

THE STRATEGIC/TACTICAL PROBLEM

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THE NATIONAL/MILITARY FIELD COMMANDER PROBLEM

Military field commanders have a large range of critical intelligence requirements. These needs range across an entire spectrum beginning with what is normally thought of as strategic intelligence on through to hot war, battlefield tactical intelligence. The field commander needs to know the weapons and weapons systems characteristics which determine the fighting effectiveness of opposing forces. He does not care about the cost of these weapons systems, location of production facilities, production capacity for manufacturing these weapon systems, long range opposition military budgets, etc. He does need to understand detailed performance characteristics and effectiveness of weapons and weapons systems. He needs to know sufficient detail about these systems so that effective countermeasures can be employed (e.g., ECM equipment against opposing anti-aircraft capability), the limitations of weapons, the range of weapons, fire power of weapons, the reliability of equipment, etc. Much of this information cannot be derived by the military field commander in his immediate theater of operations. Therefore he has a requirement for what is sometimes thought of as strategic intelligence support.

A field commander also needs to know about the deployment of opposing forces and weapons. He needs to know about the status of these forces in terms of numbers, command structure, training level, fighting effectiveness, status of stores, logistic support capability, and any other information relevant to opposing force effectiveness.

The commander also needs to know about the operational doctrine of opposing forces. The policy on things such as ECM and the employment of tactical air support versus artillery. The field commander has a high interest in warning of impending hostilities. He needs to be able to follow shifts in deployment of opposing forces and understand the significance of such shifts. He needs to identify and track indicators which might tip off initiation of hostilities. Finally, when hostilities have begun and a hot war is underway, the field commander needs tactical intelligence (combat support) to support his direction of forces under his control. He needs to track accurately and rapidly the dynamic battle scene as it unfolds. He needs to measure the effectiveness of his forces and the fighting effectiveness of opposing forces as it is impacted by delivery of the field commander's weapons systems. In particular, the field commander needs intelligence to support delivery of weapons systems against opposition targets and intelligence to support the circumvention of opposing weapons when they have not been neutralized.

In the past theater, intelligence has been largely in the hands of the field commander. He has acquired his information through aircraft, foot patrols, forward radar installations and in more recent times, COMINT collection operated under his direct command authority. Intelligence derived in this manner was (and is) called "tactical intelligence." Even when active hostilities were not underway, the field commanders need for strategic intelligence support was minimal because of the relatively unsophisticated character of the opposing weapons. The term "tactical intelligence" is still in common use, but the situation facing the field commander in the last ten years has undergone a dramatic transformation. Tactical aircraft supporting military ground operations now operate with sophisticated guided weapon systems and have an operating radius typically in excess of 500 n.m. Tactical ballistic missiles are a key element in the opposition force structure. These "tactical" ballistic missiles have ranges all the way from a few tens of miles to hundreds of miles. Helicopters have dramatically enhanced mobility and revolutionized fighting tactics. Guided weapons have virtually eliminated armored vehicles, particularly tanks, as relevant and effective elements in the fighting force. This vast array of sophisticated and flexible weaponry has in turn impacted the military doctrine and fighting strategies of opposing forces.

Most of the important weapon systems characteristics are not derivable by the field commander with resources and assets under his control. Furthermore, the reaction time to new weapon systems intelligence by way of changed doctrine or more effective tactics is measured in years, not weeks or months. Therefore the strategic intelligence (particularly technical intelligence) required by the field commander to insure an effective fighting force has increased. However, strategic intelligence remains a meaningful concept. Strategic intelligence is that intelligence required by weapons systems planners to support weapons R&D and procurement policies as well as force structure and field doctrine strategies. Strategic intelligence is derived from national strategic collection tools such as photographic satellites, SIGINT satellites, and COMINT supported by a powerful array of intelligence analysis and production resources. With the evolving weapon systems effectiveness and sophistication, needs for strategic intelligence have been well understood and effectively dealt with by the intelligence community. However, very recently it has become clear that the field commander is in real trouble when it comes to his capability to deal with a hot war in which modern weapons systems are used. The intelligence resources under his direct control remain essentially as they have been for tens of years. The intelligence support derived from the national community has been useful but limited in that national intelligence frequently has not focused on the weapons systems characteristics and vulnerabilities of most interest

to a field commander. At the same time the field commander's intelligence collection and analytical resources are sufficient to provide him with good measures of opposing force deployment, opposing force status or warn him of impending hostilities. There are serious questions after the outbreak of hostilities about the field commander's ability to track evolving events and coupling intelligence on the dynamic scene into his own tactical decisions.

In response to this intelligence gap, two things have happened. First there has been increasing and priority placed on real time collection resources. These requirements have been supported by a rapidly evolving and capable technology so

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As consequence of the "new" intelligence needs of the field commanders and the evolving capability of what have been thought in the past as strategic intelligence collection resources, the concepts of strategic versus tactical or national versus military operational intelligence have virtually vanished. Within the next five years, all critical collection resources which are essential to support national intelligence will have capabilities identical to those required to support field operations.

The implications of this suddenly changed situation are profound. Resource decisions and collection management in the

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future will be more complex because it is essential that the entire range of needs be properly accounted for. New factors must be considered such as the vulnerability of collection systems and the efficient and rapid forwarding of intelligence information to those who need it. The field commander can no longer be regarded as an independent entity which must and can have his own integrated self-contained intelligence apparatus. Sophisticated weapon systems and associated doctrine and tactics require equally sophisticated intelligence apparatus if the nation is to maintain a viable military capability. Increasingly, intelligence cannot be left in the hands of military officers primarily trained for conduct of military field operations. Intelligence will become increasingly specialized and must evolve to enjoy a first class as opposed to third class status in the military establishment.

All of this implies that the DCI in several of his many hats, must concern himself with a broader range of intelligence problems and requirements than have been concerned to him in the past.

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