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About 70,000 words

MEDIA WAR

The Media-Enabled Insurgency in Iraq

by

Pat Proctor

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OVERVIEW

The most important battle of the Iraq War is not happening in Baghdad or al-Anbar. It is happening every day on television, in newspapers, and on the Internet. It is the struggle between the US military and the insurgency for the will of the American people to prosecute the war. And the US military is losing.

With the elections of November 2006 adding to the mounting political pressure for a withdrawal from Iraq, it seems increasingly likely that the US military will be forced to leave with its work there unfinished. How did it come to this point? How can the US military, the most powerful military force in the history of the world, be forced out of Iraq by "bands of thugs and terrorists"? It is not, as others have contended, bad strategic decisions, poor military planning or execution, or a biased or negligent media that has made the enemy in Iraq so formidable. Rather, it is the revolutionary merging of terrorism, insurgency, and telecommunications: media-enabled insurgency.

Pat Proctor is a US Army major who has served on the frontlines of the media war in Iraq. In addition to spending two years studying the media war for the Army, Pat was a key player in developing the communications strategy for General David Petraeus and Ambassador Ryan Crocker in Iraq in 2007. It is

this unique perspective that Pat brings to *Media War: The Media-Enabled Insurgency in Iraq*. The reader will be treated to the inside story of how the media covers the war in Iraq, as well as how the US military and the insurgency fight to influence this coverage. This is a story that has never been told before.

This book is the first work to bring together sources from the operational, "fighting" Army, military public affairs, and the media. The book includes interviews, with men like Colonel Boykins, the senior public affairs officer for General Petraeus in Iraq, and the late John McWethy, former Senior Security Correspondent for ABC News. It also heavily references the writings of Army commanders in professional military journals about their experiences fighting the war in Iraq under the ever-present eye of the media.

Media War will also be the first post-"surge" book about the Iraq War. As the November 2008 presidential election approaches, the debate over the success of this new strategy already dominates the Iraq debate. *Media War* will be the first book to weigh in on this debate.

Media War takes a completely fresh look at the war, as a struggle between the US military and insurgency in Iraq for the will of the American people. Because this book is at the same time a book about the war in Iraq and a study of the modern media, it has unique crossover appeal. It will appeal both to military professionals and enthusiasts and to those interested in the media. Based on government occupational data and publicly available media-consumption statistics, the market for *Media War* is at least eight million people.

With the 2007 "surge" and change in strategy under General David Petraeus, there is renewed interest in books about the Iraq War. A commercial version of the new US Army field manual, *Counterinsurgency*, was one of Amazon's top 100 sellers and one of its top 20 nonfiction sellers in July 2007, despite its technical focus. *Marching Toward Hell: America and Islam*

After Iraq (Michael Scheuer) was one of Amazon's top 30 nonfiction titles in February 2008. There is a growing appetite for answers about the Iraq War. This appetite will only grow as the 2008 presidential elections approach.

TIMELINE FOR COMPLETION

The author has been hard at work on this manuscript since January 2006. The manuscript for *Media War* was completed in February 2008.

MARKET ANALYSIS

The total market for *Media War: The Media-Enabled Insurgency in Iraq* is at least eight million people. This book will appeal to anyone who wishes to better understand the Iraq War. However, this book has a crossover appeal that other books about Iraq lack--it will appeal to those interested in the media and war journalism. While it has obvious practical application for military and media professionals, policymakers, and military historians, it is written for the layperson.

The military audience for *Media War*--including active, reserve, recently separated, and retired service members--is 4.5 million people. This audience grows by 338,000 every year. This population is overwhelmingly male, middle class, and politically conservative with particularly strong negative feelings about the media (perceptions *Media War* will challenge in an engaging way). The average age for service members is about 30, and virtually all are high school graduates. Most have at least some college. According to the Government Accounting Office, 20% have at least a bachelor's degree.

About another two to three million Americans outside of the military are intensely interested in war in Iraq. In a January 2008 CBS News poll, 21 percent of Americans rated the war in Iraq as the most important issue facing

the nation. This is reflected in America's media consumption habits. According to the *New York Times*, 1.5 million Americans tuned in when General Petraeus and Ambassador Crocker appeared on Fox News Channel with Brit Hume the evening after their 10 September 2007 testimony. Many of these people buy books and publications about the military. For instance, *The Last True Story I'll Ever Tell: An Accidental Soldier's Account of the War in Iraq* (John Crawford) was a *New York Times* bestseller.

Media War is also a book about the connection between the media and warfare. Americans continue to be fascinated by the role the media plays in war. For instance, the Barry Levinson movie, *Wag the Dog* made \$43 million in theaters and \$20 million in video sales, despite costing only \$15 million to make. This audience also buys books about the media and warfare; *In an Instant*, Bob Woodruff's book about his work as an ABC News journalist in Iraq, was a *New York Times* #1 bestseller.

The wargaming community is a small but important market for *Media War* because it is a nexus of military professionals, enthusiasts, and historians. *Armchair General*, a magazine catering to this community, has a circulation of over 120,000. The author has deep roots in this community and will leverage them to market *Media War* (see "About the Author" and "Marketing Plan" for more).

SPECIAL MARKETING OPPORTUNITIES

As a book written by an active duty service member, *Media War* will almost certainly be a featured publication at the more than 3,500 post, base, and naval exchanges on military installations worldwide (including in Iraq and Afghanistan).

There is a strong cultural tension between the military and the media and a great reluctance by the military to wade into political issues such as national public opinion. The controversial ideas in this book will make it a

"must read" title for military professionals and required reading at military educational institutions such as the US Army Command and General Staff College (CGSC) and the US Army War College. The fact that the author is a recent attendee of CGSC makes this even more likely. Around 8,000 students pass through such institutions each year. Each of these institutions also maintains a sizable library which will be interested in bulk orders.

The author is also a computer wargame developer (see "About the Author" below). His games are published and distributed by Shrapnel Games, one of the largest Internet-based game publishers in the world. Shrapnel Games as well as other Internet-based game publishers will be very interested in selling *Media War* as a way to attract military enthusiasts to their Websites. Many online wargaming magazines also maintain Internet store fronts and will wish to sell *Media War* as well.

COMPETING WORKS

There is a perception in the publishing industry that readers are suffering from "Iraq fatigue"--that the market is flooded with Iraq books. The truth, however, is that some recent titles have not sold well because they have nothing new to say. A narrative about Iraq has developed among authors and the latest books are just restatements of these common themes: (1) the Iraq War is going badly because of political or military leader incompetence, (2) the media failed to inform the public before the war, and (3) the embedded media program hurt objective coverage of the war. The book-buying public has heard this all before and is rejecting new books that say the same thing. *Media War* is a fresh, new argument in this debate. It is the contention of this book that neither strategy nor tactics is the problem in Iraq. The media isn't the problem either; it simply reflects the perceptions of the American public. The problem is that the insurgency in Iraq has hijacked the media system and is using it to directly attack the will of the American people to fight the war. This new perspective is desperately needed in the marketplace.

Media War examines the interaction between the media, the US military, and the insurgency over the entire course of the war in Iraq. By contrast,

the vast majority of books about Iraq are snapshots in time and space, examining one battle, one unit, one place, or one individual over a finite amount of time. Three prominent titles are surveys of the entire war in Iraq:

- *State of Denial: Bush at War, Part III*, Bob Woodward (Simon & Schuster, 2007: multiple editions, 576 pages, \$16.00, *New York Times* bestseller) examines the conduct of the war in Iraq by the nation's political leaders.
- *Fiasco: The American Military Adventure in Iraq*, Thomas Ricks (Penguin, 2007: multiple editions, 512 pages, \$16.00, *New York Times* bestseller) examines the conduct of the war by senior military and civilian leaders in Iraq.
- *Cobra II: The Inside Story of the Invasion and Occupation of Iraq*, Michael R. Gordon (Vintage, 2007: multiple editions, 784 pages, \$16.00, *New York Times* bestseller) is a narrative account of how the war was planned and executed by military leaders (coverage ends with the insurgent violence in late 2003).

All of these books share a common theme: the war was lost due to egregious errors committed by the nation's political leadership, military and civilian leaders on the ground, or military planners. *Media War* differs from these titles; it contends that it is the enemy's ability to use the media to attack the will of the American people, not the civilian or military leadership, that is costing America the war.

Another point of divergence is that *Media War* examines how the media covers the war in Iraq, a topic largely missing in these titles. This will give the book a much broader appeal, expanding its market beyond military professionals, historians, and enthusiasts to include those interested in the media and war journalism as well. To date, books written about the media in Iraq have focused on the coverage during the build-up to the war and the

embedded media program during the invasion. Two prominent books contend that the American media's negligence made it complicit in drawing America into an ill-conceived war:

- *When the Press Fails: Political Power and the News Media from Iraq to Katrina*, W. Lance Bennett, Regina G. Lawrence, and Steven Livingston (University Of Chicago Press, 2007, 278 pages, \$22.50)
- *Now They Tell Us: The American Press and Iraq*, Michael Massing (New York Review Books, 2004, 91 pages, \$9.95)

Two prominent books conclude that embedding distorted coverage of the war:

- *Embedded: The Media at War in Iraq, An Oral History*, Bill Katovsky and Timothy Carlson (Lyons Press, 2004: multiple editions, 450 pages, \$16.95, #35 in oral histories at Amazon.com) focuses on the experiences of embedded journalists during the initial invasion of Iraq.
- *Media at War: The Iraqi Crisis*, Howard Tumber (Sage Publications, 2004: multiple editions, 192 pages, \$43.95) focuses on the embedded media program during and immediately after the initial invasion of Iraq.

Media War differs from all of these titles in three ways: it focuses on media apparatus for covering the war, it is entirely focused on coverage of the war after the fall of Baghdad, and, most importantly, it explores how the US military and the insurgency try to influence media coverage of the war. The author served inside the senior military headquarters in Iraq, fighting on the front lines of the media war. This is a perspective non-military authors cannot provide. Readers will get the inside story on a part of the war that has never been covered before--the fight that is waged in the media between the US military and the insurgency.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Major Pat Proctor (US Army) is an Iraq war veteran with 15 years of service in command and staff positions from Fort Hood, Texas to Schofield Barracks, Hawaii. He also spent three years training US Army officers in both conventional and counterinsurgency warfare at the National Training Center (NTC) at Fort Irwin, California. In 2007, Pat worked at the senior military headquarters in Iraq, fighting on the frontlines of the media war. During his tour, Pat was drafted to work as part of a handpicked, 20-man team which included such luminaries as Ambassador Robert Ford (US Ambassador to Algeria), Colonel H.R. McMasters (*Dereliction of Duty*), and Dr. Stephen Biddle (Council on Foreign Relations). This team was commissioned by General Petraeus and Ambassador Crocker to create a new strategy for the war in Iraq. Pat worked with a State Department counterpart to write the vast majority of the current strategic communication plan for the war.

Pat has conducted multiple studies on the media war in Iraq for the US Army Command and General Staff College and the Center for Army Lessons Learned, including field work in Iraq. He has consolidated his findings from these studies in his first book-length manuscript, *Media War: The Media-Enabled Insurgency in Iraq*.

Pat has written on current affairs and military history topics for the US Army War College journal, *Parameters*, and the consumer magazine, *Armchair General* (these articles will appear in these publications throughout 2008 and 2009). Pat has also published articles in *Military Simulations & Training* and the online magazines, *Wargamer.com* and *StrategyPage.com*.

Pat holds a bachelor's degree in Mechanical Engineering from Purdue University and a master's degree in Military Arts for Strategy from the US Army Command and General Staff College (CGSC). He is currently completing a second master's degree, in Military Arts for Operational Design, at the highly selective School of Advanced Military Studies (SAMS) at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. He will begin work on his doctorate in Security Studies at Kansas State University in fall 2008.

Pat has been recognized repeatedly for the quality of his writing. His first study on insurgent use of the media was selected as a finalist for the Arter-Darby Award for History at CGSC. A separate essay on the same topic was selected as a finalist for the Father Donald M. Smythe Award for Military History, also at CGSC.

In addition to writing, Pat is also a prolific computer wargame developer and is very well known in the wargaming community. Shrapnel Games, Inc. publishes his six modern combat titles, but he does most of the marketing for these games himself. His marketing efforts have even drawn the attention of the defense industry; several of his titles have been licensed by corporations such as Lockheed Martin Aeronautics, Boeing, and Teknowledge for use in their own professional-grade simulations.

Finally, Pat is an occasional marathoner and borderline fitness fanatic. He lives along the banks of the Missouri River in Lansing, Kansas with his wife, Aree, and their two children.

PROMOTION PLAN

Pat Proctor has embarked on a one-man crusade to change the way America views the media and the war in Iraq. His unique perspective on this topic and his breadth of experience in actually planning and fighting the media war have convinced him that change is essential if the United States is going to win not just in Iraq but in the broader Global War on Terrorism. Pat sees *Media War* not just as a commercial venture, but as an extension of his oath as a soldier to defend the United States. Pat is absolutely dedicated to making sure that *Media War* reaches the widest possible audience.

First, Pat is willing to "put his money where his mouth is." Pat will match a publisher's out-of-pocket, consumer promotion budget up to one-third of his advance, upon signing and receipt of the advance. However, Pat is also going to actively market *Media War* himself.

NATIONAL MEDIA

Throughout his military career, Pat has amassed a number of contacts in the national news media that he will be leveraging in order to market *Media War*. During the author's work in media studies for the US Army, he met and talked with a number of nationally recognized journalists, including the late

John McWethy (ABC News), Steve Kamarrow (*Associated Press*), and Jane Araf (NBC). During his time in Iraq, Pat also met with syndicated columnists and writers such as Bing West (*No True Glory*) and Max Boot (*Savage Wars of Peace*). Over the course of his military career, Pat has also had contact with less well known writers for publications such as *Washington Post* and the *New York Times*. Pat will use these contacts to secure reviews and interviews for *Media War*.

It is a grim but predictable trend that, as the November 2008 elections approach, insurgents in Iraq will increase the level of violence in order to influence the American political process. In the past, this surge in violence has initiated a media debate about this so-called "Tet Offensive" tactic. Pat is a recognized authority in the field of military affairs and the media. He has been quoted in the past as an expert in the *New York Times*. Pat will use this expert status to generate opportunities for interviews and on-air comment about the media war in Iraq to promote *Media War*.

THE WARGAMING MARKET

Pat will also leverage his standing in the wargaming community to market this book. This community is a great platform from which to market *Media War*; it is a nexus of security professionals as well as military retirees, historians, and enthusiasts, all of whom buy and read books about war and history. The author has successfully marketed his computer wargames in this community for nearly a decade. As a result, his name has become very well known and he has established himself not only as a great game developer, but also as an absolute authority on national security policy and military affairs.

The author maintains a Website for his commercial wargaming company (www.prosimco.com) that is very well known in this community. In addition to information about his games, it also offers free game demos and multiplayer

gaming support which draws between 30,000 and 50,000 hits per month. Pat has already expanded this Website to promote his work as a writer (www.prosimco.com/writitng). He has also established a MySpace presence (www.myspace.com/patproctor) which will soon support a blog and discussion forum so that readers can interact with him, ask questions, and provide comment about *Media War*, as well as his other work. The author will also establish an e-mail list to facilitate a new reader community.

In the past, Pat has written articles for magazines such as *Armchair General* and *Wargamer.com* that cater to the wargaming community. Pat will submit a series of articles to these magazines on topics related to *Media War* before and after publication. The author has also had his wargames reviewed and provided interviews in these and other magazines. As a result, Pat knows many of the writers for electronic gaming, wargaming, and simulation industry magazines. He will use these established contacts to garner reviews and interviews for *Media War*.

Over nearly a decade of marketing to the wargaming community, pat has amassed contact information for over two thousand wargamers, service members, and defense and commercial gaming industry professionals. Pat also maintains an e-mail list for each of his games. Pat will use all of these tools to publicize *Media War*. Pat will also promote *Media War* by leveraging his frequent blog entries and forum posts on popular wargaming Websites in this community.

Not all of Pat's marketing efforts in the wargaming community will be behind the keyboard. Pat has twice appeared at the Origins Game Convention in Columbus, Ohio. He will return to promote *Media War* after its publication.

THE MILITARY MARKET

There is a great deal of interest in the topics discussed in this book across the military. Pat will submit a number of articles to military

journals such as *Military Review*, *Parameters*, and *Proceedings* in preparation for the release of *Media War*. Pat is a lifetime member of the US Army Field Artillery Association and will leverage this membership with the association's magazine, the *Fires Bulletin*, in order to secure a review of *Media War* and potentially an interview. Pat will also secure reviews of *Media War* in other prominent military journals.

REGIONAL PROMOTION

Finally, Pat will work throughout the Midwest to promote *Media War*. He has attended the Midwest Literary Conference (Fall, Aurora, Illinois) in the past and will seek to appear as a speaker at that conference after *Media War* is published. There are also a number of other literary conferences in the Midwest, including the New Letters Writers Conference (Summer, Kansas City, Missouri) and the Nebraska Summer Writer's Conference (Summer, Lincoln, Nebraska), at which Pat will seek to appear as a speaker. Pat will also canvass Kansas City radio stations for reviews and interviews and solicit area bookstores for readings and book signings. During his annual trip back to Fort Wayne, Indiana to visit family for the holidays, Pat will seek opportunities to do readings, radio and newspaper interviews, and book signings in Fort Wayne, Indianapolis, Detroit, and Cleveland.

BOOK OUTLINE

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FORMAT AND LENGTH

Media War will consist of acknowledgements, two parts (containing fourteen chapters), and a bibliography. The manuscript will also include 20 black-and-white line drawings. The author can also provide photographs of many of the locations in Iraq described in the book. The total length of the manuscript will be about 250 pages and 70,000 words.

CHAPTER SUMMARY

Introduction**Chapter 1: The Media Battlespace**

The past half century of warfare has seen a revolution, the telecommunications revolution, which has fundamentally reshaped warfare and society in dramatic ways. The US military embraced this revolution and successfully reshaped itself by embarking on a revolutionary transformation, becoming networked and computerized. By doing so, it temporarily gained an asymmetric advantage over every other military in the world. However, it has been caught completely unprepared for a second revolutionary transformation, media-enabled insurgency, and now finds itself at an asymmetric disadvantage to its enemy in Iraq.

- The computerization and networking of the US military
- The enemy response--leveraging the global media
- The media battlespaces
 - o The physical battlespace
 - o The information battlespace
 - o The media battlespace
- The rest of this book...

Part One: The Media, the Insurgency, and the US Military in Iraq**Chapter 2: Understanding the Present**

A revolutionary reshaping of the interaction between the people and the military has taken place. The advent of 24-hour, global, electronic media, connects the people to the actions of their military in a way that has never existed before. As a result the tactical and operational decisions of the military are, like never before, subject to the scrutiny of the people.

- The models
 - The media system
 - A news story
- The rest of Part One...

Chapter 3: What is media-enabled insurgency?

In a letter written by Ayman al-Zawahiri (the "second-in-command" of al-Qaeda) to Abu Musab al-Zarqawi (at the time, the leader of al-Qaeda in Iraq), Zawahiri stated "I say to you: that we are in a battle, and that more than half of this battle is taking place in the battlefield of the media." He continues, "The aftermath of the collapse of American power in Vietnam--and how they ran and left their agents--is noteworthy." Using the media, the enemy seeks to drive the US military from Iraq just as it was driven from Vietnam.

- Does the enemy have this capability?
- How does this capability work?
 - The attack on the al-Rashid Hotel
 - The attack on the Red Cross
 - The beheading of Nick Berg
 - The bombing of a "wedding party"

- Is this capability a threat?
 - Fallujah I, March-April 2004
 - The Tet Offensive

Chapter 4: What is the media system in Iraq?

Once major combat ended, media agencies began establishing regional bureaus. War coverage continued while this process took place, using a gradually diminishing form of the embedded media apparatus that had covered the initial invasion. Once the bureaus were established, reporters began producing stories from inside the bureau. As security deteriorated, the number of reporters in each bureau dwindled because media outlets were forced to balance skyrocketing costs against waning public interest in the war.

- How does the media in Iraq work?
 - Media outlets
 - Stringers
 - Reporters
 - The enemy
 - The US military
- How has the media arrived at this solution?

Chapter 5: What is the US military's capability?

What did the US military do differently in Fallujah II that it had not done in Fallujah I? Quite simply, it controlled access. It did not control it by barring the entry of journalists. The US military controlled access by *facilitating* journalists. Practically everyone who wanted to embed was allowed to embed, including "hostile" Arab press. The voracious media hunger to report the story was fed by good, on the scene reporting. This completely drowned out the enemy's efforts to influence the media.

- Can the US military defeat this enemy capability?
 - Fallujah II, November 2004
 - Samarra
- What is current US military doctrine?

Chapter 6: Crisis and revolution

The telecommunications revolution spawned the revolutionary form of warfare now called "Network-Centric Warfare," best characterized by the dramatic, lightning victories in the first Gulf War and the initial invasion of Iraq. But the telecommunications revolution has also spawned a second, less recognized revolution: the media-enabled insurgency. If the US military does not create a "counter-revolution", it will fade into irrelevance in the 21st century.

- Summary
- Media-enabled insurgency and the media battlespace
- The way ahead

Part Two: The Media-Enabled Insurgency in Iraq

Chapter 7: Media War as a Revolution

The concept of the revolution in military affairs (RMA) traces its roots to the Soviet examination of emerging US military capabilities in the seventies and eighties. Increasing use of computer technology, telecommunications, and precision-guided munitions in the US military all combined in the Soviet consciousness to constitute an alarming "revolution in military affairs". Their fears would not be realized until after the fall of the Soviet Union, in Operation Desert Storm. That success globalized the

concept of an RMA, and formed the foundations of a debate over whether these capabilities were, indeed, revolutionary.

- Media-enabled insurgency: a revolution
- Military revolutions and revolutions in military affairs
- The telecommunications revolution
- The rest of Part Two

Chapter 8: The Tactics of Media-Enabled Insurgency

The insurgency doctrine of Mao Tse-tung, which would form the foundation of nearly a half-century of nationalist insurgencies, in its original form, was very much attrition-based warfare. The goal of the Maoist guerilla was to defeat the military force of the government. There was no point in trying to persuade government leaders of the hopelessness of their cause; they could not surrender. To surrender meant their annihilation. To quote Mao himself, "Oppose fighting merely to rout the enemy, and uphold fighting to annihilate the enemy." The only way to victory for Mao Tse-tung was to annihilate the armies of the state and supplant the government's military power with his own.

- What tactics does the enemy employ in Iraq?
- These tactics throughout history
 - Maoist revolutionary warfare
 - Gandhi's nonviolent movement as a "hybrid insurgency"
 - Propaganda and counter-propaganda in WWI

Chapter 9: Organizing to Fight a Media War

The US military's enemies in Iraq are legion. Even if one only examines the media-enabled enemy which are the topic of this book, the groups quickly become too numerous to count. The Islamic State of Iraq (ISI), al-Qaeda in

Iraq (AQI), and Jaysh al-Mahdi (JAM, the so-called "Mahdi Militia") are just a few of the groups employing media war against US forces in Iraq. There is little or no coordination between them, and they fight each other as often as they fight the US military, but they share one goal in common: the humiliating withdrawal of the US military from Iraq.

- What is the organizational structure of the enemy in Iraq?
- The history of organizing for chaos
 - The IRA
 - Maoist revolutionary warfare
 - The Vietcong
 - The Mafia in America

Chapter 10: The Doctrine of the Media-Enabled Insurgent

The so-called "Manchester document" is a "how-to" manual for any would-be al-Qaeda cell. Captured during a raid in Manchester, England by authorities, it is a valuable window into the doctrine of media-enabled insurgency. The enemy sees the media as one of many "arenas" in which its struggle occurs: "In addition, it is imperative to stand against darkness in all arenas: the media, education, [religious] guidance, and counseling, as well as others." It goes on to explain that the physical acts of crime, terror, and combat are all simply means of defeating "darkness" in these arenas.

- Enemy doctrine in Iraq
 - Writings of Bin Laden, al-Zawahiri, and al-Zarqawi
- Terror, insurgency, and doctrine: a history
 - Terror doctrine
 - Insurgency doctrine

Chapter 11: Media Technology on the Modern Battlefield

Vietnam was the first "TV war". By 1966, over 90 percent of American households had at least one television. This had a direct impact on how the American people got their news. In a poll conducted in 1964, 56 percent of respondents said they "got most of their news" from Television, as opposed to other media. By 1972, this number had grown to 64 percent. As only the "big three" (ABC, CBS, NBC) dominated the television landscape, three companies provided news to (and informed political opinion for) over two thirds of the nation. Standing astride this new colossus was Walter Cronkite, anchor of the CBS news and, as he was frequently called, "the most trusted man in America".

- The technology of the media battlespace?
- A brief history of the images of war
 - "Yellow journalism" during the Spanish-American War
 - Journalism during World War II
 - The first "television" war: Vietnam

Chapter 12: Why is America Vulnerable?

Media outlets and politicians decry any US government interference with any press, anywhere in the world. This even extends to using media to influence the populace inside Iraq. In 2005, the *Los Angeles Times* reported on a secret program run by the Lincoln Group for the US military. The contractor reportedly employed Arab linguists to write articles for Iraqi newspapers and paid the newspapers to run them without attributing the source to either Lincoln Group or the US military. Political leaders and the media pounced on the allegations. Massachusetts Senator, Edward M. Kennedy, said that the program "speaks volumes about the president's credibility gap. If Americans were truly welcomed in Iraq as liberators, we wouldn't have to doctor the news for the Iraqi people." Lynne Duke's *Washington Post* article

on the program had the subheading, "Propaganda? Nah, Here's the Scoop, Say the Guys Who Planted Stories in Iraqi Papers."

- "Free security"
- Free press
- Free speech
- Free people

Chapter 13: Responding to a Revolution

The French had every reason to discount the developments in combined arms warfare in Germany before World War II. The French experience with tanks in World War I had been lackluster at best. Air power as a compliment to ground maneuver was untested. Military thinkers before World War I had been convinced that offensive war would be decisive, only to see those hopes die in the no-man's land of trench warfare. All of these preconceptions made the German victory in only a few weeks in 1940 all the more stunning. The proof was in the results. The changes the Germans had made represented a revolution in military affairs, creating a temporary asymmetry between Germany and the Allies.

- Summary
- A counterrevolution in military affairs

Conclusion

Chapter 14: Conclusion

The US military response to media-enabled insurgency has been deeply rooted in post-Vietnam public affairs doctrine. The US military, as this dogma dictates, maintains an aloof indifference to the war raging in the media battlespace. It provides pictures and video to the media and the public

showing Soldiers bringing medical supplies to hospitals. It engineers school openings and then leads junkets of stringers to take pictures of the event. And, when bad things happen, it withholds comments and investigates, ceding precious news cycles to the enemy, which he happily fills with lies and deceptive pictures to erode the will of the American people.

- Summary
- The media "battlespace"
- Recommendations
 - Defer costs for media outlets
 - Facilitate reporters
 - Protect/target media high payoff targets
 - Redefine the role of public affairs
- Is it too late?

CHAPTER 12

WHY IS AMERICA VULNERABLE?

Media-enabled insurgency, as a revolution in military affairs (RMA), is designed for application against the United States, its military and its people. What are the essential elements of the US which make it vulnerable to this RMA? Why does the nation exhibit these characteristics? Are there feasible ways to "harden" the US and its nature to make it less vulnerable to this RMA? This chapter will explore the characteristics of the US and its military which make them susceptible to this RMA and how these vulnerabilities manifest themselves in the war in Iraq. It will then look for conditions in history under which these vulnerabilities have been successfully mitigated. Finally, this chapter will briefly examine the feasibility of recreating these conditions in the current war.

"FREE SECURITY"

John L. Gaddis, in his book, *Surprise, Security, and the American Experience*, recounts the observation of C. Vann Woodward that, in addition to

the tradition of "free land" (the vast, unexplored West that allowed the unimpeded American expansion from Atlantic to Pacific) Americans were also shaped by the tradition of "free security." For a significant portion of US history, after the end of the War of 1812, American security was in large measure guaranteed by its geographic location. As a result, it was able to expand and grow without the constant threat of invasion most other nations face. Gaddis identifies the sense of "free security" as the reason America reacts so dramatically to strategic shocks, "surprises" such as the Pearl Harbor and 9/11. It is the desire to return to this sense of "free security" that drives the nation's response to attack.

However, as Gaddis points out in passing in this same book, the nature of the attack on 11 September 2001 made it impossible for the US to mobilize as it had for World War I and II. Because the attacks on New York and Washington were terrorist attacks, a necessary component of recovery was to urge Americans to remain vigilant but go about their normal lives. There would be no conscription. There would be no rationing. There would be no war bonds. The US military would fight two wars simultaneously, a half-a-world away, while the American people went about their days as usual.

This separation between the American people and their military was not a creation of 9/11. This was simply a continuation of a semi-deliberate trend which had begun at the end of World War II. American security policy in the Cold War required that the President have the flexibility to employ the military without "drumming up" popular support or getting a declaration of war. A detailed discussion of this trend is beyond the scope of this book, but significant milestones in this journey include the War Powers Act, the Gulf of Tonkin resolution, the abolition of the draft and the rise of the all-volunteer force, and the precedents set by interventions in Grenada, Panama, Somalia, Bosnia, and Kosovo. For three generations before 9/11, the

passion of the people was increasingly removed from the security policy equation.

Most major American wars are characterized by a pattern of mobilization followed by post-war demobilization. Both North and South mobilized to fight the American Civil War. But America demobilized just as rapidly and was forced to prosecute national security policy "on the cheap": Indian Wars in the West, punitive campaigns on the Southern border, interventions across the Western Hemisphere, and most notably the Spanish-American War. World War I brought a massive mobilization followed by yet another precipitous drawdown of military capability. The Army and Marine Corps were forced to contend with a host of issues in Central and South America with limited active forces. Repeatedly in American history, America builds up to respond to strategic shocks and then is quick to return to the illusion of "free security."

But now, America is faced with the challenge of fighting a big war without mobilizing. The US government lacks all of the benefits mobilization has historically brought. Not only is the US without the vast military that conscription would provide; it is also without the mandate which, in the past, has allowed the American government to impose restrictions on free press and speech. Even more importantly, the lack of mobilization has denied the government a nation at war. Americans are still in the "free security" mindset. They do not see the wars being fought in the Middle East as a mortal threat to their nation or their way of life. As Victor Davis Hanson noted, "America believes that the entire region is not worth the bones of a single Marine."

FREE PRESS

A free, independent press is a pillar of the American political process. As the nation's founders envisioned, the fourth estate serves as a check on the power of the government. As the previous chapter highlighted,

there are technological reasons why it has become increasingly difficult for the government to impose restrictions on the media. But there are important cultural reasons as well. The default condition of the American press is to be completely unfettered. The previous chapter highlighted instances when, in times of war, the US government successfully placed restrictions on the press and its coverage of conflict. But the absence of a mobilized society has resulted in an American public operating under the illusion of "free security." In the current war, no such restrictions would be tolerated.

This limitation affects the battlefield in Iraq in several profound ways. Most obviously, it allows media outlets in Iraq to cover any aspect of the war they wish, in any way they wish. But it also has more subtle impacts that indirectly but dramatically impact the way the war is fought and the way it is perceived by the American public. Consider how adversary media (independent or enemy-sponsored Arab-language media which caters to the enemy's constituency) is treated in Iraq. Because the principle of a free press is so fundamental in American culture, in the minds of Americans it extends even to adversary media outlets. When news broke that the Bush administration was pressuring Doha over the political leanings of al-Jazeera in January 2005, an angry Michael Botein, professor and director of the Media Center at New York Law School, wrote in the *New York Times*:

The administration's pressure to shut down Al Jazeera, the leading Arabic television satellite station, is an embarrassment. It comes while the president boasts that United States-supported broadcasters -- such as Radio Free Europe, Radio Liberty and Radio Martí -- aid his "democracy" goals. Broadcasters cannot be subsidized in the United States and banned in allied countries.

Media outlets and politicians decry any US government interference with any press, anywhere in the world. This even extends to using media to influence the populace inside Iraq. In 2005, the *Los Angeles Times* reported on a secret program run by the Lincoln Group for the US military. The contractor reportedly employed Arab linguists to write articles for Iraqi newspapers and paid the newspapers to run them without attributing the source to either Lincoln Group or the US military. Political leaders and the media pounced on the allegations. Massachusetts Senator, Edward M. Kennedy, said that the program "speaks volumes about the president's credibility gap. If Americans were truly welcomed in Iraq as liberators, we wouldn't have to doctor the news for the Iraqi people." Lynne Duke's *Washington Post* article on the program had the subheading, "Propaganda? Nah, Here's the Scoop, Say the Guys Who Planted Stories in Iraqi Papers." The article goes on to say of the program:

Bombs are blasting in Baghdad. War fills the air there and fills the airwaves here. But a more quiet war -- the information war -- is waged by stealth, in the words and images deployed by pundits, partisans, policymakers, propagandists, psychological operators and influence specialists, both civilian and military.

The American people reject the interference of their government in the media, any media, even inside a war zone.

Because the US government lacks the mandate provided by national mobilization, it lacks the ability to impose any restrictions on the media. (As the previous chapter noted, imposing such restrictions might be impossible anyway, given the technology provided by the telecommunications revolution.) It even lacks the ability to influence foreign media without provoking public outrage. In the absence of restriction or influence, the

media is only limited by security and the amount of money it is willing to spend to cover the war. The money it is able to spend is, in turn, dictated by public interest about the war, communicated to the media in terms of readership and ratings. Public interest, in turn, is dictated by what the media chooses to cover about the war. As a result, the media serves up what they think the American people want to see: car bombs and American Soldiers engaged in combat. The narrative for the war in Iraq is driven primarily by the desire of media outlets to get the "biggest bang for the buck," to attract the largest audience possible while keeping costs as low as possible.

FREE SPEECH

At the heart of a free press is the principle of freedom of speech, guaranteed by the First Amendment to the US Constitution. In the age of the telecommunications revolution, the Internet has become the "public square," the forum for the public expression of ideas. Via Websites and 'blogs, all voices become equal in the media battlespace. The only price of admission is the cost to connect to the Internet. As the previous chapter highlighted, enemy groups in Iraq have used this medium to distribute their visual images and establish their credibility as competitors for Iraq's future.

The US military, by contrast, has done very little to engage in this forum. According to Frank Cilluffo, director of the Homeland Security Policy Institute at George Washington University, "There is only one side on the [Internet] battlefield, and it isn't us." A report released by the institute in May 2007 indicates that the enemy has complete freedom of action on the Internet and the US government and military is not engaging them in this medium. Why is the enemy even able to have a presence on the Internet at all? After all, US military research created the Internet. Surely the military has the ability to take down enemy Websites.

The military term for attacking enemy Internet Websites is computer network attack (CNA). JP 3-13, *Information Operations*, defines CNA as follows:

Computer network attack - Actions taken through the use of computer networks to disrupt, deny, degrade, or destroy information resident in computers and computer networks, or the computers and networks themselves.

The fact that the definition and doctrine exists is at least circumstantial evidence that the capability exists. The *Operational Law Handbook* adds, "Equipment necessary for CNA is readily available and inexpensive, and access to many computer systems can be obtained through the Internet." It then goes on to indicate that the "lead" for computer network operations is US Strategic Command (STRATCOM). It seems likely that the US military has the capability to attack enemy Websites. If this is the case, why doesn't it simply shut down the enemy in this region of the media battlespace?

One can make a relatively educated guess about why such activity does not occur simply based on the headlines. The simple answer is that the enemy is using US laws against the US military. One way in which enemy groups do this is by placing their Websites on servers in America. For instance, Jay Lyman of NewsFactor.com found that a site, PalestineInfo.com, which purports to speak for Hamas and glorifies their suicide bombing activities, is hosted by a company called OMS with servers in Connecticut and Chicago. According to James Kirkhope, director of the Terrorism Research Center in Washington, al-Qaeda is using servers in the US as well. He says this is a common practice with terrorist groups and their sites can only be shut down if they violate privacy laws or collect money on behalf of a declared terrorist organization.

The government is powerless to shut down sites that simply promote al-Qaeda or show images or video of terrorist acts. The enemy is using the basic freedom afforded to every American, the right of free speech, to attack the will of the American people to prosecute the war in Iraq.

If the US military cannot engage and disrupt enemy Websites, why doesn't it compete with the enemy by using the Internet to influence populaces just as the enemy does? Again, the answer lies in the nature of the American people and their jealous defense of the freedom of speech. Just as a cultural aversion exists in America to the government influencing the media, a cultural aversion exists to the government influencing the people themselves. In the last century, this aversion has manifested itself in a body of laws in part inspired by the American censorship and propaganda experience in World War II. In 1948, Congress passed the Smith-Mundt Act which inaugurated the US Information Agency (USIA) and the concept of public diplomacy (promoting the US and its ideals abroad). This act included provisions which explicitly prohibited public diplomacy products from being disseminated in the United States. These prohibitions were strengthened in the Foreign Relations Act of 1972. The Zorinsky amendment to this act also prohibited any federal funding of government efforts to influence the American people. It is this body of laws that created the deep doctrinal separation between psychological operations (PSYOP) and public affairs.

This sensitivity also prevents the US military from engaging the enemy's constituent population on the Internet. As Major Angela Maria Lungu, primary author of FM 3-05.30, *Psychological Operations* observed in September 2001, "The major arguments against Internet PSYOP concern isolation of target audiences, namely preventing Americans from receiving Internet products." It is the fear of PSYOP products traveling through the borderless realm of the Internet and seeping into American public discourse that prevents the US military from engaging in the war of ideas on the Internet. To understand

just how restrictive this prohibition is, consider the definition of psychological operations from the JP 3-53, *Joint Doctrine for Psychological Operations*,

Psychological operations: Planned operations to convey selected information and indicators to foreign audiences to influence their emotions, motives, objective reasoning, and ultimately the behavior of foreign governments, organizations, groups, and individuals. The purpose of psychological operations is to induce or reinforce foreign attitudes and behavior favorable to the originator's objectives.

Basically, any information intended to influence a foreign audience is a PSYOP product. E-mails, 'blog entries, pictures, videos, or text in Web pages are all PSYOP, as long as their intent is to influence "foreign governments, organizations, groups, [or] individuals" in a way that is "favorable to the originator's objectives." This describes virtually any activity in which the US military could possibly engage except purely informational content for the American public (public affairs products). The American paranoia about the government influencing the public has completely barred the US military from operating on the Internet.

FREE PEOPLE

It is so fundamental that it is easily overlooked, but this entire RMA rests on the premise that the public being influenced has influence over its government. After all, there is no point in trying to sway the "passions" of the people in the United States except to overcome the "reason" of the government. Were the government not responsive to the people, their opinion or feelings about Iraq would be irrelevant.

But, if this RMA is meant to undo the reason of national security policy by appealing to the emotions of the people, and the majority of people are now in favor of some form of withdrawal from Iraq (in April 2007, 64 percent of the people favored a timetable for withdrawal) why is the US military still in Iraq? The answer is that the US is a representative republic rather than a true democracy. Because head of state and commander-in-chief are the enumerated powers of the President, the American people normally only get to vote directly on foreign policy and national defense issues once every four years.

By late Spring 2007, an interesting dynamic had emerged in America which illustrates the complex interaction between the government, public opinion, and the media. The newly Democratic Congress passed a bill which, in addition to funding the war in Iraq, set a timetable for withdrawal. As stated above, American public opinion supported this bill by 64 percent. The President, however, vetoed the bill. The Senate, split 51-49 in favor of the Democrat-sponsored bill, was unable to override the veto. The vote was split along party rather than public opinion lines. Rather than responding directly to the popular mood, House and Senate Republicans seemed to be making a political calculation based on what they believed would be the condition of Iraq in Fall 2008, when they would again be up for reelection. In part, this opinion was informed by congressional testimony from General David Petraeus, the commander of Multi-National Force-Iraq. But it was also informed by reports in the media of conditions in Iraq.

Lest one draw a comparison with so-called fourth generation warfare (4GW) or classic anti-colonial insurgency doctrine, it is important to make a distinction here. In these earlier forms of warfare, the insurgent committed acts of violence in order to convince political leaders that their cause is hopeless; the strategy was to appeal to the reason of policy-makers in order to force a withdrawal. Congressmen and senators have the opportunity to

travel to Iraq. In fact, a study in August 2007 showed that 75 sitting US senators had been to Iraq. The same study found that nearly half of all freshman congressmen, 24 of 55, had traveled to Iraq. (Admittedly, those who do travel to Iraq seldom spend more than a single day there, usually visiting only a location or two in the Green Zone.) Political leaders also have access to senior military leaders and intelligence which the average American lacks. Responsible public officials, armed with direct observation of the war in Iraq, US intelligence, and answers from senior US military leaders must know that the enemy will never defeat the US militarily. When a political leader sees news reports in the media, he is making a political calculation about how the news stories will affect his constituency. He is also making a political calculation about whether the news will improve before his next election. Thus, political leaders are not influenced by media-enabled insurgency, but by the effect they perceive that media-enabled insurgency is having on the American people.

THE NEW COST OF FREEDOM

Media-enabled insurgency can only be exercised against a liberal democracy. It is because of the American tradition of a free and independent press that the US government is not able to limit US media access to the operational area. This tradition also hinders the ability of the US government to impose restrictions or even accountability on adversary media. This tradition even limits the ability of the US military to use local media to influence the populace in Iraq. The right to free speech in America cripples the US military's ability to disrupt or challenge the enemy's use of the Internet. As a result of these limitations, the enemy has complete freedom of action in the media battlespace.

The American government's solution to this problem in past wars has been national mobilization. The previous chapter chronicled the measures the

US government employed in World War I and II to limit the production of visual information. But these extreme measures all require that the nation's sense of "free security" be violated, that the population be conditioned by national mobilization to accept temporary surrender of freedoms for the greater good.

Such a dramatic transformation of the national psyche requires a strategic shock which shatters the nation's illusion of free security. The strategic shocks that began the current war, the Global War on Terrorism, were the terrorist attacks in New York and Washington on 11 September 2001. But this mobilization did not occur. Americans were told that the terrorists were attacking America because she was free; if Americans gave up some of their freedoms, the terrorists somehow achieved victory.

Perhaps it was a mistake to cast this war as a war on terrorism. Perhaps, if the war had been cast as a war against nations that support terrorism, mobilization would have been possible. Maybe one could have parsed the argument: this was a war on terrorism but the nation had to approach it in a new way (requiring the surrender of some freedoms on a limited basis).

These possibilities have faded now; the die is cast. The US military is engaged in a war while the American people, in obedience to the first direction of their President, are remaining vigilant while going about their normal lives. The sting of the attacks has faded and it is now impossible to rekindle the anger necessary to persuade Americans to willingly cede their freedoms. For the remainder of the war in Iraq, and probably the Global War on Terrorism, the US military will be permanently handicapped in its ability to challenge the enemy in the media battlespace.