Information Warfare

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Content

- Information warfare – definition
- Case studies
  - US
  - Russia
  - Czech Republic
  - War in Ukraine
- Information warfare as concept – critical reflection

Information warfare: concept

- Use of information to overpower the enemy
- *Information warfare is about gathering, providing, and denying information in order to improve one's own decision-making while damaging the enemy's.*
- Various techniques:
  - Psychological operations
  - Reconnaissance
  - Disinformation
  - Electronic and cyber warfare

Information warfare: development

- Observation about importance of information is classical in thinking about conflict
- Sun Tzu: *What is of supreme importance in war is to attack the enemy's strategy*
- But in 1990s significant reshaping of information space
  - Third revolution in warfare?
  - Cyberspace as a new domain of conflict for NATO (2016)
- Constant tension between technical (cyber) and human (psychological) aspect of IW

Information warfare: US tradition

- Institutionalization during WWII (Office of War Information operating between 1942 and 1945)
- Information operations key for success of D-Day
  - Operation Fortitude
- Abandoning after WWII
  - Negative attitudes towards propaganda
- Classical dilemma of democracy
  - Aim of IW is to achieve advantage on the battlefield

Information warfare: US tradition

- Lack of coordination
  - Mainly tradition in air force experimenting with electronic warfare
- Gulf war in 1991 as a triumph of deception
- First military manual in 1996
  - *Actions taken to achieve information superiority by affecting adversary information, information-based processes, information systems and computer-based networks while defending one's own information, information-based processes, information systems and computer-based networks.*

Information warfare: US tradition

- According to Libicki (2017) still lack of coordination and overfocus on technical aspect
- Army Cyber Command
  - Change of mission in 2019

Information warfare: Russian tradition

- Long-time practice
  - Maskirova – art of deception during conflict developed already at the beginning of 1900s
  - Field Regulations of Red Army from 1929 - *Surprise has a stunning effect on the enemy. For this reason all troop operations must be accomplished with the greatest concealment and speed.*
  - Important part of key military operations during WWII
    - Operation Bagration in 1944

Information warfare: Russian tradition

- Not limited to military affairs – 1989 perceived as result of successful Western information warfare
- War/conflict as normal state of international affairs
  - Aim is to achieve political objectives (military + non-military)
  - Sovereignty in information space (new authoritarian regimes, law about foreign agents)
- Annexation of Crimea
  - “Little green man” x “polite people”

Information warfare: CZ

- After 2014 need to react to new security environment
  - Russian propaganda present also in the Czech information space but general need to update state capabilities
  - Complex and messy process (Jankowicz, Eberle and Daniel)
- National Security Audit (2016)
  - *The old - new* ***manifestation of the influence of foreign power is then propaganda and the spread of disinformation such means of information warfare*** *through which foreign powers attempt to influence the state in the field of governance and use of communication and information channels or technologies through which it operates public opinion.*

Information warfare: CZ

- Establishing relevant institutions
  - Centre Against (Terrorism and) Hybrid Threats (2017)
  - National Cyber and Information Security Agency (2017)
    - Lukáš Kintr – IT specialist and manager
    - (previously Karel Řehka – military general and author of book Information warfare)
  - Cyber Forces Command (2020)
    - *CIW forces provide the ability to defend domestic parts of cyberspace, conduct infoops, infoops in cyberspace, PsyOps and CMI/CIMIC.*
  - National security advisor to the Prime Minister (2022)

Russian Aggression against Ukraine

- Significant information component from the start
  - US information about planned invasion
  - RU operation is executed in the way to maximize panic
  - UK successfully applies various IW tools to counter the invasion

Concepts

- Basic tool of science allowing research to describe phenomenon and formulate hypothesis
- Name – definition – cases
- Usefulness of concept
  - Resonance
  - Differentiation
  - Strength

Information warfare: conceptual critique

- Resonance
  - Information as key aspect or cyberspace as a new domain?
- Differentiation
  - Was there any war/conflict without deception?
  - Difference between information war, propaganda and strategic communication?
- Strength
  - Disinformation, intelligence gathering and destruction of computer networks under one conceptual umbrella?

Thank you for your attention.