

## **Analysis in the New Era**

Remarks as prepared for delivery by

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We are in an era of challenges and opportunities for U.S. intelligence that brings to mind the image of the drunk who was looking under a street lamp for his lost keys. "Is this where you dropped them?" asked a passer-by. "No," the drunk replied. "I dropped them over there, but the light is better here."

Jim Williams, Chairman of the Board of the National Military Intelligence Association, invited me to discuss the teaching of analysis in the era of the war on terrorism. I am not a teacher, let alone a teacher of analysis. Yet, I have extremely talented members of the Joint Military Intelligence College faculty who are. From their pioneering work it is fair to say that analytical work in the new era takes us beyond the lamp light of past practice alone to newer considerations, techniques, and practices. At the same time, there are underlying fundamentals of intelligence analysis that remain constant. In the next few minutes, I would offer the following snapshot of the evolving work and requirements of analysis, and the evolution in parallel of the teaching of analysis at the College.

When I was an undergraduate at Stanford University, I had a splendid teacher of journalism, the late Chilton R. Bush, who's textbook *Newspaper Reporting of Public Affairs* was the standard in its field. At the beginning of Chapter One, Bush identified three basic rules: "1. Know news. 2. Know where to get it. 3. Go get it."

He wrote of the skills and the attitude needed by a good reporter of public affairs: the need to be gregarious; to develop a good working relationship with the stenographers, the clerks, and the officials in high places; the need to have curiosity, the need to be enthusiastic, searching and ready for something important however dull the day or the task at hand; the need to answer for the reader those significant questions about the event that naturally arise in the reader's mind; the need to have a critical sense, to develop a habit of verifying information given him by checking it against his own sense of the probabilities; the need to be resourceful, to locate another source or sources when information is denied from the most obvious source; the need to respect confidences; and the need to be a literary craftsman, to be able to write well in the idiom.<sup>1</sup>

These same rules and skills fit quite elegantly and comfortably on the frame and the work of the skilled intelligence analyst. "Know intelligence; know where to get it; go get it." Be gregarious; know and develop a good working relationship with your collection sources and with the commanders and policy-makers; blend creativity and curiosity with a dedication to sifting the evidence and verifying the information; be resourceful in locating and drawing on new sources – from streaming video, to internet, to law enforcement – in the practice of your work; protect sources and methods; and be a skilled craftsman in the presentation of your analysis, writing and speaking well in the idiom.

Such analytical skills are not a birthright for most in the business. They must be forged; they must be honed. If they are not, as the College's Provost Dr. Ronald Garst has written, an unskilled analyst too often will think of an explanation for the issue in question, then look for information that supports that explanation, and stop when that information has been found. Students studying intelligence analysis are taught to develop competing hypotheses covering a wide range of outcomes as they go about the analysis of a particular situation or issue.

They are taught to gather and list the evidence, the data, the collection take, assessing the impact of such evidence – or absence thereof – on each hypothesis, to create an evidence/hypothesis matrix, and to refine the matrix determining where information needs have and have not been met and how the evidence at hand points to the most likely and least likely of the hypotheses. In exercising this alternative hypothesis process, the analyst has introduced a range of data and possibilities that otherwise would not have been considered.

The analyst is then taught to draw a tentative conclusion. Having drawn this conclusion – just as Professor Bush's students were taught to develop a critical sense – the analyst is taught to challenge that conclusion. Did individual or national mindset cause him to favor his interpretation of the data? Could deception have been involved? With these steps completed, the analyst is taught to report his conclusion, alerting the consumer of the analysis of issues, new developments that would lead to a change in the appraisal of the situation.<sup>2</sup>

In this new era of the war on terrorism, students know more than ever that strategic and tactical warning – the business of divining the intentions and impeding actions of others – are at the very heart of the intelligence business. They study aware that one of the greatest barriers to producing actionable strategic indications and warning is the tendency of the mind to tilt toward the status quo. The Cuban Missile Crisis of 40 years ago, the Yom Kippur War, and the Falklands Conflict confirm that analysts and nations generally do not credit their potential opponents with the will to take unexpected, "unlikely and improbable" acts.

They study aware of the challenges of denial and deception as practiced by foreign individuals, groups, organizations, and nations. They study aware of the need to move beyond individual mindset to examine what is and is not important to a potential adversary, however he might judge the relative importance of the issue; the risks and the actions that an adversary might

take, however he might be inclined to judge the good sense of such an action. In this new era, the process of competing hypotheses, brainstorming, thinking the unthinkable, the play of analysts in red cells – thinking through the minds, the tactics, the methods of operation, and the cultures of the adversaries – becomes more than ever important to the value of the analytical product.

In framing the teaching of analysis in the era of the war on terrorism, it is useful to bear in mind the following words taken from Rear Admiral Lowell E. Jacoby's statement for the record last month to the Congressional Joint 9/11 Inquiry: "Successes in deterring terrorist attacks," he advised the joint committee, "will most always involve some combination of intelligence, good police or investigative work, vigilant security, foreign government involvement, and plain luck. With the exception of luck, each of these entities possesses knowledge and information not ordinarily available to the intelligence analyst. Trends in terrorist organizational and operational behavior – loosely affiliated groups and collaborative planning or execution of operations, often geographically dispersed and stretched over long periods of time – combined with their small footprint and extraordinary efforts to conceal their activities argue that terrorism-related information will nearly always appear to be fragmentary, ambiguous, and uncorroborated."<sup>3</sup>

The challenge for the analyst of terrorism is compounded by the velocity of information, the exponential growth in the quantity of information, and the uncertain quality of the data being received.

To meet this challenge, today's student of analysis learns that skillful, creative analysis of the first order filling in the gaps between the fragments – connecting the dots in today's vernacular – gaining the earliest possible access to good human intelligence reporting, good signals intelligence reporting and widened access to law enforcement information all will be required.

Today's student learns that help is on the way, that collaborative information technology tools, using commercial web technologies, are being developed, for example, through the Joint Intelligence Virtual Architecture program to assist the analyst with cyber-era speed in locating and accessing valuable data wherever it may be found, in assessing such data, in producing a professional analytic product, and in moving that product to where it will be of value. Such tools are designed to provide search and discovery protocols allowing mining of data not only of what the analyst knows is important but also – while unthought-of by the analyst – what might be of importance. Such tools will allow automatic extraction of relevant data from classified and unclassified sources. Such tools will support the analyst in making rapid assessments and developing time-critical reporting of streaming media – video and audio, for example.

Today's student learns in person from Admiral Jacoby of his goal for the analytic environment: immediate, on-demand access to all sources of data in the context a real-time collector-exploiter-analyst partnership, this bearing in mind that "The concept of Decision Dominance demands rapid conversion of information into knowledge ... that is what we pay analysts to do ... they must have full access to collection output and be supported by carefully employed information technology."<sup>4</sup>

To provide the best possible education to the future intelligence thinkers, practitioners, and leaders of this new era, the College is adding several new courses to Master's program this academic year. Four focus on advanced study of denial and deception: the history, issues, and implications; the psychological and cultural aspects; the adversaries, the organizations, the activities and the countermeasures; and the tradecraft, tools and methodologies.

The new terrorism analysis course, tested as a pilot this past summer, and being introduced this November will be a two-term, 20-week graduate seminar designed to enable the student to:

- develop a comprehensive analytical framework for the study of terrorism;
- apply this framework to the study of a terrorist group drawing on case study methodology;
- apply forecasting methodologies, based on the evolution of the terrorist group, to identify four possible alternate futures for the organization; and,
- based on the foregoing analyses, critically examine existing all-source collection plans and indications and warning indicator lists, and develop all-source collection and I&W indicator lists for the target group's four alternative futures.<sup>5</sup>

This is a potent course. The critical thinking, informed debate and related writings over the 20 weeks take our students to a new level of understanding and expertise in the work of terrorism analysis, expertise that allows, for example, the underlying lessons learned from the case study of a single terrorist group to be transferred and flexibly applied in the future by the analyst to different target sets.

As course work evolves in the age of the war on terrorism, so does research. The Joint Military Intelligence College is in the vanguard of research, both classified and unclassified, on the new challenges – through the Master's thesis research of our military and civilian graduate student, through the research of our faculty, and, most recently, through the research of Fellows at the College's Center for Strategic Intelligence Research, which came into being a month ago.

This research addresses subjects of critical importance to the U.S. intelligence and homeland security communities such as the development of new Web-based terrorism indications and warning models. It includes work such as Marine Reserve Lieutenant Colonel Doman McArthur's Master's thesis on "The Critical Nodes Model of Weapons of Mass Destruction Acquisition and Use: An Iraqi Case Study." McArthur examined the critical nodes of the Iraqi

challenge, the issues, the timelines, the ways of addressing each aspect of the challenge. His research and findings on the non-proliferation and acquisition node would move from approved Master's thesis to the law of the land as part of the Proliferation Prevention Enhancement Act of 1999.

That work has been published by the College with a Foreword by Senator Arlen Specter in which he writes that the law "requires anyone who exports an item on the United States Munitions List or the Commerce Control List to report the shipment in electronic format using a new, Internet-based filing system that is being developed for this purpose. Having the data available in a consolidated database that can be searched and analyzed by computers will enable export control officials to more easily detect purchasing patterns which may indicate that terrorists or rogue nations are trying to acquire weapons of mass destruction by evading or violating U.S. export control laws."<sup>6</sup>

In this our 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary year, the Joint Military Intelligence College's graduate and undergraduate student study and, once they graduate, contribute to the nation's security aware that information superiority, intelligence providing strategic and tactical warning – actionable information – are the air we breathe in the age of the war on terrorism. They study the role of intelligence – to include the real-time play of collection, analysis and dissemination – in the nation's need to know what is going on outside our borders, what is going on inside our borders, and how most effectively to link the two so as to provide for the defense and wellbeing of the United States of America.

Thank you.

## End Notes

1. Chilton. R. Bush, *Newspaper Reporting of Public Affairs*, Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1951, pp 1-3.
2. *A Handbook of Intelligence Analysis*, edited by Ronald D. Garst, Defense Intelligence College, Washington, D.C., 1989, p. 106.
3. "Information Sharing of Terrorism-Related Data," Statement for the Record for the Joint 9/11 Inquiry by Rear Admiral Lowell, E. Jacoby, U.S. Navy, Acting Director, Defense Intelligence Agency, Washington, D.C., 1 October 2002, p. 4.
4. "Transforming Defense Intelligence – Current and Future Challenges," briefing by Rear Admiral Lowell E. Jacoby, U.S. Navy, Washington D.C., 2002.
5. Dr. Mark Weisenbloom, course overview of Terrorism Analysis Course (ANA 698), Joint Military Intelligence College, 2002.
6. *Intelligence and Policy: Venturing a Structured Analysis of Iraqi Weapons of Mass Destruction*, Lieutenant Colonel Doman O. McArthur, USMCR, Discussion Paper Number Eleven, Joint Military Intelligence College, Washington, D.C., 2001, p. v.