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**SPECIAL OPERATIONS: QUANTIFIED DETERRENCE
AGAINST RUSSIAN AGGRESSION
IN EASTERN EUROPE**

by

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**SPECIAL OPERATIONS: QUANTIFIED DETERRENCE AGAINST RUSSIAN
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ABSTRACT

Russia threatens Eastern Europe, overtly and covertly, with offensive cyber-attacks, by shooting down aircraft, and through violations of international law such as the annexation of Crimea. The current economic sanctions are not deterring Russia from acting aggressively. Nuclear deterrence is not an appropriate or proportional deterrent of, or response to, these threats. The previous presidential administration held that Ukraine is not important enough to the United States to warrant conventional intervention. How can the United States military support a political warfare campaign to advance its national interests and deter Russia from advancing in Eastern European non-NATO states? This thesis examines how specific Title 10 authorities might allow an appropriate deterrent to such threats. With the absence of other options, United States Special Operations Forces are uniquely organized, trained, and equipped to operate in these environments and may provide a solution. In order to deter Russian aggression, selected Title 10 tasks require blending and assessing the following factors: strategy, tangible value at risk, tripwires, and risk of escalation. Special operations can help achieve deterrence against Russia.

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I. INTRODUCTION

The United States and Russia are at a nuclear and conventional force deterrence stalemate. Both forms of deterrence are successful in deterring similar force responses; however, the United States struggles to deter unconventional actions. Russia annexed Crimea in 2014 and works to subvert the government in Moldova, challenges eastern Ukraine, and meddles in eastern European domestic political activities as well as in the Middle East. The only tangible consequences for the Russians use of the aforementioned acts have been United States' and European Union economic sanctions. Russia views the cost of economic sanctions are below the benefits gained from furthering its policy. Conventional forces and nuclear deterrence are not deterring Russian unconventional action.¹

The Russian Chief of General Staff Valery Gerasimov is a key leader in advancing the Russian foreign policy agenda. Russian political objectives are to counter North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) growth and undermine NATO influence in Eastern European, non-NATO buffer states.² Western leaders often refer to Russian action as hybrid warfare; however, Gerasimov refers to Russian action as modern warfare. Russian leaders do not seek “direct military conflict with the United States” or its allies.³ Frank Hoffman describes hybrid warfare as a blend of state conflict lethality with the fanaticism of irregular conflict that maximizes the pursuit of political objectives.⁴

¹ For the purposes of this thesis, unconventional warfare (UW) is defined in accordance with Joint Publication 3-05 (2014), “UW consists of operations and activities that are conducted to enable a resistance movement or insurgency to coerce, disrupt, or overthrow a government or occupying power by operating through or with an underground, auxiliary, and guerrilla force in a denied area.” Russia may not subscribe to this definition; however, we define hybrid warfare from Russia’s perspective later in this chapter.

² Joint Chiefs of Staff, *The National Military Strategy of the United States of America*, (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 2015), 2.

³ *The National Military Strategy*, 2.

⁴ Frank G. Hoffman, “Conflict in the 21st Century: The Rise of Hybrid Wars.” *Potomac Institute for Policy Studies*, (Arlington, VA: Potomac Institute, 2007), 43.

A. NATO GROWTH AND BUFFER STATES

Coming out of the Cold War, Russian leaders assumed that Western leaders understood their concerns about any expansion of NATO near the Russian borders, but Western leaders have either not understood or ignored this concern.⁵ Starting with the Clinton Administration in the 1990s, NATO continued to expand, and by 2008 Ukraine and Georgia received NATO endorsements for future membership.⁶ Russia views these states as buffers between them and a “hostile” western alliance. As a result, President Putin considers Ukrainian and Georgian potential NATO memberships a “direct threat” to Russia.⁷ Russian strategy in Eastern Europe aims to prevent NATO expansion on its border. By keeping Ukraine and Georgia “weak and divided,” and by creating border disputes, Russia can prevent NATO enlargement. To keep these former Soviet Union satellite republics “weak and divided,” Russia employs hybrid warfare tactics.

The United States aims to “advance the values of human freedom” by ensuring the independence and territorial integrity of these buffer states.⁸ By Supporting self-determination in Ukraine, United States’ leaders hope to create a more peaceful and democratic world. The United States also aims to counter Russian political influence in NATO states such as the Baltic Republics.

Russia uses its instruments of statecraft to advance its national interests while undermining the national interests of its non-NATO neighbors, and the West in general. We assume the United States wishes to provide some level of support for denying Russian gains and furthering its own interests. We also assume, however, that level of support is below the threshold of conventional and nuclear engagement. President Obama claimed eastern European, non-NATO states are not U.S. “core interests” and the U.S. is not,

⁵ John J. Mearsheimer. “Why the Ukraine Crisis is the West’s Fault: The Liberal Delusions That Provoked Putin,” *Foreign Affairs* 93, no. 5 (2014): 78.

⁶ Mearsheimer. “Why the Ukraine Crisis is the West’s Fault,” 79.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Carl Gershman, “A Fight for Democracy: Why Ukraine Matters,” *World Affairs* 177, no. 6 (March/April 2015): 56.

“willing to go to war” for these states.⁹ However, options existed to support these states but were never seriously explored.

Political warfare is not a new form of strategic interaction between Russia and the United States. In fact, the Cold War saw clear applications of political warfare. There is “widespread tendency to exaggerate what is new in Russian military thinking,” and hybrid warfare tactics.¹⁰ The United States has important national interests in supporting eastern European, non-NATO states as a buffer between Russia and NATO states.¹¹ Russia also has an interest in buffer states, with Russian influence, not western influence. Of course, Ukraine and other buffer states also have the right to self-determination.

B. RESEARCH QUESTION

Given constraints on other options, how can the United States military support a political warfare campaign to advance its national interests and deter Russia from advancing their own national interests, in eastern European, non-NATO states?

C. MILITARY AUTHORITIES AND OPTIONS

The U.S. National Military Strategy states that “there exists an area of conflict where actors blend techniques, capabilities, and resources to achieve their objectives. Such ‘hybrid’ conflicts may consist of military forces assuming a non-state identity, as Russia did in the Crimea.”¹² Title 10 of the United States code outlines specific military activities directly relating to the aforementioned Russian techniques and capabilities within hybrid

⁹ Jeffrey Goldberg, “The Obama Doctrine: The U.S. president talks through his hardest decisions about America’s role in the world.” Politics, *The Atlantic*, April 2016, <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2016/04/the-obama-doctrine/471525/#10/>.

¹⁰ James Scherr, “The Militarization of Russian Policy.” *Transatlantic Academy*, no. 10 (2017): 1.

¹¹ “The U.S. Army War College Methodology for Determining Interests and Levels of Intensity” by H. Richard Yarger and George F. Barber, U.S. Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, Carlisle, PA, 1997. Adapted from Department of National Security and Strategy, Directive Course 2: “War, National Policy & Strategy,” (Carlisle, PA: U.S. Army War College, 1997) 118–125. Important national interests, if unfulfilled, will result in damage that will eventually affect critical national interests.

¹² Joint Chiefs of Staff, *The National Military Strategy*, 3.

conflict. These activities are not unique to Russia and fall within U.S. Code, Title 10 authorities.¹³

The U.S. military mostly focuses on conventionally confronting adversaries giving too little credence to non-traditional, indirect approaches that the nations conducting hybrid warfare use to exploit U.S. and ally weaknesses. Primary reliance on conventional and nuclear deterrence since World War II established internationally recognized red lines that can trigger conventional or nuclear responses based on international law. Russia recognizes the aforementioned responses and, to avoid them, conducts deniable, covert, and seemingly non-threatening actions to appear as a responsible international actor. This is not to say Russia refrains from use of conventional forces, particularly in Ukraine; however, Russia's focus and operations have been largely unconventional in recent years. Hybrid warfare victories may be territorial, informational, or economic.

Russia uses propaganda, exploitation of ethnic populations, special operations, conventional shows of force and other direct and indirect approaches to further national policy, while staying below the threshold of conventional and nuclear red lines. Deterrence fails in Eastern European, non-NATO states because Russia is not convinced there is legitimate interest within the West and Western retaliatory threats are not credible. Russia makes rational calculations that the benefits of their actions greatly outweigh any costs they may incur.

Conflict is not a binary choice for Russian leaders; conflict is considered a permanent and normal aspect of foreign relations. Russia enjoys success in advancing their foreign policy in part by grabbing weakly controlled or uncontrolled political space. Russia emboldened a sympathetic population in Crimea, and in eastern Ukraine. Russia made a rational calculation that Ukraine could not effectively politically or geographically control those areas if the ethnic Russian and sympathetic population supported Russia. There are many ethnic Russians in Ukraine. Still, Russia violated a sovereign state's territorial integrity. It is evident Russia deems repercussions, such as economic sanctions, acceptable

¹³ *United States Code: Title 10 – Armed Forces*, (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2006), 178.

because Russia has not changed its behavior. Crimea is now part of Russia, and Russia continues to act in support of separatist rebels in eastern Ukraine.

D. THE ROADMAP

This thesis begins by reviewing the literature associated with deterrence, hybrid warfare, Title 10 authorities and international relations, and then create a model based on this literature review. According to B. H. Liddell Hart, an indirect approach has the ability to out-think and out-flank the enemy geographically and psychologically.¹⁴ This thesis utilizes a case study of Russia's annexation of Crimea, highlighting Russia's indirect approach. This case was chosen because it is a contemporary case of hybrid warfare and good data is abundant. Additionally, Russia is geographically contiguous to Eastern Europe.

This thesis uses a quantitative model based on the pillars of deterrence. Deterrence encompasses capability, resolve, and communication. The model weights deterrence factors for tasks with respect to the risk of escalation to reveal what tasks may or may not be appropriate under a given set of conditions. Additionally, the thesis provides a sensitivity analysis of the models' factors that identify whether certain changes affect outcomes. Finally, a Technique for Order of Preference by Similarity to Ideal Solution (TOPSIS) decision tool will be available for readers to manipulate if they do not agree with a given factor's weight. This thesis hopes to provide insight into which tasks might be most appropriate as part of a comprehensive strategy for deterring Russia in eastern European non-NATO states. This thesis does not outline an overall strategy towards that policy goal. Readers can adjust the factor weights and test alternative strategies using the model.

¹⁴ B. H. Liddell Hart, *Strategy*, (New York: Penguin Books, 1991), 121.

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II. LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter examines key theories of warfare, deterrence, special operations, and international relations. We outline data and hypotheses from authors and theorists seeking relevant variables to create a model. Finally, we conclude the chapter by examining preemptive and preventative war theories.

A. THEORIES ON WARFARE AND STRATEGY

This section will focus on two specific theories that are used to inform the quantitative model. This does not suggest that these are the only theories on warfare and strategy. Lawrence Freedman's book *Deterrence*, provides the framework for many of the assertions made relating to deterrence, specifically his concept of prevention. Freedman describes prevention as a strategy to "deal with a problem before it becomes a crisis."¹⁵

1. Beaufre

Andre Beaufre believed that successful battles were preceded by preparatory actions designed to occupy an enemy and force them to unnecessarily spend resources.¹⁶ These preparatory actions facilitate "freedom of action" or a culminating or a decisive attack. Beaufre's model can be applied indirectly to restrict an opponent's "freedom of action." The indirect application involves an exterior maneuver to restrict the enemy, while an interior maneuver achieves a given objective. The exterior maneuver is applied on a large scale (perhaps worldwide), and restricts movement through "psychological, economic, and diplomatic means."¹⁷ These means may include military involvement. The interior maneuver would then be a rapid action to gain a limited objective. Exterior and Interior maneuvers accurately describe Russian actions in Crimea. Russia used propaganda, it took advantage of a sympathetic population, and then decisively paralyzed Ukrainian troops and stormed the Crimean parliament building. President Putin used the

¹⁵ Lawrence Freedman, *Deterrence*, (Cambridge, UK: Polity Press, 2008), 86.

¹⁶ Hy Rothstein, "Strategy and Psychological Operations," in *Information Strategy and Warfare: A Guide to Theory and Practice* ed. John Arquilla and Douglas A. Borer (New York: Routledge, 2007): 169.

¹⁷ Rothstein, "Strategy and Psychological Operations," 170.

Olympic Games in Sochi with a massive disinformation campaign to distract the international community while conducting these operations in Ukraine.

Beaufre also contends that if an objective, such as an Eastern European, non-NATO state, is not of significant importance, then resources and freedom of action for deterrence will be considerably constrained, so an actor such as the U.S. would have to act in an indirect manner.¹⁸ Currently, Russian actions warrant neither the threat of nuclear response nor a U.S. conventional response.

2. Lamb and Tucker

Christopher Lamb and David Tucker advocate that “special operations are uniquely suited to hostile, denied, and politically sensitive areas.”¹⁹ Special operations could be a military option in Ukraine, since a conventional response is unlikely. According to Lamb and Tucker the greatest strategic utility for special operations forces (SOF) is to employ them as the supported force, in an indirect manner.²⁰ SOF are less effective when employed in a direct manner (Figure 1).²¹

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Christopher Lamb and David Tucker, *United States Special Operations Forces*, (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2007), 147.

²⁰ Lamb and Tucker, *United States Special Operations Forces*, 147.

²¹ Ibid., 42.

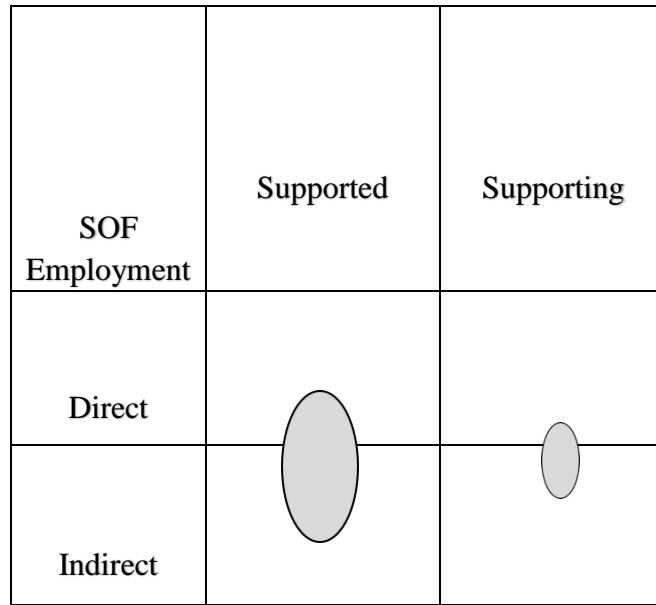


Figure 1. A Graphic Representation of Lamb and Tucker’s Strategic Utility (represented by the shaded ellipses) of SOF²²

Using Lamb and Tucker’s assertions regarding special operations, any policy to affect a strategic outcome through the employment of special operations should predominately be indirect and have SOF as the supported force. There can be cases where SOF is a supporting force conducting direct action; however, these situations will not exploit SOF’s comparative advantage. Keeping in mind, we note that Russia used a predominately indirect approach in Crimea, with a small, but decisive direct action. This concept is similar to Beaufre’s concept of exterior and interior maneuvers.

Russian actions building up to and during the annexation of Crimea validates Beaufre’s and Lamb & Tucker’s theories, which will be detailed in the case study chapter. Before the case study is presented, outlining the basics of these inferences is important to develop the model. Immediately following the 2014 Winter Olympics, Russia organized a large military exercise near the Ukrainian border, which Beaufre would characterize as an

²² Ibid. The graphic representation does not appear in the book; however, this is graphic is from Dr. Hy Rothstein who made it so readers can visualize Lamb and Tucker’s concept. The area of the ellipses in this graph are not scientific in nature; they simply tell the reader where the greatest and least SOF strategic utility is found. Russia maximized their SOF strategic utility, represented by the left-most shaded ellipse on the graph. Russian SOF employed as the supported force and operated both with direct action, and by indirectly influenced partner forces and Crimean factions.

exterior move. Synchronized with these maneuvers, Russian Special Forces began to contact, organize, and train sympathetic groups in Crimea. Lamb and Tucker would define Russian SOF actions as indirect and supported. These maneuvers operationally prepared the Crimean environment and gave the Russians freedom of action to set up their culminating interior maneuver, where they directly seized the Crimean parliament building without causing a reaction from the international community. The west described the Russian annexation of Crimea as hybrid warfare.

B. HYBRID WARFARE

Hybrid warfare takes place in the operating zone between peace and declared war,²³ and encompasses nontraditional military actions such as covert operations, cyber-attacks, influencing local populations, and applying economic pressure to achieve political outcomes.²⁴ The Russians did not use the term hybrid warfare until it was a common term for western states. After hybrid warfare became a common term, Gerasimov used it in a speech at the Russian Academy of Military Sciences in 2016.²⁵ Hybrid warfare can be non-attributable or plausibly deniable. In the United States, the term *gray zone* is often used to describe the space between peace and conventional war, where hybrid warfare is often conducted. The Russians consider hybrid warfare a tactic and part of their current steady state foreign policy. They assume they are constantly at war against their adversaries in some form or fashion.²⁶

Russia's hybrid warfare tactics are chosen specifically to avoid declared thresholds created by alliance commitments, international institutions, and accepted norms of international behavior. Examples of these commitments are binding treaty obligations and international guidelines established by the United Nations. Hybrid warfare probes these

²³ The United States has not declared war since 1941. The United States only official military engagement involving Russia directly was authorized by Congress in 1918 to intervene in the Russian Civil War.

²⁴ Frank Steder, "The Theory, History, and Current State of Hybrid Warfare," 9.

²⁵ Steder, "The Theory, History, and Current State of Hybrid Warfare," 9.

²⁶ The lecture referenced was an academically non-attributable lecture given in 2017. We reference the idea; however, not the individual.

commitments based on either deniability or a continuous gradation of conflict scale.²⁷ Russia understands that its actions must exist below the accepted escalation thresholds and has shifted its tactics accordingly. Russia will not likely directly confront the United States in the foreseeable future. Russia seeks to continue clandestine and covert operations so that its opponents cannot immediately recognize and react, or if they do recognize Russian operations, they will lack the determination to act.

It is plausible that Russia would continue to employ hybrid warfare to further their policy objectives based on past success, such as Crimea. Still, Russia uses traditional military power to deter; however, Russian hybrid warfare creates border disputes and prevents NATO from accepting those states. NATO has stated that any nation with a border dispute is ineligible to join.²⁸ One can argue that Russia prevents NATO action in Ukraine because NATO does not seek conflict, and if it elects to make Ukraine a NATO member, it will have to act militarily on Ukraine's behalf.

As early as 2007, authors such as Frank Hoffman theorized that one of the implications of hybrid warfare is its ability to deter. Hoffman postulated that hybrid employment would disrupt the United States' freedom of action and drive up the cost of intervention, thus deterring action.²⁹ This is akin to Beaufre's theory that exterior maneuvers inhibit an adversary's freedom of action. In the case of Crimea, the United States would have to compel Russia to undo what it achieved, and if the United States does not view the gray zone as war, the United States is currently not willing to compel Russia. Another important aspect of Hoffman's writing is the cultural resistance within the United States military. Hoffman warned that the military's professional status "linked to traditional modes of war" and maintaining conventional superiority will lead to failures with the hybrid tactics and deterrence.³⁰

²⁷ Thomas C. Schelling *Arms and Influence*, (London: Yale University Press, 1966), 67–68.

²⁸ North Atlantic Treaty Organization. *Study on NATO Enlargement*, last modified November 5, 2008, https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_24733.htm/.

²⁹ Frank G. Hoffman, "Conflict in the 21st Century: The Rise of Hybrid Wars." *Potomac Institute for Policy Studies*, (Arlington, VA: Potomac Institute, 2007), 43.

³⁰ Hoffman, "Conflict in the 21st Century, The Rise of Hybrid Wars," 44.

C. DETERRENCE

Deterrence is defined as the threat or actual use of force to influence a desired result.³¹ Deterrence is designed to avoid unwanted outcomes, namely violence; however, employment of violence below escalatory thresholds can be a form of aggression for deterrence purposes. Freedman calls this an “aggressive posture,” and warns this may agitate the opponent, but he does acknowledge that aggression may be necessary as a “costly signal.”³² Aggression may be necessary to reinforce the credibility of threats because there is a substantial psychological aspect of deterrence. The keys to psychological influence are either finding common interests, or making deterrent threats credible through capability and resolve.³³ Without capability and resolve, an opponent could ignore a given deterrent threat, and deterrence will fail. If a given deterrent shows an adversary that the cost of war outweighs the political gains of war, then that deterrent will likely succeed.³⁴

Nuclear weapons have only seen use in conflict in World War II. Theorist Bernard Brodie states that the United States’ nuclear weapons are purposeful because they deter the Russians from using their nuclear weapons, namely because of mutually assured destruction through massive retaliation.³⁵ Thus far, Brodie’s point is valid: nuclear weapons keep others’ nuclear weapons holstered. The United States both deters adversaries and attempts to prevent nuclear weapon acquisition with defense guarantees of our extended deterrence. Extended deterrence is an agreement in which “one state threatens the use of force against another state in an attempt to prevent that state from using military force against an ally.”³⁶ This type of agreement allows a given state receiving the benefit

³¹ Lawrence Freedman, *Deterrence*, (Malden, MA: Polity Press, 2008), 26; Freedman, *Deterrence*, 6. Freedman does not include the actual use of force as a form of deterrence. He focuses on “conditional threats.” Freedman also warns that “too much might slide into an aggressive posture.”

³² Freedman, *Deterrence*, 15; Freedman, *Deterrence*, 38.

³³ Schelling, *Arms and Influence*, 2.

³⁴ Scott D. Sagan and Kenneth N. Waltz, *The Spread of Nuclear Weapons: An Enduring Debate*, (New York, NY: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 2013), 40.

³⁵ Blanken, “Deterrence.”

³⁶ Paul K. Huth, “Extended Deterrence and the Outbreak of War.” *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 82 No. 2 June (1988): 424.

of extended deterrence to save the time and resources required for nuclear weapons acquisition.³⁷

Nuclear deterrence has limitation and may not be appropriate for non-nuclear aggression, particularly small-scale aggression. States such as Russia constantly test other states' resolve through irregular warfare. This irregular warfare takes place in the form of cyber-attacks, media propaganda, or actual small-scale interventions as seen in Crimea in 2014. Russian decision-makers concluded that the political gains of their actions were worth the costs and risk. This line of reasoning also applies to the lack of will to use conventional forces in Europe to deter Russian action in non-NATO eastern European states. Hybrid warfare seeks to avoid clear triggers that warrant a significant military response. As outlined with the Obama administration's policy, eastern European non-NATO states are not vital enough to make the threat of conventional force response credible.

To avoid clear triggers, while realizing some political gains, nations like Russia employ strategic gradualism. This concept comes from Thomas Schelling's theory of "salami-slicing" techniques.³⁸ These techniques attack "ambiguity of commitments" by testing the seriousness of those commitments, with the goal of degrading the credibility of deterrence.³⁹ The risk of strategic gradualism is an "ever-present risk of escalation despite the desire of the aggressor to avoid it."⁴⁰

D. POLITICAL WARFARE

Political Warfare is not a new concept, nor is it uniquely Russian. George Kennan outlined political warfare in 1948 as "the employment of all the means at a nation's

³⁷ Blanken, "Deterrence."

³⁸ Michael J. Mazarr, "Mastering the Grey Zone: Understanding a Changing Era of Conflict," *Advancing Strategic Thought*, December (2015), 39.

³⁹ Mazarr, "Mastering the Grey Zone," 35.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 36.

command, short of war, to achieve national objectives.”⁴¹ Kennan built this definition by citing Clausewitz, Marx, and Lenin as foundational theorists of modern political warfare.⁴² Hybrid warfare is just the newest evolution of this old concept of employing all means short of open warfare to achieve national objectives. Russia is employing a political warfare strategy to prevent NATO expansion and western influence within former Soviet Union buffer states.

The military is one part of the political warfare strategy, which the United States employed with some success during the Cold War. The United States policy aims toward the Soviet Union were relatively consistent throughout the Cold War. Though its stance shifted from containment, to détente, back to containment, and to “rollback,” the use of the military as part of the Political Warfare framework was always one aspect of the overall strategy.⁴³ The United States conducted unconventional warfare to prevent communist influence from spreading. In Guatemala, Tibet and Afghanistan, the United States sponsored indigenous forces to fight both local communists and Soviet forces to prevent Russian influence from spreading.

Information campaigns were an important aspect of Cold War Political Warfare. The United States was able to further national policy objectives through information campaigns and support for domestic information campaigns within targeted nations. Poland’s *Solidarity* movement benefited greatly from Radio Free Europe and Radio Liberty. These broadcast platforms were the overt communication arm of the United States Information Agency (USIA). Information campaigns on this scale required coordination across the interagency by the USIA. Unfortunately, the organization was eliminated after the collapse of the Soviet Union.

⁴¹ State Department Policy Planning Staff, “The Inauguration of Organized Political Warfare,” April 30, 1948. Box 11A, Lot File 64 D 563, Record Group 59, National Archives & Records Administration, College Park, Maryland. <https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1945-50Intel/d269>.

⁴² Jeffrey V. Dickey, Thomas B. Everett, Zane M. Galvach, Matthew J Mesko, and Anton V. Soltis, *Russian Political Warfare: Origin, Evolution, and Application* (Monterey, CA: Calhoun Institutional Archive of the Naval Postgraduate School, 2015): 9.

⁴³ Dickey, *Russian Political Warfare*, 84.

Special operations forces were often key facilitators of the United States Political Warfare campaign against the Soviet Union. Their ability to train indigenous forces and train “stay-behind” units were part of the flexible response that administrations used to prevent the Soviet Union from achieving policy objectives.

E. SPECIAL OPERATIONS

Joint publication 3–05 defines special operations as:

Special operations require unique modes of employment, tactics, techniques, procedures, and equipment. They are often conducted in hostile, denied, or politically and/or diplomatically sensitive environments, and are characterized by one or more of the following: time-sensitivity, clandestine or covert nature, low visibility, work with or through indigenous forces, greater requirements for regional orientation and cultural expertise, and a higher degree of risk. Special operations provide joint force commanders (JFCs) and chiefs of mission with discrete, precise, and scalable options that can be synchronized with activities of other interagency partners to achieve United States Government (USG) objectives.⁴⁴

This section of the chapter will examine special warfare and special operations forces. Colonel C. E. Callwell defines such warfare as “small wars,” though the meaning is not connected to the size of a campaign. Callwell describes small wars as wars that do not include regular troops, but include disciplined soldiers who do not meet in open field. Rather they conduct guerilla warfare, rebellion suppression, and other warfare that varies in scope and condition.⁴⁵

Clausewitz lectured on small wars to the Prussian War College, where he noted that special warfare is often conducted by small units, which can sustain themselves easily almost anywhere, that can conceal their presence easier than conventional forces, and they can generally move fast.⁴⁶ Clausewitz was also keenly aware of George Washington’s use

⁴⁴ Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Joint Publication 3–05: Doctrine for Joint Special Operations*, (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 2014), x.

⁴⁵ C. E. Callwell, *Small Wars: Their Principles & Practice*, (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, Bison Books Edition, 1996), 21.

⁴⁶ Christopher Daase, and James W. Davis, eds., *Clausewitz on Small War*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 21. Clausewitz’s lectures on small wars to the Prussian War College were written on 211 pieces of paper of varying sizes. Daase and Davis translated and edited Clausewitz’s works into English for English speaking readers.

of irregular warfare during the American Revolution where small partisan teams would harass the British and inflict pain but not necessarily defeat the British in battle. The American partisans' success was due, in part, to the support they received from the local population, and their motivation to defend their homeland against a tyrannical aggressor.⁴⁷ The United States can similarly exploit a motivated population for the defense of Eastern European, non-NATO states.

Any Eastern European, non-NATO state with an ethnic Russian population or territory that was once part of the Soviet Union is vulnerable to Russian aggression, and that population may welcome Russian engagement. While these states know they cannot defeat Russia in a conventional war, they could use the non-Russian local population support and nationalist motivations to counter Russian aggression. This would not hamper self-determination, but support the legal rights of a domestic population to work within the laws of that nation to determine its mode of governance. In regions with majority Russian populations that are inclined to support Russian engagement, the focus would be to prevent Russian disinformation and exploitation campaigns, guaranteeing self-determination. Special Operations act with and through indigenous forces by mustering local support and the aforementioned motivations in politically sensitive environments. Special Operations can be proactive by identifying regions that are vulnerable to these Russian tactics, before Russia can act.

As Colin Gray points out, "SOF prosper when conventional operations are prohibited by political factors, ruled out as too expensive, or are otherwise deemed inappropriate."⁴⁸ He continues this line of reasoning by pointing out that special operations also "prosper in a strategic context of diminished conventional options."⁴⁹ These are part of Colin Gray's *Conditions for Success*, and may well apply to the current United States policy towards non-NATO states.

⁴⁷ Daase and Davis, *Clausewitz on Small War*, 12.

⁴⁸ Colin S. Gray, "Handfuls of Heroes on Desperate Ventures: When do Special Operations Succeed?" *Parameters* Spring 1999 pp. 2–24: 10.

⁴⁹ Gray, 10.

F. ISSUES AND GAPS

James Kiras argues, “Special operations should be defined according to their intended effect: improving conventional performance.”⁵⁰ Indeed, in some cases, special operations can certainly improve conventional performance; however, if this is the only logic used regarding special operations, SOF will not deploy independently because they are tied to conventional deployments. Kiras’ argument also indicate conventional forces would be the supported force during operations. In other words, SOF would enhance conventional capabilities. Kiras’ notion also contradicts Colin Gray and Lamb and Tucker who find the greatest strategic utility of SOF is when they operate independent of conventional forced and in an indirect manner.

Along the line of SOF and conventional force discussions, the fifth SOF truth states that most special operations require non-SOF assistance.⁵¹ Most military undertakings require some degree of external involvement, such as moving large conventional forces and associated equipment.⁵² Conversely, successful large-scale conventional operations as part of a greater war effort will rarely require SOF assistance as a necessary condition for success.⁵³ Sometimes commanders and decision-makers will task conventional forces to support SOF; however, these conventional forces are not always added value because they increase complexity that can hinder special operations success.

Additionally, there is a belief that optimizing special operations obliges interdependence with conventional forces. Interdependence equals dependence and begs the question of why any organization would link its success to depend on another body?⁵⁴ Interdependence suggests to task organize before receiving a mission or before

⁵⁰ James Kiras, *Special Operations and Strategy: From World War II to the War on Terrorism*, New York, NY: Routledge, 2006, 9. Kiras does acknowledge that sometimes their goal is to improve the performance of irregulars.

⁵¹ The SOF truths are common knowledge for members of United States Special Operations Command (USSOCOM), and both authors have a combined 22 years of service under USSOCOM.

⁵² Hy Rothstein, “Conspicuous and Persistent Absurdity,” *Special Warfare* 29, no. 1 (Jan. 2016): 86–87.

⁵³ Rothstein, “Conspicuous and Persistent Absurdity,” 2016.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

understanding a given problem-set. In other words, it puts the cart before the horse because interdependence forces a SOF and conventional force integration that may not be necessary and could compromise a special operation.

G. DEVELOPING A MODEL

Special operations forces offer an option for policy makers when “conventional operations are constrained by political factors,” because they are too expensive or inappropriate.⁵⁵ Lamb and Tucker find the majority of SOF strategic utility lies with indirect application as the supported force. Beaufre provides a framework for restricting the freedom of action of one’s opponent, or in other words, reducing the opponent’s political and geographic maneuver space. This is achieved through exterior maneuvers that prepare the way for culminating interior maneuvers. We infer that exterior maneuvers or indirect SOF application can deter by restricting enemy freedom of action. Based on this insight, we create a model to quantify special operations deterrence because there are diminished conventional options. The model uses the basic components of deterrence: capability, communication, and resolve. To quantify the likelihood of deterrence, specific tasks are chosen that were used during the Cold War and those currently employed by Russian forces. These tasks are then quantified.

Included in these tasks, which we will now refer to as Title 10 tasks, are: 1) Foreign Internal Defense (FID); 2) Operational Preparation of the Environment (OPE); 3) Military Information Support Operations (MISO); 4) Unconventional Warfare (UW); 5) Strategic Reconnaissance (SR); 6) Direct Action (DA) (Appendix).⁵⁶ Under Title 10, and according to Joint Publication 3–05, these tasks are assigned to special operations forces. However, this thesis only measures the tasks, not the forces conducting the tasks, since conventional forces can also perform these tasks.

⁵⁵ Gray, 10.

⁵⁶ Definitions for each tasks are available in the appendix from Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Joint Publication 3–05: Doctrine for Joint Special Operations*. Washington, D.C.DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 2006, x-xii. OPE is not specifically listed in Title 10 as a special operations activity; however, it is listed in JP 3–05 as a USSOCOM core task. Title 10 lists other activities specified by the President or Secretary of Defense (SECDEF), as a special operations activity. OPE is another activity that is specified by national level leaders and outlined by the SECDEF and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS) in JP 3–05.

The goal of this thesis is to measure specific Title 10 tasks overlaid with deterrence factors, with respect to the risk of escalation. This analysis uses a model, which incorporates a quantitative decision tool to reveal which tasks may yield high potential deterrence values with respect to escalation. This thesis does not aim to discount the validity of nuclear and conventional deterrence or the ability of any other force or organization to potentially conduct these tasks. This model is also specific to Russian and the United States interacting in eastern European non-NATO states, and the weighting of variables is specific to that scenario. The weights would change dramatically if these assumptions were altered.

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III. DETERRENCE MODEL

A. INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents a model of six Title 10 tasks and their potential deterrence value ($SD_{(x)}$). This model tests the tasks, not the forces, because a variety of forces could perform these functions. Title 10 of the U.S. code labels the aforementioned tasks as special operations activities, which have unique characteristics, affecting the cost-benefit calculation of foreign leaders. The United States may employ these Title 10 tasks as a deterrent by choosing a combination of tasks while measuring likelihood of success with respect to escalation ($S_{(x)}$). This chapter proceeds by outlining the sub-variables that make up $S_{(x)}$, describing the weighting of those variables, and the sub-variables' value for deterrence ($D_{(x)}$) based on the three deterrence components: credibility, capability, and communication.⁵⁷ The two variables ($S_{(x)}$ & $D_{(x)}$) combine to create the potential deterrence value ($SD_{(x)}$).

This chapter treats the Title 10 tasks as factors and assigns the factors weights based on the concepts presented in the literature review and key insights from flag officers.⁵⁸ The six tasks are 1) Foreign Internal Defense (FID); 2) Operational Preparation of the Environment (OPE); 3) Military Information Support Operations (MISO); 4) Unconventional Warfare (UW); 5) Strategic Reconnaissance (SR); 6) Direct Action (DA).⁵⁹

To measure $S_{(x)}$, we measure each of the Title 10 tasks based on four variables. We chose the four variables based on our literature review of deterrence theories and strategic

⁵⁷ T. V. Paul, Patrick M. Morgan, and James J. Wirtz, eds, *Complex Deterrence: Strategy in the Global Age*, (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 2009), 5.

⁵⁸ The three presentations referenced are from the United States Pacific Command Commander, the Deputy Supreme Allied Commander, Europe, and from the Special Operations Command, Europe, Commander.

⁵⁹ Definitions for each tasks are available in the appendix from Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Joint Publication 3-05: Doctrine for Joint Special Operations*. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 2006, x-xii.

interaction concepts from Beaufre and Lamb & Tucker. The tasks' weights are 1) their direct or indirect strategic interaction, and command relationship (St), 2) their ability to hold an enemy at risk (RH), 3) their ability to act as a tripwire (TW), and 4) the potential risk of escalation (RE). The weights are from zero to one, with one being the highest value possible. The aforementioned task weights are also measured based on the deterrence components ($D_{(x)}$) of credibility (Cr) or resolve, capability (Ca), and communication (Co); these components are defined later in the chapter.

Finally, the $S_{(x)}$ and $D_{(x)}$ values are multiplied to yield a potential deterrence value of each Title 10 task under study, from zero to one, with one being the highest value possible. Multiplication is used because as one United States Combatant Commander asserts, if any deterrence factors are zero, then there is no deterrence value.⁶⁰

In conclusion, we use the Technique for Order of Preference by Similarity to Ideal Solution (TOPSIS) methodology as a tool to measure criterion weights compared to weights assigned, based on the literature review and analysis of insights from flag officers. We also conduct a sensitivity analysis to test results of the model as the value of the highest weighted factor is adjusted.

B. RATIONALE

Russia implicitly threatened Eastern European, non-NATO states when it annexed Crimea from Ukraine in early 2014. Russia displayed the capability and resolve (credibility) in what it thought was its national interest. In the past, the United States relied on nuclear deterrence, conventional deterrence, and diplomacy to deter unfavorable Russian action against the United States and its allies. Some experts such as Bernard Brodie, Michael Roehl, and Thomas Schelling argue nuclear employment cannot serve a political purpose, an argument dating back to bi-polar Cold War deterrence theory.⁶¹ Under this logic and without Russian nuclear use, U.S. nuclear deterrence loses credibility, and it

⁶⁰ The lecture referenced was an academically non-attributable lecture given at Naval Postgraduate School in 2017. We reference the idea; however, not the individual.

⁶¹ Blanken, "Deterrence."

is documented that diplomacy failed to prevent Russia from acting in Ukraine.⁶² What other options does the United States have to deter an adversary such as Russia in Eastern European, non-NATO states?

Russia believes it is always acting in campaign plan Phase II, or in the *gray zone*, with non-allied states.⁶³ The first model predicts the success of a Title 10 task with respect to escalation, the second model predicts the deterrent value of a given task, and the third model strives to predict potential deterrence value. Successful deterrence against Russia in Eastern European, non-NATO states is defined as prevention of Russian military action in sovereign states beyond campaign plan phase II (seize the initiative).

C. TITLE 10 TASKS AND SUCCESS VERSUS ESCALATION

1. Introduction

Ideally, leaders will employ a given tasks to achieve a positive strategic utility, fulfilling a successful strategic campaign, which will enforce a national policy. To quantitatively assess the value of these tasks as a deterrent, we measure the effectiveness of these tasks using four factors contributing to their success, with respect to deterrence. These five factors are 1) direct or indirect strategic interaction, and command relationship; 2) presence of trip wires; 3) ability to hold enemy vulnerabilities at risk; 4) risk of escalation.

These Title 10 tasks are assigned to and conducted primarily by SOF. If SOF are chosen, then Lamb and Tucker argue that SOF is best employed as the supported force vice supporting force and also that indirect approaches have a higher strategic utility, compared to direct approaches.⁶⁴ For all activities, the likelihood of an activity's success is weighted higher if SOF (or another force) is in a supported role. Likewise, activities that are indirect score higher than direct approaches. Within our model, indirect applications of tasks are synonymous with Beaufre's exterior maneuver definition. "Exterior maneuvers prepare the

⁶² *Joint Publication 3-12: Doctrine for Joint Nuclear Operations*, Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 2005, 5.

⁶³ Luke Draybn, "NATO, Russia, and the Gerasimov Doctrine," *Nations and States* (May 2006), 151.

⁶⁴ Lamb Tucker, *United States Special Operations Forces*, 42.

way for” or are preparatory actions that restrict the opponents freedom of action.⁶⁵ We argue the majority of Russian strategic interaction is indirect and that the United States and Eastern European, non-NATO allies should use these Title 10 tasks proactively. This is not to suggest that offensive direct action lacks value; however, in our model, indirect strategic interaction weights higher. Beaufre argues that if an objective is not of significant importance, then resources and freedom of action will be considerably constrained, so an actor such as the U.S. would have to act in an indirect manner. The following section covers the four factors contributing to success, the Title 10 tasks and the specific values given for their likelihood of success.

2. Contributing Factors

Within this model, strategic interaction is based on command relationship (supported or supporting) and direct or indirect application of force. Type of strategic interaction (St): Strategic interaction ranges in value from 0.25-1.0 determined by direct or indirect approach and if special operations forces (or another force) are the supported or supporting force. The highest likelihood of success is a value of 1.0, which is an indirect approach where special operations forces are the supported force. A value less than 0.25 is never assigned since there will be some form of strategic interaction and a degree of strategic utility. Strategic interaction (St) is the most important variable in success and accounts for 40% of the overall potential for success, because this thesis assumes the U.S. and its Eastern European, non-NATO allies should act proactively to deter Russia. Additionally, strategic interaction (St) is given the highest weight due to the likelihood of low strategic utility when special operations (or another force) are not employed indirectly, as the supported force, outlined by Lamb and Tucker.

Risk holders (RH): A Title 10 task’s ability to hold something of value to the adversary at risk is only considered at the time of the activity, not resulting from the activity. For example, the threat of direct action holds something (a given target) at risk,

⁶⁵ Hy Rothstein, “Strategy and Psychological Operations,” in *Information Strategy and Warfare: A Guide to Theory and Practice* ed. John S. Arquilla and Douglas A. Borer (New York: Routledge, 2007): 170.

yet FID does not overtly hold any enemy resources at risk. These factors range in value from 0–1.0 with 1.0 as the greatest ability to hold the adversary at risk. Holding an adversary at risk implies conducting operations that specifically target something an adversary values. This concept can be counter-force targeting (military), counter-value targeting (society/ideas), or countervailing targeting (deny success).⁶⁶ The ability to hold the adversary at risk is less significant than St and accounts for 15% of the potential for success. RH weights lower because not all tasks will hold an enemy at risk, and the perception of risk holding by an adversary may be less during activities that occur before open hostilities.

Trip Wires (TW): A trip wire is the presence of something that would cause escalation if the adversary were to harm or cross a recognized escalatory threshold.⁶⁷ In this paper, trip wires are the physical presence of U.S. forces, where negative action against U.S. forces causes an escalation. The value of a trip wire is either 0 or 1, where 1 is assigned if U.S. forces are present to represent a trip wire. The presence of trip wires holds the same weight of RH (15%) because not all of these Title 10 tasks will create trip wires, yet they may still positively contribute to successful operations and successful deterrence.

Risk of Escalation (RE): Risk of escalation is the risk that the adversary will escalate tensions based on their reaction to an operation. The value of RE ranges from 0–1 with 1 being the value of an operation that is least likely to escalate conflict. The risk of escalation is second most important due to potential spiraling affects and accounts for 30% of $S_{(x)}$. Another key element of this weighting is that spiraling into open conflict would equal deterrence failure.

To summarize, our equation for likelihood of success with respect to escalation ($S_{(x)}$) is additive since a deterrent should aim to maximize each of the four aforementioned factors, in order to increase the likelihood of success. We weighted strategic interaction and command relationship the highest because of the aforementioned assertions that the majority of the strategic utility resides in indirect approaches in a supported command

⁶⁶ Philip Kapsuta, “The Grey Zone,” *Special Warfare* (October – December 2015), 23.

⁶⁷ Mazarr, “Mastering the Grey Zone,” 112.

relationship, based on our literature review. We give 40% of the $S_{(x)}$ value to St because we deduce it is the most important factor; however, a non-favorable strategic interaction and command relationship can be overcome with other factors so we did not weigh it at 50% or greater.

We weight RH and TW at 15% each because a given task may not hold anything at risk, or, it may not present a trip wire; however, it does not mean that a given Title 10 task is not useful, or not a valid deterrent. Additionally, we weight RE at 30% because successful deterrence should aim to prevent an enemy from acting unfavorably, and therefore lower the probability of escalation. This fact led us to rank RE higher than RH or TW but not as high as St . Finally, we kept with not ranking factors in between tenths or fifths to keep numerical representations as simple as possible for decision-makers, while also doing justice to allowing supporting literature to influence our weights. Once again, readers and decision-makers can alter weights in the TOPSIS program embedded in this work.

$$\text{Model (1): } S_{(x)} = (St * W_{t1}) + (RH * W_{t2}) + (TW * W_{t3}) + (RE * W_{t4})$$

$$\text{Model (2): } D_{(x)} = Cr + Ca + Co$$

$$\text{Model (3): } SD_{(x)} = S_{(x)} * D_{(x)}$$

Model (1) with variable weights:

$$S_{(x)} = (St * .4) + (RH * .15) + (TW * .15) + (RE * .3)$$

Table 1. Title 10 Tasks with Respect to Escalation

<i>Activity</i>	<i>Strat Interaction</i>	<i>Wt</i>	<i>Risk Holders</i>	<i>Wt</i>	<i>Trip Wire</i>	<i>Wt</i>	<i>Escalation</i>	<i>Wt</i>	<i>St</i>
DA (Supporting/Direct)	0.250	0.400	1.000	0.150	0.000	0.150	0.000	0.300	0.250
DA (Supported/Direct)	0.500	0.400	1.000	0.150	0.000	0.150	0.000	0.300	0.350
FID (Supporting/Indirect)	0.750	0.400	0.000	0.150	1.000	0.150	1.000	0.300	0.750
FID (Supported/Indirect)	1.000	0.400	0.000	0.150	1.000	0.150	1.000	0.300	0.850
MISO (Supporting / Direct)	0.250	0.400	0.500	0.150	0.000	0.150	0.500	0.300	0.325
MISO (Supported / Direct)	0.500	0.400	0.500	0.150	0.000	0.150	0.500	0.300	0.425
MISO (Supporting / Indirect)	0.750	0.400	0.500	0.150	0.000	0.150	0.500	0.300	0.525
MISO (Supported / Indirect)	1.000	0.400	0.500	0.150	0.000	0.150	0.500	0.300	0.625
OPE (Supporting/Indirect)	0.750	0.400	0.000	0.150	1.000	0.150	1.000	0.300	0.750
OPE (Supported/Indirect)	1.000	0.400	0.000	0.150	1.000	0.150	1.000	0.300	0.850
SR (Supporting / Direct)	0.250	0.400	0.000	0.150	0.000	0.150	0.000	0.300	0.100
SR (Supported / Direct)	0.500	0.400	0.000	0.150	0.000	0.150	0.000	0.300	0.200
SR (Supporting / Indirect)	0.250	0.400	0.000	0.150	0.000	0.150	0.500	0.300	0.250
SR (Supported / Indirect)	0.500	0.400	0.000	0.150	0.000	0.150	0.500	0.300	0.350
UW (Supporting / Direct)	0.250	0.400	0.500	0.150	1.000	0.150	0.000	0.300	0.325
UW (Supported / Direct)	0.500	0.400	0.500	0.150	1.000	0.150	0.000	0.300	0.425
UW (Supporting / Indirect)	0.750	0.400	0.500	0.150	1.000	0.150	0.000	0.300	0.525
UW (Supported / Indirect)	1.000	0.400	0.500	0.150	1.000	0.150	0.000	0.300	0.625

D. QUANTIFYING DETERRENCE

The deterrence model (2) quantifies the deterrence value of the six Title 10 tasks. Deterrence is a manipulation of an adversary’s behavior through credible threats. The deterrence value of any action considers three distinct characteristics: capability to act (Ca), communication of the threat (Co) and credibility of action, or resolve to act (Cr).

First, the United States must have the capability to accomplish a given mission or task. Capability only addresses the specific task itself, and the assets required to conduct an operation. This value is the simplest to weigh because either an actor has a given capability or it does not. With the exception of MISO, all six are given the maximum value

(0.3) and the rationale will be discussed shortly. The United States has shown the capability to accomplish all six missions, but MISO was given a lower score due a democracy's inherent difficulty of a conducting information operation.⁶⁸ Russia has a strong government sponsored mass media and understanding of counter-narrative. The United States has not recently (post-Cold War) displayed the ability to conduct a MISO campaign against a technological near-peer and experiences difficulties crafting uniform information operations with the dissolution of the United States Information Agency in 1999. Currently, there is no singular U.S. government agency or department that leads national messaging or political information operations.

In recent history, successful DA operations include the successful raid that killed Osama Bin Laden (Operation Neptune Spear), and the successful rescues of Captain Richard Phillips, Jessica Buchanan, Paul Thisted (Operation Octave Fusion), and the successful combined forces rescue of 70 Iraqi hostages from an ISIS prison in Hawija, Iraq.⁶⁹ Successful FID, OPE, and UW operations examples include SOF and Northern Alliance operations to take control of Mazar-e-Sharif, Kabul, and Kandahar, Afghanistan by December 2001. The environment was quickly prepared for follow-on actions and governance, though what happened in Afghanistan after 2002 is extensively debated, such as the ways the U.S. trained Afghan forces, and the focus on capturing and killing rather than on developing local capacity and political resolution.

Another component of deterrence is the ability to communicate activities or threats to an adversary (Co). Some Title 10 tasks can be overtly communicated, like FID, and weigh high in value (0.3). Other tasks, by their very nature, can be difficult to communicate. An actor may not want to communicate the act or threat, such as strategic reconnaissance (0.0). This factor considers the inherent overt communication of actions such as FID, and communications that could occur after the activities' employment. Direct action scores high because it can be easily communicated before the action, as a threat, and after the

⁶⁸ Walter Jajko. "Deception: Appeal for Acceptance; Discourse on Doctrine; Preface to Planning," *Comparative Strategy* 21, no. 5 (2002), 355.

⁶⁹ The hostage-rescue operation in Hawija, Iraq occurred on 22 October 2015; it does not have an operation name in open-source reporting. During the raid, there was one American killed in action, Master Sergeant Joshua L. Wheeler.

action, as a result (0.3). We acknowledge, in some cases, for operational security, that an actor would not want to communicate a DA threat to maintain the element of surprise; however, the actor does retain the ability to communicate the threat if it desires. OPE and UW both score low because the nature of those mission sets requires operational security that preclude the communication of the action (0.1). These activities have a low communication value because the opponents can make assumptions about the source of action. OPE does gain some communication value based on the example of “stay-behind” units that were trained during the Cold War.

The final deterrence component is credibility (Cr). The United States must convince the target that it is willing to conduct the activity. Historic credibility will result from instances where the United States has shown the willingness to conduct specific missions, therefore FID scores very high along with OPE (0.3). The United States has shown the willingness to partner with nations, specifically to deter an adversary’s actions. DA and UW both score low because the United States has not shown the willingness to employ these methods against near-peer nations (0.1).

Each task receives a value using the three components of deterrence. The maximum deterrence value is a score of 1.0, and the lowest deterrence value is a score of 0. As previously discussed, $D_{(x)}$ is comprised of the three factors for successful deterrence: Credibility (Cr), Capability (Ca), and Communication (Co). We view $D_{(x)}$ as additive because successful deterrence can still be achieved with a low rating of a factor. One example would be credibility, where an actor may have a capability and communicate it; however, the actor may not have the resolve to use the capability. An actor’s enemy could miscalculate the credibility, and believe the actor does have the appropriate resolve, and thus a successful $D_{(x)}$ could be achieved.

We also assume a perfect (1) $D_{(x)}$ cannot be achieved through a singular use of one task, so no one activity can achieve (1), and in fact we do not allow a (1) to be achieved as all three factors within the $D_{(x)}$ are weighted at 30% each. All deterrence components are evenly related based on our literature review. We do not find any suggestions that one deterrence factor is more important than another perspective factor.

Table 2. Model (2) with Variable Weights

<i>Activity</i>	<i>Credibility</i>	<i>Capability</i>	<i>Communication</i>	$D_{(x)}$
DA (Supporting/Direct)	0.100	0.300	0.300	0.700
DA (Supported/Direct)	0.100	0.300	0.300	0.700
FID (Supporting/Indirect)	0.300	0.200	0.300	0.800
FID (Supported/Indirect)	0.300	0.200	0.300	0.800
MISO (Supporting / Direct)	0.200	0.200	0.200	0.600
MISO (Supported / Direct)	0.200	0.200	0.200	0.600
MISO (Supporting / Indirect)	0.200	0.200	0.200	0.600
MISO (Supported / Indirect)	0.200	0.200	0.200	0.600
OPE (Supporting/Indirect)	0.300	0.300	0.100	0.700
OPE (Supported/Indirect)	0.300	0.300	0.100	0.700
SR (Supporting/Direct)	0.100	0.300	0.000	0.400
SR (Supported/Direct)	0.100	0.300	0.000	0.400
SR (Supporting/Indirect)	0.100	0.300	0.000	0.400
SR (Supported/Indirect)	0.100	0.300	0.000	0.400
UW (Supporting / Direct)	0.100	0.300	0.100	0.500
UW (Supported / Direct)	0.100	0.300	0.100	0.500
UW (Supporting / Indirect)	0.100	0.300	0.100	0.500
UW (Supported / Indirect)	0.100	0.300	0.100	0.500

E. QUANTIFYING POTENTIAL DETERRENCE VALUE

We define potential deterrence value as $SD_{(x)}$. In order to compute $SD_{(x)}$, activity success with respect to escalation ($S_{(x)}$) is multiplied by its respective value of deterrence ($D_{(x)}$). This equation is multiplicative because without a credible deterrent or a task that yields an $S_{(x)}$, there is no $SD_{(x)}$.⁷⁰

⁷⁰ Lecture, Naval Postgraduate School by a United States Combatant Commander. The lecture focused on the multiplicative nature of deterrence because if any factor is zero, then there will be no deterrence.

Table 3. Model (3) with Variable Weights

Activity	$S_{(x)}$	$D_{(x)}$	$SD_{(x)}$
DA (Supporting/Direct)	0.250	0.700	0.175
DA (Supported/Direct)	0.350	0.700	0.245
FID (Supporting/Indirect)	0.750	0.800	0.600
FID (Supported/Indirect)	0.850	0.800	0.680
MISO (Supporting / Direct)	0.325	0.600	0.195
MISO (Supported / Direct)	0.425	0.600	0.255
MISO (Supporting / Indirect)	0.525	0.600	0.315
MISO (Supported / Indirect)	0.625	0.600	0.375
OPE (Supporting/Indirect)	0.750	0.700	0.525
OPE (Supported/Indirect)	0.850	0.700	0.595
SR (Supporting/Direct)	0.100	0.400	0.040
SR (Supported/Direct)	0.200	0.400	0.080
SR (Supporting/Indirect)	0.250	0.400	0.100
SR (Supported/Indirect)	0.350	0.400	0.140
UW (Supporting / Direct)	0.325	0.500	0.163
UW (Supported / Direct)	0.425	0.500	0.213
UW (Supporting / Indirect)	0.525	0.500	0.263
UW (Supported / Indirect)	0.625	0.500	0.313

F. TOPSIS

TOPSIS is a method to compare alternative solutions by identifying criterion weights for each variable, based upon minimization from an ideal point and maximization from a nadir point.⁷¹ We use TOPSIS to provide additional credibility to the weights we assign to model (1) and model (2), based on our literature review. The TOPSIS criterion decision tool (CDT) results yield similar criterion weights when compared to the method based on the literature review. TOPSIS resulted in a higher strategic interaction (St), while

⁷¹ D. L. Olson. "Comparison of Weights in TOPSIS Models," *Mathematical and Computer Modeling* 40, (2004): 721.

the weight of risk holder (RH) was halved. Despite the changes in these variables, the top ten Title 10 task rankings did not change.

The weights developed using the CDT create a $S_{(x)}$ value in another manner than outlined above to further justify the results. This value is compared to the $S_{(x)}$ value using the original weights developed by the literature review. Table 4 displays the model (1) variable weights, based on the literature review, and those created by TOPSIS and the CDT.

Table 4. Comparison of Author’s Weights versus CDT

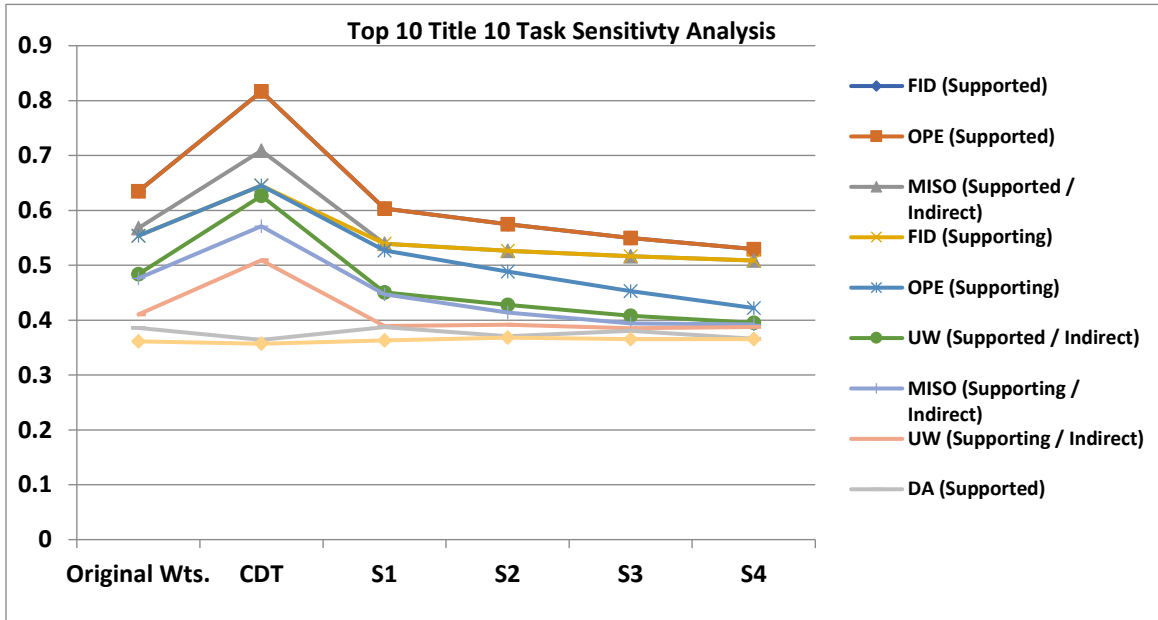
Manually entered weights (if used, all criterion must sum to 1):			
Strat Interaction	Escalation	Trip Wire	Risk Holder
0.40	0.30	0.15	0.15
Criterion Decision Tool determined weights:			
0.5820	0.2244	0.1197	0.0739

G. SENSITIVITY ANALYSIS

To further validate the results of model (1), we conducted a sensitivity analysis. The sensitivity analysis analyzes how a change in the weights affects the value of $S_{(x)}$. The sensitivity analysis modifies the highest weighted factor (strategy) of the original formula. The analysis subtracts .05 from the strategy weights and distributes .05 equally among the other criterion. We conducted the subtraction over 4 iterations, changing the weighted value incrementally of strategic interaction from .4 to .2. Only 4 iterations were used because the trend of narrowing the results was identified as the likely result. The sensitivity analysis indicates no change in the rank order of the top 5 Title 10 tasks (Table 5). It did narrow $S_{(x)}$ value spread, which is illustrated by the graph in Figure 2.

Table 5. Potential Deterrence Value Original Model Compared to Sensitivity Analysis

Top 10	Original Wts.	CDT	S1	S2	S3	S4
FID (Supported)	0.635	0.816	0.603	0.575	0.550	0.529
OPE (Supported)	0.635	0.816	0.603	0.575	0.550	0.529
MISO (Supported / Indirect)	0.568	0.709	0.539	0.527	0.516	0.509
FID (Supporting)	0.554	0.645	0.539	0.527	0.516	0.509
OPE (Supporting)	0.554	0.645	0.527	0.488	0.453	0.422
UW (Supported / Indirect)	0.484	0.626	0.451	0.428	0.408	0.395
MISO (Supporting / Indirect)	0.476	0.571	0.447	0.414	0.394	0.392
UW (Supporting / Indirect)	0.410	0.509	0.389	0.392	0.385	0.387
DA (Supported)	0.386	0.364	0.387	0.371	0.380	0.366
SR (Supported/Direct)	0.361	0.357	0.363	0.368	0.365	0.366



*Note: FID is directly behind OPE in the depiction and is unable to be seen.

Figure 2. Sensitivity Analysis Graphic Depiction

The weighting of tasks and deterrence sub variables in this chapter is based on the authors' interpretation of published literature from subject matter experts, flag officer lectures, and TOPSIS methodology, to lend factor-weighting credibility. Additionally, the mathematical model that defines $D_{(x)}$ currently adds all sub-variables in order to produce a deterrence value. During a lecture at Naval Postgraduate School, a senior flag military

officer suggested the sub-variables of deterrence must be multiplied because if any sub-variable is zero, then the total deterrence value would be zero.⁷² The authors question if this is true because the logic seems to suggest that bluffing and deception could not result in effective deterrence. This is a possible avenue of further research.

H. CONCLUSION

Within the model, FID and OPE in the supported role score the highest deterrence values. They score high because they have low risk with respect to escalation, they employ an indirect strategic interaction, and the presence of U.S. forces constitute a trip wire. These tasks also place forces within contested regions for longer durations, allowing them to act as an early warning detector. The task necessitates continued force presence that can receive, stage, and integrate additional forces should it be necessary to enhance the deterrence posture. This does not mean these tasks alone, can produce a deterrent value. Special reconnaissance in a supported direct role scores the worst. It fails as a deterrent activity due to the threat of escalation and lack of deterrence communication. Overall, these missions have the ability to deter if they can reliably communicate intent while minimizing their potential to escalate conflict.

The $SD_{(x)}$ values from Title 10 task cannot be multiplied or added to yield an overall deterrence value; however, they can be compared to each other in terms of their $S_{(x)}$ and $D_{(x)}$ so a decision-maker can see the overall $SD_{(x)}$ comparative values. The $SD_{(x)}$ values give a decision-maker insight into weighted options he or she has with respect to the Title 10 task and deterrence value. Countless factors can yield or not yield deterrence, though the models in this thesis aim to simplify these Title 10 tasks and deterrence values to yield an $SD_{(x)}$ value. This provides decision-makers insight into tasks he or she may or may not want to use, or use in combination, based on the $SD_{(x)}$ value approaching an unreachable (1). Our model constrains each task so that no task, on its own, can have a perfect $SD_{(x)}$ value of one; however, a decision-maker can manipulate his or her own values in the TOPSIS model if he or she wants to weight a given aspect different than we do.

⁷² The lecture referenced was an academically non-attributable lecture given at Naval Postgraduate School in 2017. We reference the idea; however, not the individual.

IV. CASE STUDY ON SUCCESS IN CRIMEA: RUSSIA'S USE OF HYBRID TACTICS

This chapter examines Russia's successful use of hybrid warfare to successfully annex Crimea and deter other states from countering Russian action. This case study focuses on the tasks weighted in our model. Russia's annexation of Crimea hinged upon many factors; however, this chapter will focus on Russia's tasks from our model and their successful deterrence. This case study is not an analysis of every strategic, operational and tactical activity employed by Russia leading up to and during the annexation of Crimea. Other states and institutions, such as the United Nations, enacted economic sanctions on Russia due to its action in Crimea; however, there was not an overt military response to Crimea's annexation.

The lack of military response from states other than Ukraine can be attributed to the fact that Ukraine is not a full-fledged NATO member; though, Ukraine is a member of the NATO Partnership for Peace.⁷³ When Russia began its operations to annex Crimea, NATO could not invoke NATO Article V, where an attack on one NATO state is an attack on all NATO states. Therefore, NATO did not militarily aid Ukraine. Many representatives of NATO say that the "West" is not ready to defend Ukraine.⁷⁴ Additionally, a 1995 study concluded that NATO applicant states must resolve border disputes before NATO will consider a state for membership.⁷⁵ NATO certainly would not want to invoke article V on the first day a perspective state joins. Immediate, open conflict is not in the best interest of the organization. The United States could have invoked the Budapest Memorandum to

⁷³ This is an additional factor that gave Russia freedom of action.

⁷⁴ Steven Pifer, "Will Ukraine Join NATO? A Course for Disappointment," *Brookings*, 25 July 2017: retrieved on 3 August 2017, <https://www.theatlantic.com/news/archive/2017/02/trump-obama-russia-crimea/516777/>.

⁷⁵ North Atlantic Treaty Organization. *Study on NATO Enlargement*, last modified November 5, 2008, https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_24733.htm/.

pressure Russia to stop its aggressive actions, but the deniability of hybrid warfare tactics made early attribution difficult.⁷⁶

Similarly, individual states were deterred from acting militarily in Ukraine because of Russia's clandestine and quick action, and asymmetry of interest.⁷⁷ President Obama's claim is that "Ukraine is a core Russian interest but not an American one, so Russia will always be able to maintain escalatory dominance there."⁷⁸

Russia successfully annexed Crimea using hybrid warfare, both clandestinely and covertly, with special operations forces as a supported force, the interior culminating maneuver. Russia also used conventional forces in support of SOF, and it used other national instruments of power to deter Ukrainian allies. These exterior maneuvers allowed Russia to distract and deter to prepare for the culminating maneuver.

A. A BRIEF HISTORY

Crimea became part of Russia once again in March of 2014 because Russian leaders thought the annexation was in Russia's national interest and because of the perceived expansion of North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) influence. Before 2014, Crimea was for decades an autonomous republic and a constituent entity of Ukraine. On 5 May 1992, Crimea voted for complete independence; however, Ukraine opposed the Crimean referendum.⁷⁹ Crimea has a long and varied history with respect to culture and politics. Today, Crimea is a Russian federal district, and its currency, tax, and legal system are under Russian jurisdiction.⁸⁰ Many countries and institutions, such as NATO and the European Union (EU), do not recognize Russia's annexation of Crimea; however, since 2014, these

⁷⁶ The 1994 Budapest Memorandum: In exchange for relinquishing its nuclear stockpiles, Ukraine was given assurances its territorial integrity would be respected. Article signed by Russia and the United States, among others.

⁷⁷ Asymmetry of interest refers to the different values placed on Ukraine by Russia and the United States.

⁷⁸ Goldberg, "The Obama Doctrine."

⁷⁹ Serge Schmemmann, "Crimea Parliament Votes to Back Independence from Ukraine," *The New York Times*, 6 May 1992: retrieved 1 June 2017. <http://www.nytimes.com/1992/05/06/world/crimea-parliament-votes-to-back-independence-from-ukraine.html>.

⁸⁰ Schmemmann, "Crimea Parliament Votes to Back Independence from Ukraine."

entities have not made tangible progress toward a nullification or reversal of the annexation.

There are many reasons why Russia successfully annexed Crimea; however, this chapter will examine Russia's actions during the annexation. Russian forces made the annexation a success by taking advantage of acting directly, acting indirectly, and these forces maximized their relative superiority over Ukrainian forces. Russia spent years strategically reconnoitering Crimea and greater Ukraine, and Russia conducted OPE leading up to their invasion and annexation of Crimea. Russia worked with local Crimean sympathizers to train local forces and provide them information. Russia also directed these forces in a UW context, achieving common objectives for the sympathizers and for Russia. Finally, Russian SOF conducted DA covertly, quickly, and decisively, when it seized the Crimean parliament building. Russian supported pro-Russian Crimean factions who communicated that Crimea wanted to be part of Russia.

Russian action in Crimea was not solely a military victory, though without the military successful annexation would not have been possible. This chapter will further proceed by detailing a brief case study of Russian forces used in Crimea, discuss Russian hybrid warfare, then analyze Russian direct and indirect actions based on Christopher Lamb, and David Tucker's theories on SOF strategic utility. Finally, this chapter assigns qualitative and quantitative values to Russian tasks in terms of $SD_{(x)}$. Russian hybrid warfare and these tasks demonstrate successful operations and successful deterrence to states that oppose Russian action in Crimea.

B. BACKGROUND

Russia honed its methods for bringing some of its former Soviet satellites back under Moscow's rule well before March of 2014. Russia began to modernize its military and make it more professional in the mid-2000s. Specifically, it formed its special operations command structure to streamline efforts. Russian Spetsnaz are one such force, an "irregular force that operates covertly, providing the Russian government plausible

deniability.”⁸¹ Spetsnaz often wear non-descript clothing bearing no information or identifying insignia of country or unit. While deployed, Spetsnaz operators initially focus on “political agitation and other indirect methods trying to create a political environment favorable to Russian policies.”⁸² Specifically, Spetsnaz support Russian proxy forces and ethnic Russian populations in border states.

In 2011, President Putin pressured peripheral states, or Russia’s near-abroad, not to associate with the European Union in order to protect Russian diasporas abroad.⁸³ Russian political leaders saw and still see NATO as a threat. Ukraine is not and was not a full NATO member; however, Russian leaders wanted to prevent a NATO expansion to the east. Putin would end up showing the world he was not afraid to intervene within states in Russia’s near-abroad and prevent them from turning against Moscow. He calculated that a NATO threat of direct intervention was extremely unlikely. Russia’s military intervention used hybrid warfare.

Hybrid warfare was part of a Russian political and military scheme leading up to the 2014 winter Olympics in Sochi, Russia. Beaufre would call these buildups part of the exterior maneuvers that prepared the environment and allowed freedom of action for direct action or the seizure of the Crimean parliament building. The Olympics were held in mid-February. Prior to February, the Russians moved significant military forces into its Southern Military District (Figure 3), adjacent to Crimea where Sochi is located. Russian leaders bolstered their military forces in the southern district for security during the Olympics, and it was also a cover to move forces and other materiel in place for actions in Crimea after the Olympics ended.⁸⁴ Russian operations prepared the environment near their target, Crimea. This deception reduced potential adversary suspicion and ended up increasing the elements of speed and surprise, once actions in Crimea began after the Olympics.

⁸¹ *Little Green Men: A Primer on Modern Russian Unconventional Warfare, Ukraine 2013–2014*, (Fort Bragg, NC: The United States Army Special Operations Command, 2015), 43.

⁸² *Little Green Men*, 43.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, 41.

⁸⁴ Kalev I. Sepp, “Psychological Warfare and Deception.” (Lecture, Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, CA, Winter Quarter 2017).



Figure 3. Russian Military Districts⁸⁵

After the Olympics on 26 February 2014, President Vladimir Putin ordered a “large military drill” where Russian forces mobilized and moved closer to the Crimean border. On 28 February, multiple news sources indicated Russian aircraft and personnel in Anapa, Russia, and in various locations within Crimea.⁸⁶ Beforehand, self-defense groups and militia groups started to form within Crimea; some speculate these groups were under Russian influence. Here Russia performed UW, maintaining contact with sympathetic groups, training them and providing them information for future actions. The training and

⁸⁵ Source: This digital map was retrieved from <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/russia/mo-md.htm> on 2 June 2017 to give the reader a visual depiction of the Russian Southern Military District. Crimea is not depicted; however, it borders the western tip of the Southern Military District.

⁸⁶ Abdullah Atay, “The Strategic Utility of the Russian Spetsnaz in Crimea,” *Combating Terrorism Exchange* 6, no. 4 (2016): 48.

information dissemination also served to prepare the environment in terms of sympathizers within Crimea for future actions.⁸⁷ On 27 February 2014, “unidentified armed groups blockaded Ukrainian bases” and stifled “any potential reaction to the imminent seizure of the Crimean parliament building.”⁸⁸ The same day, approximately 50 armed men, without identification insignia, stormed the Crimean parliament building in a DA seizure.⁸⁹ They hoisted the Russian flag and “identified themselves to the press as the Russian-speaking, Crimean population’s self-defense force.”⁹⁰

Professor and author Mark Galeotti described the force that seized the Crimean parliament building as a highly professional unit on its initial deployment, from “Russia’s new Special Operations Command: *Komanda spetsialnogo naznacheniya*.”⁹¹ The Russian deception, misinformation, and direct-action continued as Ukrainian airfields and other military bases within Crimea fell, one after the other. Abdullah Atay asserts that Ukrainian troops had initial relative superiority; however, Ukraine did not resist Russian action because Ukrainian national-level leaders did not trust their own military.⁹² The Spetsnaz and other Russian forces used economy of force, combined with conventional fire support and Ukrainian internal distrust, to paralyze Ukrainian forces. Ukraine chose not to fight because of aforementioned Russian OPE, SR, and UW, which culminated with a DA seizure that was so fast the Ukrainian security forces could not adequately respond. Ukraine was also deterred militarily because of political-military distrust.

Russian tactics also proved to be very successful at mobilizing local Russian ethnic groups within Crimea to support Russian goals.⁹³ These local forces conducted unconventional, paramilitary actions, protests, riots and other acts against the Ukrainian

⁸⁷ Cyber-attacks cut off communications between Ukrainian bases in Crimea and mainland Ukraine. Ukrainian troops and their command and control were in an information blackout. This is addressed in the conclusion as part of a potential future model.

⁸⁸ Atay, “The Strategic Utility of the Russian Spetsnaz in Crimea,” 48.

⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁹¹ Mark Galeotti, *Spetsnaz: Russia’s Special Forces*, London, UK: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2015, 50.

⁹² Atay, “The Strategic Utility of the Russian Spetsnaz in Crimea,” 49.

⁹³ Ibid.

government in order to bolster Russian legitimacy in the Crimea. The Russian indirect action was a force multiplier to the disinformation campaign and confused outsiders as to exactly who was behind the aforementioned actions. Russian indirect strategy and predominate indirect use of SOF deterred outsiders from acting militarily because outsiders could not clearly discern what was happening and who was truly behind the actions in Crimea.

Russia took advantage of a paralyzed Ukrainian government and military, and maximized its hybrid warfare utility. Russian performance proved effective in a very short amount of time. Russian military analyst Anton Lavrov declares that the rapid Russian hybrid action, combined with the Ukrainian paralyzation, led to the successful referendum between Crimea and Russia on 21 March 2014. Crimea became part of Russia less than one month after the initial reported Russian actions in the region. Russia masterfully employed their forces with decisive direct action on the Crimean parliament building, and indirect action, supporting pro-Russian factions. The positive strategic utility fulfilled the Russian desires of keeping the Ukrainian military from effectively defending their territory and deterring Ukrainian allies from militarily aiding Ukraine. Russian hybrid warfare successfully enforced the national strategy and policy of absorbing Crimea into the Russian state, all in under one month.

C. THE STRATEGIC UTILITY OF RUSSIAN TACTICS

As previously referenced, Christopher Lamb and David Tucker assert that the most strategic utility of SOF is found when SOF employ as a supported force and in an indirect manner. There is less utility when SOF are employed as a supported force in a direct manner, and when SOF employ as a supporting force, either directly or indirectly.⁹⁴

Russian forces conducted direct action when they overtook the Crimean parliament building, blockaded Ukrainian bases, and subsequently seized Ukrainian airfields and bases within Crimea. Russia deterred action because it employed the concept of *fait*

⁹⁴ Lamb and Tucker, *United States Special Operations Forces*, 42.

accompli, “a quick limited grab to demonstrate control before anyone can react.”⁹⁵ By the time external actors realized this, the action was complete, and reversing the action would have required compellence, which Russia understood was politically infeasible. Simultaneously, Russian forces also acted indirectly when they supported and mobilized ethnic Russians and pro-Russian factions in Crimea. Russian tactics were initially unattributed to Russia, making it clandestine, and Russians operated with local Crimean forces to keep their visibility low. Russian SOF was the supported force and main effort during the military portion of the Crimean annexation, though conventional forces were involved as well. Russian leaders took advantage of both direct and indirect actions, maximizing SOF’s capabilities to achieve their political objectives. These actions are all interior maneuvers culminating from the freedom of action by Russian conventional force posture along the Ukrainian border and cordoning Ukrainian military bases.

D. QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS

As previously stated, Russia used all tasks under study in this thesis to achieve a positive Russian outcome and successfully deter outside intervention. The table below outlines the tasks, their employment manner and their $SD_{(x)}$ yield, based on the TOPSIS model in the previous chapter.

Table 6. Russia’s Deterrent Prediction Values

Activity	$S_{(x)}$	$D_{(x)}$	$SD_{(x)}$
DA (Supported)	0.350	0.700	0.250
FID (Supported)	0.850	0.800	0.680
MISO (Supported / Indirect)	0.625	0.600	0.380
OPE (Supported)	0.850	0.700	0.600
SR (Supported / Indirect)	0.350	0.400	0.140
UW (Supported / Indirect)	0.625	0.500	0.310

⁹⁵ Mazarr, “Mastering the Grey Zone,” 37.

According to the model, Russia achieved the highest $SD_{(x)}$ possible for each task by employing SOF optimally. For example, Russian forces conducted UW, which is an indirect task, yielding the highest strategic utility. This combination of strategic utility and strategic interaction yields the highest $SD_{(x)}$ value for UW. Russia employed all other tasks in the optimal combination of strategic utility and strategic interaction to maximize the $SD_{(x)}$. Additionally, this chapter described how Ukraine's allied institutions, states, and leaders do not deem Crimea high enough in their national interests to militarily intervene, making deterrence easier. Using hybrid warfare, Russia achieved the maximum total $SD_{(x)}$ possible.

E. THE AFTERMATH

Russian Chief of General Staff Gerasimov and other Russian leaders realize that the paradigm of modern warfare is drastically different from warfare of World War II, or The Cold War. In place of declared wars employing large conventional armies in climactic battles, we have undeclared wars, hybrid warfare, special operations forces, and non-military activities. Gerasimov implies, "that the state prosecuting the unconventional warfare campaign must be in control of the catalysts and crises that lead to escalation and resolution, rather than simply react to events. In the 2014 campaigns in Crimea and Ukraine, Russia in fact controlled and exercised a strong grip on the pace of many of the headline events."⁹⁶

In this case, Russia chose to be proactive and annex Crimea before NATO could further influence Ukraine and avoid a potential Ukrainian NATO state. This action will likely prevent NATO from accepting Ukraine as a NATO member because NATO does not desire conflict with Russia, and Russia has shown the will to act in the region. This case also illustrates a failure of extended deterrence that was agreed to in the Budapest Memorandum.

Russia successfully employed these tasks both directly and indirectly as part of a hybrid warfare strategy. Russian forces achieved maximum strategic effect by seizing the

⁹⁶ *Little Green Men*, 58.

Crimean parliament building and mobilizing local Crimea groups to achieve Russian goals. Russian forces acted covertly and clandestinely and developed a narrative for the global audience that Crimea wanted to be part of Russia.

After Crimea's annexation, western political leaders admonished Russia; however, no one opposed Russia militarily. Ukraine is not a member of NATO as of 2018. No state or institution is directly confronting this issue nor doing anything about it in a serious manner. If this continues, the world must accept Russian success and live with the consequences.

V. CONCLUSION

The United States can and should employ a political warfare strategy that incorporate the identified Title 10 tasks of FID and OPE to deter Russian aggression in eastern European, non-NATO states. This strategy would support a policy to limit Russian influence outside Russian borders, maximize United States' influence, and act in accordance with U.S. national security interests. This strategy would provide opportunities for the United States to militarily combat Russian hybrid warfare and limit Russian aims. Title 10 gives the Secretary of Defense the authority to make USSOCOM the supported command that employs forces that specialize in these tasks within any Geographic Combatant Command's area (GCC).⁹⁷ Unlike GCCs, USSOCOM is not geographically bound. Therefore, it can synchronize operations, globally, to exploit Russian weaknesses at every opportunity, anywhere.

Russian leaders believe that there is no phased approach to warfare, but that war is a constant state against geopolitical opponents.⁹⁸ To quantify certain Title 10 tasks as a potential part of a national strategy a model is introduced. The model quantifies the core components of effective deterrence (capability, communication, & credibility) with respect to the chosen task. The components receive equal weight and then we model the ability of the Title 10 tasks to support deterrence requirements. These deterrence values ($D_{(x)}$) are combined with the likelihood of success for each Title 10 task with respect to escalation ($S_{(x)}$). The combination of these values results in the potential deterrence value ($SD_{(x)}$) of the selected Title 10 task. Analysis of Russia's operations leading up to and during their annexation of Crimea validates the model. We do not account for United States' self-imposed inaction, but concede that this was part of Russia's calculation. From the validation, we can then infer deterrence responses based on their potential deterrence value ($SD_{(x)}$).

⁹⁷ *United States Code: Title 10*, 176.

⁹⁸ Draybn, "NATO, Russia, and the Gerasimov Doctrine," 151.

As theorists like Michael Mazarr have pointed out, this strategy is just the current realization of Thomas Schelling's classic work, *Arms and Influence*. Schelling described these tactics as "salami-slicing" while Mazarr prefers "strategic gradualism."⁹⁹ Russia employs "tactics of erosion, testing the seriousness of commitment" with probes that are deniable, non-attributable, inadvertent, or loosely justified based on Russia's interpretation of international law.¹⁰⁰ These tactics form a pattern of strategic gradualism. Russian hybrid warfare tactics are part of a long-term goal focused on gradual progress towards reasserting its control over their near-abroad. President Vladimir Putin places great emphasis on the former Soviet concept of buffer states (near-abroad). The geographic position, political ties, economic interdependence, and historical significance make these states a legitimate concern for Russia. States within Russia's near-abroad are the focal point of Russian strategic gradualism with the aim of preventing NATO enlargement and western influence. Putin has emphasized Russian obligations to protect "compatriots" from persecution. "Compatriots" are essentially any population of ethnic Russians, pro-Russian elements or any other entity supporting Russian national interests. Former buffer states with "compatriots" give Russia pretense for intervention. They then employ any number of hybrid warfare tactics gradually exploring the commitment of their target and the commitment of that nation's allies. Once Russia judges international reaction, they then increase their response incrementally without provoking a reaction.

As each Russian move goes unpunished, it degrades the credibility value of a U.S. deterrent. Current nuclear and conventional force posture is unable to deter Russian low visibility or hybrid warfare actions in Eastern European, non-NATO states. Emphasizing nuclear posture and conventional formations are not applicable since the United States does not deem these states important enough to engage in this manner to counter hybrid tactics.¹⁰¹ Russian use of propaganda targeting ethnic-Russian populations would make United States conventional presence an easy target for agitation of ethnic tension within Russia's near-abroad.

⁹⁹ Mazarr, "Mastering the Grey Zone," 35.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., 37.

¹⁰¹ Goldberg, "The Obama Doctrine."

Deterrence theorists argue that the cost of inaction is continued imperceptible shifts towards Russian control over its near-abroad. Russia’s employment of strategic gradualism through hybrid warfare tactics is being tested on non-NATO states with ethnic-Russian populations. Ukraine, Moldova, and Georgia are all currently experiencing Russian hybrid warfare and these states have open border disputes. External territorial disputes and ethnic disputes prevent these states from becoming NATO members.¹⁰² Economic sanctions have not deterred Russian actions, and allows Russian “salami-slicing” techniques to continue, undeterred. For the United States to deter these actions, Russia must believe that the United States values these states as allies and that it will act to preserve international or regional order with credible, communicated actions. President Barack Obama took the stance that Russia’s dominance over Ukraine was not worth challenging because “Ukraine is a core Russian interest but not an American one.”¹⁰³ When questioned about further Russian aggression in Moldova, President Obama responded with, “if it’s really important to somebody, and it’s not that important to us, they know that, and we know that.”¹⁰⁴ It is obvious that any deterrence attempted by the previous U.S. administration against Russian aggression toward Eastern European, non-NATO nations was not credible. It has become obvious that the strategic cost of inaction is continued Russian aggression.

A. RECOMMENDATION

The United States should conduct these Title 10 tasks as part of a strategic approach in Eastern European, non-NATO states to deter continued Russian aggression, through strategic preclusion. Strategic preclusion is a concept of “introducing military capabilities early and with precision so that an adversary cannot gain or consolidate a significant operational advantage.”¹⁰⁵ Russian consolidates aims through strategic gradualism, which this approach is designed to undermine. It deters gradual gains by decreasing Russia’s

¹⁰² North Atlantic Treaty Organization. *Study on NATO Enlargement*, last modified November 5, 2008, https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_24733.htm/.

¹⁰³ Goldberg, “The Obama Doctrine,” April 2016.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁵ Hy S. Rothstein, “Special Operations History,” Lecture, Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, CA, 1 March 2017.

“freedom of action” in Eastern European, non-NATO states. A foundational principle of this recommendation is acceptance of the underlying Russian belief that it is in constant conflict. By choice, the United States assumed the role of a weaker actor in Eastern European, non-NATO states, and must change to preclude and deter Russian action. Not embracing alternative options for deterrence and relying solely on conventional and nuclear deterrence paradigms, “we leave ourselves vulnerable and weaken our national efforts.”¹⁰⁶ These Title 10 tasks would only be part of a comprehensive political warfare strategy, with the goal of deterring Russian aggression and we acknowledge there are other ways to deter Russian aggression.

The forces that conduct these tasks should act as *global scouts*, providing information for U.S. decision makers to act preventively to deter, rather than be surprised by Russian stealth. This is a concept of global strategic engagement to deter Russia’s employment of strategic gradualism. Our model quantified potential deterrence factors, and based on our factor weights, the Title 10 tasks with the highest value are FID and OPE in a supported, indirect role. UW, MISO, SR, and DA provide less of a $SD_{(x)}$ value than FID and OPE; however all tasks provide some deterrent value. For example, in some cases it may be necessary to use DA as a decisive operation or UW to maintain forward presence to prevent Russia from consolidating operational advantages. The case study illustrated how Russia employs similar tasks, but does not necessarily illustrate the exact manner in which the United States would employ these tasks. This thesis does not recommend only applying these tasks within a sovereign state that has accepted the United States as a willing partner. These tasks do not constitute a complete strategy. They should not be considered in a vacuum, or separate from other instruments of national power.

The deterrence model relies on the calculation that the strategic cost of inaction is unacceptable for U.S. interests and its allies in Eastern European, non-NATO states. This thesis recognizes that Russia will continue its long-term policy of strategic gradualism.

¹⁰⁶ National Commission on Terrorist Attacks upon the United States, Thomas H Kean, and Lee Hamilton. *The 9/11 Commission Report: Final Report of the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks upon the United States*, Official Government Ed. ed. Washington, DC: National Commission on Terrorist Attacks upon the United States, 2004, 17.

NATO members agree that Russian aggression with hybrid warfare is a threat to their sovereignty, but Russia operates below the recognized escalatory lines, internationally, and within NATO states.¹⁰⁷ In the future, a NATO partner could be pushed far enough to compel Russia to stop hybrid tactics, leading to military conflict. Russia’s strategic gradualism creates an “ever-present risk of escalation despite the desire of” Russia to avoid conventional conflict.¹⁰⁸ To prevent this, the U.S. must adopt a policy of deterring Russian aggression against non-NATO states, “precluding the necessity for a costly conventional war,” by “maintaining a forward presence, facilitating, and conducting decisive operations.”¹⁰⁹ Eastern European non-NATO members are looking for U.S. leadership to prevent escalation and provide deterrence against further Russian aggression. Deterrence is core to NATO.¹¹⁰ Our model and the tasks it incorporates give the United States viable military options that can deter Russian hybrid aggression by exploiting the gaps that our current conventional and nuclear deterrence postures fail to address. This form of deterrence would preclude Russia from gaining any further significant advantages in Eastern European, non-NATO states, and possibly lead to a political modus vivendi.

In order to maintain a peaceful Europe and prevent wider conflict, the United States must demonstrate to Russia that its actions of subverting the rights of a sovereign state are not acceptable. The U.S. must accept the uncomfortable necessity of fighting to reinforce deterrence.¹¹¹ The United States must also communicate that it realizes that NATO expansion onto Russian borders is a grave concern to Russia, perhaps then a political modus vivendi could be realized in Eastern Europe. The tasks quantified in our model would deter Russian action by inhibiting its “freedom of action” without changing the

¹⁰⁷ Phillip Breedlove, Supreme Allied Commander, “Foreword,” *NATO’s Response to Hybrid Threats*, NATO Defense College, 2015.

¹⁰⁸ Mazarr, “Mastering the Grey Zone,” 36.

¹⁰⁹ Rothstein, “Special Operations History.”

¹¹⁰ James Everard, “NATO” Lecture, Global SOF Symposium, Bucharest, Romania, 27 September 2017. General James Everard is the Deputy Supreme Allied Commander, Europe, at the time of this writing.

¹¹¹ Freedman, *Deterrence*, 38.

status quo. For the United States, the self-determination of these states is valid, but Russia's goal of preventing NATO enlargement is not going to change.

B. FUTURE RESEARCH ENHANCEMENT

Our findings should not be considered in a vacuum. Enhancing deterrence value in Eastern European, non-NATO states requires an understanding beyond the military instrument of power. One area of possible enhancement would be to apply a similar model to the effects of the use of cyberspace to alter behavior. Another area of enhancement would be to weight our factors with other potential tasks, or other instruments of power. A new model could measure task effectiveness in combination or in a unilateral application. This model is also specific to Russian and the United States interacting in eastern European non-NATO states, and the weighting of variables is specific to that scenario. The weights would change dramatically if these assumptions are altered.

APPENDIX. DEFINITIONS

All of the following definitions are direct quotations from Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Joint Publication 3-05: Doctrine for Joint Special Operations*, Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, 2014, x-xii.

DIRECT ACTION (DA):

Direct action entails short-duration strikes and other small-scale offensive actions conducted with specialized military capabilities to seize, destroy, capture, exploit, recover, or damage designated targets in hostile, denied, or diplomatically and/or politically sensitive environments.

FOREIGN INTERNAL DEFENSE (FID):

Foreign internal defense refers to U.S. activities that support a host nation's (HN's) internal defense and development strategy and program designed to protect against subversion, lawlessness, insurgency, terrorism, and other threats to their internal security, and stability.

MILITARY INFORMATION SUPPORT OPERATIONS (MISO):

Military information support operations (MISO) are planned to convey selected information and indicators to foreign audiences to influence their emotions, motives, objective reasoning, and ultimately the behavior of foreign governments, organizations, groups, and individuals in a manner favorable to the originator's objectives.

OPERATIONAL PREPARATION OF THE ENVIRONMENT (OPE):

The conduct of activities in likely or potential areas of operation to prepare and shape the operational environment.

SPECIAL RECONNAISSANCE (SR):

Special reconnaissance entails reconnaissance and surveillance actions normally conducted in a clandestine or covert manner to collect or verify information of strategic or operational significance, employing military capabilities not normally found in conventional forces (CF).

UNCONVENTIONAL WARFARE (UW):

UW consists of operations and activities that are conducted to enable a resistance movement or insurgency to coerce, disrupt, or overthrow a

government or occupying power by operating through or with an underground, auxiliary, and guerrilla force in a denied area.

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