

USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

**THE STRATEGIC CONTEXT: THE NEED FOR
A REVOLUTION IN ARMY PUBLIC AFFAIRS**

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ABSTRACT

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Throughout our nation's history, the Army has been a powerful force in pursuing, achieving, and defending U.S. national security objectives; however, September 11, 2001 changed forever the future strategic environment. Consequently, the President of the United States directed the Department of Defense (DoD) to transform to meet the uncertain future and the unfolding challenges of the 21st Century. As seen in the recent operations in Afghanistan and Iraq, DoD changed the way it conducts operations -- a shift to a global perspective of the battlespace, a noncontiguous approach to operations and the employment of a fully integrated Joint Force. In addition, Joint Pub 1, *Joint Warfare of the Armed Forces of the United States*, states that Joint Warfare requires the integrated and synchronized application of all appropriate capabilities. This paper examines the issue of whether Army Public Affairs has reformed to successfully meet the complexities of the future strategic environment. It assesses the principles of doctrine, organization, training, leadership and education, and material. Further, the paper provides thoughts on how Army Public Affairs can preserve its relevance as an essential member of the Joint Team.

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THE STRATEGIC CONTEXT: THE NEED FOR A REVOLUTION IN ARMY PUBLIC AFFAIRS

DEFINING THE STRATEGIC CONTEXT

The horrific acts of terrorism committed on September 11, 2001 thrust the United States into the forefront of a new global environment where military leaders pursue and defend U.S. national security objectives in a strategic arena which is fraught with uncertainty, complexity, ambiguity, and extreme volatility.¹ More than anything else, these first years of the 21st Century have showed that the world as we know it has changed, and that the future is full of open and unknown dangers. The 21st Century threats are elusive and idiosyncratic -- threats of transnational terrorism, cyber warfare, weapons of mass destruction (WMD), and unconventional warfare transcend national and regional boundaries. Geopolitical trends such as scarce resources, failed states, population-spikes in underdeveloped countries, and the growth of mega-cities provide the underpinning to a diverse and evolving global environment. Likewise, rogue states led by authoritarian regimes with criminal interests foster an environment for extremism and asymmetric warfare which further complicate the strategic context.²

The uncertainty of this future environment necessitates future military strategy that is devoid of a threat-based view of the world and its linear requirements. Military planners no longer have the luxury of knowing the identity of the next adversary or the exact method of engagement. Threats to U.S. national interests are not clearly identified, and in turn, do not have a return address.

Accordingly, in the aftermath of September 11, 2001, Secretary of Defense, Donald Rumsfeld, directed the Department of Defense (DoD) to shift to a capabilities-based approach for the future. An approach focused on how the United States can defeat a broad array of capabilities that any enemy may employ, rather than who the adversaries are and where they may threaten U.S. national interests.³

Today's war on terror is unlike any war the U.S. has fought before. Instead of opposing armies, we face enemies who use 21st Century technology to globally command and control personnel, transfer financial investments, and pursue aggressive anti-propaganda initiatives. Continuously evolving collection and dissemination capabilities have dramatically altered the dynamics of the global media and consumer markets.⁴ As demonstrated by the successful media embed plan for Operation IRAQI FREEDOM, off-the-shelf mobile sophisticated telecommunications equipment with satellite capability have become widely accessible.⁵ Additionally, smaller, portable, powerful radios, televisions, cell phones, computers, and other communications devices facilitate a desire for consumer access to the information. Audiences

around the world, including Army deployed forces and adversaries, are able to receive a wider range of information from an expanded spectrum of sources.

The emerging electronic information communications technologies, the proliferation of commercial satellite technology, and the expansion of international satellite alliances have resulted in the spread of world-wide communications. This capability has resulted in the instantaneous battlefield media coverage with the global public, our allies, and our potential adversaries. In certain instances, this instantaneous media coverage can reach audiences prior to operational reports reaching the Unified Commander or the National Command Authority.⁶ Therefore, the impact of emerging communications technologies on the strategic environment can be compared to that of emerging weapons technologies.

For it is this asymmetric global threat, coupled with the eruption of information age technologies, that has created operational environments and requirements so fundamentally different from those that existed in the past, which in turn, compels Army Public Affairs to shed its parochial bonds and radically transform to a relevant Joint capable force.

Army Public Affairs practitioners must, therefore, recognize and accept the critical need to depart from the past and holistically prepare for the future challenges of the strategic context. This paper assesses the issue of whether a revolution in Army Public Affairs is required in order to successfully meet the complexities of the strategic context. It will examine this issue through the key principles of doctrine, organization, leadership and education, and material. Finally, the paper will provide thoughts on how Army Public Affairs can preserve its relevancy as a member of the Joint Team.

DOCTRINE

“You will observe the Rules of battle, of course?” the White Knight remarked, putting on his helmet too. “I always do, said the Red Knight, and they began banging away at each other with such fury that Alice got behind a tree to be out of the way of the blows. “I wonder, now, what the Rules of Battle are, “she said to herself...”

—Alice in Wonderland⁷

To successfully meet the unknown challenges of future warfare, the Secretary of Defense directed the Services to integrate combat organizations with Joint Forces capable of responding rapidly to events that occur with little or minimal warning. Specifically, forces must be scalable and task-organized into modular units so as to provide the Joint and Combatant Commanders the ability to utilize the appropriate forces required to accomplish their military objectives. Key characteristics of the future force are: lighter, lethal, survivable, deployable, and responsive.⁸

The 2003 Army Posture Statement captures this requirement and imbeds it into the Army's transformation plan as "changing the way we fight will require a holistic transformation of Logistics, Personnel, Installation Management, Acquisition, Aviation, business practices – every aspect of the Army must transform."⁹ All of this suggests broad implications for Army Public Affairs practitioners as they support Joint Commanders across the full range of military operations.

As the Army transforms to become an interdependent member of the Joint, Interagency, Multi-national team, so too must Army Public Affairs incorporate joint tenants and competencies into its doctrinal core processes. Likewise, the unique practices and principles of the Interagency and Multi-national organizations must also be integrated. A secondary benefit of this doctrinal revision is a reduction of Service parochialisms, a conservation of resources, and a facilitation of the Joint Team concept. As such, the elements of strategic relevance, Joint and Multi-national operations, and asymmetric warfare become integral pieces to the future relevance and readiness of Army Public Affairs. Therefore, these elements become the pertinent metric to examine current Public Affairs doctrine.

As the doctrinal Holy Grail for Army Public Affairs, Field Manual 46-1, *Public Affairs Operations*, defines Public Affairs roles, missions, capabilities and organizations for the Active Army, Army Reserve and Army National Guard across the operational continuum. It also establishes a basis for modernization, and provides the linkage between Public Affairs and the Army's keystone document, Field Manual 100-5, *Operations*.¹⁰ Unfortunately, last updated in May 1997, Field Manual 46-1, uses predominately symmetrical operations, such as DESERT STORM/DESERT SHIELD as its doctrinal foundation to govern the combat activities of Army Public Affairs. While the Public Affairs core processes remain mainly unchanged, attempting to implant this doctrinal template on today's complex battlefield, such as Afghanistan or Iraq, is not feasible or suitable. Public Affairs operations in asymmetric operations are vastly different than linear operations due in large part to Joint and Multi-national implications, operational and strategic impacts of world-wide media coverage, idiosyncratic threat capabilities, and integrated interagency operations.

The asymmetric environment in which the Joint Force conducts combat operations and stability operations calls for Army Public Affairs practitioners who can quickly respond to increasingly complex, demanding challenges. They must be capable of adapting their capabilities without loss of strategic or operational effectiveness. They must support the Joint Force commander with a wide breadth of strategic knowledge and understanding of the Global Information Environment (GIE) in order to blend desirable operational Public Affairs strategies

with asymmetric warfare in a new way to achieve success in the strategic context. Therefore, it is imperative for Army Public Affairs practitioners to have a thorough doctrinal understanding of the fundamentals of Joint, Interagency, and Multi-national operations, and the strategic context within which the Joint Force operates. Successes in this environment will also require the skillful integration of the resources and competencies of the Interagency and Multi-national partners.

As the strategic context compresses the distance between the strategic, operational, and tactical levels of the vertical continuum of war, Army Public Affairs practitioners must recognize the linkage between public opinion, strategic events and tactical events that directly influence national security strategy, and political decision-making.¹¹

Astutely, Joint Publication 3-0, *Doctrine for Joint Operations*, alerts commanders of how the quantum leap in media reporting may now inflict Clausewitz's "fog of war" on the vertical continuum of war.¹² Advances in technology, information-age media reporting, and the compression of time-space relationships contribute to the growing interrelationships between the levels of war. The levels of war help commanders visualize a logical flow of operations, allocate resources, and assign tasks to the appropriate command. Commanders at every level must be aware that in a world of constant immediate communications, a single event may cut across these three levels.¹³ To overcome this phenomenon, Public Affairs officers must be doctrinally linked to all echelons of command.

Absent in the current edition of Field Manual 46-1, is the doctrinal description of the synchronization linkage from the Coalition Joint Task Force Public Affairs Office to the Unified Command Public Affairs Office. Additionally, as recently noted in Afghanistan and Iraq, there exists an administrative linkage from the Coalition Joint Task Force (CJTF) Public Affairs Office to the Office of Secretary of Defense and Joint Chiefs of Staff Public Affairs Office.¹⁴ Although informal, this critical linkage ensures Public Affairs practitioners and commanders at all echelons are integrated and are speaking with one voice.

Likewise, a synchronized unity of effort from the Information Operations (IO) activities provides the commander actionable, precise, and fused information to the Joint, interagency, and Multi-national team. Field Manual 100-6, *Information Operations*, defines Information Operations as "the activities that gain information and knowledge and improve friendly execution of operations while denying the adversary similar capabilities by whatever possible means."¹⁵ The core activities include: Operations Security, Military Deception, Electronic Warfare, Psychological Operations, and Computer Network Operations. Civil Affairs and Public Affairs are related activities that may support an information operations plan. Even though each activity uses distinctly different methods to address distinct audiences, the actions of all activities are

coordinated and synchronized to ensure common credibility and to achieve a unified effort. While Field Manual 46 -1 lays out the traditional doctrinal procedures and capabilities to conduct information operations, the pace of change and evolving GIE, dictates that the Army Public Affairs must expand this view and seek unorthodox doctrinal approaches in support of information operations.

Examples of this unorthodox approach by Public Affairs were demonstrated frequently during Operation IRAQI FREEDOM. To maximize the impact of an upcoming Information Operations campaign, Public Affairs would shape the conditions for success at least a week earlier by framing the subject during either a media interview or a press conference.¹⁶ Likewise, during military operations in Bosnia, Kosovo, Afghanistan, and Iraq, Public Affairs practitioners were instrumental in orchestrating the effectiveness of media in preempting enemy misinformation and propaganda campaigns by graphically portraying actual air, ground, and naval operations.

Nevertheless, Public Affairs doctrine developed for the Cold War Army, while valid at the time, requires revision to become relevant for the future strategic battlefield. Public Affairs should doctrinally incorporate and exploit the capabilities and competencies of the Joint, Multinational, and Interagency team, as well as new concepts to support Information Operations. At the same time, and, most importantly, future doctrine must reflect the Public Affairs realities of the strategic context in order to adequately meet the Combatant Commander's requirements.

ORGANIZATION

"There is still a tendency in each separate unit to be a one-handed puncher. By that I mean the rifleman wants to shoot, the tanker to charge, the artilleryman to fire... To get harmony in battle, each weapon must support each other. Team play wins."

—GEN George S. Patton, Jr., USA¹⁷

The mission of Army Public Affairs as stated in Field Manual 46-1, *Public Affairs Operations*, is "to fulfill the Army's obligation to keep the American people and the Army informed, and help to establish the conditions that lead to confidence in America's Army and its readiness to conduct operations in peacetime, conflict, and war."¹⁸ As such, Army Public Affairs provides a unique and critical contribution to the Army and Joint Team as it prosecutes the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT). To execute Public Affairs strategies and campaigns in support of the Army's new capabilities-based force approach to joint warfare, it is essential that

the Public Affairs force structure reflect and fully support the future needs and requirements of the Army and Joint Team.

Currently, Army Public Affairs is encumbered by an Army organizational process designed to support a Cold War national security strategy. As such, more than 65 percent of the total Public Affairs force and approximately 85 percent of deployable Table of Organization and Equipment (TO&E) unit structure is now positioned in the Army Reserve Components.¹⁹ Likewise, the active duty Army Public Affairs organizations are relatively small sections built into the force structure of divisions, corps, and echelons above corps. In order to meet the required warfighting requirements and capabilities, the Public Affairs force must be augmented by separate Reserve Component Table of Organization and Equipment (TO&E) units or individual augmentees. Joint Publication 3-61, *Doctrine for Public Affairs in Joint Operations*, recognizes the potential risk from this situation and astutely informs commanders that as the command shifts from deliberate planning to crisis planning, the peacetime staffing of an organization's Public Affairs office is woefully inadequate to respond to the increase in operational planning, news media and public interest, and the 24/7 operational tempo. Hence, prior contingency planning must address the need for augmentation of the staff to meet this challenge.²⁰

However, this prescribed force structure is clearly in divergence with the Department of Defense's embodiment of an expeditionary mindset that calls for a force that has greater versatility and deployability, while ensuring the necessary capabilities to conduct both sustained combat and potentially simultaneous operations.²¹ To date, Army Public Affairs has only 12 Public Affairs Detachments (PAD) and one Mobile Public Affairs Detachment (MPAD) in the Active Component. However, there are 14 Public Affairs Detachments and 47 Mobile Public Affairs Detachments in the Reserve Components.²² As past operations have shown, the Public Affairs force best suited for operational deployment is the Mobile Public Affairs Detachment. Ironically, as noted above, the overwhelming majority of these units reside in the Reserve Components, which presents many unique challenges for Public Affairs practitioners as they posture for deployment and at the same time, request mobilization of these mission essential units.

Another major challenge is unit cohesion and training. The organizational process of augmentation from the Reserve Component leads to a creation of an ad hoc team that has not trained together, developed staff coordination relationships, or established Standard Operating Procedures. Joint Publication 3-61, *Doctrine for Public Affairs in Joint Operations*, states that, "the successful joint Public Affairs operations will be those which have dedicated the necessary personnel, equipment, transportation, and communications resources to meet the prevailing

demands for information.”²³ As such, it’s imperative that the Army strive to ensure the immediate readiness and prompt availability of Active and Reserve Component Public Affairs personnel to support the emerging mission. Likewise, the gaining unit Public Affairs Office must anticipate and plan for the integration of the Reserve Component Public Affairs forces into each Mission Readiness Exercises (MRE) and any other unit exercise leading up to the deployment.

To date, the Army maintains a protracted requirement to provide Reserve Component MPAD’s and Public Affairs augmentees in support of on-going stability operations in Bosnia and Kosovo. Additional force structure requirements in support of operations in Afghanistan and Iraq have only exasperated this limited force structure capability. Consequently, this sustained demand for Army Public Affairs units and personnel to meet operational mission requirements, is straining the already stretched readiness capabilities of the Reserve Component Public Affairs force.

The demanding commitments of an expeditionary campaign-quality Army dictate an examination of the organizational balance between the Active Component and the Reserve Components’ Public Affairs forces. Army Public Affairs accept operational risk and capabilities by maintaining the majority of its forces in the Reserve Components. To support the future warfighting requirements, Reserve Components Public Affairs Detachments should be consolidated into active duty Mobile Public Affairs Detachments and assigned at Division, Corps, Army, and Unified Echelons of Command as round-out units. This concept provides Army Public Affairs the capability to react promptly and decisively with a trained and equipped force ready to meet the requirements of the strategic context. Additionally, the current mobilization call-up system must adapt to support the training needs of an expeditionary Joint Force.

LEADERSHIP AND EDUCATION

“It is not sufficient that the soldier must shoot; he must shoot well”

—Napoleon Bonaparte²⁴

During Operation IRAQI FREEDOM, the Department of Defense oversaw an unprecedented, aggressive media embed plan that integrated nearly 700 national and international news media representatives with U.S. forces.²⁵ The speed of military operations and state of the art advances in communications technology significantly complicated the challenges to both commanders and Public Affairs practitioners as they attempted to support the around-the-clock news media efforts to keep the global public informed. Ironically, the

impact of this new element on the battlefield was acutely recognized nearly 10 years ago by then Lieutenant General Hugh Shelton, who commanded Joint Task Force-180 in Operation UPHOLD DEMOCRACY in Haiti. LTG Shelton stated that, "commanders and staff officers must come to grips with one undeniable fact in military operations: great numbers of media will cover U.S. troop deployments anywhere in the world and in great detail. The images and words the media projects are powerful, moving, and immediate and can influence national policy."²⁶

One does not have to look far in U.S. military history to find other examples of this prognostication. Nowhere was this more evident than in the aftermath of the October 1993 firefight in Mogadishu, Somalia. What began as a tactical operation ultimately had a strategic impact on U.S. policy once the media broadcast pictures of a dead American soldier being dragged through the streets. The outrage voiced by the American public and the Congress, eventually forced the Administration to withdraw from Somalia. Operations in Africa, Bosnia, and most recently, Iraq, have all experienced this phenomenon -- tactical events with strategic impact.

Army Public Affairs practitioners who are trained to recognize the warning signs and possess the ability to expand their approaches to the asymmetrical environment are integral to the execution of strategic communication strategies necessary to deal with this compression of the vertical continuum of war. Additionally, the challenges of the multidimensional strategic context require trained and experienced Public Affairs practitioners who possess a comprehensive understanding of the organizations and systems inside the global and Military Information Environments (MIE). What is reported about the operation and how external and internal public officials, elected officials, and global leaders respond to the reporting are critical information requirements for commanders. Public Affairs practitioners should be trained to recognize unconventional opportunities and leverage information strategies to counter misinformation and propaganda in order to support the commander's strategic end state.

Consequently, the strategic context necessitates new fields of knowledge for Public Affairs practitioners, and new forms of expertise to be practiced. Skilled Public Affairs officers, as with other military professionals, are the by product of continuous education, training, and experience. There is no shortcut to the knowledge and mental agility they require to operate in the strategic context. Consequently, the Public Affairs education system should reflect current and future realities of the operating environment and institutionalize the Joint, Multinational, and expeditionary mindset. An integral challenge facing Army Public Affairs is the lack of a robust continuing education system for senior military and civilian personnel, beyond the initial training

phase, that leverages operational experiences and competencies to meet the complex requirements of the strategic context.

For example, the Defense Information School (DINFOS) located at Ft. Meade, Maryland, has the mission to train military and civilian personnel within the Department of Defense (DoD), other Federal agencies, and selected foreign nations in Public Affairs and Visual Information career fields.²⁷ As the DoD proponent for Public Affairs training, DINFOS is the schoolhouse for initial entry and advanced Public Affairs training. The core curriculum is tailored toward basic training in the principles, techniques, and applications of public affairs and journalism to military personnel at the junior level, as well as, the GS-9 to the GS-11 level. While DINFOS offers a two week Joint Public Affairs Officers Course designed to prepare mid level military and civilian personnel for an assignment to a unified command or joint staff billet, it is designed only as an introduction to Joint doctrine and operations. Also, Army Public Affairs sponsors an Advanced Civilian Schooling (ACS) program that allows mid-level military and civilian personnel to obtain a Masters in Journalism from a nationally credited university. While these programs provide a solid underpinning to Army Public Affairs practitioners, they are not tailored to address the operational challenges of the current and future dynamic operational environment.

In order for future Army Public Affairs practitioners to develop and sustain the capabilities necessary to retain their relevance, requires an investment in a continuing education system that not only captures the knowledge, processes, and techniques gleaned from past and current operations, but leverages these into an interactive senior Public Affairs Officers education system. Web-based technology, participation in Joint and Multinational training exercises and experiments, global cultural training, information technology, and interagency workshops are all suggested elements of an education system focused on the development of mid-level military and civilian Public Affairs personnel. Creating such a system ensures that future generations of military and civilian Army Public Affairs practitioners will possess the leadership attributes and operational and intellectual capabilities required to meet the uncertainties of the future asymmetric battlefields, while retaining relevancy to the commander.

MATERIAL

“Without supplies neither a general nor a soldier is good for anything.”

—Clearchus of Sparta, 401 BC²⁸

While the dynamics of the future military landscape continue to evolve, Joint and Combatant Commanders can be assured of one remaining constant – large numbers of news media representatives will be present during all aspects of a military operation.²⁹ As discussed

earlier, the news media representatives that cover the military will be equipped with the latest in portable satellite telecommunications equipment, enabling them to transmit instantaneous reports to audiences throughout the world. And, as past military operations have demonstrated, battlefield news reports have the propensity to shape global perceptions, attitudes and opinions, and, in some cases, have a direct impact on the operation.³⁰ Therefore, to successfully meet the strategic and operational informational needs and requirements of the Commander, it is crucial that Public Affairs units are adequately resourced with modernized technical and tactical mission equipment. Likewise, in order for Public Affairs practitioners to expeditiously counter media misinformation, they must possess satellite communications equipment commensurate with the media's capabilities. As recently demonstrated in Afghanistan and Iraq, most Active Duty and Reserve Component Public Affairs units do not possess these vital operational capabilities.³¹

A review of the current Modification Table of Organization and Equipment (MTOE) for a Reserve Component Mobile Public Affairs Detachment (MPAD) vividly portrays outdated automation equipment, antiquated vehicles, and obsolete communications equipment. As such, in all likelihood, these units will lack the technical editing equipment, deployable computers, Global Positioning Systems, or satellite communication equipment required when augmenting a Public Affairs section of a warfighting unit.³² The results, as observed in the transition of the Operation ENDURING FREEDOM Public Affairs mission from the Marine Corps to the Army, can be near catastrophic if not anticipated by the Service component and the deployed Public Affairs Officer. In this situation, an Army Reserve Component Public Affairs unit deployed into an active theater of war with obsolete and ineffective mission essential equipment, which greatly hindered their capability to operate in an austere environment, as well as, support the large number of news media representatives already covering the operation.³³

At the same time, a large number of Army Active Duty public affairs units at the Corps, Major Command (MACOM), and Component Command levels also lack the satellite communications equipment and tactical vehicle requirements needed to exercise command and control of their Public Affairs assets. And, with the increasing likelihood of conducting future operations in austere, immature theaters, the challenges associated with not possessing satellite communications capabilities only exacerbate the already complex global information environment. Along this same vein, a key lesson learned from OEF was that in order for DoD and JCS Public Affairs to expeditiously develop strategic communication strategies, deployed Public Affairs Officers must have reliable secure and non-secure satellite telecommunication equipment, as well as, mobile satellite video teleconference capability. Lack of these capabilities

hindered Senior Military officials from providing timely and accurate information to the American and Afghanistan publics', the Coalition, and the operating forces.³⁴

Another equipment challenge placed on deployed Active Duty, and Reserve Component, Army Public Affairs practitioners is vehicle standardization and modernization. The current TOE and MTOE of most Active Duty and Reserve Component Public Affairs units, depicts either two or four High Mobility Multipurpose Wheeled Vehicles (HMMWV) as the only organic means to transport the unit's equipment. As such, the unit's deployable equipment requirements far exceed the vehicle's maximum load bearing capabilities.³⁵ An additional deployable factor to overcome with most Public Affairs vehicles is that many are not configured to support SINGARS radios and the mobile communications assets required to access Army MSE networks.³⁶ Without vehicle communication capability, Public Affairs practitioners are faced with the significant burden of coordinating additional vehicle assets to support internal administrative activities and the movement of news media representatives around the battlefield.

A fundamental component of Joint warfare is the strategic responsiveness of the Joint, Multinational, and Interagency force. This concept infers mobile capabilities-based forces that enhance the Joint teams versatility and deployability.³⁷ As such, Army Public Affairs must earnestly concentrate its institutional efforts to address the glaring equipment issue that permeates both Active Duty and Reserve Component units. Maintaining relevant and responsive forces requires a continued investment in the modernization and replacement of mission essential technical and tactical equipment. Not only does this situation exemplify the significant challenges placed upon deployed Public Affairs practitioners, it underscores the critical need for funding improvements in the Reserve Components.

THE JOINT TEAM

"Generally, in battle, use the normal force (direct approach) to engage: use the extraordinary (indirect approach) to win."

—Sun Tzu, *The Art of War*³⁸

The overarching theme to Joint Publication 1, *Joint Warfare of the Armed Forces of the United States*, is that "joint warfare is team warfare."³⁹ Therefore, vital to the overall operational success of the joint force is the successful integration of Service core competencies and the addition of Total Force capabilities. Likewise, Joint and Combined interoperability requires forces that can immediately "plug and play" into the Joint Battlefield Operating Systems (command and control, intelligence, fire support, logistics, etc.) and perform effectively. This

equates to a cultural change that must permeate all aspects of Service doctrine, force structure, training, deployment, acquisition, and sustainment.⁴⁰

Adhering to the above Department of Defense guidance, the Army re-defined its core competencies to: train and grow leaders, and provide relevant and ready land power capability to the Combatant Commanders as part of the Joint Team. Accordingly, the Army is aggressively striving to become fully joint: intellectually, operationally, organizationally, doctrinally, and technically.⁴¹ As such, Army Public Affairs must also embrace the evolving characteristics of the Joint Team warfare and adapting new approaches and capabilities that will accommodate the complexities of the future environment

In today's strategic context, Joint Public Affairs practitioners will operate predominately in two information domains termed the Global Information Environment (GIE) and the Military Information Environment (MIE). The GIE is defined as including "all individuals, organizations or systems, most of which are outside the control of the military or National Command Authorities, which collect, process and disseminate information to national and international audiences." The MIE is the "environment contained within the GIE, consisting of information systems and organizations, friendly and adversary, military and non-military, which support, enable or significantly influence a specific military operation."⁴² While these environments are both fraught with numerous challenges, successful Joint operations in the GIE and MIE can be accomplished through the careful synchronization of Public Affairs communication strategies with the Joint, Multinational, and Interagency staff elements.

Additionally, operations in Iraq have demonstrated that Information Operations are a critical factor in the joint force commander's capability to achieve and sustain the level of information superiority required for decisive joint operations on the asymmetric battlefield.⁴³ Joint Publication 3-13, *Joint Doctrine for Information Operations*, further expands upon the importance of Information Operations by declaring that "our ability to conduct peacetime theater engagement, to forestall or prevent crisis and conflict, and to fight and win is critically dependent on effective Information Operations at all levels of war across the range of military operations."⁴⁴

Just as the strategic environment has changed, so to have the realities of news media on the battlefield. The news business has become global in nature and increasingly competitive. The emerging electronic communications technologies, the abundance of commercial satellite technology, and the expansion of international satellite alliances have resulted in the spread of world-wide communications equipment and capabilities.⁴⁵ As such, technological improvements have opened a market that once was only accessible to major news networks. Today's telecommunications equipment is widely accessible, highly capable, very portable, and easily

affordable. These expanding capabilities now enable large numbers of news media representatives to be present in any geographic area of the world with the ability of virtually simultaneous news reporting. Consequently, Joint Commanders and Public Affairs practitioners must anticipate and be prepared to support news media coverage during all phases of an operation. As the global information environment evolves, public affairs operations become an increasingly critical element in the achievement of the Joint Commanders end state as well as the strategic objectives.

All of this suggests that to become an indispensable member of the Joint Team, Army Public Affairs must espouse joint force interoperability while maintaining the decisive technical and resource capabilities needed to successfully plan and execute strategic and operational communications strategies in the global information environment.

SUMMARY

Soon after taking over as the new Army Chief of Staff, General Peter J. Schoomaker published a guide that lays out the Army's Way Ahead as it transforms to a campaign-quality Army with a Joint and Expeditionary mindset. A key statement which permeates throughout the document is that "individual and organizational approach to duties and tasks must reflect the seriousness and sense of urgency characteristic of an Army at war."⁴⁶ In order to remain relevant to the needs of the Combatant Commander, Army Public Affairs must holistically shift towards an effects-based function of information communications instead of a product-based function of information communications. As such, Army Public Affairs practitioners must depart from the institutional paradigms and organizational structures currently in place and tailor operational capabilities to the strategic context where it is not business as usual.

The global proliferation of national and international newspapers, 24-hour cable television news, interactive television and computers, cellular phones, and satellite communications has resulted in an environment where information is tailored to meet the needs of the audience. As technologies continue to improve and saturate the open market, the demand for information from the global public will likewise continue to grow at a staggering rate. Consequently, the increased accessibility to "operational" media coverage will have an exponential impact on the perceptions of U.S. service members, multinational partners, American public, and other critical audiences.⁴⁷ Likewise, adversaries of the U.S. will attempt to use electronic information technologies to affect military operations by influencing soldier confidence and eroding the will of the American public and the multinational team. Army Public Affairs practitioners must be resourced with mission essential technical telecommunications equipment and modernized

operational equipment in order to effectively operate in the global and military information environments.

A true revolution in military affairs according to an accepted school of thought, “involves not just technological advances but also changes to the way militaries think about, organize themselves for, and wage combat.”⁴⁸ Within this construct, the interrelationship between technology and Army Public Affairs becomes an essential component of a potential revolution in Army Public Affairs. As such, Army Public Affairs must appreciate and take full advantage of new technologies which could enhance operational and Joint experience, knowledge, and continuing education capabilities at the individual and collective level. At the same time, Army Public Affairs must acknowledge the need to refocus its efforts on the critical doctrinal, organization, and material structural deficiencies required to become a fully integrated and synchronized member of the Joint and Multinational Team. As the Army transforms to a Joint and campaign-quality capable force, so too, must Army Public Affairs rapidly change to meet the complex requirements of the strategic context.

To ensure the Army’s senior leadership understands the transformation priorities; the Army’s Way Ahead document denotes sixteen Immediate Focus Areas that direct Army efforts on fighting the Global War on Terrorism and increasing the relevance and readiness of the Army. Not surprisingly, one of the focus areas is titled “Strategic Communications” -- the need to tell the Army Story so that the Army’s relevance and direction are clearly understood and supported.”⁴⁹ Before Army Public Affairs can effectively pick up this mantle and successfully carry it into the strategic context, relevant and responsive approaches and processes must be established which support the requirements of the global information environment.

Likewise, a system built and designed on a Cold War requirement is a system in need of review. Not because the system is not efficient, but because the new strategic context has devalued its very existence. Are we applying outdated metrics? Cold War age metrics of value must give way to new information age metrics. We must ask ourselves: is the Public Affairs branch currently performing at increasing or decreasing rates of return on the Army’s investment? Is the current system or capability worth the cost?⁵⁰

The future of Army Public Affairs may well rest on how well we define the requirements of the future strategic context and how well we “transform” to meet these challenges.

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