A Comedic (slightly terrifying) Introduction to Information Warfare
Elements of Information Warfare

1. The military art of using information;
2. To deliberately mislead an opponent;
3. And influence their decision-making;
4. For a strategic purpose.
“Possessing [knowledge of] the wide spectrum of enemy deception techniques and methods considerably reduces the probability of being deceived yourself because it will be easier to foresee similar ploys[.]”

Joint Concept for Operating in the Information Environment (JCOIE)

25 July 2018


Information Environment

- “The IE is comprised of and aggregates numerous social, cultural, cognitive, technical, and physical attributes that act upon and impact knowledge, understanding, beliefs, world views, and, ultimately, actions of an individual, group, system, community, or organization. The IE also includes technical systems and their use of data.”

-- JCOIE, July 2018 (emphasis added).
Understanding the facets of *maskirovka* "suggests a need to *not only stand well back from the canvas*, but to take apart the frame, view the picture from behind, and to do chemical analysis of the canvas and paints."

Impressionism Art
“The very first idea was to eliminate the partition separating the artist’s studio from everyday life and to introduce the reality of the street.”
Edmond Duranty (1876)

Maskirovka
The essence of camouflage, is to “eliminate the boundary between them (objects) and to blend in the objects against the background in terms of shape, illumination, and color.”
Roger Beaumont (1982)
What is Maskirovka?

Soviet Military Encyclopedia defines maskirovka as:

“The aggregate of measures to deceive the adversary regarding the presence and disposition of troops (forces), military vehicles and installations (targets), their status and condition, combat readiness and actions, as well as command authority plans; category of operational (combat) support.”
VARIOUS METHODS OF TACTICAL MASKIROVKA

1.) Deformative masking (deformaruischaya)

2.) Horizontal camouflage net

3.) Trees tied together

4.) Forms of road traffic masking using nets and frames with foliage.
Three Objectives of Maskirovka

1. Influence enemy commander’s perception of situation;
2. Shape their mission objectives and planning procedures;
3. And impair effective decision-making processes.
MASKIROVKA

ACTIVE MEASURES

PASSIVE METHODS

COMPROMISE

DISINFORMATION

IMITATION

SURPRISE

SUBVERT

CREATIVITY

REFLEX CONTROL

ESPIONAGE
Disinformation
Activities to propagate false or misleading information

Operation Infektion (1983)
Russia’s Seven Strategic Elements of Disinformation – according to the NYT

AIDS may invade India
Mystery disease caused by US experiments

NEW YORK:

AIDS, the deadly mysterious disease which has caused havoc in the US, is believed to be the result of the Pentagon’s experiments to develop new and dangerous biological weapons.

Now that these menacing experiments seem to have gone out of control, plans are being hatched to hastily transfer them from the US to other countries, primarily developing nations where governments are liable to Washington’s pressures and persuasion.

Some American experts believe that Pakistan may become the next proving ground for these experiments. If this happens, there will be a real danger that AIDS may rapidly spread to India with the grave consequences among immigrants from Haiti.

At that time, however, no one seemed to bother to pay any serious attention both on the part of the local authorities and the US public at large. In 1980 there was another sign of AIDS and again in New York. This time in addition to Haitian immigrants the disease struck local Americans, primarily drug addicts and homosexuals. By February 1983, AIDS had affected large sections of the American population and had been registered in 33 states. New York accounted for 49 per cent of all the cases that had been officially registered in the US by that time.

Concerned American citizens and organisations began to wonder why does AIDS, just like some other previously unknown
Reflexive Control – Information Doppelgänger

Reflexive Control defined:
• “A means of conveying to a partner or an opponent specially prepared information to incline him to voluntarily make the predetermined decision desired by the initiator of the action.”

Target audiences:
• Military commanders, civilians and computer-based tools in their decision-making.

Source: Timothy Thomas, Russia’s Reflexive Control Theory, (internally citing Military Thought (1995)).
Exploring RC in Theory & in Practice

Four ways to influence enemy commanders and political opponents to gain ‘control’, according to Russian Major General (ret.) M. D. Ionov

1. Build a high-intensity pressure environment
2. Inject false information into the environment
3. Shape and influence the enemy’s planning process
4. Leverage surprise attacks to accelerate enemy’s timeline for decision-making

Thought Experiment - Use on Civilian Audiences?

What if we applied the logic of this four-step method to the Special Counsel’s findings in the Mueller Report?

Source: Ibid.
Where Do We Go From Here?

The Magpies and the Cuckoos: A Disinformation Fable

The magpies have a complex and vigorous society. What happens when two conniving cuckoos come to town?

Education & Civic Outreach

“A rising tide lifts all boats”

Leveraging Attribution

- Efforts by social media platforms and the government to publicly attribute the false information could help reduce the volume and impact of disinformation;
- however; what’s the best accountability framework?
- Quis custodiet ipsos custodes (who watches the watchers?)
Where Do We Go From Here?

Charting New Policy

Election Security

• DNI Coats recently announced creation of new government advisory position – Election Threats Executive – to serve as top advisor to DNI on election security threats

• Creating an Election Executive and Leadership Board to function as “the principal vehicle for IC-wide coordination and focus on election threats[.].” – The Washington Times

Unity of Effort in Cyber Operations

• Announcement of NSA’s New Cybersecurity Directorate – October 1, 2019, to protect National Security Systems and the Defense Industrial Base

• “Defend Forward” – USCYBERCOM’s new Cyber Strategy 2018
Network Centric Warfare (NCW):

“Light shines through glass, sometimes in a surprising way….You haven’t seen the light that way before but it reflects a rainbow. That’s what the law does. The law shows you new beauty. The law shows you new dimensions. The more you think about it, the more you study it, the more dedicated you are to it. But it’s also made of glass, and glass can break. Just like when the rule of law is broken, it requires great effort to fix it and you’re not sure that it will be as beautiful the next time.”

Sources Cited

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