

Leading the Pack: Intelligence Staff's Role in Coalition Planning Process

by

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This paper examines the role of the intelligence staff in the development of the commander's intelligence requirements during the coalition crisis operations planning process. NATO's Operation Unified Protector (OUP) is a case study on intelligence staff's performance in a coalition environment. During OUP, NATO was unable to apply, in a timely manner, its doctrine to intelligence staff support of planning resulting in the desynchronization of intelligence with planning and poor intelligence staff alignment, up and down echelons. Many point blame for poor integration of intelligence at the commander, yet the intelligence organizations themselves must accept culpability as well. Coalition warfare is the character of conflict and the U.S. can improve intelligence support. The U.S. and NATO must use organizational change principles to improve doctrine, the selection of personnel assigned to intelligence staff positions, the training of intelligence personnel, and staff integration exercises. Reinforcement of these changes requires improved staff organization, design, and procedures. Intelligence staffs must lead operational planning teams and use Prioritized Intelligence Requirements (PIRs) as synchronization lynchpins.

Leading the Pack: Intelligence Staff's Role in Coalition Planning Process

There is nothing more difficult to take in hand, more perilous to conduct, or more uncertain in its success, than to take the lead in the introduction of a new order of things.

—Machiavelli¹

The small team from the U.S. Africa Command (USAFRICOM) intelligence section located in Molesworth, U.K. (J2-Molesworth) arrived at NATO's Joint Forces Command, Naples, Italy. Quickly directed to the base's old officer club—converted into the ad hoc Operation Unified Protector (OUP) combined joint task force operations center—they entered the intelligence section, known as the Knowledge and Intelligence Production Branch (KIPD). "Great, more analysts!" the French Colonel in charge of the branch exclaimed, "I hope you are actually intelligence professionals? I have enough ex-artillery officers posing as analysts." As the discussion moved to a back room overlooking the derelict swimming pool half filled with green water, he was informed they were in Naples to figure out how KIPD's production could be better aligned with J2-Molesworth's.²

The team's leader stated, "Sir, we at J2-Molesworth are not sure what your priorities are and can't align our production to support you. The collection requirements matrix is over 1,500 items long and many are duplicate or triplicate entries. We can't figure out what you want us to collect, exploit, produce, and disseminate for you. We don't know if our collection is effective because we are not sure what you need." Exhausted, the Colonel says, "If I knew those things do you really think I would be looking for more analysts? Everything is a priority. Nothing is a priority. We are just trying to answer the staff's questions as they figure out what the objectives are and if we are meeting them." Turning to walk away he mumbles, "None of my people know

anything about planning. We are just building a morning and afternoon Power Point brief."³

The story above highlights key synchronization difficulties facing most joint task forces, but especially coalition ones. This friction is not new, and is present in after action reports on coalition operations from World War II through NATO's Allied Force in 1999. OUP's difficulties with intelligence support to operations are consistent with the past and resulted from poor intelligence staff synchronization with the commander and his planning process. This lack of synchronization is detrimental to the decision making process inherent in command.

The responsibility for this synchronization challenge has been laid at many feet. Many blame the commander for not understanding the intelligence process, his planning process, and the intelligence support he needs. Others blame poor communication technologies and interpretation difficulties. Even more point to the contributing problems of different military cultural practices and views on intelligence support and the planning process as a whole. While it is true those coalitions bring with them variations in the understanding and application of the military planning process and intelligence support, this is only part of the problem. The real culprit may be the intelligence staffs themselves.

The U.S. military has professionalized military intelligence organizations across the Department of Defense and defined doctrine that sets the path for proper intelligence synchronization with the planning and operation processes, yet it continues to have difficulty getting it right. NATO has doctrine and similar problems. Doctrine identifies that the commander is responsible for aligning his staff, setting priorities, and

making decisions, yet this can be difficult in the globalized digital modern world. It is more effective for the subject matter experts, in this case the intelligence staff, to help the commander understand how intelligence fits into his organization than to wait for him to come to that understanding on his own.

In the past, most intelligence staffs have sat on the sidelines during the planning process. The globalized world is too fast for the intelligence staff to stand by and wait for direction—they must lead, not follow, the planning process. In the future, U.S. military operations will be conducted as part of a coalition and the changes in the manning, training, and synchronization of intelligence staffs must be improved. Intelligence staffs require help from the commander to make the synchronization happen. The commander must send a clear demand signal to the intelligence organization's leadership that intelligence staffs must fully understand the planning process, must be integrated into the staff, and must lead the planning process—not just participate. Intelligence organizations must enlist an organizational change model, like that of Edgar Schein, to embed and then reinforce change to their doctrine, manning and training processes. Changes to the intelligence organizations will spur greater doctrinal changes in the U.S. military's overall strategic and operational planning process, resulting in the intelligence staff's leading the planning processes.

This paper will examine the role of the operational intelligence staff in the development of the commander's intelligence requirements during the planning process, specifically during coalition crisis operations. Recommending several organizational changes, this paper recommends improvements for integration, alignment, and synchronization of intelligence staffs during the operational planning process. Using

NATO's Libya campaign, Operation Unified Protector (OUP), as a case study, an examination of the intelligence staff's responsibility to lead the development of the commander's intelligence requirements in a coalition environment reveals some common intelligence staff alignment and synchronization problems and addresses them with recommendations.

Intelligence's Role

Strategy

The linkages between strategic objectives, derived from an understanding of national interests in the context of the world, and operational objectives come from analysis. This analysis is the primary concern of the military intelligence profession. In the simplest of form, strategic intelligence analysis leads to the identification of strategic objectives. Operational analysis draws together the strategic objectives and the environment which together leads to operational objectives. Operational plans are derived from these operational objectives. When strategic level intelligence is not developed to present the operational commander understanding, he is unable to visualize, describe, and direct his staff during operational mission analysis in order to identify operational objectives. Compounding the strategic to operational intelligence problem is the nature of the globalized digital world. Today, events unravel in minutes or hours when once it was days and months. The “flash to bang” time for events is so compressed that most events with an armed component occur in a crisis environment. Further complications occur when the crisis is handled by a coalition. Even when the coalition has had years of working together, like NATO, the intelligence support function can still be difficult.

The operational intelligence staff must be an integral part of the commander's planning team and the first personnel assigned to the commander in a crisis coalition environment. To be experts in the planning process, the intelligence staff must be able to relate the operational environment to the strategic objectives and be poised to lead the staff planning process. They must be able to reach up to higher echelons to use strategic intelligence analysis in order to put strategic objectives into context and relate them to the mission given to the operational commander. These intelligence professionals must be of the right rank and experience to lead the planning staff towards identification of centers of gravity and proper operational objectives. Finally, these operational intelligence professionals must understand how to build an intelligence structure designed to provide indications and warnings to the commander, while understanding the planning process well enough to anticipate future needs of the staff as the operation develops.

Command

The operational level of war links an end state, determined at the strategic level, to the execution of operations at the tactical level. Operational art is described as the military art and science of war applied to the battlefield. It is at the operational level, where the ways and means are metered out, that intelligence's relation to war most matters.⁴ Milan Vigo, in his work on operational warfare, describes intelligence support to the planning, preparation, and execution of operations as "operational intelligence."⁵ Operational intelligence is the fusion of strategic and tactical level intelligence and has a broader aspect than tactical intelligence, yet narrower than strategic. It must evaluate both military and nonmilitary factors. Inherently, operational intelligence seeks to quantify and qualify elements of the enemy's situation vital to the operational

commander's decision making and risk management process.⁶ It looks to give the commander a competitive edge over his adversary by reducing the uncertainty within the fog of war.

Intelligence is essential to command and operations.⁷ There is a distinction between command and control in that command regards decisions and control refers to execution of those decisions. Intelligence, or the commander's information requirements, straddles both the command aspect of decision making, as well as the control aspect of information management. Key to the commander's decision making are adjustment and execution decisions. As the commander and his staff develop the operational plan both look to intelligence for slightly different purposes. The commander, using an intuition based process, looks for intelligence that will help with adjustment decisions to his plan while the staff, using an analytic approach, will look for intelligence to support decisions on when to execute the plan. Both demands occur at incredible speeds.⁸

The understanding of adversaries across the entire spectrum of national elements of power is as critical, and probably more so, than understanding them once the conflict has started. Doctrinally, levels of conflict can be divided into three, segments: strategic, operational, and tactical.⁹ All levels of war have a corresponding level of intelligence focused to support the specific planning requirements of each. It is the responsibility of the intelligence officer at each level to understand the flow of information vertically as well as horizontally from and within each level.¹⁰

Hew Strachan, in his article *Strategy and Contingency* stated, "Planning may not be strategy, but we certainly need an awareness of strategy in order to be able to

plan."¹¹ Planning is a continuous process conducted at all levels of war. Strategy, the interrelating of ends, ways, and means, provides the direction and framework for planning. Military success cannot be measured if the desired end is not clearly defined.¹² Strategic intelligence provides decision makers a context from which to determine the strategic objectives. Figure 1 shows a model of overlapping strategic, operational, and tactical objectives. Each level of war has a corresponding level of intelligence support. As figure 1 describes, the levels of intelligence support must also overlap if alignment is to be maintained.¹³ Milan Vego stated, "The main purpose of the intent is to provide a framework for freedom to act for subordinate commanders."¹⁴ For the operational commander, an understanding of strategic objectives, and the strategic policies and strategy they are derived from, helps him understand the intent of the operational objectives given to him. This understanding is contextualized by the intelligence analysis and is critical to the direction of the operational planning.



Figure 1. Overlapping Objectives and Supporting Intelligence.

Planning Cycles

Joint Publication 2, *Joint Intelligence* states, "Intelligence must be synchronized with operations and plans in order to provide answers to intelligence requirements in time to influence the decision they are intended to support."¹⁵ The intelligence staff must understand the commander's intent in context with the strategy and operational environment. This level of understanding and synchronization can only result from integration with the commander and his planning staff. Synchronization of the intelligence effort at every level of war allows for a seamless understanding vertically, from the strategic to the tactical level, as well as a deeper understanding horizontally within the operational realm. This understanding of the nature and character of the objectives and the commander's intent is critical to focus and align intelligence efforts and to anticipate future needs. The ability to anticipate the commander's needs is critical if the integration of intelligence products into the operational decision-making and planning process is to occur in a timely manner. When planning is conducted without proper inclusion of the intelligence staff, it will fail to build sufficient lead time for proper execution of the intelligence cycle relevant to key decision-making and planning. The requirements of the commander and his planning staff are the principal driving force in the timing and sequencing of intelligence support.¹⁶

As a process, intelligence should provide accurate, timely, and relevant knowledge of the threat to the commander. Intelligence helps the commander to observe and orient, part of the observation-orientation-decision-action (OODA) model, and is critical to command and control of the battle space. Intelligence, however, is not omnipotent and cannot predict the future with complete certainty. At its best, intelligence hopes to reduce the amount of uncertainty the commander must manage in accepting

risk to his operations.¹⁷ As an activity that supports the commander, intelligence is conducted as process. The intelligence process is made of five steps (see figure 2) and there are external cycles providing input into the process. Synchronization of the intelligence cycle with the planning cycle is critical to the success of the operation.

The planning process is never ending and must adjust to the changing conditions the commander faces en route to achieving the objectives assigned.



Figure 2. The Intelligence Cycle.¹

There are seven steps in the planning process (the darker square boxes on the outside of figure 3): Planning Initiation, Mission Analysis, Course of Action (COA) Development, COA Analysis and Wargaming, COA Comparison, and COA Approval. Intelligence is critical to the planning process because it provides estimates regarding the situation, the environment, and the enemy.¹⁸ Figure 3 shows that Prioritized Intelligence Requirements (PIRs) and their subcomponent, Essential Elements of Information (EEIs), drive the intelligence cycle and in turn operations. The critical linkage that ensures the intelligence engine drives the operation is the synchronization of the

intelligence cycle with the planning process (shown in lighter, nested rectangles between the darker planning process boxes in figure 3). The synchronization of intelligence with operations is focused on the planning process and begins with the intelligence staff understanding the objectives, strategic through tactical, as well as the environment from which those objectives were chosen. This can only be done if the intelligence staff is a key part of the commander's staff and leading the operational planning team.

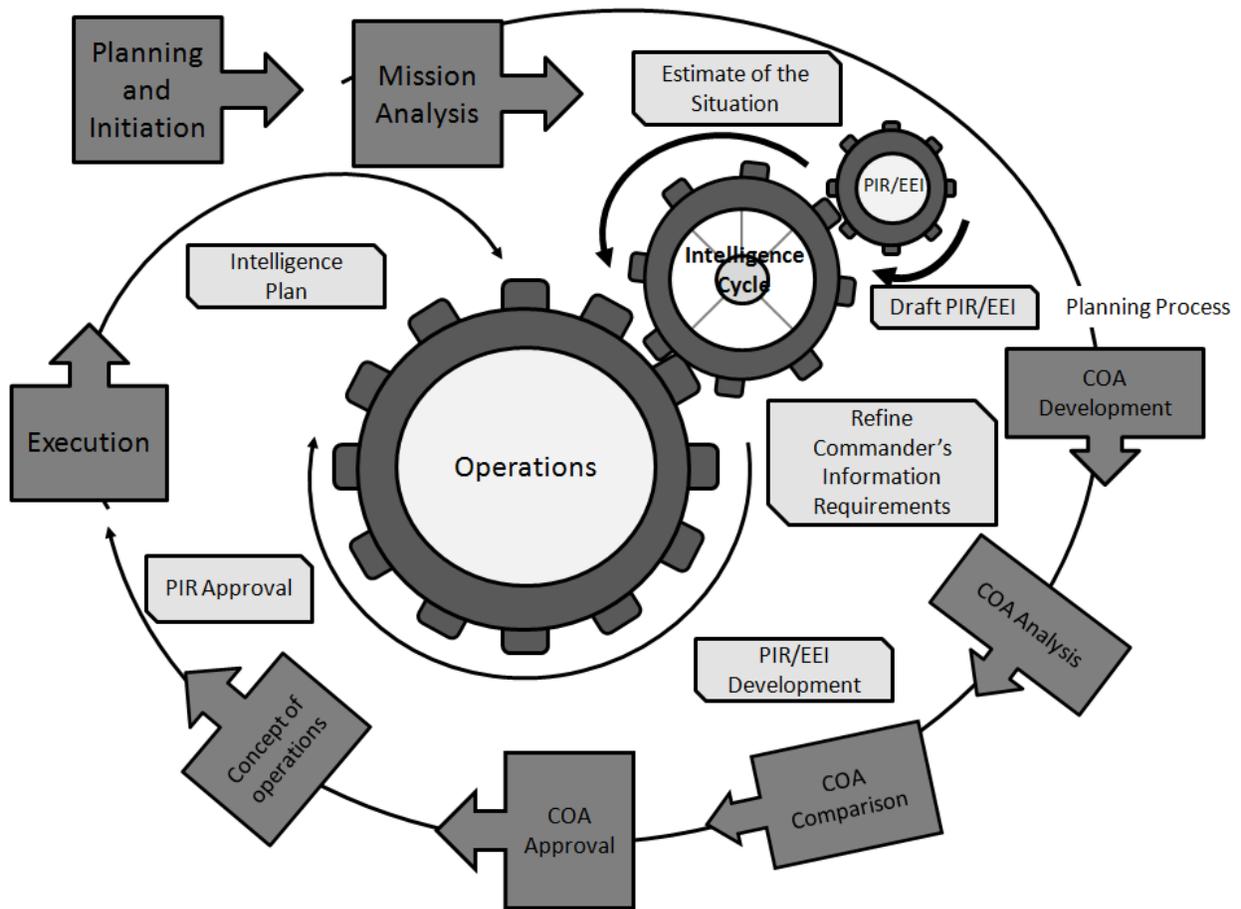


Figure 3. Intelligence Cycle and Planning Process Synchronization.

PIR, EEI, and CCIR

Intelligence support to the commander is simple in concept, yet as Clausewitz said, "Everything is very simple in war, but the simplest thing is difficult."¹⁹ Joint Pub 2 lists the commander's responsibilities to the intelligence staff as: "Understand(ing) intelligence doctrine, capabilities, and limitations. Provide planning guidance. Define area of interest. Identify critical intelligence needs. Integrate intelligence in plans and operations. Proactively engage the intelligence staff. Demand high quality, predictive intelligence."²⁰ Elias Carter Townsend, in his work on combat intelligence, points out that "staffs act only for the commander...the combined minds of a commander and his staff form the commander's Master Mind."²¹ It is more reasonable for the intelligence staff to push to the commander what they can do versus him pulling that information. The intelligence staff, through vertical and horizontal synchronization, must understand the commander's vision and think like the commander in order to anticipate his needs.²²

The intelligence staff's intuition is pointed out in *Front Line Intelligence*, "The commander is supposed to tell you what he needs to know, by giving you ...essential elements of information (redefined as PIRs today), but you should know them yourself without being told."²³ Proper integration into and synchronization with the planning process will ensure that the intelligence staff already has a "jump" on what the staff and commander need to know for planning.²⁴ These Prioritized Intelligence Requirements (PIRs) play a critical role and JP-2.0 notes that, "overall staff responsibility for consolidating PIR nominations and for making an overall staff recommendation to the commander regarding their approval" falls to the intelligence staff.²⁵ Simply put, the intelligence staff, understanding the objectives, synchronized with the plan, and fully embedded with the planning process, is best situated to develop the PIRs needed.

Once approved, the PIRs are combined with the friendly force information requirements and become the commander's critical information requirements (CCIRs). CCIRs are used to manage the execution decisions of the staff and the adjustment decisions of the commander.^{26, 27}

The commander's understanding of the need for PIRs should be clear and present. PIRs must be tied to a decision point in the operational plan. Yet too often,

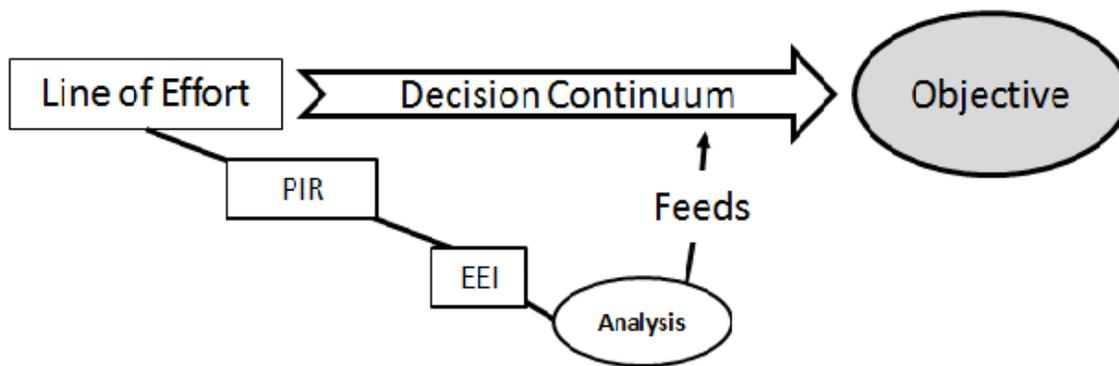


Figure 4. PIR Linked To Line of Effort, Supporting Decision Continuum.

PIRs are tied to information the commander and the staff are interested in, but which is not critical to adjustment and execution decision making. One way to ensure PIRs are linked to decisions is to tie them to lines of effort associated with the operation's design (see figure 4). Lines of effort tie tasks and missions into a logical purpose focused on achieving objectives.²⁸ PIRs should be written as a clear interrogative statement. The easier it is to answer yes or no to the PIR, the easier it is for the commander to make decisions with the information.²⁹ The ability to provide a level of confidence in an answer helps the commander judge the situation and make adjustment decisions. In a manner, the PIRs are a "flame lit by the commander" to guide not only the operation but support to the operation. Once lit, the intelligence staff must be the caretakers of the flame.

The direction of the intelligence staff's operations and the application of the intelligence cycle will be set by the PIRs. Similar to lines of operation in the planning process (see figure 4), PIRs must be broken down into smaller questions, or essential elements of information (EEIs), whose answers are needed by the intelligence staff to answer the PIRs. EEIs are critical when developing a plan to apply the intelligence cycle and they allow the intelligence staff to identify information gaps and devise collection plans to close the gaps. Figure 5 shows the alignment of PIRs, EEIs, and the collection process. Once the information collected has been analyzed and presented to the commander and planning staff, the intelligence staff must evaluate how effective the process was and where changes are needed. As the commander moves along the decision continuum, making execution and plan adjustment decisions, the intelligence staff must continuously review the intelligence cycle and the PIRs that orient them for synchronization with the planning process. Too often the intelligence cycle falls behind or becomes misaligned with the planning process, which can put the operation at risk.³⁰

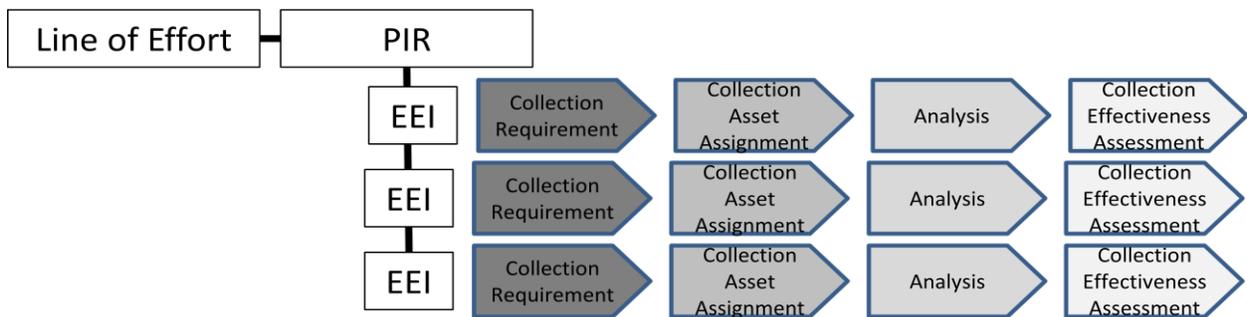


Figure 5. The Alignment of PIR, EEIs, and the Collection Cycle.

PIRs provide registration marks that allow the supporting efforts to be synchronized to the operational plan. Even more critical is the synchronization of the PIRs with strategic and tactical level operations. Where possible, PIRs at the operational level should be synchronized with EEIs at the strategic level (see figure 6).

This creates transparency, aligns collection efforts, and creates analysis efficiencies. Intelligence staffs at higher echelons will distribute important information down and up based on its relevance to the PIRs, while other echelons will be able to distribute information similarly. Most importantly, it allows the intelligence staffs at each level to have a better understanding of the total intelligence effort.³¹

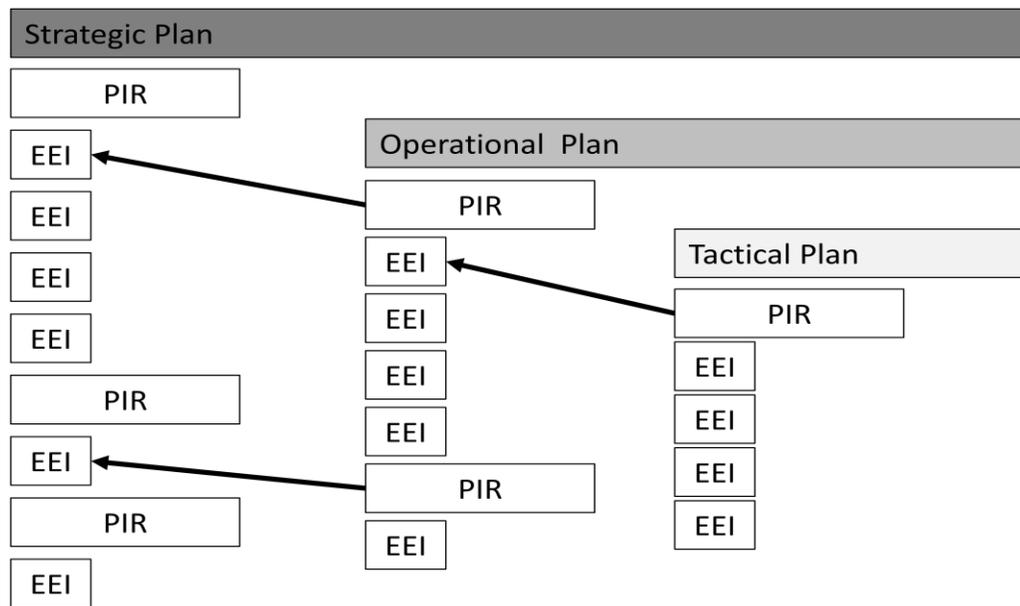


Figure 6. Linkages of PIRs and EEIs Vertically, Enforcing Intelligence and Plan Synchronization.

Intelligence in Coalition Warfare

Former U.S. Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta stated that, "U.S. forces will plan to operate whenever possible with allied and coalition forces."³² The globalized environment makes coalition warfare a fundamental aspect of U.S. national security strategy. Coalitions create a synergy that can amplify warfare capabilities and other elements of national power, improving the achievement of U.S. strategic goals. Even after decades of conducting coalition operations, the U.S. and its coalition partners still

have difficulties in conducting operations. One of the major challenges has been in the integration of intelligence support to the operational commander.³³

Coalitions have been called "warfare by committee."³⁴ As Churchill once said, "The best argument against democracy is a five-minute conversation with the average voter,"³⁵ and this sentiment can be applied to coalition partners. Even in a coalition formed by countries that have a common language, it can be difficult for partners to understand each other's procedures, especially classified information procedures, which makes conducting combined operations difficult. It can be particularly difficult for partners to agree on basic strategic objectives and intent.³⁶

The challenges of coalitions are consistent, if nothing else. Lessons learned from World War II bear this out and Major General Harold R. Bull, former U.S. Army Chief of the Plans Directorate in the Supreme Allied Headquarters noted,

I can conceive of no scheme which will work unless three actions are taken: First, firm political decisions made and clear objectives set by national leaders above the theater commander. That is to ensure unity of purpose; [second] Unity of Command to ensure unquestioned and timely execution of directives; [third] Staff integration with mutual respect and confidence in combined staffs to ensure sound development of plans and directives fully representing the interests of the major elements of the command.³⁷

The character of coalition warfare increases the difficulty of intelligence support.

Coalition warfare is not necessarily new; most of the wars fought in the last three centuries were done so under some form of coalition. What is new, however, is the character of coalition warfare in the 21st century. In a globalized world, the speed at which coalitions can form and engage is measured in days not months as before.³⁸ War in the 21st century appears to be mostly crisis response. It is often short and violent, and can escalate over a limited time and within a limited geographic space. Intelligence

support to the coalition must operate faster and inside the application of force decision loop. Yet, the individuality of the intelligence sections within each contributing partner's armed forces makes it difficult to create a coalition intelligence section that can operate at the required speed.

In his paper on *Strategic Direction in Coalition Warfare*, Colonel David Morrissey points out that, "identifying a strategic end state that satisfied the real interests of all coalition nations, and then designing an operation that achieved the end-state was problematic at best" during OUP.³⁹ NATO has common doctrine and operating procedures, and experience with combined training and combined staffs. NATO also has extensive experience in coalition operations since 1991; unfortunately, NATO often does not seem to follow its doctrine any more than the U.S. follows its national doctrine. The impact of these coalition barriers can be felt at the operational planning level. When strategic objectives are ambiguous, operational objectives become broad and difficult.⁴⁰ For the intelligence staff, the ambiguity can desynchronize efforts between the strategic level and the operational level, and PIRs and EEIs can therefore lack focus which means they will not be aligned vertically or horizontally in the planning process.

Libya and Operation Unified Protector

Strategy

The Libyan uprising started in Benghazi in February 2011, following a series of uprisings in several neighboring North Africa states. Met by a vicious armed response from the long-time dictator Muammar Qaddafi, French (Operation HERRICK), U.K. (Operation ELLAMY), and U.S. (Operation ODYSSEY DAWN) forces established a no-

fly zone on 19 March. NATO took control of all military operations for Libya under United Nations Security Council Resolutions 1970 & 1973 on 31 March 2011. The aim of NATO's Operation UNIFIED PROTECTOR (OUP) was to protect civilians and civilian-populated areas under attack or threat of attack. The mission comprised of three elements: an arms embargo, a no-fly-zone, and actions to protect civilians from attack or the threat of attack. On 28 October 2011, the North Atlantic Council took the formal decision to end the operation on 31 October 2011. The operation lasted a total of 214 days.⁴¹

OUP is a useful case study that demonstrates the complexities of coalitions and the pitfalls associated with them. OUP was conducted by a taskforce created within a stable long-term alliance, NATO, with clear doctrine regarding planning and command and control. Yet, even in the best of coalition organizational conditions, OUP had difficulty integrating intelligence support vertically and horizontally within the planning and execution process at all of the levels of war. At the strategic level, NATO and the North Atlantic Council (NAC) had difficulty finding consensus on the operation's objectives among the member states. Five members abstained but continued to voice their concerns and opinions on NATO objectives. The dissension among member nations and the inclusion of non-NATO members, like Sweden and the Arab League countries of UAE and Qatar, created additional complications.⁴² Essentially, NATO was using its alliance command and control mechanisms for an ad hoc coalition, in what former U.S. Secretary of State Collin Powell called a "coalition of coalitions that [was] constantly shifting... as needs shift and change."⁴³

Command

NATO's Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE), which provided strategic guidance to the operational commander of OUP, Canadian Lieutenant-General Joseph Jacques Charles Bouchard, had difficulty giving proper planning guidance. It was not until after a 14 April meeting in Berlin, over two weeks after NATO had taken over the Libya mission that NATO formalized the three main objectives.⁴⁴ While the NAC was able to articulate three primary objectives, there was still a lack of fidelity in how the operation could meet them. All the objectives were framed within the "Responsibility to Protect" concept and did not lend themselves to military planning. As noted by Florance Gaub in her assessment of OUP, "The protection of civilians does not indicate an end state to be achieved, nor does it identify an enemy. For a mission to be planned and executed properly, its outline needs to be more precise."⁴⁵

Several member states had unilateral economic interests in Libya and tried to ensure that operations would not significantly impact them after the conflict ended. In his paper, Colonel David F. Morrissey, pointed to political and economic, not humanitarian, issues as the actual driver for Europe's support of OUP.

Europe receives over 85 percent of Libya's crude exports. In 2010, Libyan oil accounted for 22, 16, and 13 percent of Italy, France, and Spain's consumption respectively...President Nicholas Sarkozy himself signing a major memorandum of agreement in 2007 that allows French access to Libyan uranium in exchange for an agreement to sponsor construction of a nuclear desalination plant in the country . . .⁴⁶

These member state's unilateral objectives created what are called "caveats," or specific conditions under which they would contribute to the operation, and they restricted operations. Caveats are communicated both formally and informally, and they can have a significant impact on the planning of operations, particularly on target

development, at the operational level.⁴⁷ This creates a very fluid planning situation, one that requires a trained staff, experts in the planning process, who are supported by a flexible and effective intelligence staff.

The problem with deciding on strategic objectives two weeks after operations have started and three weeks after a taskforce has started planning is that it is not possible to create vertical alignment. Even more problematic for OUP was the lack of intelligence personnel trained in the planning process, which limited the situational awareness of the Libya area of operations needed to help choose operational objectives. The intelligence staff was not synchronized with the strategic planning and therefore could not anticipate the direction it was going. This lack of anticipation had a significant impact on collection planning and platform management. Observations from U.S. intelligence personnel associated with SHAPE's planning efforts for the turnover of operations from the U.S., U.K., and French coalition to OUP noted that,

The US-led OOD was doing all it could to turn over mission and planning to NATO's SHAPE, who in turn was doing all it could to let the ball roll right on down to Naples and JFC South (CJTF OUP)...the OUP intelligence staff was poorly trained. Much of the staff was not made up of intelligence professionals, nor did those staff members who were intelligence professionals have the experiential or educational knowledge to manage intelligence functions at the operational level of conflict.⁴⁸

Even if the intelligence staff had been comprised of intelligence professionals, the disparate views of how operational planning should be conducted and the intelligence staff's role in supporting it caused problems. As with most issues in a coalition, finding a common approach to planning and intelligence support amongst the member nations can be difficult, and it was a key lesson identified after NATO's Allied Force operation in 1999.⁴⁹ The common approach, though documented in NATO doctrine, appears to still have some problems in practice. A U.S. intelligence officer at

SHAPE indicated that most of the other NATO member nations viewed operational planning more as a maneuver problem and did not always include enablers or force enhancing aspects which are needed in expeditionary conflict. Intelligence preparation of the battlespace was often left out or given only a minimal effort as most nations assumed actions would take place on home soil.^{50,51} The ad hoc planning required for crisis response provided additional complication for intelligence staffs, removing them from the long-term deliberate planning process and the more measured, paced intelligence cycle associated with the defense of Europe they are so accustomed to.⁵²

Planning Cycles

NATO doctrine, unlike U.S. doctrine, does not reinforce the importance of intelligence support to the planning process. In the Allied Joint Doctrine for Operational-Level Planning (AJP-5), intelligence, with regards to the planning process, is mentioned as a support entity that generally answers requests for information, provides estimates, and monitors for indications and warning. There is, as noted by Friedrich Korkisch's *NATO Gets Better Intelligence*, "no book written about NATO intelligence. Even official NATO publications . . . rarely mention intelligence. Intelligence is only shortly mentioned in key NATO documents . . ." ⁵³ The U.S. doctrine mirrors NATO but diverges with regard to the determination of the adversary's centers of gravity,

Joint force intelligence analysts identify adversary COGs (center of gravities), determining from which elements the adversary derives freedom of action, physical strength (means), and the will to fight. The J-2, in conjunction with other operational planners, then attempts to determine if the tentative or candidate COGs truly are critical to the adversary's strategy. This analysis is a linchpin in the planning effort.⁵⁴

This intelligence key task highlights a difference in the view of the intelligence staff between the NATO operational planning process and the U.S. joint operational planning

process (JOPP). The U.S. system tends to view intelligence as a more significant partner in the planning process than NATO's does. However, neither doctrine views intelligence's role, or the role of the intelligence staff, as leading the process.

The intelligence staff's role in the planning process for OUP took on a familiar role of sideline supporter. At SHAPE, where the initial planning for the hand-over of the mission was occurring, the intelligence section was fractured from a staff reorganization that had occurred in August 2010. The reorganization changed the previous "J" code organization to broader divisions. This resulted in intelligence being combined with different operations sections.⁵⁵ From an intelligence support to planning perspective, this change meant that the intelligence planning and part of the analysis production, two parts of the five part intelligence cycle, resided in the new "Capabilities, Plans, Policy" division while the rest resided in the "Operations/Intelligence" section. A special crisis planning team was formed to overcome staff friction and speed up the planning for OUP. The result was top-down planning where much of the intelligence estimates and center of gravity analysis was done to justify a predetermined course of action. The intelligence was not leading, or really participating in, the operational planning.⁵⁶

Once Lieutenant-General Bouchard and his CJTF OUP staff, the core of which were the NATO Ready Force staff at JFC Naples, assembled, they inherited a draft plan that lacked any of the detailed operational art that would make it easily executable.⁵⁷ The CJTF OUP intelligence staff was also limited, since it was waiting for augmentation from other member nations, and it was not synchronized with the planning process. According to a U.S. Air Force intelligence officer assigned to the CJTF OUP intelligence section, the draft PIRs handed off from SHAPE's crisis planning cell were not aligned

with the plan and were quickly abandoned. Attempts to create useful PIRs and EEIs were met with pushback from the CJTF staff who failed to understand their importance to the vertical and horizontal synchronization of the intelligence support and did not see the need for them.⁵⁸

PIR and EEIs

Synchronization of the intelligence effort is tied directly to the PIRs and EEIs. When troops are in contact there is limited time for the intelligence section to waste effort on products of little value to the commander's decision making process. The linkage from the operational plan's lines of effort, to PIR, to EEI, to collection requirement, to collection, analysis, production, and dissemination is critical to support ongoing operations (see figure 5, page 14). The Collection Management (CM) Section of OUP's intelligence staff tried to apply the NATO collection doctrine, or what NATO refers to as "Collection Co-ordination and Intelligence Requirements Management (CCIRM)," ⁵⁹ but since the rest of the staff and the commander had not established PIRs it became nearly impossible, and they "made it [collection management plan] up as [they] went along using principles learned in previous assignments"⁶⁰ as guidance.

Further complicating the intelligence staff's job was the multitude of tactical collection assets brought into theater by individual member states. The U.S. provided the bulk of the high-altitude, broad area collection assets. Together, all of the assets available were still insufficient to cover the 700,000 square miles of battlespace.⁶¹ At one point, the CM Section had over 1,500 collection requirements listed, many were duplicates or triplicates.⁶² Each part of the staff and many of the member nations would submit requirements based on national interests or on areas they thought might be important. Without the clear priorities established by PIRs, EEIs, and a properly

coordinated collection plan, there could be no efficiency and little effective support provided to the decision making process from the intelligence staff.

As OUP operations approached their midway point, the collection management process became so ineffective that it drove a realization throughout the intelligence staff that action was needed. The U.S. intelligence community, especially the airborne reconnaissance platform managers, continued to advocate for PIRs and EEIs with limited success. Constant pressure from the OUP collection management chief, and the improvement in the intelligence staff's manning by the addition of an experienced French intelligence officer in the KIPD, set the stage for the development of PIRs and EEIs. Though created mainly to help synchronize the collection efforts, the OUP PIRs and EEIs, improved the collection management efforts, especially with the U.S. airborne reconnaissance platforms. Unfortunately, the lack of experienced intelligence staff personnel led to the PIRs and EEIs remaining static and limited their use to collection synchronization, missing the opportunity to improved intelligence staff alignment up and down echelons.⁶³

It is not just about the number of collection assets operating, but about the analysts producing relevant information from that collection. As noted in a Royal Aeronautical Society report, this was a constant problem for CJTF OUP intelligence staff.

Attention in ISR often focuses on the platforms and sensors but in fact, collection is the (relatively) easy part; human analysis is vital with expert knowledge combining with an appreciation of the operational context being the key to turning data into understanding. Because of this fact, the balance of analysis between reach-back and forward-deployed (including onboard) must be considered very carefully.⁶⁴

This simple understanding regarding priorities and efficiency of the analysis being conducted by a limited intelligence staff highlights effective, or ineffective, intelligence support to the commander. As the vignette used to open this paper illustrates, it is not just about synchronizing intelligence at the operational level, but about creating a unity of effort by synchronizing vertically across all intelligence staffs.

“Reach Back” Centric Intelligence Support

The bulk of analysis supporting CJTF OUP was not conducted in Naples. The NATO intelligence architecture, like most coalitions, relied on support provided by individual member nations through their National Intelligence Cells (NICs). This architecture, according to Friedrich Korkisch in his article on NATO intelligence, is a result of the bipolar conflict NATO was designed to fight.

NATO intelligence, in the way it exists today, is the result of the early years of NATO, when it was assumed that all NATO forces would remain under national command, and strategic intelligence would be mainly national intelligence . . . NATO’s intelligence branch always obtained the mass of data from U.S. agencies (mainly DIA and military G-2/A-2 branches), and from some other governments like Great Britain, Norway, Turkey or Germany.⁶⁵

This use of “reach back” to NICs for intelligence support complicated matters. When requests for information were submitted, they were done so to all of the NICs and it was left to those individual NICs to respond to the requests. Very few NICs were robust enough to conduct constant and independent analysis, the U.S. and U.K. being the exceptions. Yet with PIRs and EEIs only being created midway through the operation, and then only being disseminated within collection management cells, the national intelligence production centers, like that of J2-Molesworth and DIA, were left to produce on intelligence questions they believed the OUP commander cared about. As the U.S. was providing most of the broad area collection assets and processing, exploitation, and

dissemination, not fully understanding OUP's all-source analysis priorities degraded their support. Though not fully meeting the intent of existing doctrine, the ultimate realization and use of PIRs and EEs by OUP shows that operational requirements prove the practicality of their use.

Recommendations

"It does help to fight a totally incompetent enemy"⁶⁶ —this quote is apropos when discussing Libya and the OUP coalition actions against it. While there was little doubt in the Libyan operation's outcome, one must ask if it could have been achieved sooner with proper intelligence and planning synchronization? OUP is illustrative of a problem deeply rooted in inadequate doctrine, a propensity to not follow doctrine, poor manning, and a lack of training. Fundamentally, "intelligence failures are failures of command just as operations failures are command failures."⁶⁷ However, military intelligence is as culpable as the commanders. As the old proverb says, "when the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch."⁶⁸ The intelligence staff must be the experts in the application of intelligence in support of command and it must be trained to lead the commander's planning efforts.

Organizational Changes Needed

In a post World War II critique of combat intelligence, the authors of *Front-Line Intelligence* felt that, "Almost every Intelligence activity is subject to improvement . . . (with) one surplus word: 'almost.'"⁶⁹ Intelligence organizations are no different today. Intelligence and operational staffs need to make cultural changes, but changes to mature organizations are very difficult. To improve intelligence support and synchronization in coalition planning, it must start at the top, in this case with the lead coalition partner, the United States. There are two primary areas for change: to the

intelligence organizations themselves and to the operational staff and its planning process.

Permanently changing an organization's culture requires the use of embedding and reinforcing mechanisms. Edgar Schein, a noted organizational culturist, highlights that embedding mechanisms "emplace the assumptions into an organization" while reinforcing mechanisms "merely support the embedded assumptions" that make up the organization's culture. Schein identifies embedding mechanisms as how leaders: 1) respond to news; 2) allocate resources; 3) role model/teach/coach; 4) allocate rewards/status; 5) and recruit/select/promote/atrrite personnel.⁷⁰ Reinforcing mechanisms are: 1) organizational design/structure; 2) organizational systems/procedures; 3) design of spaces/buildings; 4) formal statements of organizational philosophy/creeds; 5) rites and rituals; 6) and stories about important people.⁷¹ Schein points out that, "many leaders tend to think they can change the culture by using the quicker, easier reinforcing mechanisms, [but] real culture change comes from first ensuring that the embedding mechanisms are in place."⁷² The intelligence staff's role in the planning process cannot improve with just a new logo or creed; it requires changes to the leaders' actions and in the execution of the planning process. Together, and applied with a "lead with principles, not processes" approach, effective change can occur in the military intelligence organization and ultimately result in improvement to coalition planning and intelligence synchronization.

Staff Manning Priorities and Improved Intelligence Staff Skills

The commanders themselves must reinforce the importance of intelligence. Many members of the intelligence staff, sometimes because they are junior in rank and lack operational staff training, are outside of the commander's in-group collective.

According to Geert Hofstede's Global Leadership and Organizational Behavior Effectiveness Research Program (GLOBE study), "In-Group Collectivism focuses on concepts like group cohesion and teamwork."⁷³ The commander must bring the senior intelligence staff officer into his inner-circle and set the tone for intelligence synchronization with his planning staff. Nothing can stop change quicker than a commander allowing a high-level leader, even a successful one, to disregard a new behavior model. The commander must set the tone, reinforcing the new organizational philosophy of intelligence inclusion across his staff to ensure success for his staff and operations.

The commander's operational staff manning must make the intelligence staff equal to or more important than the operations staff. This change in resource allocation takes an "intelligence staff first" mentality to manning planning staffs. While a minor change for the U.S. military, this increased priority of intelligence staff manning would be a significant change for other NATO member countries. Not all NATO partners have a professional military intelligence corps and some view intelligence billets at NATO commands as simply staff officer billets. This leads to the commander having an intelligence staff that is, "staffed almost entirely by military personnel who may be—but are often not— intelligence professionals."⁷⁴

To reinforce the embedded mechanism of resource allocation, the military intelligence community must improve its doctrine, systems, and procedures. For commanders to truly value their intelligence staff they must receive high quality intelligence personnel that understand the intelligence cycle, synchronization, and the operational planning process. Military intelligence must also improve the training of its

personnel and select only the best for assignment at operational staffs. Military intelligence organizations must view operational staff jobs as highly competitive positions and structure their promotion assessments accordingly. These embedded changes to intelligence organizations would be reinforcing mechanisms for ensuring the overall changes to the operational staff planning process.

Better staff integration and staff training is needed to further embed and reinforce change. The development of advanced courses focused on operational intelligence support to planning must be created at the NATO training command. Assigned intelligence personnel should be professional intelligence personnel that work and train together as an operational intelligence support staff. No longer should a CJTF commander expect to have just any staff officer of the required rank placed on his intelligence staff. Too often, the intelligence staff is assigned last in the manning of the staff. The Intelligence staff must also take a lead in the planning process and be assigned at the same time as the operations officer in order to synchronize intelligence support to the planning process from the beginning.

Further, NATO Allied Command Operations (ACO) must articulate its precise intelligence requirements and provide clear justifications for its intelligence needs (decision-making support, support for operations, security, and defense planning, among others). In addition, certain organizational characteristics within a coalition can inhibit intelligence sharing.⁷⁵ Thus intelligence sharing and improved communication processes are necessary reinforcing mechanisms of organizational design and process, which can ensure improvement to the vertical alignment of intelligence and its synchronization with the planning process at the operational level.

Doctrine and Training Reform a Key Reinforcing Mechanism

As a reinforcement mechanism of intelligence synchronization with planning, every intelligence staff should first ask, "what are the PIRs and EEIs?" before embarking on any avenue of support to the operational commander. If the response is "we haven't made any" or "we don't need them" red flags should go up. If each intelligence staff reinforces the need for PIRs and EEIs to every other intelligence staff, then true vertical alignment and intelligence synergy can occur. This is self-help in that intelligence personnel reinforce the intelligence principles to other intelligence personnel, and further builds reinforcement. Additional reinforcement comes from ensuring PIR and EEI creation is taught, or re-taught, at basic, intermediate, and advanced intelligence support courses. Integrated staff exercise should also reinforce the use of PIR and EEIs as a synchronization tool.

Training, led by the intelligence community for the intelligence staffs, is also an important embedding mechanism. There must be changes to the organizational procedures for conducting integrated staff exercises. The NATO School Oberammergau's (NSO) Intelligence, Surveillance, Target Acquisition, and Reconnaissance (ISTAR) Department, for example, offers courses, conferences, and seminars in three primary areas: Intelligence Orientation, Operational Orientation, and International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) —Afghanistan Orientation. These courses are for

those intelligence personnel already trained by their nations in their given intelligence fields; ISTAR courses take this knowledge and educate students on how NATO conducts intelligence and intelligence related operations as opposed to how individual nations conduct intelligence in several different fields.⁷⁶

As discussed previously, most NATO member states do not have professional military intelligence organizations and many states consider intelligence staff positions the same as generic staff positions. NATO's Intelligence (N2-02) and Analyst (N2-03) courses, for example, are for mid-grade noncommissioned officers through mid-grade commissioned officers.⁷⁷ Unfortunately, personnel at those grades are generally placed in leadership positions on an intelligence staff. Lacking understanding and experience, it is difficult to imagine non-professional intelligence personnel successfully integrating fully into the commander's staff as intelligence cycle experts. The recruit/select/promote/attrite reinforcing mechanism is therefore critical to supporting the teaching and coaching embedding mechanism. NATO should require all assigned intelligence staff to meet certain intelligence professional skill sets prior to assignment to a coalition staff. In NATO's case, the ACO must set the intelligence staff member's skill set requirements. A useful tool for establishing skill set requirements would be the development of an intelligence essential task list (ETL) that quantifies and qualifies the intelligence skills needed for assignment to operational staffs.

Improved doctrine is another reinforcing area for changes to intelligence organizations and operational planning staffs. NATO has robust doctrine, but OUP showed that it does not always use it. Admiral Gregory G. Johnson, former Commander in Chief NATO Forces South (CINCSOUTH), addressed this issue in the following terms.

Another area critical to the success of every crisis-management operation where NATO must improve its capabilities is that of intelligence collection, analysis, dissemination and sharing. The Alliance cannot simply sit back and hope that once a crisis develops, nations will come forward with the necessary information and intelligence. Rather, it is up to NATO to

develop its own intelligence and regional expertise to support ongoing operations as well as potential future missions.⁷⁸

The U.S. and NATO must improve their joint doctrine for operational-level planning with a focus on increasing the role of intelligence personnel in leading operational level planning.

Changes to doctrine should include a look toward a more disciplined process of planning, linking strategic objectives through to tactical objectives, and ensuring the use of PIRs and EEIs. This will reinforce the alignment of the intelligence process up and down the echelons, as well as create the framework from which to synchronize national level intelligence support efforts. National level intelligence support should be synchronized by the commander's intelligence staff in order to be an enhancing, not desynchronizing influence. Reformed doctrine and improved training--incorporating vertical intelligence synchronization--must reinforce the focus of intelligence synchronization as an important aspect of the planning process.

Staff Training Exercise Improvement Will Increase Staff Synergy

Integrated staff exercises are also essential for reinforcing organizational design, systems, and procedures changes. The STEADFAST exercise, for example, is NATO's Response Force certification exercise to certify the JFC staff as NATO Response Force (NRF) capable. The JFC Naples staff became the core of the OUP staff and responded to the Libya problem as they had been trained to do during the STEADFAST series exercise in 2010. The exercise only integrated intelligence as much as was needed to facilitate operational training objectives and did not allow for intelligence integration or innovations to improve staff organization. As one of the U.S. intelligence officers assigned to JFC Naples described it, NATO intelligence "was firmly in the transition to

the 'knowledge development' concept . . . doing intelligence without significant intelligence assets or capabilities . . . and a shooting war didn't fit into that paradigm."⁷⁹ It was no surprise that when OUP was created, the intelligence staff "was integrated only as much as they were trained to (be) integrate(d)" during the staff exercise.⁸⁰

NATO has updated its STEADFAST exercise since OUP, increasing the live fire and interoperability portions of the exercise, but it is unknown how involved the intelligence staffs will be. NATO must improve its staff integration exercises and should leverage its NATO Training Group and the Joint Services Sub Group to embed teaching and coaching strategies into the exercises for intelligence staffs.⁸¹ More importantly, the NATO member leadership, beginning with the Supreme Allied Commander (SACEUR), must actively participate in these exercises and the intelligence synchronization. As has been said, units do best at what the commander checks.

Interoperability Improvements

Kathleen McInnis, in her article on coalition warfare, notes that improved interoperability can cross-level weakness in the individual partner nations.⁸² Improving interoperability is not just about improving the communication and data sharing systems, it is also about improving the baseline of partner nation's contributions. It is clear that a return to the fundamentals of the intelligence cycle is critical for making organizational changes, but technical system solutions will also be needed to further embed change. During OUP, it was noted that there were "some significant interoperability issues with US intelligence entities." In *Smart Intelligence: Beyond Joint to Coalition Intelligence Collaboration*,⁸³ and other similar articles, the authors look at effective intelligence sharing and collection management from a systems perspective. If the right series of systems were cobbled together, then each coalition partner's

collection platform could be synchronized and the information shared.⁸⁴ While better interoperability is necessary, it is secondary to fixing the manning, training, and doctrinal mechanisms that embed and reinforce change. Having the best collection assets and sharing system is only as good as what it is tasked to collect and share.

Admiral James Stavridis, former Commander of U.S. European Command and SACEUR of NATO, highlighted the need to rethink intelligence staff organization for U.S. geographic combatant commands (GCC) in his 2010 article *An Intelligent Theater*. His comments apply to NATO and the interoperability of "reach back" to support a coalition. Stavridis, noted the need for, "highly disciplined processes and procedures to fully exploit all theater staff capabilities and capacities found in our headquarters, as well as among our components and assigned forces . . ."⁸⁵ In order to fully exploit intelligence support through all echelons, as Stavridis suggests, the operational level intelligence staff must disseminate properly formulated PIRs and EEs. Many of the decisions and information requirements are tied to interdependent relationships among joint, interagency, and multinational partners.⁸⁶ The intelligence staff should craft the commander's PIRs to support his adjustment and execution decisions, but the EEs should be used to help align intelligence support up and down echelon.

Conclusion

Operation Unified Protector provides a case study highlighting the necessity to improve operational level intelligence staff's vertical and horizontal integration with their supporting intelligence staffs to ensure their synchronization with the operational planning process. The U.S. has doctrine and a professional military intelligence organization that can adequately support operational commands, yet it can struggle with the proper integration of intelligence. Most intelligence integration and synchronization

failures begin with an inability to clearly define and align strategic to tactical objectives. Furthering the problem is a propensity for commanders and operational staffs to keep intelligence at an arm's length, and the intelligence staff's willingness to remain there, during the planning process. This disconnection of the intelligence staff from the planning process does not synchronize the intelligence effort with the planning effort, creating a situation where operations drive the plan rather than intelligence.

Integration and synchronization of intelligence becomes even more difficult within coalitions. The nature of coalitions, especially when created in a crisis environment, creates difficulties during the selection of strategic through tactical objectives. Difficulty in deciding objectives has a desynchronizing effect on intelligence support. Making the situation even more challenging is the disparity among coalition partners of their understanding and application of intelligence support to planning. NATO, for example, is a long standing alliance with detailed doctrine, yet during OUP it was unable to apply that doctrine regarding intelligence staff support to planning. OUP's inability to create PIRs and EEIs created a situation where supporting intelligence staffs, up and down echelon, were unable to create synergy and cohesion. Intelligence organizations, particularly from the J2-Molesworth, attempted to improve the effectiveness of their support but could not overcome NATO's staff organization.

Many blame the commander for this poor integration, yet the intelligence organizations themselves must accept some culpability as well. The United States is seen as the lead entity in many coalitions, especially NATO. Many of the intelligence staff changes needed are organizational and they must begin with the U.S. military intelligence organizations. Using an organizational development model, the U.S. and

NATO must begin to change by using embedding and reinforcing mechanisms. Improvements in doctrine, the selection of personnel assigned to intelligence staff positions, and staff integration exercises will help to embed changes. These embedding mechanisms must be reinforced by changes in the U.S. and NATO staff organizational design, structure, and procedures. Finally, the intelligence staff should lead operational planning teams and use PIRs and EEIs as synchronization lynchpins.

In a coalition environment like NATO, change must be top-down driven. Senior leaders must get involved in staff integration, demanding the application of doctrinal tools such as the use of PIRs and EEIs, and allocating rewards and admonishment where needed to ensure the new behavior model takes root. Without change, coalition warfare, particularly that of NATO, will remain U.S. centric, losing the benefit desired in collaborative warfare. Furthermore, U.S. and NATO operational commands must invest intelligence staffs with an equal importance as operational staffs. To reinforce this staffing change, the intelligence organizations must improve their training and selection processes to ensure only the best are available for the commander. Eventually, NATO will encounter an expeditionary conflict with an enemy that is not as incompetent as the Libyan Regime forces, which could result in a significant loss in blood, treasure, and prestige if the changes proposed in this paper are not undertaken.

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