



Lithuanian President Dalia Grybauskaitė attends the opening ceremony of the NATO Strategic Communications Centre of Excellence 20 August 2015 in Riga, Latvia, where she gave the keynote speech. (Photo courtesy of the Office of the President of the Republic of Lithuania)

# Strategic Communication

## A Caution to Military Commanders

Capt. J. D. Scanlon, Royal Canadian Navy, Retired

**W**atching Vladimir Putin waltz into Crimea and eastern Ukraine in 2014, supported by robust information campaigns, put a stake into the heart of NATO. Unable to mount a kinetic response, civilian and military elements alike

sought to better leverage Alliance communication. In their 2014 Wales Summit declaration, NATO nations called for the enhancing of strategic communication (SC) and welcomed the creation of a new Strategic Communications Centre of Excellence in Riga, Latvia.<sup>1</sup>

NATO military commanders want to bring all of their resources to bear on achieving desired military outcomes, or effects, with a view to accomplishing the missions assigned by their political masters. In bringing all of the Alliance's information capabilities under one umbrella, SC in theory offers the capacity to dominate the information dimension of a defined operational

Unfortunately, the recruiting pool for SC has been very shallow. NATO SC advisors typically hail from a civilian or military PA background—that is, persons versed in government or military media and public relations—but they can also come from military disciplines like IO and PSYOPS. Most NATO and partner nations do not have “professional, full-time deployable capabil-



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environment. Ostensibly, SC completed the Alliance's operational tool box.

Despite the pro-SC rhetoric, Alliance members have been slow to build SC capacity through the establishment or enhancement of full-time subdisciplines, like public affairs (PA), information operations (IO), and psychological operations (PSYOPS).<sup>2</sup> NATO itself failed to approve SC doctrine and its approved SC policy differs little from extant PA policy. Moreover, the shift to the “influence” model of SC neglects the import of the preceding “inform” model of PA. Through an examination of the rise of SC, this essay argues that PA in its own right continues to be a valuable capability to NATO commanders in addition to being a critical talent pool to build broader Alliance information capacity.

### Development of the SC Advisor Role

NATO command teams typically include advisors from several disparate disciplines who provide a wide range of frank doctrinal and experiential advice.<sup>3</sup> This can include military officers who are expert in the law, operations, intelligence, and PA, as well as key civilian staff such as political and cultural advisors. The aim is to ensure commanders receive unfiltered, divergent viewpoints. Over the last decade, SC advisors have been added to the NATO command team.<sup>4</sup> Russia's hybrid incursions into Ukraine, its deft leveraging of civilian and military elements of power, and its use of the latest techniques in cyber and information warfare accelerated this move.

ities in the field of public affairs, let alone longstanding operational communications disciplines,” including IO, PSYOPS, and SC. During the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) mission in Afghanistan, NATO largely relied on only four nations—the United States, the United Kingdom, Germany, and Canada—to provide professional capacity in the above areas.<sup>5</sup>

Substantial investment in SC subdisciplines by members and partners is needed if NATO is serious about building and sustaining robust information capacity. In essence, NATO is building a roof without the underlying walls and foundation. It is also decrying the failure of those same subdisciplines without having truly invested in their potential. If all NATO nations had dedicated, well-resourced military PA cadres, for example, the demand for SC might be less acute.

### The Promise of Strategic Communication

As modern commanders seek to achieve more discrete effects on the battlefield through special operations forces and precision weapons, with a view to minimizing collateral damage, the promise of SC is very alluring. It offers a degree of precision approaching other modern types of combat fires or effects. One NATO nation's armed forces is looking at operationalizing its PA discipline with a view to bringing it closer to the Alliance's SC model, thus delivering commanders more tangible effects.<sup>6</sup> As other militaries and NATO's establishment redirect limited resources toward SC, and perhaps also seek to operationalize PA,

the already limited NATO-wide investment in PA may be impacted. The desire for operational precision and effect may be diminishing an important capability in the distinct doctrinal and experiential voice of the public affairs officer (PAO), as will be discussed below.

SC also promises better coordination between IO and PA. Despite the doctrinal firewall between influence-based IO and inform-based PA, the advent of SC brought the two disciplines under the same roof, though not necessarily into the same room. As one NATO official observed, “Ethical issues about informing and influencing our domestic audiences and ensuring credibility is sustained are continuing topics of debate.”<sup>7</sup>

Given that both IO and PA pass information into the public domain, and given the emergence of new forms of media, it was sensible to ensure that the two were coordinated to avoid troublesome dissonance and increase collective effect. This said, where PA is seen as a low-wattage bulb trying to illuminate the truth, SC is seen more as a surgical laser beam targeting and influencing discrete audiences. Both arguably have a place in NATO’s operational tool box, but commanders may be overestimating the precision of SC and underestimating the strategic effect of PA.

## Public Affairs Doctrine: Democratic Underpinnings

The principles of PA doctrine derive from the UN and NATO charters, NATO member constitutions, and international declarations that extol the principles of democracy, such as good governance, freedom of the press, and freedom of speech.<sup>8</sup> The motto of the U.S. Defense Information School, where American and foreign officers receive PA training, is “Strength through Truth.” The doctrine sees the timely dissemination of accurate and truthful information as essential to the credibility and reputation of military forces, as well as an effective tactic in promoting good stories and negating bad ones.<sup>9</sup>

PA advice is informed by national and NATO policies, political guidance, and higher direction on messaging and narratives. PA is the interface with the free press, who would have a field day if they perceived they were targeted by influence operations. PA recognizes that communication transcends the battlefield, most audiences are not adversaries, and many audiences are the citizens of NATO or coalition countries, therefore trying to influence them would present ethical issues and could seriously backfire.

The democratic underpinnings of the doctrine implicitly acknowledge that nonbelligerent audiences have the protection of such international instruments as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, of which Article 19

states, “Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.”<sup>10</sup> Contending that PA is a pillar of democracy, however, carries little weight in a world increasingly captivated and manipulated by cyberattacks, social media, and big data.

SC is the logical outcome of the evolution of command-and-control warfare, which itself evolved into IO.<sup>11</sup> Through better coordination, IO strove to achieve more precise effects in the information environment, placing a range of largely nonlethal capabilities under one umbrella. SC was conceived during the 2000s, at a time when NATO leaders were looking to the “effects-based approach to operations” and “the comprehensive approach” to deliver more precise effects through improved military and civilian planning and coordination.<sup>12</sup> SC soon subsumed the full range of information capabilities,

**Capt. J. D. Scanlon,** Royal Canadian Navy, retired in September 2016 after serving thirty years in the Canadian Armed Forces. He holds bachelor’s degrees in arts (law) and journalism, and is a graduate of the U.S. Defense Information School, Indianapolis, and the NATO Defense College, Rome, Italy. He served as a public affairs officer at all levels of command in Canada, including as Director Public Affairs Operations at National Defence Headquarters in Ottawa, Ontario. Inter alia, he served as a spokesperson for the NATO mission in Bosnia and visited Afghanistan twice in an advisory capacity, including with a United States Special Operations Command-led team that evaluated International Security Assistance Force Headquarters’ strategic communication. He also served at both of NATO’s strategic commands: at Allied Command Transformation, in Norfolk, he served as head of NATO public affairs training and education, and at Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe in Belgium, as executive officer for the Bi-Strategic Command Military Partnerships Directorate.

including PA. By 2009, ISAF Headquarters in Kabul had a two-star deputy chief of staff of communication, a PAO by background, in charge of full-spectrum strategic communication.<sup>13</sup>

Also in 2009, NATO nations approved an SC policy. The policy defines SC as “the coordinated and appropriate use of NATO communications activities and capabilities—Public Diplomacy, Public Affairs (PA), Military Public Affairs, Information Operations (InfoOps) and Psychological Operations (PSYOPS), as appropriate—in support of Alliance policies, operations and activities, and in order to advance NATO’s aims.”<sup>14</sup> Key principles include: “Accuracy, clarity, and timeliness; consistency and coherence of message across all levels of command; active engagement in the information environment, including public electronic communications, with an emphasis on speed and responsiveness; ensuring credibility of NATO’s communications by fostering relationships of mutual trust with media representatives.”<sup>15</sup>

This definition “avoided tedious haggling (and political dispute) over proper wording by defining the concept of SC in rather wide and unspecific terms.”<sup>16</sup> Its language differed little from existing PA policy. Nevertheless, it was sufficiently watered down to win consensus within the Alliance’s North Atlantic Council. Subsequent attempts to define and approve NATO SC doctrine faltered.

NATO researcher Jan Techau proposed a more potent definition: “Strategic communications is the combined exercise of all types of communication activities, conducted with the aim of influencing opinions and behavior of select recipients, fully integrated into overall operations, conducted professionally and based on comprehensive planning and execution.” The researcher added, “This definition applies to both the military and nonmilitary communication realms.”<sup>17</sup> The key difference between Techau’s definition and the official NATO version are inclusion of the words “influence” and “behavior.” In fact, his paper includes a section titled, “Yes, You Do Want To Influence People!”

Techau acknowledges that many organizations fear being accused of manipulation but essentially argues that in the end all communication is about influence:

A small but essential prerequisite for strategic communication is that it aims to influence

peoples’ opinions, convictions, and behavior ... But a lot of organizations will not openly admit that these kinds of effects ... are what they are aiming at for fear of being accused of manipulation, propaganda, or even “brain-washing.” Nevertheless, all strategic communication must aspire to influence people.<sup>18</sup>

In fact, the news media are quick to attack any shift toward an influence model and to point out the need for government and institutional transparency. In Iraq, for example, the United States was criticized in media reports for conducting IO against inappropriate audiences, including Iraqi citizens and, in Fallujah in 2004, even against U.S. media.<sup>19</sup> NATO has faced similar criticism. In 2008, Reuters reported that NATO’s ISAF commander was merging PA and PSYOPS and quoted an Alliance official as saying the move “could undermine the credibility of information released to the public.”<sup>20</sup> Similarly, also in 2008, a CBC reporter posited that to counter Taliban propaganda, NATO would be tempted to blend PA and PSYOPS, concluding, “if it’s done, it will undermine the credibility of anything NATO tells anyone again.”<sup>21</sup>

If, as Techau suggested, some NATO members are unwilling to support a more influence-oriented SC policy, then perhaps there’s something more profound at play than simply the fear of being accused of manipulation.

## Legacy of Nazi Propaganda

During the era in which NATO was founded, nations were still recovering from the most horrific war known to humankind, a war that saw the systematic extermination of eleven million people and the dropping of two atomic bombs (influence operations?), not to forget the tens of millions of other lives lost in a conflagration that spanned the globe.

The ability of the Nazi Party to spark World War II was enabled by its powerful propaganda machine. For this and other reasons, NATO’s charter commits its signatories to

[have] faith in the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and their desire to live in peace with all peoples and all governments ... determined to safeguard the freedom, common heritage and civilization of their peoples, founded on the principles of democracy, individual liberty and the rule of law.<sup>22</sup>

The authors of both the UN Charter and the earlier cited Declaration of Human Rights wanted to ensure individual rights like freedom of expression were never again trampled by the excesses of the state, or state institutions. To quote the preamble, the signatories to the UN Charter were determined “to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, which twice in our lifetime has brought untold sorrow to mankind.”<sup>23</sup>

Consequently, empowering governments, or institutions like NATO, to engage in influence and behavioral change is likely seen by many Western politicians as anathema to the principles of democracy. Embedded in PA doctrine, as in the principles of democracy, is the

NATO narrative might not be propagated by member nations in their own capitals in the face of domestic politics. Additionally, the narrative might not be perpetuated in NATO joint operations areas by national forces handcuffed by their own national stories. In fact, the differing operational experiences of member nations might generate distinct operational subnarratives that might not appear aligned with the higher NATO or coalition narrative.

NATO’s Operation Unified Protector serves as a compelling example of the challenges of maintaining a coherent NATO metanarrative. In 2011, the UN empowered NATO to protect civilians in Libya from

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notion that individuals (other than enemies) should have the right to make up their own minds without undue influence.<sup>24</sup> Commanders must understand that this political resistance to notions of influence is well founded and based on painful historical lessons.

### The Challenge of the Narrative

One of SC’s means of achieving strategic effect or influence is through the creation and dissemination of so-called narratives, which frame the Alliance’s message in the form of a story.<sup>25</sup> This is a fair approach, given that stories are an effective way to showcase a message.

The Alliance’s overarching narrative for a given operation would be politically sanctioned, would reflect the collectively agreed rationale for why the Alliance has chosen a particular course, such as in Afghanistan or Libya, and would be crafted to help influence a range of defined target audiences. Ideally, an SC narrative would be at once truthful and influential, and would build support amongst NATO publics and other audiences for Alliance missions. National narratives would in turn flow from the agreed NATO metanarrative, ensuring repetition and coherence across the Alliance.

In practice, this is highly problematic. Despite being agreed upon by the North Atlantic Council, the

the brutal Gaddafi regime: “Member States that have notified the Secretary-General, acting nationally or through regional organizations or arrangements [are authorized] to take all necessary measures ... to protect civilians and civilian populated areas under threat of attack in the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, including Benghazi ... excluding a foreign occupation force.”<sup>26</sup> The Alliance’s subsequent narrative was consistent with the resolution, underscoring the object of protecting civilians and committing to no “boots on the ground.”

As the NATO mission unfolded, however, some of its member nations began to speak openly about an underlying goal of regime change, supported by speculative commentaries and news reports that questioned the real purpose of some of the targets selected under Operation Unified Protector. Despite the Alliance’s cautious rhetoric, several of the Allies soon conceded they did, in fact, support regime change and, in some cases, admitted they did have boots on the ground.

The strategic effects of this substantial dissonance within the Alliance continued to resonate long after air operations ceased, as noted in this blog on *Foreign Policy* magazine’s website:

The IBSA countries—India, Brazil, and South Africa—feel betrayed by the Western

interpretation of the [UN mandate.] [They] wanted the West to consider a settlement with Gaddafi after the initial strikes. They claimed to be shocked by the extension of the campaign into one of regime change. The West views Libya as a success of sorts, but IBSA sees it as a dramatic failure and warning.<sup>27</sup>

Examples of dissonance will be found in almost any NATO or coalition operation as member nations confront their own national politics, making the sustainment of a coherent allied narrative highly challenging. Managing strategic communication in an Alliance with twenty-nine sovereign and independently-minded nations is a herculean challenge.<sup>28</sup>

As for the ISAF mission, a contemporaneous poll indicated that “75 percent of European respondents and 68 percent of Americans support either withdrawal or an immediate troop reduction.”<sup>29</sup> Clearly, the NATO narrative failed here as well. Ironically, despite growing public dissatisfaction with the Afghan mission, a 2012 survey indicated that NATO was still seen as essential by majorities in all NATO member countries, except for Turkey. Some 58 percent of Europeans and 56 percent of Americans believed in NATO, with Turkish support at 38 percent.<sup>30</sup> Thus, the longstanding metanarrative of NATO as a valued Western defense institution still resonated with a majority of member publics. This is important to remember.



Images such as this one of Vladimir Putin pulling the strings of a Russian news anchor present a powerful, concise narrative of political events. According to the author of this article, it is important to remember that NATO is still trusted by its constituents. Utilizing such images in strategic communications helps build and maintain support for countering those striving to undermine democratic values via state manipulation of the press. (Image by Zina Saunders, [www.zinasaunders.com](http://www.zinasaunders.com))

## The Debate Over Inform and Influence

Some argue it is naive and outdated to hold to such democratic ideals of informing not influencing, as is “protected” by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Like Techau, they argue that all communication is about influence. Moreover, they submit that to counter the capabilities of potential adversaries, like Russia, NATO needs robust SC capability. In modern America, with its hallowed 1st Amendment that protects freedom of speech, can it truly be said that its citizens have the “freedom to hold opinions without interference?”<sup>31</sup>

Take the 2016 U.S. presidential campaign. The Trump team employed three voter databases: Cambridge Analytica provided “5,000 data points on 220 million Americans”; the Republican National Congress’s enhanced Voter Vault reportedly had “more than 300 terabytes of data, including 7,700,545,385 micro-targeting data points on nearly 200 million voters”; and the Project Alamo database culled millions of data points from Trump supporters.<sup>32</sup> The above data were leveraged through digital advertising in social media. According to one observer, “That the Republicans

didn't lose can be attributed in large measure to their expert manipulation of social media: Donald Trump is our first Facebook president."<sup>33</sup>

This is not to say the Trump campaign stands alone. The Republican and Democratic parties alike have amassed vast voter databases and pull out all stops to get their candidates elected. These same ever more effective marketing techniques drive Western consumerism. Big data and new methods of mass communication are upending traditional understanding of what it

When acting at the behest of a host government, or in support of a UN resolution, when is it appropriate for an institution like NATO to target friendly or unfriendly audiences with influence activities? When are such activities ethical, and when do they violate international law, including the UN Declaration of Human Rights? What is the reputational risk to the Alliance and its members when nonbelligerents perceive they are the targets of influence campaigns? Is the likelihood of success worth the risk to credibility?



Even when appropriate, Western influence campaigns face the dense veil of foreign culture.



means to be a consumer of information in democracies. Like the U.S. debate around the use of super PACs to thwart election spending laws, Western governments are facing a plethora of challenges in legislating against the misuse of advertising.<sup>34</sup>

The pandemic of opinion-based “news” is a related challenge. The Sinclair Broadcast Group, for example, which owns 173 local television stations across the United States, routinely directs all of its stations to run centrally produced right-leaning opinion segments. This practice “has stirred wariness among some of its journalists concerned about intrusive direction from headquarters.” Sinclair is poised to acquire another forty-two stations, which would allow it to reach 70 percent of American households.<sup>35</sup>

Western publics are inundated with influence communication, from foreign internet trolls to domestic actors purporting to be representatives of the free press. The use of influence techniques by foreign actors and free enterprise, however, is vastly different from its use by democratic states. Putin's Russia and Kim Jong-un's North Korea are sobering examples of the unfettered use of influence by authoritarian states—the very things the UN Charter and the Declaration of Human Rights are intended to subdue. In the democratic context, the use of influence by the state or proxies of the state presents profound ethical issues.

The ethical issues are equally perplexing when conducting NATO operations in faraway places.

Even when appropriate, Western influence campaigns face the dense veil of foreign culture. “They think with a few hard charging colonels we can sway Afghan public opinion through a few local radio stations and loud speaker teams. They forget that the guy behind the loud speaker is a Caucasian from Texas,” commented one veteran ISAF PAO.<sup>36</sup> Even the private sector, with all of its marketing savvy, frequently fails to breach the barrier of culture. The giant U.S. retailer Walmart, among many other examples, struggled for more than a decade to get a footing in Japan's unique consumer market.

Moreover, coordinating communication within a twenty-nine member consensus-based alliance is infinitely more difficult than from the iron-fisted epicenters of Moscow or Pyongyang. But then, they are not democracies, where citizens are allegedly free to make up their own minds. It could be argued that, politically, NATO nations reflect an inform model while authoritarian states like North Korea reflect an influence one. Alliance commanders must understand both models.

### **Public Affairs Officers: Still an Important Part of the Toolkit**

NATO commanders need the tools to dominate all elements of an operational environment and SC offers the possibility of dominating perhaps the most complex element, the information domain. This said, collateral damage in information campaigns is difficult to avoid. Unlike a laser-guided missile, it is almost impossible

to isolate information to a designated target audience, especially in the ubiquity of the information age. This means a host of unintended audiences, including allied publics, are likely to be exposed to such efforts.

Additionally, cross-cultural communication remains problematic. Literacy, education, religion, beliefs, and values are significant barriers to effective communication, especially where massive databases are absent and public opinion surveys difficult. Misinterpretation of allied words or actions can be detrimental to operational effectiveness. If mounting a successful advertising campaign is difficult at home,

They know how to gather information quickly, coordinate it up and down the communication hierarchy, develop action plans, obtain higher approvals for public release, and communicate effectively to journalists, stakeholders, and the public through all forms of media. PAOs understand and respect the imperatives of operational security, but also understand the military has to be ready and able to publicly explain any and all of its actions. This minimizes errors and cultural misunderstandings and quickly douses misinformation.

**Public affairs officers create interoperability.**

PAOs understand the political and bureaucratic com-

“ PA doctrine, albeit idealistic, is effective at delivering timely information and offers an important voice in the commander’s executive suite. ”

then the challenge in faraway places is colossal. Given the investment of time and resources required to launch and sustain effective influence campaigns, SC is not the best quick-reaction force.

Given some of the limitations of SC argued above, commanders will continue to need an information tool that can deliver timely, truthful, and accurate information, in turn minimizing Alliance dissonance and cross-cultural miscues. Indeed, there is substantial merit in developing strong military PA cadres, for the following reasons.

**Public affairs officers offer distinct insight.**

Well-trained PAOs offer commanders a critical “outside-looking-in” perspective, thus helping to militate against groupthink. As uniformed personnel, they understand the military perspective, but serve as devil’s advocates by explaining or anticipating media, public, or adversary responses to military deeds and actions. PA doctrine, albeit idealistic, is effective at delivering timely information and offers an important voice in the commander’s executive suite. While many others are focused on delivering successful kinetic operations, PAOs are focused on transparency, credibility, reputation, and other strategic effects that can affect how operations are perceived by key audiences.

**Public affairs officers are expert crisis managers.**

PAOs are operational 24/7 in times of peace or crisis.

munication machinery. They work side-by-side with their counterparts in government, NATO, the UN, coalitions, international organizations, and nongovernmental organizations. This provides commanders valuable links to other communication networks and practitioners. Some players, be they member governments, coalition partners, international or nongovernmental organizations, or news media, may not want to be associated with perceived influence operations.

Due to these skill sets, the military PA discipline serves as an excellent pool from which to recruit SC advisors. PAOs understand the players, the pitfalls, the opportunities, the tool sets, and the ethical challenges in the communication domain. Good PAOs are not developed overnight, however. Too few Western armed forces retain full-time PA cadres. Those that do lack effective career-long training and professional development, including cross-training in related disciplines.

Thus, the recruiting pool for PAOs is not deep. This raises a critical question: If well-trained PAOs are hard to find, from where will good Alliance SC advisors and managers be recruited?

IO and PSYOPS are also good recruiting pools, but many such practitioners lack real-world experience conducting issues management and media relations. They may also lack the “outside” perspective that a trained and experienced PAO ideally



will bring to the table. When parsing operational issues, such as civilian casualties, commanders need communication advisors who see military actions through a highly critical lens.

NATO's move toward SC was inspired both by its own inability to engage other elements of its tool kit and by concern over the growing information capabilities of potential adversaries. In an age of fiscal restraint, the move may also have been predicated on the notion that information capabilities are cheaper. Establishing a robust, effective information capacity that operates continuously in times of peace or crisis is not cheap.

## Conclusion

In terms of the promise of SC, commanders should keep their expectations low. Amidst the fog of war, the barriers of culture, and the challenges of competing perspectives in a twenty-nine member Alliance, in addition to the limitations of time and resources, the precision expected of SC is perhaps overly optimistic.

And, the risks are significant. If the higher narrative is about freedom and democracy, the perceived hypocrisy of influence operations could at times prove damaging.

NATO's ISAF narrative of delivering a secure and stable environment lost all credibility early on thanks to repeated civilian casualties. Once lost, credibility and reputation are hard to regain.

In the age of "post truth" and "fake news," maybe more thought should be given to the power of timely, accurate, and truthful information—the so-called inform model. Commanders should demand better trained, experienced, more strategically minded, career PAOs, cross-trained in SC and other information disciplines.

In democracies, military strategic effects are not just about hitting targets, they are about demonstrably holding to the ideals of the publics NATO forces represent in faraway places. They are also about holding those ideals up to the people the Alliance is sent to help. These potential strategic effects in the field of public opinion may sometimes outweigh the operational effect sought on the field of battle.

NATO should consider the implications of influence operations for its enduring narrative as a successful democratic treaty organization. Public communication in Western democracies may not always show profound short-term effects, but in the long game, democratic values may prove the West's strongest asset. ■

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## Notes

1. North Atlantic Council, "Wales Summit Declaration," NATO press release, 5 September 2014, last updated 26 September 2016, accessed 17 October 2017, [http://www.nato.int/cps/ic/natohq/official\\_texts\\_112964.htm](http://www.nato.int/cps/ic/natohq/official_texts_112964.htm). See section 13: "We will ensure that NATO is able to effectively address the specific challenges posed by hybrid warfare threats, where a wide range of overt and covert military, paramilitary, and civilian measures are employed in a highly integrated design."

2. For an assessment of the state of strategic communication (SC) and public affairs (PA) in NATO, see Brett Boudreau, *We Have Met the Enemy and He Is Us: An Analysis of NATO Strategic Communications: The International Security Assistance Force [ISAF] in Afghanistan, 2003-2014* (Riga, Latvia: NATO Strategic Communications Centre of Excellence, July 2016), 44, accessed 17 October 2017, <http://www.stratcomcoe.org/we-have-met-enemy-and-he-us-analysis-nato-strategic-communications-international-security-assistan-0>. Boudreau cites a dearth of "qualified and trained" communication professionals during the ISAF mission.

3. The author cites his personal experience in strategic and operational headquarters, but submits that it is common practice to see SC, PA, legal, intelligence, operations, and cultural advisors as part of a NATO commander's executive team. In 2011, the author observed both SC and PA advisors in the executive structure during NATO-led Operation Unified Protector. In 1999, in Bosnia, the author observed

the NATO Stabilization Force (SFOR) commander's decision to add an indigenous cultural advisor to his executive team to better advise on political and public engagement.

4. Boudreau, *We Have Met the Enemy and He Is Us*, 303. Boudreau writes, "As an operating concept, StratCom in NATO arguably started to take shape and form in 2006."

5. *Ibid.*, 30.

6. David Pugliese, "Chief of the Defence Staff Gen. Jon Vance and the 'Weaponization of Public Affairs,'" *Ottawa Citizen* website, 21 September 2015, accessed 17 October 2017, <http://ottawacitizen.com/news/national/defence-watch/chief-of-the-defence-staff-gen-jon-vance-and-the-weaponization-of-public-affairs>. The article first reported the country's chief of the defense staff as wanting to "weaponize public affairs"; this was subsequently modified to "operationalizing the public affairs branch."

7. Boudreau, *We Have Met the Enemy and He Is Us*, 255. Boudreau quotes Mark Laity, chief of SC at SHAPE (Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe).

8. The author adheres to the language found in a wide range of NATO and NATO member policies and doctrine, such as Department of National Defence (DND) B-GJ-005-361/FP-000, *Joint Public Affairs*, (Ottawa, ON: DND Canada, May 2007). For a discussion on military public affairs doctrine see author's article, "In Defense of Public Affairs Doctrine," first published in the U.S. Army's *Military*

Review 87, no. 3 (May-June 2007; subsequently included as a chapter in *Ideas as Weapons: Influence and Perception in Modern Warfare* (Lincoln, NE: Potomac Books, January 2009).

9. See NATO Military Committee MC 0457/2, *NATO Military Policy on Public Affairs* (Brussels: North Atlantic Council, February 2011), accessed 17 October 2017, [http://www.nato.int/ims/docu/mc0457-2\\_en.pdf](http://www.nato.int/ims/docu/mc0457-2_en.pdf).

10. UN General Assembly, Resolution 217 (III) A, Universal Declaration of Human Rights, A/RES/217 (III) A (10 December 1948), accessed 18 October 2017, <http://www.un.org/en/universal-declaration-human-rights/>. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights was the result of the experience of the Second World War.

11. For example, see U.S. Joint Publication 3-13.1, *Joint Doctrine for Command and Control Warfare (C2W)* (Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office, February 1996 [obsolete]), V, accessed 31 October 2017, [http://www.iwar.org.uk/rma/resources/c4i/jp3\\_13\\_1.pdf](http://www.iwar.org.uk/rma/resources/c4i/jp3_13_1.pdf). The introduction offers this definition: "C2W is the integrated use of psychological operations (PSYOP), military deception, operations security (OPSEC), electronic warfare (EW), and physical destruction, mutually supported by intelligence, to deny information to, influence, degrade, or destroy adversary C2 capabilities while protecting friendly C2 capabilities against such actions."

12. The concept for the effect-based approach to operations (EBAO), within NATO, was led by NATO Allied Command Transformation, which later effectively absorbed it into the newer idea of the comprehensive approach. NATO's "Comprehensive Political Guidance" issued in November 2006 described EBAO as the "the coherent and comprehensive application of the various instruments of the Alliance to create overall effects that will achieve the desired outcome." See NATO, "Comprehensive Political Guidance," NATO website, last updated 13 July 2009, accessed 17 October 2017, [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official\\_texts\\_56425.htm?selectedLocale=en](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/official_texts_56425.htm?selectedLocale=en). NATO later used similar but broader language to define comprehensive approach: "a comprehensive approach to crisis situations requires nations, international organizations and non-governmental organizations to contribute in a concerted effort." See NATO, "A 'Comprehensive Approach' to Crises," NATO website, last updated 21 June 2016, accessed 17 October 2017, [http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics\\_51633.htm?selectedLocale=en](http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_51633.htm?selectedLocale=en). Also see the NATO video on the comprehensive approach, "NATO's Comprehensive Approach to Operations," YouTube video, posted by "Tyce Velde," 9 February 2007, accessed 17 October 2017, [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iFVxZ4f\\_mvE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iFVxZ4f_mvE); it was scripted and coproduced by the author, and was distributed to all NATO chiefs of defense in late 2006 or early 2007.

13. Boudreau, *We Have Met the Enemy and He Is Us*, 90. Boudreau covers the history of ISAF communication. The author visited Kabul in 2011 with a U.S.-led staff assistance visit that assessed ISAF SC.

14. *NATO Strategic Communications Policy*, Annex to PO(2009)0141 (Riga, Latvia: NATO Strategic Communications Centre of Excellence, 29 September 2009), 1.

15. *Ibid.*

16. Jan Techau, "What Makes Communications Strategic?—Preparing Military Organizations for the Battle of Ideas," Research Paper no. 65 (Rome, Italy: Research Division, NATO Defense College, February 2011), 2. See Techau's wiki, which includes a link to his paper in the endnotes, [https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jan\\_Techau](https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jan_Techau).

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18. *Ibid.*, 6

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Credibility of U.S. Forces, Critics Say," *Los Angeles Times*, 1 December 2004.

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23. A/RES/217 (III) A, preamble.

24. Scanlon, "In Defense of Public Affairs Doctrine."

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29. Simon Tisdall, "Western Support for Afghanistan War Collapsing, Survey Shows," *The Guardian* online, 12 September 2012, accessed 17 October 2017, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2012/sep/12/western-support-afghanistan-war-collapsing>.

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31. Commons, "A Dangerous Mix"; A/RES/217 (III) A.

32. Sue Halpern, "How He Used Facebook to Win," *The New York Review of Books* website, 7 June 2017, accessed 17 October 2017, <http://www.nybooks.com/articles/2017/06/08/how-trump-used-facebook-to-win/>. Note that Cambridge Analytica's parent organization is Strategic Communications Laboratories (SCL Group); SCL was contracted to support military information campaigns in Afghanistan.

33. *Ibid.* The article says the Trump team's digital advertising budget, mostly spent on Facebook, ramped up to \$70 million a month. See also Jacob Pramuk, "Trump's Digital Director Explains How He Used Facebook to Help Win the White House," CNBC, 9 October 2017, accessed 28 October 2017, <https://www.cnbc.com/2017/10/09/brad-parscale-says-trump-campaign-used-facebook-to-beat-clinton.html>.

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35. Sydney Ember, "Sinclair Requires TV Stations to Air Segments that Tilt to the Right," *New York Times* online, 12 May 2017, accessed 17 October 2017, <https://www.nytimes.com/2017/05/12/business/media/sinclair-broadcast-komo-conservative-media.html>.

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