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MILITARY INFORMATION AND ITS IMPORTANCE FOR UNDERSTANDING THE INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL-MILITARY PHENOMENON

Ovidiu MOȘOIU

Faculty of Aeroanautical Management, „Henri Coandă” Air Force Academy, Brasov, Romania

Abstract: *From the perspective of policy makers, the military information is a notification system with the purpose of triggering reactions, which in turn determine the actions. Responding promptly to external signals represented by primary information and informing in an appropriate way, the military and military-political decision makers, can prevent aggression, this being the reason why between military intelligence and policy makers needs to exist a continuous two-way communication path that is able to allow notification and react approach to any threat, communication being the key factor of transmitting the military information. This article focuses on the analysis of military intelligence seen as an important element of international military-political structures, also focusing on the place and role of military information systems providing information for effective strategic decisions.*

Keywords: *military decision makers, military information, military information systems, information environment, military terminology, data, information, knowledge, information products*

1. INTRODUCTION

In our days, it is more and more necessary to find ways to estimate the amount of information needed and being sufficient to perform the necessary tasks, due to the fact that information began to overwhelm both the volume, diversity and dynamics of the phenomena described, and the growing need of its distribution among individuals and departments that process and distribute it in a periodical manner. Thus, it is necessary to limit the amount of information only to be used to enable the military and military-political international order to preserve national interests and prevent aggression, facts that are only possible by knowing the elements of military information assessment, its characteristics and its parameters.

The military information is „a message concerning the facts and the military and military-political events witch have to be understood, used by governing structures and sent to executive structures to help achieve goals.”[9] Data and information in military terminology is defined in terms of finality and must ensure a level of understanding of the environment so that it can be used by the consumer. The data is defined as: representations of events, concepts or instructions presented in a note that can be used in formal communication, interpretation, analysis, human processing or by automatic means, any representations; such characters written or in any other form that can be attached analogue to that meaning[8], representation of information in a formalized manner that can be transmitted, interpreted or

processed[2]; raw signals transmitted between any two centers or obtained from the environment by a collector of any kind (human, mechanical or electronic).[5]

Also, in terms of military terminology, information is defined as: events, data or instructions in any enclosure and for any configuration, meaning that man, as an individual, attaches data by means of conventions used in their representation[8], data processed in order to be understood[5] (people give data more generally in cognitive hierarchy).

2. MILITARY INFORMATION CONCEPTS, FEATURES, REQUIREMENTS, CLASSIFICATIONS

Military information is important for understanding both the military and international political-military phenomena and to eliminate uncertainty about the occurrence of various anomalies in its progress, for which consideration it should be given more importance to the military information characteristics, as follows:

- *The age of information* - it is the time elapsed between when the information was collected and when it will be used by the analysis and synthesis organs;
- *Accuracy* - means that information elements have to form a complete and real informative picture of the described event. Accuracy of information can be appreciated by the number of responses to requests for information and the total number of application ratio, or the degree of information required to assure objective reflection of reality;
- *Opportunity* - reflects the need for providing information to the analyst officer when he needs it, in real time, in order to prevent events that could affect national interests (preventing surprise, aggression);
- *Form* - directly influences the speed of information and speed product decision development ;
- *Ability to integrate* - to achieve maximum information from a minimum processed primary information; the contribution of each information to create the informative image;

- *The complex character* - encompassing elements that allow the formation of a comprehensive picture of the process, event or situation. Efficiency is influenced by the degree of completeness of the following information barriers: *historical* (accessibility to information is directly proportional to its age), *geographic* (accessibility to confidential information is inversely proportional to the distance to the source), *economic* (availability depends on the ability to withstand "cost" purchase information) *terminology* (data are much more available to the intelligence officer than when referring to the military than in any other field) *language* (availability depends on the knowledge of the source of information or editing the source document) *regime* (accessibility to information is greater for democratic regimes which promote free access to information) *resonance* (availability depends on the extent to which information-gathering body is able to understand the meaning and value);
- *Utility* – getting appropriate information to the receiver;
- *Consistency* - logical ordering of signals in such manner up to acknowledge the information and afterwards, to accept and assimilate it;
- *Perishability* - refers to the time value of information (may be valid for a time, a time or have permanent value);
- *Rigor* - define the degree of accuracy, detail and brevity of information in relation to the essence of the message;
- *Vulnerability* - refers to the probability that the information can be canceled as a consequence of truth value (other information which may be true or false);
- *Argumentation* - characterizes the level of scientific substantiation of statements or information by logical demonstrations, all together confirming the truthfulness of its content and let us not forget the usefulness;
- *Reliability* - important information parameter that combines all the other features in order to give a value of true or false to the information;
- *Portability* - characterizes the ability of information to be processed and stored in an



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informational system without being semantically altered;

- *Clarity of semantics* - semantics are defined by the uniqueness of the message: 1 for clear and 0 for unambiguous;
- *Concision* - is a parameter derived from the restrictions imposed by the methods of cryptographic protection of information;
- *Form of the message* - messages are defined as classes of communication (signals, messages, graphics, radio transmission, wireless, email, etc..) or by coverage (digital, coded, secret);
- *Operational risk* - the risk assumed by the transmission of information from receptors to the analysis and synthesis structures;
- *Message confidentiality* - the message quality to resist attempts of unauthorized access during transmission, processing and storage in databases;
- Information status - can be: static (semantically) expressing the ratio of the information provided and the event to which it relates or it can be dynamic (programmatic) expressing the effect of information on beneficiaries.

Due to the high cost of obtaining and processing information, the need for identification and authenticating sources, safety related channels, and authorizing limited access to information and receiving and understanding the transmitted information, military information must be precisely defined, clear, concise and obtained as a result of a explicitly stated request.

This information must have certain properties in order to be integrated into a global system and, therefore, be used. The information must meet certain requirements to be used. These requirements have to be as following: *to be necessary* - the leading factors have to depend on it at a specific moment of interest, *to be authentic* - it must not distort the reality and present events according to the reality, *to be*

exact - to not be ambiguous, can be used without the need for further details, *to be complete* - does not need to be supplemented, to be focused and relevant to the subject to which it relates, *to be appropriate* - be disseminated in the right time in order to be used in decision-making process, *to be recent* - the interval of time between the occurrence of a conflict that requires the intervention of the leader, until the time when the information at hand reaches the leader to be minimum, *to be rhythmic generated* - to reach a leading department with a established frequency in order to allow proper organization of the subordinate departments, *to be reliable* - the information must not be affected during collection, transmission and processing, *to have a dual nature* - the information should be objective (characteristic given by the intrinsic informational content), but also subjective (character given by the value attached to it).

Emphasizing the military dimension of the term, we can define the information (this concerns the processed information - *intelligence*) as "*a product resulting from the processing of information relating foreign nations, hostile or potentially hostile forces, elements or areas of operations or potential operations.*"[4] This term may be used to name the activities that lead to the emergence of information and, as a generic designation for those involved in the process of obtaining information.

Classifying information is done by highlighting the quantitative criteria, the qualitative side, the issues related to the action, the destination, the system features and procedures of sending it.

Depending on the destination of the information, there are two categories of information: *cyber information* - for the government as a process of determining the existence and operation of any system type, *non-*

cyber information - referring to the inorganic world and needs to be managed.

In relation to the characteristic of certain types of information systems, there are two categories of info: *technical information* - allowing the operation of technical systems, having a probabilistic expression, *social information* - intended for managing processes in different domains (social, economic, etc..) and governs the evolution of human society and the individual. Within this category, there are communicative types of information (which have a story), control information (which engages an action), organizational information (which generates a specific ordering) and recurring information (which ensures efficiency and auto regulation against hazard)[11].

Depending on the relationship between source, broadcast channel and receiver we can identify the following types of information:

- *Distributed computing* - there are no precisely established consignees and does not require communication channels (for example radio and television);

- *Oriented information* - has both known and unknown recipients, but receivers have common characteristics and can assimilate information; requires communication channels (radio,

thematic discussions on the Internet, books, magazines, scientific communications, etc.).

- *Group information* - the number of receptors is known to the source, the channels of communication are established by the source; the information can be assimilated;

- *Direct information* - which has a single recipient (both source and recipient are unknown, and the transmission channel has the required parameters); the information can be assimilated.

2. THE MILITARY INFORMATION SYSTEM (MIS), THE STRATEGIC DECISION SUPPORT STRUCTURE

The command and control of military operations, in addition to strategic information of national, political, social and economic interest, has to have a significant amount of specifically military information at all levels (strategic, operational and tactical). The strategic level information is integrated within the politico-military one, building the object of study that concerns the decision analysis and high-level control structures: the President, Parliament, CSAT, MAP.N, CNMC. The military intelligence structure plays a special role, its primary mission being to prevent strategic surprises/aggression (figure no. 1).

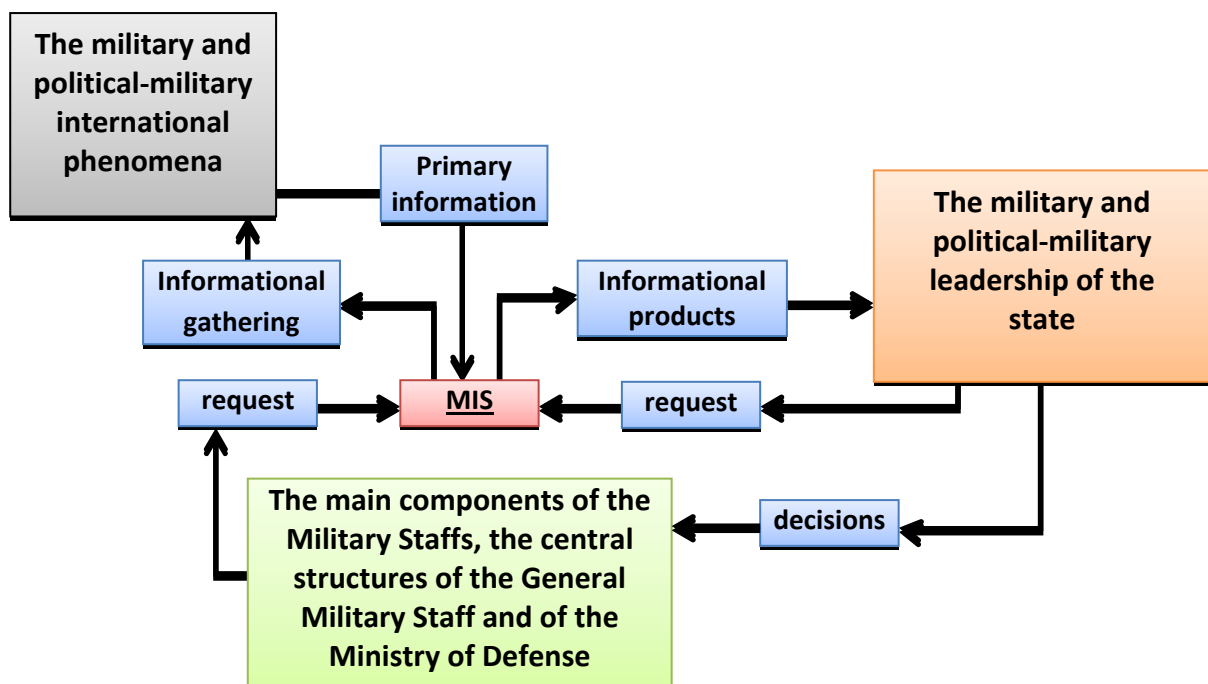


Figure no. 1 Location and MIS role in providing information for strategic decisions

Source: Gheorghe Savu, *The role and mission of military intelligence, activities necessary for the execution of strategic research*, GMR nr.6/2006, p.11



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Operational level of information is the result of an informational cycle conducted by the Operation Command Center using information received from strategic levels.

Tactical information derives from operational headquarters, large neighboring units subordinated and supporting their research.

The information may be divided up to three types according to its level:

- *Basic information* – it represents information about a particular subject that is stored in databases and updated both in peacetime and during operations. The main use of the basic information is to establish a general framework in order to start missions and meeting the information requirements relating immutable data such as terrain features in the area of operations and climate conditions that can occur during operations;

- *Current information* – it refers to the information that it is produced in response to the additional information concerning the current operation defined as "information that reflects the current situation at both strategic and tactical levels";[1]

- *Information about the target /objective* - it is defined as "information that describes and locates the components of a target or groups of targets and indicates the vulnerabilities and their relative importance." [1] Information regarding the target provides data for the identification of objectives. This process ensures that the support systems are used at maximum efficiency.

The technological progress has made its mark on every human activity, implicitly on the military ones. Any military action plan is based on information that is available, even if the information is incomplete, it cannot miss when planning and executing an action. Commanders have a modern information system capable of continuously collect data from areas of interest, adversary, own troops, weather, etc.. It is not

enough just linking all the data, it must be analyzed and disseminated in order to predict the opponent's intentions and capabilities. Each commander, at all levels, will try to discover the opponent's intentions, its possibilities in order to be able to make a correct decision and lead the mission, within certain ordered restrictions.

The informational architecture is performed on three levels (strategic, operational, tactical) and may include: structure management, the execution forces, information flow and information products. The informational structure is designed according to the mission, in order to satisfy the commander's needs of information at different echelons. The tactical combatant commanders are in need of tactical information and therefore subordinate intelligence forces will be organized in order to respond to these requests.

In the planning and analyzing of different intelligence activities, the aim that must concern us most is that of obtaining an informational advantage, a decision-making advantage and an advantage regarding the actions taken against the opponent. These informational advantages are generally accepted at three levels: information superiority, supremacy of information, information dominance. Defining the levels used to quantify the informational advantages of the situation we must take into consideration the following *factors*: the ability to obtain the largest possible amount of information from diverse sources, reducing the likelihood of using false information by adopting techniques, tactics and effective procedures for the collection, processing, transmission in various formats (fix format and dynamic format) and automatic processing of them; the capability of the communication systems for transmitting the entire flow of information, safely and on-time; the levels of protection and security of data and

information structures; the commander ability to use the information in order to take decisions, remaining one step ahead of the enemy etc.

For the success of the operation and the efficiency of the activities that have developed for the safety of the military information and the politically and military activities of the state, in time of peace and war, the modern military information defines the entire process of gathering the information, evaluation, coalition, interpretation and distribution, activities that are executed in a succession of well-defined algorithms.

The informational environment defines the source of information which operates with the informational system along with every technique support and human resources they have. The concept of informational environment is given by the characteristics of the informational systems, by composing fragments which are based on the information we have, referring to the whole amount of information, generators referring to the written and audio press, all sorts of publications, inventions, social, cultural, scientific manifestations, internet and publicity.

The informational systems that belong to some departments like economic or security, consider those elements of informational environment as well as their technique support as being open sources of information, focusing on the informational product in the security field.

The military informational environment can dispose decisions regarding the informational product coming from: one informational system, national systems and the departments of internal responsibility, national systems and departments of external responsibility, open sources. Specific to the defense department the informational environment is based on the action of the informational environment of the national security regarding the internal and external areas of defense and protection.

3. CONCLUSIONS

We appreciate that the defense structure is classified, limited to the public access. It can define its informational environment as being a coalition of resources and national security which includes people, technical support and the doctrines that are capable to assure the informational military action. At this we can add the informational exploitation and all the informational systems, open sources for the military informational environment and the commercial environment. A lot of states are adopting these informational sources at the highest rank.

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