions and goals that do not exceed the abilities of the organization. Effective expectation management supports the “cores of credibility” of intent, capability, and results.

Pro-active activities encompass Boyd’s physical and moral levels. It is the physical interaction of the unit and the Soldiers with key audiences – the destruction of enemy forces, security operations, training partnered nation security forces, infrastructure development, etc., and information. This Soldier/leader interaction, regardless of the mission, occurs whenever Soldiers are out in the populace. It is how they interact with and treat the populace while conducting operations. Pro-active activities establish the moral element of Boyd’s three levels – the code of conduct and standards of behavior one is expected to uphold – essential for credibility. Pro-active activities maintain all the “cores of credibility.”

Additionally, pro-active activities employ action and information to defuse threats to current positive trends and risk management to prevent crisis events. Defusing threats include actions taken to reduce the risk of the enemy creating a shock point in current trends or producing crisis events. Risk management consists of Rules of Engagement (ROE), Escalation of Force (EOF), and other policies implemented to limit negative perceptions and the creation of a crisis event by friendly forces.

The reactive stage is only executed as crisis response to specific crisis events. The purpose of the reactive stage is to restore order and maintain the credibility of the organization and mission. As stated earlier, crisis response deals primarily with dissemination of public information and action to ensure public safety. Speed in release of public information prevents the enemy from exploiting the event through the dissemination of misinformation and disinformation.

Conclusion

The trade-off between accuracy and speed in the information environment creates a zero sum game. Both are intertwined with the “cores of credibility” – integrity, intent, capability, and results – required to develop credibility with key audiences. Accuracy requires time to collect information sacrificing speed; speed sacrifices accuracy. Inaccuracy in information damages integrity, intent, and capability – the message and source are untruthful, have hidden agendas, and the source is incompetent. Lack of speed damages intent and capability – implies a cover-up, a lack of transparency and incompetence due to lack of control.

Unable to defeat the military forces of the stronger opponent, the enemy attacks the counterinsurgent’s credibility in order to limit his ability to gain and maintain the support of key audiences. The enemy’s strategies of “armed propaganda” and “speed strategy” exploit the speed versus accuracy dilemma. “Armed propaganda” and “speed strategy” allow the enemy to control operational tempo and the initiative and places U.S forces in a constant reactionary state.

The misapplication of the rapid OODA loop by U.S. forces to react to crisis events will not “out-loop” and disrupt the enemy’s OODA loop. Additionally, the

centralization of all information requirements under the information activity of IO degrades the function of IO and limits the capabilities of other information activities. Application of Boyd's expanded OODA loop coupled with an information strategy that is pre-active and pro-active anticipates negative trends and potential shock points in positive trends and facilitates setting operational tempo and maintaining initiative. Defining information strategy as *the planning, coordination, and execution of kinetic and non-kinetic operations in conjunction with all information activities (strategic communication, PA, PSYOP, and IO) in order to send a consistent message to key audiences enabling the achievement of the military and ultimately the political end* facilitates decentralization and congruency in words and deeds. Decentralization of information activities creates a flatter organization, allowing those responsible for planning and executing those activities access to the planning process and the commander. Because kinetic and non-kinetic operations planning and execution are conducted in conjunction with all information activities, the interaction of units and Soldiers on the ground and actions send the organization's message to key audiences. The application of information strategy at all operational levels (tactical, operational, and strategic) in this manner maintains the speed and accuracy to enable and enhance action and bolster the organization's credibility due to enhanced operational effectiveness.

Endnotes

¹ Cori E. Dauber, "The Truth is out there: Responding to Insurgent Disinformation and Deception Operations," *Military Review*, January-February 2009, 13-14. Operation VALHALLA conducted on 26 March 2006 by 10th Special Forces Group and Iraqi Special Forces resulted in the discovery and destruction of an enemy weapons cache, the release of badly beaten hostage being held by JAM members, the detention of 16 JAM, and 16-17 JAM killed. Only one Iraqi Soldier was injured during the operation.

² “US Planes Hit Afghan Wedding Party, Killing 27,” *The Sydney Morning News*, 07 July 2008, <http://www.smh.com.au/cgi-bin/common/articles/2008/07/07> (accessed 23 April 2009). The event occurred 06 July 2008 in Nangarhar, Afghanistan. In the article, U.S. spokesman blamed the claims of civilian casualties on militant propaganda.

³ Candance Rondeauz, “civilian Airstrike Deaths Probed,” *The Washington Post*, 25 July 2008, <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2008/07/24/AR2008072403465> (accessed 23 April 2009).

⁴ Earl R. Carlson and Herbert I. Abelson, *Factors Affecting Credibility in Psychological Warfare Communications*, (Human Resources Research Office, George Washington University, Silver Springs, MD, 1956), 7. Carlson and Abelson define credibility as a necessary condition for a communication to be effective and its contents to be believed by an audience. They stated credibility of a message exists with the audience.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 12.

⁶ *Ibid.*, 10-12.

⁷ Stephen M.R. Covey, *The Speed of Trust: The One Thing That Changes Everything*, (Free Press, New York, NY, 2006), 54. Covey presents integrity, intent, capability, and results are the “4 cores of credibility.” These are the elements that make or destroy credibility.

⁸ *Ibid.*, Integrity, 59-72. Intent, 73-90. Capabilities, 91-108. Results, 109-125.

⁹ Carlson and Abelson, 24.

¹⁰ Timothy W. Coombs, *Crisis Management and Communication*, http://www.instituteforpr.org/essential_knowledge/detail/crisis_management_and_communication_s (accessed 30 April 2009).

¹¹ Timothy W. Coombs, *Ongoing Crisis Communication: Planning, Managing, and Responding*, 2nd Edition, (Sage Publications, 2007), 130, http://www.sagepub.com/upm_data/14131.chapter8.pdf (accessed 30 April 2009).

¹² Scott Russell, e-mail message to author, 13 January 2009. In 2007, MAJ Russell and I deployed to Afghanistan with the 13th PSYOP Battalion supporting CJTF-82. MAJ Russell, Tactical PSYOP Detachment 1320 Commander, served as the PSYOP officer for 4BCT, 82 ABN DIV. I served as the PSYOP Task Force-Afghanistan (POTF-AF) Commander responsible for planning and executing PSYOP for CJTF-82 and coordinating all U.S. PSYOP efforts in Afghanistan.

¹³ Coombs, *Crisis Management and Communication*.

¹⁴ Coombs, *Ongoing Crisis Communication: Planning, Managing, and Responding*, 129.

¹⁵ David Kilcullen, *The Accidental Guerrilla: Fighting Small Wars in the Midst of a Big One*, (Oxford, New York, 2009), 29. Kilcullen stated AQ statements indicate a strategic intent to provoke the U.S. into action that would destroy its credibility. The enemy understands credibility is based on action not just words.

¹⁶ Scott Gerwehr and Kirk Hubbard, "What is Terrorism? Key elements and History," *Psychology of Terrorism*, ed. Bruce Bongar, Lisa M. Brown, Larry E. Beutler, James N. Breckenridge, Philip G. Zimbardo, (Oxford University Press, New York, 2007), 87. Gerwehr and Hubbard stated terrorism could be seen as a form of social influence, employing acts of extra-normal violence to influence a target population's emotions, motives, objective reasoning, perceptions, and ultimately behavior.

¹⁷ Kilcullen, *Accidental Guerrilla*, 300. Based on Gerwehr and Hubbard's description of terrorism as a form of social influence, the term of "armed propaganda" aptly describes terrorism and acts of intimidation as used by insurgents and enemy forces in irregular warfare.

¹⁸ James N. Breckenridge and Philip G. Zimbardo, "The Strategy of Terrorism and Psychology of Mass-Mediated Fear," *Psychology of Terrorism*, ed. Bruce Bongar, Lisa M. Brown, Larry E. Beutler, James N. Breckenridge, Philip G. Zimbardo, (Oxford University Press, New York, 2007), 122. They stated this supports the asymmetrical principle. When applying this principle to irregular warfare, it is easier for insurgents to destroy public trust than it is for the government to build public trust.

¹⁹ Gerwehr and Hubbard, "What is Terrorism? Key Elements and History," 91.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 92,93.

²¹ Richard J. Josten, "Strategic Communications," *IO Sphere*, (Joint Information Operations Center, Summer 2006), http://www.au.af.mil/inf-ops/iosphere/iosphere_summer06_josten.pdf (accessed 17 April 2009),19.

²² Anthony Pratkanis and Elliot Aronson, *Age of Propaganda: The Everyday Use and Abuse of Persuasion*, (W.H. Freeman and Company, New York, 2001), 274.

²³ Jason Motlagh, "Afghanistan's Propaganda War: The Taliban's Public Relations Machine," USNEWS.COM, posted 12 November 2008, <http://www.usnews.com/article/news/iraq/2008/11/12/afghanistan-propaganda-war-the-taliban-public-relations-machine> (accessed 15 April 2009).

²⁴ Joanna Nathan, "Selling the Taliban," *The Wall Street Journal*, 02 September 2008, linked from *International Crisis Group* <http://www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm?id=5656&1=1> (accessed 16 April 2009). The June 2008 jailbreak in Kandahar and the assault on the only five star hotel in Kabul; the February 2007 suicide bomber attack at Bagram Airbase while Vice President Cheney was visiting; and the 2007 South Korean hostage incident are a few of the examples of Taliban attacks that grabbed the media headlines.

²⁵ ABC News (Australian Broadcasting Corporation), "Taliban Show New Media Savvy," posted 20 August 2007, <http://www.abc.net.au/news/stories/2007/08/20/2009153.htm> (accessed 16 April 2009). From personal experience, during the 2007 suicide bomber attack at Bagram, inquiries by the media to the CJTF-82 PAO were made before news of the incident had been received in the CJTF HQs.

²⁶ "Speed strategy" is a term developed by SGT Joe Atneosen during our 2007 rotation in Afghanistan. As a member of the POTF-AF S2 section, SGT Atneosen was responsible for

tracking Taliban propaganda trends and methods, determining perceptions of the Afghan populace, and analysis that facilitated PSYOP planning and support for the CJTF-82 mission.

²⁷ U.S. Department of the Army, *Counterinsurgency*, Field Manual 3-24, (Washington D.C.: U.S. Department of the Army, December 15, 2006), 1-103. If the insurgents maintain the momentum, they maintain the initiative.

²⁸ Frans P.B. Osinga, *Science, Strategy, and War: The Strategic Theory of John Boyd*, (Routledge, New York, 2007), 237.

²⁹ Effective counter-propaganda seldom, if ever directly refutes each piece of enemy propaganda produced. An effective counter-propaganda program identifies and monitors enemy themes and incorporates discrediting/countering those themes with planned PSYOP programs and public information. It is part of the organization's day to day planned and executed actions and messages. An example would be Taliban night letters in Afghanistan. Night letters are normally hand written or crudely printed letters delivered at night to protect the source and add to the intimidation factor of just appearing at selected individual or public locations. The common theme of Taliban night letters is one of do not supporting the Government of Afghanistan and NATO forces or face punishment by the Taliban. Instead of refuting each night letter, counter the established theme. Directly refuting each night letter only highlights the piece of enemy propaganda and the fact the Government of Afghanistan and NATO forces are unable to stop the dissemination of night letters. However, if you discredit the enemy's theme/message you render the night letters ineffective.

³⁰ Osinga, *Science, Strategy, and War*, 231. This is the only diagram Boyd developed depicting the OODA loop. Diagrams of the rapid OODA loop as depicted in figure one were not developed by Boyd.

³¹ John Boyd, "The Strategic Game of ? and ?," ed. Chet Richards and Chuck Spinney (June 2006), http://www.d-n-i.net/boyd/strategic_game.ppt (accessed 19 April 2009), 33.

³² *Ibid.*, 37.

³³ Osinga, *Science, Strategy, and War*, 215.

³⁴ Boyd, "The Strategic Game of ? and ?," 37.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 36.

³⁶ Osinga, *Science, Strategy, and War*, 230.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 235-236.

³⁸ Department of Defense, *Irregular Warfare (IW) Joint Operating Concept (JOC)*, Version 1.0, (Department of Defense, Washington D.C., 11 September 2007), http://www.dtic.mil/futurejointwarfare/concepts/iw_joc1_o.pdf (accessed 27 May 09), B-3. The term "indirect approach" has three distinct meanings within the context of IW: 1. Unbalance and dislocate adversaries by attacking them physically and psychologically where they are most vulnerable and unsuspecting, rather than where they are strongest or in the manner they expect to be attacked. 2. Empower, enable, and leverage IA and multinational strategic partners to

attack adversaries militarily or non-militarily, rather than relying on direct and unilateral military confrontation by US joint forces. 3. Take actions with or against other states or armed groups in order to influence adversaries, rather than taking actions to influence adversaries directly.

³⁹ U.S. Department of the Army, *Counterinsurgency*, 5-18.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 5-18 – 5-34.

⁴¹ Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Information Operations*, Joint Publication 3-13, (Department of Defense, Washington D.C. 13 February 2006), ix. JP3-13 defines IO 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 and related capabilities, to influence, disrupt, corrupt, or usurp adversarial human and automated decision making while protecting our own. The specific effect IO is to achieve is to disrupt the adversarial decision making – enemy leaders and their networks. If IO is limited to integrating the core, specified and related capabilities to this target set as it was intended to do, it would be more effective and produce results.

⁴² Past experiences with several organizations have separated IO and other information activities into separate non-kinetic staff sections or organizations limiting access and integration into kinetic operational planning.

⁴³ Strategic Communication, as defined in JP 1-02, is the “focused United States Government efforts to understand and engage key audiences to create, strengthen, or preserve conditions favorable for the advancement of United States Government interests, policies, and objectives through the use of coordinated programs, plans, themes, messages, and products synchronized with the actions of all instruments of national power.” Strategic Communication is a coordination function to synchronize interagency and military information activities and action.

⁴⁴ Heritage Lectures, No. 1065, “Public Diplomacy: Reinvigoration America’s Strategic Communication Policy,” presented by Edwin J. Feulner, Ph.D., Helle C. Dale, Colleen Graffy, Michael Doran, Ph.D., Joseph Duffy, Ph.D., Tony Blankley on February 13, 2008, (The Heritage Foundation, Washington D.C., March 14, 2008), http://www.heritage.org/research/nationalsecurity/upload/hl_1065.pdf (accessed 13 January 2009), 5. Colleen Graffy presented the concept of a pre-active approach as one that “anticipates and helps shape stories in the media.” This concept was expanded by the author to include other aspects of social networking and actions required to shape the information environment including all key audiences.

