

# **Crossing the Last Three Feet: Organizational Integration of State Department Public Diplomacy and Psychological Operations Overseas**

**A Monograph  
by  
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## **Abstract**

**CROSSING THE LAST THREE FEET: ORGANIZATIONAL INTEGRATION OF STATE DEPARTMENT PUBLIC DIPLOMACY AND PSYCHOLOGICAL OPERATIONS OVERSEAS** by MAJ Dale M. Russell, US Army, 44 pages.

The influence effort is one of the key parts of success in the Global War on Terrorism. The US government must do everything possible to be effective in winning the war of ideas. This monograph will explore the efficacy of assigning a US military psychological operations officer to work in the Public Diplomacy section of select embassies to facilitate the Global War on Terrorism. It will address the responsibilities and capabilities of the Department of State in executing influence for the US government overseas and show how the addition of this officer will offset the resource shortfalls of State Public Diplomacy. In addition to highlighting the benefits to State, it will also show the benefits to the Department of Defense. Lastly, it will present considerations for implementation of this proposal including recommendations for grade and seniority of the officer, specific unit of assignment, and pre-assignment training and education.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction.....	1
Framing the Conflict.....	3
Influence as a Means of Engagement.....	4
Shortcomings in the Influence Effort and the Psychological Operations Offset.....	7
Benefits to the Department of Defense.....	14
US Policy and Other Supporting Arguments.....	16
Opposing Views.....	18
Implementation.....	21
Conclusion.....	31
Bibliography.....	35

**ILLUSTRATION**

	Page
Figure 1. Psychological Operations Officer Career Timeline .....	24

## Introduction

“It has always seemed to me the real art in this business is not so much moving information or guidance or policy five or 10,000 miles. That is an electronic problem. The real art is to move it the last three feet in face to face conversation.”

Edward R. Murrow, Director, United States Information Agency 1961-1964 on ABC TV, “Issues and Answers,” 4 August 1963

The intent of Murrow’s quotation is the driving force behind this monograph and the reason it was included in the title. To be successful in the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT), the United States (US) and its allies must win the war of ideas. US ideology espouses democratic ideals of self-determination, plurality, and equality. These ideas compete with the ideology of Al Qaeda that espouses terrorism and implementation of Sharia law where those who are not Muslim must submit to Muslims and plurality and equality do not exist.<sup>1</sup> To win the war of ideas, the US must communicate with not just leaders and elites in other nations, but also with the people of that nation. The proponent US government agency for achieving this objective is the Department of State, specifically the Under Secretary for Public Affairs and Public Diplomacy (PA/PD). State PA/PD does this through their public diplomacy sections in embassies worldwide, but because of funding, resource, and capability issues they are unable to reach the requisite target audiences. They primarily engage media, leaders, the educated, and the elites in host nations. To be truly successful, the US must engage the masses and in those nations that are susceptible to terrorist influence and cross the “last three feet” of diplomacy.

This monograph presents a course of action that could facilitate this effort by changing the staffing of US embassies in nations that have insurgencies or the potential for insurgent activity related to the GWOT. The National Command Authority gave the Department of State overall responsibility for planning and coordinating strategic communication in support of US

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<sup>1</sup>Bin Laden, Osama, “Fatwa,” 1996, Available from [http://www.pbs.org/newshour/terrorism/international/fatwa\\_1996.html](http://www.pbs.org/newshour/terrorism/international/fatwa_1996.html); Internet; accessed on 13 March 2007.

government objectives.<sup>2</sup> The addition of a Psychological Operations (PSYOP) officer to the embassy staff will enhance the ability of the embassy public diplomacy (PD) section to plan and execute influence in the host nation. This officer would bring training in detailed target audience analysis, which is similar to market analysis in business, and the planning culture and mindset of the US military. He would also bring the ability to enter semi-permissive environments to perform that target audience analysis where a civilian member of State may not be able to.

In addition to being a facilitator for State, he will also be a facilitator for the Department of Defense. The same target audience analysis and information gathering that aids the embassy in execution of public diplomacy is also of benefit for potential US military operations.

Additionally, there are challenges to overcome with the reticence of the Department of State to work with the Department of Defense. The introduction of a US military PSYOP officer to the Embassy staff would build the understanding and trust between the Department of State and the Department of Defense in the interagency process that is required to be successful in the strategic communication effort.

There are potential issues with the idea. The first is the perception of what PSYOP is and does. The stereotypical but incorrect connection between PSYOP and false propaganda must be broken. There will also be issues with manning for the US military. With PSYOP as a member of the Special Operations community, US Special Operations Command (SOCOM) must determine along with State which embassies will require these billets, and SOCOM must also determine how best to fill the requirements and provide funding for them and their operations. There are

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<sup>2</sup>Steven Hadley, National Security Advisor, Interdepartmental Directive to Vice President, Secretary of State, Secretary of the Treasury, Secretary of Defense, Secretary of Commerce, Secretary of Homeland Security, Chief of Staff of the President, Director of the Office of Management and Budget, United States Trade Representative, Director of National Intelligence, Administrator of the Agency for International Development, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Chairman of the Broadcasting Board of Governors, "Establishment of the Strategic Communication and Public Diplomacy Policy Coordinating Committee," 8 April 2006, photocopied..

also specific issues regarding rank structure, rating schemes, and career progression that the PSYOP community must resolve to execute this idea.

Once these issues are addressed, the assignment of a PSYOP officer to work with the PD sections of select Embassy staffs will facilitate the Global War on Terrorism, a war that has as one of its central objectives the war of ideas. The US must be successful in this to have a chance of being successful in defeating global terrorism.

## **Framing the Conflict**

The intent of this chapter is to establish the nature of the conflict in which the US is involved. Joint Publication 1-02, *Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms*, defines terrorism as “the calculated use of unlawful violence or threat of unlawful violence to inculcate fear; intended to coerce or to intimidate governments or societies in the pursuit of goals that are generally political, religious, or ideological.”<sup>3</sup> Webster’s Dictionary is in agreement defining terrorism as “the unlawful use or threat of violence esp. against the state or the public as a politically motivated means of attack or coercion.”<sup>4</sup> Therefore, this is not a war on terrorism. Terrorism is one of the many tactics used, but one cannot fight a war against a tactic. That would be like fighting a war on field artillery bombardments. Terrorism itself is not the enemy. Those that use terrorism are.

Both definitions state that a political goal is a characteristic of the use of terrorism. Therefore, to properly define this conflict, one must look at it as in insurgency. Joint Pub 1-02 defines an insurgency as “An organized movement aimed at the overthrow of a constituted government through use of subversion and armed conflict.”<sup>5</sup> Webster’s again agrees on the political nature of this conflict defining insurgency as “a condition of revolt against a recognized

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<sup>3</sup>Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Publication 1-02, *Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2001), 536.

<sup>4</sup>Dictionary.com, “Terrorism,” Available from <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/terrorism>; Internet; accessed on 23 October 2006.

<sup>5</sup>Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Publication 1-02, 264.

government that does not reach the proportions of an organized revolutionary government and is not recognized as belligerency.”<sup>6</sup> Whether one considers al Qaeda’s goal of overthrowing the governments of several countries in the Middle East and across northern Africa and reestablishing the Caliphate,<sup>7</sup> or the Abu Sayyaf Group’s goal of establishing a separate Muslim state in the southern Philippines and northern Malaysia,<sup>8</sup> or any of the numerous insurgencies worldwide including Iraq and Afghanistan, there are definite political objectives and violence and terrorism are only the tools that these insurgents are using to achieve these objectives. As such, there are multiple individual insurgencies in countries across the globe that contribute to the overall Caliphatist campaign. Defining the conflict as an insurgency leads those that are attempting to defeat it toward a counterinsurgency strategy. This allows for the development of individual counterinsurgency campaigns that contribute to an overarching global counterinsurgency strategy.

### **Influence as a Means of Engagement**

If one agrees with the assertions in the previous two paragraphs, then one must decide how best to counter an insurgency; how best to counter this enemy. The right thinking is out there. David Galula, a widely studied French military theorist on counterinsurgency, wrote that the insurgent must use alternate means to offset the imbalance in military power. The insurgent must attempt to dissociate the populace from the government and gain the support of the population and thus this “battle for the population is a major characteristic” of insurgent warfare.<sup>9</sup> The spokesman for and second in command of Al Qaeda, Ayman al Zawahiri, wrote in a letter to the now deceased leader of Al Qaeda in Iraq, Abu Mussab al Zarqawi, that the jihad must have

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<sup>6</sup>Dictionary.com, “Insurgency,” Available from <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/insurgency>; Internet; accessed on 23 October 2006.

<sup>7</sup>Federation of American Scientists Intelligence Resource Program, Al Qaeda, Available from <http://www.fas.org/irp/world/para/ladin.htm>; Internet; accessed on 24 October 2006.

<sup>8</sup>Federation of American Scientists Intelligence Resource Program, Abu Sayyaf Group, Available from <http://www.fas.org/irp/world/para/asg.htm>; Internet; accessed on 24 October 2006.

<sup>9</sup>David Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare: Theory and Practice* (New York, NY: Praeger, 1964), 7-8.

the support of the masses and must not do anything that the masses do not understand or approve.<sup>10</sup> He further stated that this war is a “race for the hearts and minds of the Umma,”<sup>11</sup> Umma defined as the Islamic community.<sup>12</sup> Joseph Nye, author of “Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics,” stated the US will only be able to win if they are able to attract moderate Muslims.<sup>13</sup> Will Marshall, President of the Progressive Policy Institute, stated that “counterinsurgency seeks, first and foremost, to win over the civilian population.”<sup>14</sup> Andrew F. Krepinevich, Jr., Executive Director of the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments and Distinguished Visiting Professor of Public Policy at George Mason University, claims the war in Iraq has three centers of gravity; the Iraqi people, the American people, and the American Soldier, and the key to securing each is “winning hearts and minds.”<sup>15</sup> *The Defense Science Board Report on Strategic Communications* stated the information campaign is the “essential objective” to separate non-violent Muslims from those that use terrorism.<sup>16</sup> The Department of Defense stated in the 2006 *Quadrennial Defense Review Report* that the enemy uses propaganda<sup>17</sup> and that “victory will come when the enemy’s extremist ideologies are discredited

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<sup>10</sup>Global Security.org, Homeland Security, Letter from Ayman al Zawahiri to Abu Mussab al Zaraqawi, Available from [http://www.globalsecurity.org/security/library/report/2005/zawahiri-zaraqawi-letter\\_9jul2005.htm](http://www.globalsecurity.org/security/library/report/2005/zawahiri-zaraqawi-letter_9jul2005.htm); Internet; accessed on 23 October 2006.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid.

<sup>12</sup>Dictionary.com, “Umma,” Available from <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/umma>; Internet; accessed on 23 October 2006.

<sup>13</sup>Joseph S. Nye, “Soft Power and American Foreign Policy,” *Political Science Quarterly* 119, no. 2 (2004): 255--270.

<sup>14</sup>Will Marshall, “A Smarter Fight,” *Blueprint* 2005, no. 4 (2005): 43.

<sup>15</sup>Andrew F. Krepinevich, “How To Win In Iraq,” *Foreign Affairs* 84, no. 5 (2005): 93.

<sup>16</sup>Department of Defense, *Report of the Defense Science Board Task Force on Strategic Communication* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2004), 39.

<sup>17</sup>Department of Defense, *Quadrennial Defense Review Report* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2006), 1, Available from <http://www.defenselink.mil/qdr/report/Report20060203.pdf>; Internet; accessed on 24 October 2006.

in the eyes of their host populations and tacit supporters.<sup>18</sup> The *National Strategy for Combating Terrorism* states that this is both a “battle of arms and ideas”<sup>19</sup>

The sources listed above show there is ample evidence in academia, in the US government, and in the minds of Al Qaeda leadership of the importance of influencing the population in the GWOT. The US President has acted accordingly in appointing a single US government agency responsible for developing and coordinating the strategic communication effort.

On 14 March 2005, President Bush nominated Karen Hughes as the Under Secretary of State for Public Affairs and Public Diplomacy.<sup>20</sup> In 2006, Stephen Hadley, the President’s National Security Advisor formed a new National Security Council Policy Coordinating Committee for Strategic Communication and Public Diplomacy (PCC for SC/PD). This directive combined the Counter Terrorism Information Strategy Policy Coordinating Committee and the Strategic Communication Policy Coordinating Committee. It also appointed Under Secretary Hughes as chair of this committee and gave her the responsibility to coordinate interagency activities related to strategic communications and global influence.<sup>21</sup>

Recognizing that influence is critical to success in the GWOT, the US government has begun organizing more effectively with this single point of coordination for strategic communication. The purview of the PCC for SC/PD is to:

1. ensure that all agencies work together to disseminate the President’s themes and messages;

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<sup>18</sup>Ibid., 21.

<sup>19</sup>The White House, *Fact Sheet: National Strategy for Combating Terrorism* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2006), Available from <http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2006/09/20060905.html>; Internet; accessed on 24 October 2006.

<sup>20</sup>Amelia H. Arsenault, University of Southern California Center on Public Diplomacy, “Karen Hughes’ Appointment as Undersecretary of State for Public Affairs and Public Diplomacy,” 12 April 2005. Available from [http://uscpublicdiplomacy.com/index.php/newsroom/specialreports\\_detail/karen\\_hughes\\_appointment\\_as\\_undersecretary\\_of\\_state\\_for\\_public\\_diplomacy/](http://uscpublicdiplomacy.com/index.php/newsroom/specialreports_detail/karen_hughes_appointment_as_undersecretary_of_state_for_public_diplomacy/); Internet; accessed on 15 December 2005.

<sup>21</sup>Hadley.

2. all public diplomacy and strategic communications resources, programs, and activities are effectively coordinated to support those messages; and

3. every agency gives public diplomacy and strategic communication the same level of priority that the president does.<sup>22</sup>

Why then does it seem that the US is failing to be effective? Although not the sole reason, the reason that this paper will address are the lack of resources and insufficient manning of public diplomacy sections in embassies and inadequate training of Public Diplomacy personnel.

### **Shortcomings in the Influence Effort and the Psychological Operations Offset**

Public diplomacy is the term that the State Department uses to define their efforts to inform and influence foreign audiences. Public diplomacy resources have eroded by more than 30 percent since 1989. More than 60 percent of embassies have only one public diplomacy officer.<sup>23</sup> As of 2004, the annual budget for State Department information programs and US international broadcasting was approximately \$1.2 billion or only .25 percent of the budget of the Department of Defense.<sup>24</sup> Jeffrey Jones, former Senior Director, Strategic Communication and Information, National Security Council and former commander of the 4th Psychological Operations Group estimated that given the importance of the influence effort that resources allocated are insufficient by a factor of ten.<sup>25</sup> The *Defense Science Board Report on Strategic Communication* said State Department strategic communications planning is constrained by small staff and budget,

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<sup>22</sup>US Congress, House, Committee on Appropriations, Subcommittee on Science, State, Justice, and Commerce, and Related Agencies, *US Public Diplomacy: State Department Efforts Lack Certain Communication Elements and Face Persistent Challenges*, Statement of Jess T. Ford, 109th Congress, 2nd Session, US Government Accountability Office, Available from [www.gao.gov](http://www.gao.gov); Internet; accessed on 12 September 2006.

<sup>23</sup>Department of Defense, *Report of the Defense Science Board Task Force on Strategic Communication*, 76.

<sup>24</sup>*Ibid.*, 28.

<sup>25</sup>Jeffrey B. Jones, "Strategic Communication: A Mandate for the United States," *Joint Forces Quarterly* 39 (2005): 109.

inadequate technology, limited evaluation capability, and insufficient attention from State and Defense Department leaders.<sup>26</sup> This paper will not explore the issue of resourcing for public diplomacy, but will attempt to show that this paucity of resources is limiting the ability of PD sections in embassies to effectively influence the populations in their host nations.

Focus is the first issue. According to William Parker, the Political Advisor to the Commander of US Strategic Command and a career US Information Agency employee until its dissolution in 1999, PD officers overseas are primarily focused on engaging the host nation media, governmental leaders, and elites.<sup>27</sup> This was corroborated by Stephen Rounds, a retired State Department Public Diplomacy Officer, who said the same thing.<sup>28</sup> There are two factors that contribute to this, training and manning.

There are 11 Public Diplomacy courses that the State Department Foreign Service Institute offers. PY131, “PD Engaging Foreign Audiences,” deals most directly with target audience analysis. But it is a mid-level course and is not a prerequisite for assignment as a PD officer in an overseas PD section. The three courses which are required for overseas PD assignments and in which PD officers get their tradecraft are as follows:<sup>29</sup>

1. PY122, “Advanced Administration of Public Diplomacy Operations Overseas,” addresses the special regulatory authorities and responsibilities of Public Affairs operations;
2. PY 138, “PD Tradecraft for Information and Media Affairs,” which “equips officers with skills, strategies, and networks needed to direct press and information programs at post;”

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<sup>26</sup>Department of Defense, *Report of the Defense Science Board Task Force on Strategic Communication*, 26.

<sup>27</sup>William Parker, Political Advisor to the Commander of the United States Strategic Command, Interview by author, 8 September 2006, Tape recording, Offutt AFB, NE.

<sup>28</sup>Stephen Rounds, Retired State Department Public Affairs Officer, Interview by author, 20 April 2006.

<sup>29</sup>Dara Dozier, Deputy Director of Public Diplomacy Training, US Department of State Foreign Service Institute, Electronic mail with author, 26 January 2007.

3. PY 140, “Tradecraft for Exchanges and Educational and Cultural Programs,” which “introduces individuals assigned to cultural affairs work to the major tools in the cultural affairs portfolio.”<sup>30</sup>

PY 138 and PY 140 “touch on” engaging tactical level target audiences with an influence campaigns using information.<sup>31</sup> In addition to these two required courses, PY 153, “Introduction to Public Diplomacy,” also has instruction on target audience analysis, but it is not required to work in an overseas PD section, and it is more intended as a course to familiarize foreign service officers and other State Department employees with PD as opposed to educating PD officers.<sup>32</sup>

Rob Tappan, a former Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Public Affairs and Public Diplomacy, said that PD officers learn cultural analysis and target audience analysis on the job. PD training does not include target audience analysis. It centers on media interaction and press relations.<sup>33</sup> Again, this was supported by Stephen Rounds, a retired State Department Public Affairs Officer.<sup>34</sup> This leads to the conclusion that the training that PD officers receive does not sufficiently prepare them to do detailed demographic analysis.

Manning is the other contributing factor to the focus of PD sections. As stated earlier, 60 percent of embassies have only one PD officer. The administrative responsibilities of the PD officer and the requirement to handle the press take the vast majority of the PD officer’s time.<sup>35</sup> The limited available man hours prevent the PD section from being able to spread their focus to

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<sup>30</sup>US Department of State, Foreign Studies Institute, Course Catalog (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2007).

<sup>31</sup>Dara Dozier, Electronic mail.

<sup>32</sup>US Department of State, Foreign Studies Institute.

<sup>33</sup>Robert Tappan, President of Washington Office of Burston-Marsteller and former Principle Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Public Affairs and Public Diplomacy, Interview by author, 2 October 2006.

<sup>34</sup>Stephen Rounds, Retired State Department Public Affairs Officer, Interview by author, 20 April 2006.

<sup>35</sup>US Congress, *US Public Diplomacy: State Department Efforts Lack Certain Communication Elements and Face Persistent Challenges*, 9.

individual target audiences at the local level in the host nation. Combine these two factors, and it is easy to see why the focus of PD sections is where it is.

The PSYOP officer would have the mission to assist in planning the engagement effort to reach these local target audiences. As part of that, he would be responsible for doing the requisite research to effectively engage them. He would bring training and experience in doing exactly that. PSYOP has a detailed process of target audience analysis. The process includes analysis of audiences to determine appropriate messages and media to effectively influence. This process is based in the commander's objectives but examines each target audience from aspects that facilitate influencing that audience.<sup>36</sup> To do this for a nation would be time-consuming, but is necessary for effective influence efforts.

Understanding the audience, whether in a marketing campaign or in public diplomacy, is one of the keys to effectiveness in influencing. It is stated that the overall goal of public diplomacy is to “understand, inform, engage, and influence” foreign populations.<sup>37</sup> Understand is listed first. It is difficult if not impossible, to understand the audience without doing analysis. The 2005 RAND Institute report “Dissuading Terror: Strategic Influence and the Struggle Against Terrorism” stated to properly match psychological objectives and target audiences one must understand the “attitudes, beliefs, opinions, and emotions or target populations.”<sup>38</sup> A deficiency noted by a 2006 Government Accountability Officer report is the identification of specific target audiences.<sup>39</sup> As the PSYOP mission commander for Joint Special Operations Task Force-Philippines, I saw evidence of this. There are over 700 inhabited islands in the Philippines with

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<sup>36</sup>Department of the Army, Field Manual 3-05.301, *Psychological Operations Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2003), 5-1.

<sup>37</sup>US Congress, *US Public Diplomacy: State Department Efforts Lack Certain Communication Elements and Face Persistent Challenges*, 4.

<sup>38</sup>Kim Cragin and Scott Gerwehr, *Dissuading Terror: Strategic Influence and the Struggle Against Terrorism* (Arlington, VA: RAND Corporation, 2005), 62.

<sup>39</sup>US Congress, *US Public Diplomacy: State Department Efforts Lack Certain Communication Elements and Face Persistent Challenges*, 7.

multiple tribes and languages. With the duties assigned to the PD section in the embassy in Manila, it was impossible for them to develop specific plans with the appropriate messages and themes to address even the major groups.

The analysis of the individual target audience is critical. The failure to do it leads to failure in influencing. Although anecdotal in nature, there was a series of events that provides evidence to support this assertion. In the southern Philippines, the United States Agency for International Development executed an assistance program called Livelihood Enhancement and Peace (LEAP) in which they provided funding and training for former members of the Moro National Liberation Front to build and run seaweed farms.<sup>40</sup> In February 2005, there was an insurgent uprising on the Island of Jolo involving the Abu Sayyaf Group and the Misuari Breakaway Group (The Philippine Star [Manila] 14 February 2005). The leadership of the Abu Sayyaf Group and the Misuari Breakaway Group called for these farmers to take up arms in Mindanao to take military pressure off them in Jolo. When I and other members of Joint Special Operations Task Force-Philippines visited the farms and asked them why they did not respond to the call, they said it was because they had an income and the ability to provide for their families and were not willing to risk losing that to support the insurgents on Jolo.

The PD section in the US Embassy in Manila developed a DVD to showcase the success of the LEAP Program. The problem was that one of the potential target audiences for this DVD on the Island of Jolo, a stronghold of the Abu Sayyaf Group and many other portions of Mindanao, do not have access to electricity. Even in areas where the village had access to electricity and a video player, the most common format was video compact disc, not DVD. If the PD section had the resources and training necessary to the proper demographic analysis, it would have led to the use of a different medium to advertise the LEAP program.

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<sup>40</sup>United States Agency for International Development, Program Description, 2005, Available from [http://philippines.usaid.gov/mindanao\\_leap.php](http://philippines.usaid.gov/mindanao_leap.php); Internet; accessed on 25 October 2006.

This is not to say that the Army gets it right every time either. The Joint Special Operations Task-Philippines Military Information Support Team (MIST) which I commanded oversaw an advertising campaign for the Rewards for Justice Program through the US Embassy. The MIST ran newspaper advertisements in several papers on Mindanao that reported circulation areas on the Islands of Sulu Archipelago and radio advertisements on stations with broadcast radii extending past the Island of Jolo. When I traveled to Jolo in May of 2005, I learned almost no one had access to radio because they did not have electricity, and if people read newspaper they only got them once or twice a month and primarily read papers in which we did not advertise. These examples highlight the need to do the research to determine the best way to reach each target audience, and often that research requires someone to go to the audience to get the needed information. The PSYOP officer would do this where the PD section is unable.

The anecdote about Jolo indirectly addresses another capability that an Army officer would bring to the PD section. Safety is a critical issue and State Department personnel are civilians. They do not carry weapons and are not trained to operate in semi-permissive environments. Therefore they do not have the ability to enter environments that might be hostile.<sup>41</sup> As a member of the armed forces, the PSYOP officer could do this, whether with other members of the US military or working with host nation forces, to gather the target audience data.

Working with host nation forces is yet another advantage of having the member of armed forces assigned. The State Department Foreign Service Officers will generally not have access to host nation military forces for use as surrogates to facilitate or execute public diplomacy efforts. This is less than optimally productive since the use of host nation personnel as surrogates is a contributing factor in success in a counterinsurgency.<sup>42</sup> It is better to have a member of the host nation government execute counterinsurgency operations to build the credibility of the partner

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<sup>41</sup>US Congress, *US Public Diplomacy: State Department Efforts Lack Certain Communication Elements and Face Persistent Challenges*, 10.

<sup>42</sup>Department of Defense, *Quadrennial Defense Review Report*, 17.

nation government and the connection between the government and the people.<sup>43</sup> One should deduce that this also means delivery of the host nation message to the target audience, and even if the PSYOP officer could not enter certain areas, he could work with host nation forces to both gather target audience data and deliver US messages.

In working with host nation surrogates and in influencing foreign populations, language ability is a key enabler. Another manning issue with State PD officers is filling language billets. In 2005 the State Department could fill only 24 percent of billets that required language proficiency.<sup>44</sup> Every PSYOP officer must maintain proficiency in a foreign language.<sup>45</sup> The battalions of 4th Psychological Operations Group, the only active component military PSYOP unit and a subordinate unit of US Special Operations Command, are aligned regionally and the battalions try to send the officers to work in countries where they speak the host nation language. As a result of the organization built around regional orientation, there would likely be PSYOP officers with ability in the language of the host nation and experience working in the target region if not the target country. This would be of benefit to the mission and would address an issue raised by members of embassy staffs in the December 2006 Senate Foreign Relations Committee Report, *Embassies As Command Posts in the Anti-Terror Campaign*. They expressed concerns that often the military assigned to work in embassies do not have regional experience or language skills requisite to be effective.<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>43</sup>Robert M. Cassidy, "The Long Small War: Indigenous Forces for Counterinsurgency," *Parameters* 36, no. 2 (2006): 47.

<sup>44</sup>US Congress, *US Public Diplomacy: State Department Efforts Lack Certain Communication Elements and Face Persistent Challenges*, 10.

<sup>45</sup>Department of the Army, Pamphlet 600-3, *Commissioned Officer Professional Development and Career Management* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2005), 314.

<sup>46</sup>US Congress, Senate, Committee on Foreign Relations, *Embassies As Command Posts In The Anti-Terror Campaign*." 109th Congress, 2nd Session (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2006), 15.

Planning is another area where the PSYOP officer would provide assistance to State. According to William Parker<sup>47</sup> and Rob Tappan,<sup>48</sup> State does not have a culture of planning. The PSYOP officer assigned will have completed extensive training in planning and will bring the planning culture of the military to the public diplomacy effort. Additionally two trans-regional PSYOP programs have been approved. These are aimed at reinforcing the embassies ability to assist host nations in their struggle to exercise better control over ungoverned space that is currently or has the potential to be used by terrorists as safe havens.<sup>49</sup> Currently, these programs are primarily executed by Military Information Support Teams that work with embassies on a transient basis.

Public affairs sections in embassies do great work to support US government policies and objectives, but they are limited by inadequate levels of resourcing, both in funding and personnel, and in the way they are trained to execute PD. Adding a PSYOP officer to the country team would provide an additional capability to reach the tactical target audience that in which PA sections currently have shortfalls.

## **Benefits to the Department of Defense**

This proposal does not solely benefit State. It will also have benefits for the Department of Defense in its GWOT efforts. As stated earlier, the same information the PD section needs to reach the local target audience can be used by the DoD to execute military information activities if it becomes necessary for the US military to be directly involved in the counterinsurgency effort.

Additionally, it is clearly stated in the *National Strategy for Combating Terrorism* that part of the GWOT is the development of partner nation capability.<sup>50</sup> Since the ideological and influence components of this conflict are so important, one can deduce that the development of

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<sup>47</sup>Parker.

<sup>48</sup>Tappan.

<sup>49</sup>Department of Defense, *Report of the Defense Science Board Task Force on Strategic Communication*, 79.

<sup>50</sup>The White House, *Fact Sheet: National Strategy for Combating Terrorism*, 12.

partner nation influence capabilities should be included. The PSYOP officer could work with the Embassy Office of Defense Cooperation or Military Advisory Group to provide assessments and recommendations on security assistance for partner nation military information and influence activities. And as stated earlier, the PSYOP officer could work by, through, and with these partner nation forces to advance the ideas of stability, self-determination, prosperity, and others.

It is also stated in the NSCT that increased interagency cooperation is critical to success in defeating global terrorism. The NSCT directs that “where practicable, we will increase interagency and intergovernmental assignments for personnel in CT related positions. This will help to break down organizational stovepipes and advance the exchange of ideas and practices for more effective CT efforts.”<sup>51</sup> The primary method that USSOCOM uses to do this overseas in the influence realm is the MIST. However, there are often obstacles in employing MISTS, most often from the host nation but also from members of the embassy staff.<sup>52</sup> If State PD and DoD determine that this initiative would have efficacy in the GWOT, it would also provide an avenue to overcome these obstacles. The PSYOP officer would obviously not be a deployed unit. He would be a member of the embassy staff. Having the initiative come from State would counter the arguments from the members of the embassy staff that DoD would be encroaching on State’s purview.<sup>53</sup> An additional benefit is that once the PSYOP was assigned to the staff, he would “help to educate and institutionalize the PSYOP process and presence into State. State will grow accustomed to having PSYOP.”<sup>54</sup> The officer would become a part of the embassy community and would eventually be seen as a normal part of doing business. This has great potential to assuage the concerns of State Department personnel who have reservations about working with Defense Department personnel.

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<sup>51</sup>Ibid., 21.

<sup>52</sup>Kyle Hickman, Deputy Commander of 4th Psychological Operations Group, Interview by author, 4 October 2006.

<sup>53</sup>US Congress, *Embassies As Command Posts In The Anti-Terror Campaign*, 11.

<sup>54</sup>Hickman, Interview by author.

The advantages offered with the initiative are clear. The Department of State will gain assistance in performing a critical function in the GWOT in which they currently have significant shortfalls. The Department of Defense through USSOCOM will have the opportunity, in working the embassies to execute PD, to gather information that will be useful for potential military information activities in a host or partner nation. They will have greater access to host or partner nation security forces for assessment and development of influence capabilities. And they will have the opportunity to build relationships with the interagency community on the embassy staff to assuage concerns about DoD stepping outside its purview. Although there are positions counter to this idea and potential negative consequences, the benefits outweigh the costs. The addition of a PSYOP officer to the PD staff at an embassy has great potential to add to US effectiveness in defeating violent extremism.

## **US Policy and Other Supporting Arguments**

The benefits of this proposal are easy to see, but that is not the only reason it is viable. It is clearly stated in multiple US national policy documents that countering the ideology that spawns violent extremism is a critical task. Those same documents direct that the US must use all instruments of national power and influence highlighting diplomacy, financial, intelligence, law enforcement, and the military.<sup>55</sup> The *National Strategy for Combating Terrorism* calls for enhanced interagency collaboration in this fight<sup>56</sup> as does the *Quadrennial Defense Review Report* calling it “imperative to work with other government agencies . . . and where appropriate to help them increase their capacities and capabilities and the ability to work together.”<sup>57</sup> The initiative to place a PSYOP officer in addresses all of these statements in policy guidance. It forces State and Defense cooperation in the influence effort.

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<sup>55</sup>The White House, *Fact Sheet: National Strategy for Combating Terrorism*, 1.

<sup>56</sup>*Ibid.*, 20.

<sup>57</sup>Department of Defense, *Quadrennial Defense Review Report*, 20.

The Political Advisor to the commander of USSOCOM agrees with the efficacy of increased State and DoD PSYOP integration. Ambassador Joseph LeBaron has expressed the idea of placing post-battalion command PSYOP lieutenant colonels in the public diplomacy sections of the regional bureaus at State.<sup>58</sup> Not only does this support the idea of further DoD PSYOP and State PD integration, it also fits perfectly into the grade and seniority recommendations in this monograph that the PSYOP officer in the embassy should be a senior major or junior lieutenant colonel. The more senior PSYOP officer working at the regional bureau would provide advice and assistance at regional bureaus at State Department headquarters and the subordinate PSYOP officer would be doing the same at the embassy in the field.

As stated earlier, MISTs already provide this advice and assistance to embassy PD sections. Although successful, there have been issues with the tour length for these elements. Generally they deploy for six months to twelve months and then return to the US. State Department personnel in embassies have stated that this is not long enough, that by the time the MIST learns the processes they have finished their tour.<sup>59</sup> Both William Parker<sup>60</sup> and Rob Tappan<sup>61</sup> mentioned this as a shortcoming of the MIST program. The primary reason is the limited personnel available. The only active component PSYOP unit is the 4th PSYOP Group at Fort Bragg, North Carolina. The Soldiers and officers of this unit are the ones that fill the MISTs and must return to home station after TDY to reset.<sup>62</sup> A three year permanent assignment would address these issues. The embassies of both Yemen and Ethiopia requested permanent assignment of PSYOP officers.<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>58</sup>Joseph LeBaron, Political Advisor to the Commander of US Special Operations Command, Electronic mail with author, 16 February 2007.

<sup>59</sup>US Congress, *Embassies As Command Posts In The Anti-Terror Campaign*, 11.

<sup>60</sup>Parker.

<sup>61</sup>Tappan.

<sup>62</sup>Hickman, Electronic mail.

<sup>63</sup>Paul Touchette, Former Psychological Operations Assignments Officer and current of 6th Battalion, 4th Psychological Operations Group, Interview by author, 4 October 2006.

There is one caveat to this. There are countries that DoD considers hardship tours for which they can only assign personnel for one year. If State and Defense decide on implementation for one of these countries, SOCOM can continue to provide PSYOP support using the current MIST programs.

## Opposing Views

Despite the potential for positive impacts the PSYOP officer could have if assigned to support the PD section, there are some arguments against this type of integration of Defense and State. Many in the State Department have an overall negative view of PSYOP as evidenced by the statements of Bill Parker, Stephen Rounds, and Rob Tappan previously cited in this monograph. From the military perspective, there are two main arguments against this initiative. The current levels of PSYOP major strength would currently be prohibitive. There is also some belief that the MISTs working with embassy PD sections already perform this function.

The interagency misperception about PSYOP will probably be the most difficult hurdle to cross. Stephen Rounds, a retired Department of State Public Affairs Officer, when interviewed about the idea of assigning a PSYOP officer to embassies stated, “State PA is seen as open. We don’t want to be seen as deceptive.”<sup>64</sup> When told that PSYOP does not lie to achieve its objectives he responded, “that makes a big difference. That breeds an environment of working with our counterparts.”<sup>65</sup> By US government policy, PSYOP is truthful. However, it suffers from a common misperception that it is the opposite of truthful because of incorrect beliefs that it is tied to deception and disinformation.<sup>66</sup> This misperception makes State reticent to request and permanently assign a PSYOP officer to work with PD sections.<sup>67</sup> If this notion is pervasive and entrenched, then overcoming it will be critical to not only implementing the proposal of adding a

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<sup>64</sup>Rounds.

<sup>65</sup>Ibid.

<sup>66</sup>Curtis D. Boyd, “Psychological Operations: Learning Is Not A Defense Science Project,” Monograph, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA, 2006, 8.

<sup>67</sup>Ibid., 18.

PSYOP officer to the embassy staff, but also to increasing State and DoD cooperation in the influence effort.

As stated earlier, part of the solution to this issue is the actual assignment of the officer. Foreign Service officers who have worked with PSYOP in peacetime already state the benefits.<sup>68</sup> Rob Tappan when asked about the Military Information Support Team program that, “The MIST is a valuable asset to embassy operations with functions they provide.”<sup>69</sup> There is historical precedence for PSYOP and State cooperation. Starting with US intervention in the Dominican Republic in 1965, PSYOP units worked with the US Information Agency, now part of State in the Public Diplomacy section.<sup>70</sup>

The boundaries between PSYOP and PD are thinning. PSYOP and PD must cooperate to deliver an effective message to target audiences.<sup>71</sup> If necessary to facilitate, then PSYOP should consider developing a euphemism for the title of this officer when assigned to the PD section. William Parker, the Political Advisor to the Commander of US Strategic Command stated the name of PSYOP is the hardest issue with those outside the US military and further recommended that this officer be assigned as assistant cultural affairs officer or information support officer.<sup>72</sup> The interagency community must overcome their reticence to cooperate with DoD PSYOP to allow more effective influence of target audiences overseas.

Continuing with discussion of the MIST, there is another counter to this proposal. Some have said MISTs already perform the functions that the PSYOP officer would perform if assigned to the PD section. As stated earlier, a MIST generally deploys to work with a PD section for a maximum of six months. There are exceptions where personnel volunteer to stay longer than the

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<sup>68</sup>Ibid., 17.

<sup>69</sup>Tappan.

<sup>70</sup>Randall Stagner, “Denying Sanctuary to the Global Insurgency: A Primer to Reestablish USG Strategic Communication,” Monograph, National War College, Carlisle Barracks, PA, 2005, 36.

<sup>71</sup>Boyd, 10.

<sup>72</sup>Parker.

six month deployment, but generally six months is the rule.<sup>73</sup> To restate, members of the embassy staff report that the MIST barely has time to become oriented before their tour is complete and a new team comes in. William Parker, the POLAD at STRATCOM, recommended that PSYOP officers be assigned for a minimum of three years on accompanied tours.<sup>74</sup> This tour length would give the officer the time to build relationships in the embassy, with host nation counterparts, and with the host nation military. Colonel Randy Stagner, Director of the Joint PSYOP Support Element-Washington Office, characterizes the interagency coordination with regard to strategic communication as “ad hoc.”<sup>75</sup> Colonel Curtis Boyd, incoming Commander of 4th PSYOP Group also calls military PSYOP support to PD ad hoc and further characterized it as “episodic.”<sup>76</sup>

Assuming implementation of the recommendation to assign a senior PSYOP major, manning strength for majors was the most stated and hardest obstacle to overcome for those in the Army PSYOP community. At 76 percent strength, it is currently not possible to take ten to twenty majors from the force to place in these assignments without sacrificing elsewhere. The manning priority for PSYOP officers is as follows:

1. Manning Priority 1 is to SOCOM units. This includes SOCOM, USASOC and 4th PSYOP Group, Special Forces Groups, the Ranger Regiment, and JSOC. These are must fill billets.
2. Manning Priority 2 is to conventional units. These are corps and division PSYOP planners and Stryker brigade combat team PSYOP planners.
3. Manning Priority 3 is to NATO assignments.<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>73</sup>Hickman, Interview by author.

<sup>74</sup>Parker.

<sup>75</sup>Stagner, 3.

<sup>76</sup>Boyd, 18.

<sup>77</sup>John P. Morgan, Psychological Operations Assignments Officer, Interview by author, 3 October 2006.

If implemented immediately, the likely bill payer would be the conventional unit headquarters since the officers assigned to these positions are primarily majors. Over time the transition of these billets to active duty reserve component officers in accordance with the transfer of reserve component PSYOP units to the control of US Army Forces Command would assuage this concern and offset loss of active duty PSYOP majors by fourteen.

The Deputy Commander of 4th PSYOP Group questioned if SOCOM can do this given current force structure, but further stated if the officers were available, it would be a good idea.<sup>78</sup>

The Commander of the Joint PSYOP Support Elements at US Special Operations Command said:

In order to better synchronize and coordinate the operational and trans-regional influence levels of the GWOT, we could envision placing a JPSE officer within embassies that have MISTs. This initiative would serve to coordinate the work of the MISTs with the capabilities of the JPSE and provide ready access to a menu of JPSE prototypes for modification and approval by the Ambassador and his staff. An aggressive initiative of this nature would require approval by Cdr, SOCOM, the affected US Ambassadors, and an associated increase of appropriate personnel within the JPSE.<sup>79</sup>

Although there are some seemingly valid points of opposition to assigning a PSYOP officer to embassies to facilitate PD and GWOT, the concerns are not prohibitive. Given the potential benefits, the costs are minimal. If the Army, US SOCOM, and the PSYOP community can address the officer strength issues, there is no real reason to not move forward.

## **Implementation**

To make this proposal reality will require agreement between State and DoD.<sup>80</sup> Once these agencies reach the agreement to go forward, State would need to submit a request to DoD to have the personnel assigned. This request from State to DoD would start the process to change the TDA for the Joint PSYOP Support Element-Washington Office, the recommended billet for the PSYOP officer. The PSYOP Personnel Proponency Office at Fort Bragg would make the

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<sup>78</sup>Hickman, Interview by author.

<sup>79</sup>Colonel Jack Summe, Commander of the Joint Psychological Operations Support Element, US Special Operations Command, MacDill AFB, FL, Electronic mail with author, 25 January 2007.

<sup>80</sup>Hickman, Interview by author.

change to the TDA and generate the request to the PSYOP assignments officer at Army Human Resources Command to fill the billets. The time from decision by State and Defense to approve this initiative to adding the billet and building the requisition at US Army Human Resources and then assigning an officer would be a minimum of six months<sup>81</sup>

One of the initial questions to answer in assigning a Psychological Operations officer to these positions is what grade the officer should be. The possible options are captain through colonel. Rank, experience, and career progression are the factors to consider in making this determination.

Captain is not a viable option because this rank does not have the requisite experience level. Officers enter the psychological operations career field as captains. The training takes ten to twelve months depending on the language the officer takes. A standard overseas tour for the Army is three years. This eliminates captain as a feasible rank. The training plus the overseas tour will not give the captain the time to return to the 4th Psychological Operations Group and command at the captain level. Command is generally considered a critical position for captains in selection for major. A captain will probably not have any experience in Psychological Operations before the assignment and, therefore, would not be a good candidate. Lastly, given the senior grades of most personnel working in embassies, a captain will also not have the appropriate rank to interact with the embassy staff. The initial assignment for captains in the PSYOP field should be at 4th PSYOP Group.

Major is a feasible rank. These officers have the seniority and generally the experience working in psychological operations to perform the duties at the embassy. Lieutenant Colonel Rick Springett, the PSYOP Personnel Proponency Officer, stated “from an operational perspective, major is better (compared to lieutenant colonel) because of malleability and the

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<sup>81</sup>Richard Springett, Psychological Operations Personnel Proponency Officer, Interview by author, 4 October 2006.

potential that the lieutenant colonel will refuse the assignment and retire.” He also stated that the officer needs to be major from an experience perspective.<sup>82</sup> There are two categories to consider for the grade of major; those that have served in key developmental positions (that are KD’d) and those that have not. KD’d officers are the best choice. The major selection board for PSYOP officers meets in the tenth year of service for the officer (see figure 1). If selected, the promotion for the officer will occur in the eleventh year of service and attend Command and Staff College in the eleventh or twelfth year of service (see figure 1). PSYOP majors will complete KD assignments between the twelfth and fifteenth years of service, but generally will do these after completion of Command and Staff College between the thirteenth and fourteenth year of service. These officers will have served as PSYOP company commanders, PSYOP staff officers at the division or corps level, or PSYOP battalion operations officers or executive officers. These duty positions will definitely provide the officer with the requisite background to work with an embassy public diplomacy section. Majors still have several years left in their careers and promotion to lieutenant colonel to earn. The board for this promotion meets in the officers sixteenth year of service (see figure 1). If the officer completes the KD assignment after staff college between the twelfth and fourteenth year of service, he will still have two years before the lieutenant colonel board meets to serve in the embassy assignment.

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<sup>82</sup>Springett.



# FA 39 Career Path

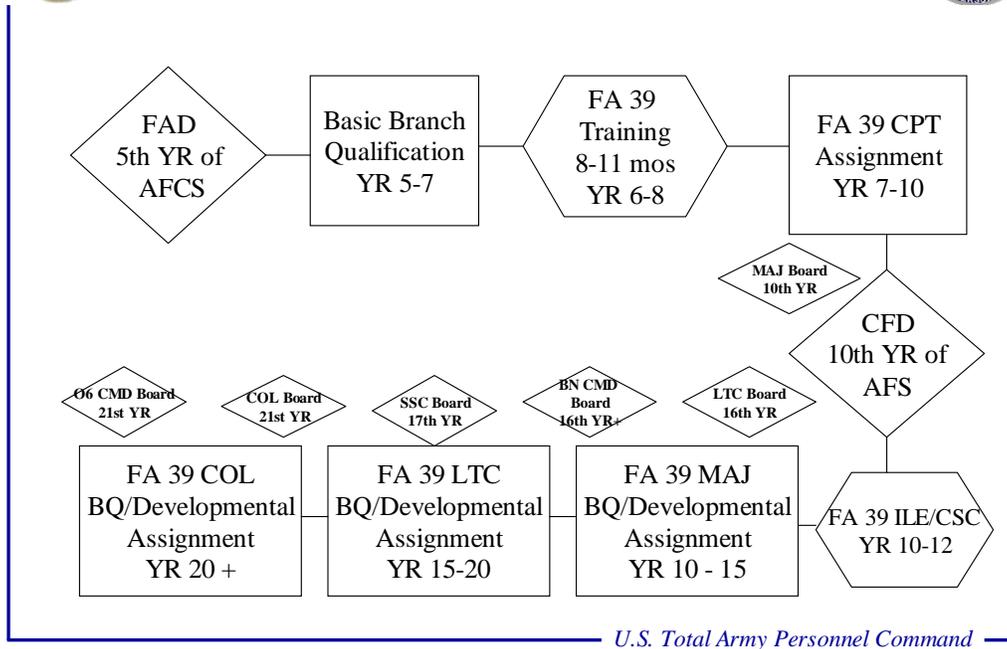


Figure 1. Psychological Operations Officer Career Timeline

Source: US Army Total Personnel Command, Functional Area 39 Psychological Operations and Civil Affairs, Available from <https://www.hrc.army.mil/site/protect/Active/opfam39/Default.htm>; Internet; accessed on 20 December 2006

There is a serious disadvantage to assigning majors to these billets. There is shortage of majors in the PSYOP field. The Army is at approximately 76 percent strength for PSYOP majors as of the writing of this monograph.<sup>83</sup> Assigning majors to embassies will reduce the number of majors available for other PSYOP assignments. A mitigating factor is that in the near future PSYOP officers for Army divisions and corps are programmed to transition to active duty reserve component officers to be in alignment with the transfer of all reserve component PSYOP units to

<sup>83</sup>Original analysis by author of assignment authorization data provided by Richard Springett, Psychological Operations Personnel Proponency Officer; and personnel strength data provided by John P. Morgan, Psychological Operations Assignments Officer, 2006.

US Army Forces Command. This will reduce the number of active duty requirements for this grade by fourteen, ten majors as division PSYOP officers, four as deputy corps PSYOP officers.<sup>84</sup>

Working up the rank structure is the option of lieutenant colonels. These officers are more experienced and obviously more senior. There are the same categories to consider, KD or not. A lieutenant colonel who has served in a key developmental position will generally have close to twenty years of service and could be eligible for retirement (see figure 1). As stated earlier, the lieutenant colonel board for PSYOP officers meets in the sixteenth year of service. The battalion command board, the critical board for lieutenant colonels, meets after the promotion board. If selected for battalion command, the officer will generally complete this assignment between the seventeenth and nineteenth years of service. Even if the officer is not selected for battalion command, he will complete another KD assignment during the same time frame. If this is the case, these officers will have completed nineteen years of service and would have the option to retire and decline an overseas assignment.

Numerically, lieutenant colonels are the best option. As of the writing of this monograph, the PSYOP field is at approximately 138 percent strength.<sup>85</sup> According to the PSYOP Personnel Proponency Officer, there needs to be more spaces for lieutenant colonels from a personnel perspective.<sup>86</sup> Taking into consideration the potential that a lieutenant colonel who is approaching twenty years of service may opt for retirement in lieu of assignment overseas, lieutenant colonels who have not served in KD positions are feasible to the same degree as majors who are KD'd. It

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<sup>84</sup>John P. Morgan. Psychological Operations Assignments Officer, Interview by author, 3 October 2006.

<sup>85</sup>Original analysis by author of assignment authorization data provided by Richard Springett, Psychological Operations Personnel Proponency Officer; and personnel strength data provided by John P. Morgan, Psychological Operations Assignments Officer, 2006.

<sup>86</sup>Springett.

is also possible to make this assignment a KD position for an officer who is not selected for battalion command.

Colonels are the last available rank to consider. There are an extremely limited number of colonels available. There are currently only fifteen Psychological Operations colonels on active duty.<sup>87</sup> Therefore this grade is eliminated based solely on numbers. For the sake of argument, if PSYOP officers were to work at 10 embassies, this would not leave enough colonels to fill the current billets.

Based on the considerations of rank, experience, career progression, and available strength in each grade, the two most feasible grades of officer for this assignment would be major and lieutenant colonel. Considering career progression and the potential that a more senior colonel might opt for retirement over an assignment like this, the best choices are a major who has completed a key developmental assignment or a lieutenant colonel who has not.

Once the rank of the officer is determined, then he must be assigned somewhere. The options considered were the Joint US Military Advisory/Assistance Group (JUSMAG) at the embassy, the Military Liaison Element (MLE), directly to the State Department, the Defense Attaché (DAT) section in the embassy, and to the Washington Office of US Special Operations Command (SOCOM-WO).

The JUSMAG initially seems like a logical choice because it is an existing military command structure inside the embassy. The JUSMAG is an asset of the Regional Combatant Command (RCC) and reports to the J3 Operations section of the RCC. However, not every embassy has a JUSMAG. Additionally the RCCs have different foci because of their different regions. For this initiative to be successful, there will need to be unity of effort across all embassies based on the US Strategic Communication effort.

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<sup>87</sup>Original analysis by author of personnel strength data provided by Lieutenant Colonel John P. Morgan, Psychological Operations Future Readiness and Assignments Officer, US Army Human Resources Command, Alexandria, VA. 2006.

Also working in the embassies are the MLEs. These are Special Forces elements that have the mission to gather information for potential future military operations in the country. They work for SOCOM and provide support to the RCC.<sup>88</sup> Although the missions seem to relate from the information gathering perspective, that is the sole mission of the MLE. The mission of the PSYOP officer to support to the PD section would conflict with the MLE focus on information gathering. Additionally these elements are generally headed by a captain. If the PSYOP officer is a major or a lieutenant colonel as recommended above, then he will outrank the senior Special Forces officer in the MLE and by default be responsible for the activities of the MLE. The aforementioned mission conflict of the MLE and PSYOP officer missions would most likely not be acceptable to SOCOM.

The last available organization in the embassy is the Defense Attaché section. The defense attaché system is managed by the Defense Intelligence Agency. The primary purpose of the defense attaché section is to observe and report on the political and military situation in the host nation.<sup>89</sup> Again, the information gathering that the PSYOP officer would do as part of his mission would be congruent with the mission of the DAT, but the primary mission of the PSYOP would be different and, therefore, the PSYOP officer would potentially have mission that would not support PD.

PSYOP officers have historically been assigned directly to the State Department under a Table of Distribution and Allowances (TDA) and it would be possible to use these TDA positions again to assign a PSYOP officer to directly support PD.<sup>90</sup> This option would provide direct

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<sup>88</sup>US Congress, House, Committee on Armed Services, Subcommittee on Terrorism, Unconventional Threats, and Capabilities, Hearing on Special Operations Command Missions and Roles, 109th Congress, 2nd Session, 29 June 2006, Available from <http://web.ebscohost.com>; Internet; accessed on 3 January 2007.

<sup>89</sup>William T. Garman, "National Intelligence Structure," Briefing to Military Intelligence Officer Basic Course, US Army Intelligence Center and FT. Huachuca, Fort Huachuca, Arizona, 1995, Available from <http://www.fas.org/irp/doddir/army/miobc/ntlintel.htm>; Internet; accessed on 21 February 2007.

<sup>90</sup>Springett.

control of the PSYOP officer by State and allow State to assign the officer to embassies in accordance with their priorities. However, by assigning the officer directly to State, US SOCOM has less of a vested interest in the operations and duties the officer might perform. This would be counter to the SOCOM mission to plan and synchronize the GWOT.

The last option to consider is the SOCOM Washington Office with duty at the embassies that SOCOM and State determine. The specific organization within the SOCOM-WO should be the Joint PSYOP Support Element-Washington Officer (JPSE-WO). The mission of the JPSE is to plan, coordinate, integrate and, on order, execute trans-regional PSYOP to promote US goals and objectives. A part of that mission, as stated in the JPSE Commander's intent statement, is to execute PSYOP with partner nations or the Department of State.<sup>91</sup> The proposed mission of the PSYOP officer at the embassy fits perfectly into the mission and intent of the JPSE. The JPSE-WO works regularly with the State Department Public Affairs and Public Diplomacy section to coordinate the influence efforts of State and DoD.

This assignment would give both SOCOM and State vested interest and a stake in the program. It would also facilitate coordination and unity of effort from Washington to the officer in the PD sections overseas. Additionally, it would give the officer more ready access to GWOT funding through SOCOM to offset some of the shortfalls in funding for PD from State. The TDA for the JPSE-WO already exists and if State and DoD agree that the program should be implemented, then that TDA could be modified to accommodate the billets for the assignments of PSYOP officers to embassies.<sup>92</sup>

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<sup>91</sup>Jack Summe, Colonel, Commander of the Joint Psychological Operations Support Element, US Special Operations Command, MacDill AFB, FL, Electronic mail ("Joint Psychological Operations Support Element Organizations and Activities") with author, 25 January 2007.

<sup>92</sup>Springett.

Assigning the officer to the JPSE-WO with duty at an embassy determined jointly by State and SOCOM is the best course of action. It facilitates unity of effort. It also provides linkages to SOCOM as the synchronizing headquarters for the GWOT.

The next step is preparing the officer for assignment to the embassy. To be able to integrate into the PD processes at an embassy most efficiently, the PSYOP officer should attend select PD classes at the State Department's Foreign Service Institute.<sup>93</sup> In addition to the PY 138 course addressed earlier to PSYOP officer should attend the following:

1. PY131, "PD Engaging Foreign Audiences," which covers strategies and tools to engage audiences and advocate US foreign policy goals;
2. PY133, "Policy Goes Primetime: Advanced Broadcast Media," trains foreign policy professionals to go head-to-head with broadcast media with the goal of advancing USG foreign policy goals for primetime audiences
3. PY141, "Outreach Diplomacy: America's Story," provides training and skills that will enable employees in all cones to explain US foreign policy to a full range of interlocutors;
4. PY142, "Advocacy through the Media." through video-taped presentations and media interview simulations, participants develop the skills needed to proactively promote the US agenda abroad as a USG spokesperson
5. PY153, "Introduction to Public Diplomacy." gives Department of State and other federal employees an understanding of public diplomacy's role in the successful implementation of US foreign policy
6. PY230, "New Trends in Public Diplomacy." a graduate-level seminar in the theory and practice of Public Diplomacy in the 21st century designed to provide a broad-based philosophical

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<sup>93</sup>Parker.

overview of the shifting role of PD, and will also focus on challenges and opportunities afforded by a range of global issues.<sup>94</sup>

The total class time involved for the PSYOP officer would be eight weeks.<sup>95</sup> It is currently not possible to ascertain if the courses would run consecutively. Therefore, the temporary duty to attend these courses may run longer than eight weeks if the classes are not run in succession. If eight weeks is not feasible, then the PSYOP should take at a minimum the PY 153, PY 138, PY 131, and PY 230 courses for a total of 31 class days. These would give the officer the background necessary to participate effectively in the overseas PD section.

Ideally, one of the criteria for assigning officer should be proficiency in the language of the host nation. This would be of great benefit to the influence mission. It would also address an issue raised by a number of embassy staffs that the military personnel assigned do not speak the host nation language.<sup>96</sup> If that is the case, then in addition to the PD training at State, the PSYOP officer should also attend a language refresher course at the Defense Language Institute (DLI), if needed, to have the requisite proficiency in the language of the host nation.<sup>97</sup> If a PSYOP officer is not available that has the necessary language skills, then he should attend language training at the John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, or at DLI to learn the target language. Either way, the minimum proficiency rating for the officer should be 2/2/2 on the Defense Language Proficiency Test.

Having gone through his PSYOP training, a key developmental position as a major, the State Department Foreign Service Institute public diplomacy courses, and any necessary language training, the PSYOP will be fully prepared to integrate into the Public Affairs Section of an embassy and meet the requirements presented in this paper.

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<sup>94</sup>US Department of State, Foreign Studies Institute.

<sup>95</sup>Ibid.

<sup>96</sup>US Congress, *Embassies As Command Posts In The Anti-Terror Campaign*, 15.

<sup>97</sup>Hickman, Interview by author.

Once trained and assigned, the officer should work in the embassy Public Affairs Section. Ambassador Joseph LeBaron, the Political Advisor to the Command of US SOCOM, believes assigning the PSYOP to the embassy is “a great idea as long as the PAO has direct oversight” further stating that “Command and control is a big issue here.”<sup>98</sup> Direct oversight to an Army officer usually indicates that person is the officer’s rater on his evaluation report. As such, the PAO should be that rater as long as he meets the grade requirement of GS07 in Army Regulation 623-3, *Evaluation Reporting System*.<sup>99</sup> To ensure that both State and DoD have input, the senior rater for the PSYOP officer should be the director of the JPSE-WO, typically an Army colonel. This arrangement would give the embassy input into the day-to day activities of the PSYOP officer and SOCOM the input on the potential of the officer based on the rater input by the PAO.

## Conclusion

Crossing the last three feet of diplomacy is critical to success in the Global War on Terrorism. The GWOT is the conflict that will define this generation and possible future generations. To win the GWOT, it is vital to win the support of the population. The US government agency primarily for this is the Department of State. Their efforts have been less than optimal due to inadequate resourcing, manning, and training. A potential way to address these shortfalls is to add a PSYOP officer to the Public Diplomacy section in embassies to provide an additional resource to plan and analyze potential target audiences to increase effectiveness in the influence effort. The GWOT is a war on terrorism only in name. The nature of this conflict makes it an insurgency. The political goal of Al Qaeda to overthrow existing governments and reestablish the Islamic caliphate or the goal of local terrorist organizations, like the Abu Sayyaf Group to reestablish the Sultanate of Sulu, make it so. As such, the war of ideas is a critical.

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<sup>98</sup>LeBaron.

<sup>99</sup>Department of the Army, Army Regulation 623-3, *Evaluation Reporting System* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2006), 7.

Repeating the opinion of one of the most respected and studied insurgency theorists stated earlier in this paper, David Galula asserted that defeating the insurgent ideology is critical to success for the counterinsurgent. The leadership of both the US government and its military say this is both a war of weapons and a war of ideas and that influencing moderate Muslims, those that do not support terrorist methods, to work with the US to counterterrorist organizations and activities is one of the most important objectives to accomplish. Even the second in command of Al Qaeda, Ayman al Zawahiri, said that the jihad must have the support of the masses and that this war is “race for the hearts and minds of the Umma.”

Given the importance of influencing populations in defeating violent extremists and their goals, it is incumbent on the US government to do everything possible, to use all instruments of national power to achieve this. As stated previously, the US government has taken the first steps to do this by establishing the National Security Council Policy Coordinating Committee for Strategic Communication and Public Diplomacy and further appointing the Under Secretary of State for Public Affairs as the chair of this committee to provide unity of effort in the influence effort toward foreign audiences. The responsibilities of this committee are to plan and coordinate the US government message for overseas audiences to further US objectives.

Even with change in governmental organization, it is still necessary to provide further support to the Department of State in their public diplomacy effort. Although State has primary responsibility for influencing foreign populations through the PD sections, they do not have everything necessary to fulfill that responsibility. Reiterating facts stated earlier, public diplomacy resources have eroded by more than 30 percent since 1989. More than 60 percent of embassies have only one public diplomacy officer. This paucity of resources and manpower has led to shortcomings in reaching target audiences at the local level. PD sections have difficulty in doing the requisite demographic analysis to determine what messages to use to influence those audiences and how best to get those messages to the target audiences.

Additionally, the training the PA officers receive from the Department of State Foreign Service Institute does not properly prepare PD officers to conduct detailed target audience analysis, focusing instead on media relations and cultural exchange programs. These combined factors lead to less than optimal effort in reaching local level target audiences. Failing to reach these local audiences gives the initiative to the insurgent organizations in the influence realm.

A possible solution to State's resourcing issue is the addition of a PSYOP officer to the embassy team. This officer would assist the embassy public diplomacy section in developing the target audience data and planning the influence effort to the individual local population. He would bring not only training and experience in target audience analysis, but also ideally language abilities and regional and cultural experience. He would also be able to work through host nation military surrogates to develop the audience data and to disseminate the US government message with a host nation face to build the relationship between the host nation government and its populace.

Since US government policy directed that two of the primary objectives in the Global War on Terrorism are to develop partner nation capability and to counter violent extremist ideologies, where will this proposal take us? With a PSYOP officer working to support PD efforts, the country teams will be better able to reach local level audiences, one of the critical elements in defeating insurgent organizations. The US message will better reach these audiences and will provide a balance to insurgent propaganda. This will build greater understanding in these audiences of what the US is about and will potentially improve the opinions that foreign populations have of the US.

Additionally, by working with host nation military forces to their capability to influence their populations, the connections between the government and the people will improve in relation to the connection between the people and the insurgent. This is critical to defeating an

insurgency because support of the population and safe haven are necessary conditions to a successful insurgency.

Ultimately this proposal should be no longer necessary. If successful in implementation, both the embassy public affairs sections and host nation influence organizations will have the capacity to defeat violent extremist ideology without assistance from DoD. Currently that is not the case. Since the most capable agents for this are currently in the PSYOP community, the US Department of Defense and Department of State should seriously consider implementing this change to embassy organization to bolster US influence efforts. If the US government does not do something, it will continue to fail to make serious progress in defeating terrorist organizations and their ideologies, both globally and locally.

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