

# **History Argumentative Essay Paper**

**By**

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## Bibliography

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What is actionable intelligence? Most definitions that you would find on the web define it as having the necessary information immediately available in order to deal with the situation at hand (Wikipedia Foundation, 2009). To troops on the ground it is more commonly defined as intelligence necessary to allow leadership to make informed decisions on the execution of a specific target set. While the concept seems simple, the pure evolution of the multiple intelligence disciplines has transformed this into an art in current conflicts. Human Intelligence, SIGINT Intelligence, Technical Intelligence, and Imagery Intelligence all have pros and cons that contribute to actionable intelligence, understanding their capabilities and possibilities of how they can be employed is what requires further analysis in order to meet the growing demands of leaders in future complex environments.

Human Intelligence (HUMINT) is one of the oldest intelligence disciplines known to man used in every conflict man has ever been apart of in some shape or fashion. Simply defined as using people to gather information, this includes everything from a scout on the ground to paying a person to provide you information. For simplicity we will focus on utilizing people to gather information on other people, otherwise known as source operations.

Source operations have been an integral part of the intelligence community for years and most people instantly think of the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) when discussing sources or spies. While this was the case during the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century the dramatic increase in capabilities of the Department of Defense (DoD) started to come to light during the Vietnam Conflict and was further propelled with the events of 9-11. DoD was able to accelerate recruitment/training and increase their capability with certain authorities creating a spike in HUMINT. While most combat brigades and Special Operations elements now have a HUMINT capability, they lack the understanding of how to employ it effectively into current irregular warfare environments.

There are several factors to consider with the employment of HUMINT; environment of operations to include culture (placement & access), threat of the enemy, requirements, feasibility and the most dynamic piece is an understanding of humans and/or human behavior. While potentially one of the most effective means, HUMINT intelligence can be the most difficult as one must find a person that has placement and access to the information desired. Additionally, people's perceptions of what they think they know or see may be different from reality. Add into the equation human motives and you end up with an equation requiring experience and knowledge of how the game works. Not having the right person can create bad intelligence causing analysts to make poor assessments, wrong targets being struck and worst case the loss of a soldier. Having a creative intellectual with critical thinking skills and a good grasp of the capabilities and knowledge on how to vet information and the capability to disseminate in a timely

manner is instrumental and almost essential in order to lead to the capture of high value individuals impacting and ultimately changing the landscape of the environment.

Signal Intelligence is one of the fastest pace and hardest capabilities in the intelligence community to date. While not the newest discipline, the current capabilities are far beyond the interception of U-boat communications during WWII. The National Security Agency (NSA) is the lead agency in SIGINT with a mission to collect, process, and disseminate intelligence information from foreign signals for intelligence and counterintelligence purposes to support full spectrum operations (National Security Agency, 2009). Additionally, all of the services have elements that augment this SIGINT machine to refine intelligence to meet diverse requirements. While the capabilities of SIGINT can provide extremely accurate information, most of this information is classified and can not be disseminated to everyone in the operational environment.

The proper employment and understanding are again critical to the effectiveness of the discipline and just like HUMINT, most units in today's current fight have access to some type of SIGINT capability. While capable of providing pin point information or early warning to a pending attack(s), leaders must understand how the system works and is fully integrated/synchronized into operations in order to exploit the full capability. Most leaders today place assets in more of a force protection role as opposed to employing assets to target and collect. Some of this is due to logistical and security concerns which may not be avoided, but can degrade the potential for understanding your adversary and more importantly the possibility of disrupting the enemy's decision cycle.

Imagery is probably one of the most misunderstood disciplines in the intelligence community and probably the most underutilized today. Most units currently use Imagery in more of a mapping or planning application as opposed to an operational enabler/collection asset that must be planned and integrated/synchronized into operations as you would any other enabler. The primary reasons for this are the lack of connectivity, a bureaucratic and antiquated collection management cycle, and most commonly a lack of understanding of how to employ the discipline. Depending on the type of imagery a unit may require may cause significant planning limitations. However, in the current environment leaders have access to assets that have historically been placed at higher echelons and the influx of information has not caught up with tactics, techniques and procedures for employment of these assets.

Imagery can include, but is not limited to satellites, U-2s, and unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) like the Predator, Darkstar, and Global Hawk to list a few (Wikipedia Foundation, 2009). Satellites are what most people reference when talking about imagery, thinking of it as a picture to show a location. While this is certainly a capability, the planning must be carefully thought out in order to achieve the desired endstate of capturing a specific event at a given time. Satellites are a national level asset and requests can be as fast as minutes and can also take up to several days in order to meet specific requirements. This has led to an increase of manned and unmanned fixed wing assets to support near real-time (NRT) imagery requirements of combat forces. While providing more timely intelligence, as with the previous intelligence

disciplines/capabilities noted, most units fail to employ the assets in a manner to exploit the offensive potential and capabilities of the platforms. The most common error by units is having platforms scan lines of communications (LOCs) or reacting to events focusing on what has already happened. Leaders must resist the desire to monitor forces and history with these capabilities and look forward to the next ridge line and enemy locations.

While each intelligence discipline has strengths and weaknesses, the most powerful employment of these capabilities is when they are fully integrated/synchronized and complementing each other. This can be achieved through numerous methods like cueing and redundancy, but the success is dependent on a well planned collection plan with the built in flexibility to track the enemy. Without a well thought out methodology, units will remain reactive and never be able to effectively employ the find, fix, finish, exploit and analyze (F3EA) methodology that has been proven to be effective in current operations. This will require leaders to decentralize and empower subordinates and trust intelligence subject matter experts to do what they have been trained to do. In addition, it will require leaders to push the envelope of creativity in their soldiers in order to maximize collection assets and develop innovative targeting techniques required to fight in asymmetric environments.

Leadership in today's fight will require a change; we can no longer accept a lack of understanding of force multipliers like intelligence assets. Intelligence is an enabler but is also an operation and must be planned, rehearsed, synchronized, and integrated as you would for any other operation. Time is not on the side of US forces and requires a

precise aggressive campaign in order to defeat our current enemies. Carefully crafted collection plans will provide leaders with the abilities to exploit critical centers of gravity and change the landscape of operational environments. In the end it will protect and save soldiers lives while simultaneously defeating the enemy.

“No leader should put troops into the field merely to gratify his own spleen; no leader should fight a battle simply out of pique. But a kingdom that has once been destroyed can never come again into being; nor can the dead ever be brought back to life. Hence the enlightened leader is heedful, and the good leader full of caution.” (Military-Quotes, 2009).

**-Sun Tzu**