



Influence: a power tool to be developed within the armed forces

military-Earth thinking notebook

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Histoire & stratégie

To speak of influence^[1] in the armed forces is to have in mind "war within the populations" or the implementation of procedures to preserve our freedom of action. Some allies also use influence to facilitate the signing of economic contracts. In fact, France's current trade deficit and the opportunities offered to military personnel in operations could lead to the development of a new strategy of influence within the armed forces, in an interministerial framework.

1) For Patricia Adam (Chair of the National Defence and Armed Forces Committee of the National Assembly), exercising influence means changing the behaviour of others, without violence, so that they act in the desired direction, consciously or not.

Influence: a way to preserve our freedom of action in operations

- Methods developed and proven by great military thinkers

Since the end of the 19th century, the concept of "war within populations" [1] has become firmly rooted in mentalities. In a way, this concept consists of influencing local populations, mainly through open actions of development aid, governance and security, but also through actions [2] of psychological warfare, propaganda, disinformation. They are intended to make people adhere to a cause, to legitimize military operations, to demonize the adversary or to demobilize the opposing camp. Two great military leaders can then be cited: on the one hand, Marshal Gallieni, whose principle of progressive penetration (or the concept of the oil stain) is "the most fruitful method, which consists in gaining ground forward only after the enemy has been demobilized". On the other hand, Marshal Lyautey insisted on the imperative need to "convince rather than coerce".

- Legitimacy of the concept and implementation on the ground

Since Gallieni, Lyautey, then Trinquier and Galula, the conceptual and doctrinal corpus of armies has been consolidated through numerous publications relating closely or remotely to influence[3]. 3] The main reference documents are: the Joint Doctrine (DIA 3.10.01) on Military Influence Operations (MIO) and the Joint Concept (CIA 3.10-A) on Influence in Support of Operational Commitments written by the Joint Centre for Concepts, Doctrine and Experimentation (CICDE). Currently, influence is part of the continuum of operations, especially during the phases of environmental consolidation (stabilization) and the return to political balance (normalization). According to the CICDE, "IMOs include all activities whose purpose is to influence the behaviour of individuals, groups or organizations (info-targets) in order to (...) lead them to act in favour of the mission or/and encourage them not to take action in opposition to the action of the armed forces". In this framework, in order to maximise the effects obtained, the IMOs are linked to the other operational functions in the field: APEO[4], targeting, COMOPS[5] and ACM [6].

The armed forces therefore use influence at the tactical and operational levels, but hardly at the strategic level. This shortcoming is all the more detrimental in view of the current difficult economic situation in our country and the recognised setbacks in terms of the conquest of economic markets in former or current theatres of operations.

The economic situation of our country is intimately linked to the need to go further...

- Priority to economic recovery

France's trade balance has been in deficit for almost ten years. As such, all ministries are strongly committed to reversing this trend. The Quai d'Orsay can be taken as an example through its action plan released on 23 August 2012. The will of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is, among other things, to "make economic diplomacy a priority in the organisation of our diplomatic tool" and to "develop economic influence". For Mr. Laurent Fabius[7], "it is necessary to create the economic reflex in the service of activity in France". This requires a change in mentality and a redefinition of missions at all hierarchical levels for agents working in France, but especially for those deployed abroad. This awareness reveals the need for change in order to develop economic influence, train civil servants in the economic challenges facing France, and promote the development of the French economy as a whole. This awareness reveals the need for change in order to develop economic influence, train civil servants in economic issues, recruit experienced executives, communicate more effectively and open up to economic players, whether French or foreign.

- The need to be pragmatic and to reconsider the desired end state (EFR)

Our experience allows us to affirm that a major intervention by France in a country does not imply a monopoly on post-conflict economic contracts. Mali can be taken as an example because, over and above the success of Operation Serval and the many efforts made, France has experienced a fairly significant economic failure in this country. Indeed, out of the approximately €230 million in funding granted by the UN to support MINUSMA, France would have won only a tiny part of the contract (of the order of €200,000). This ratio is totally disproportionate to the commitment made on the ground. The markets that

will be opened up in the short term for the reconstruction of the country, as is the case in Libya, will most certainly give rise to new inter-state confrontations in which France will have to fight to get its way.

Since the wars currently being fought are no longer "total wars" in the Clausewitzian sense, the armed forces are no longer seeking to win the "decisive battle". Their objective is to reach an REF defined before the deployment of troops and achieved through lines of operation (e.g. governance, development, security). Within this framework, without seeking to transform the soldiers engaged in theatres of operations into RRTs [8], more pragmatism could be envisaged. It would consist in reconsidering RRT by including preparation for the conquest of economic markets in the lines of operations. The privileged links that the military establishes with local authorities, sometimes and often at the highest level, are undeniable advantages.

Our country's economic recovery is therefore one of the government's top priorities. Thanks to their special relationship with local governments, the military could become a matchmaker to facilitate the conquest of economic markets that we are trying to win against a host of states that have not necessarily participated in military coalitions. This new task must involve the development of a new strategy of influence within the armed forces, all within an inter-ministerial framework.

... by developing a new strategy of influence within the armed forces

- A more strategic vision of influence among some of our allies

Since "cooperation" [9] is more important than ever, our allies do not hesitate to lobby and use influence as a weapon [10] to win economic contracts in theatres of operation. This observation is partly justified by the content of schooling at the Westpoint Military Academy, the Royal Military Academy of Sandhurst and by the academic background of the cadets. Indeed, from their first years in the armed forces, cadets integrate the economic and defence issues of their country in order to respond to them during their future deployments abroad. At the same time, British doctrine requires that one must influence before acting. This indirect strategy advocated by Sun Tzu is an art of warfare based on abandoning the enemy by using soft power tools such as cunning, influence, espionage, etc. In his book "Introduction to Strategy", General Beaufre also urges to learn this form of strategy. Finally, the director of the School of Economic Warfare, Christian Harbulot, specifies [11] that "the United States and Great Britain have been changing their mode of organization for several decades. Their respective armies have integrated non-military issues and are participating in the process of capturing [economic] markets.

- The possibility of strengthening training within armies and the synergy between the ministries concerned

The development of a new strategy of influence in the armed forces inexorably requires an extension of influence to economic issues and more specifically to training in economic intelligence (EI) [12]. 12] This major evolution will not be possible without substantial and adapted training. At first glance, the addition of a module to the Coëtquidan Schools seems unsuitable because the vast majority of young officers will initially be deployed in operations in a tactico-operative and non-strategic framework. On the other hand, senior officers in the intelligence and ACM fields would constitute an appropriate breeding ground for participating in this new strategy of influence. A number

of avenues are then conceivable:

- EI training for senior CIAE officers [13];
- like some officers holding a technical diploma (TD), specialized training in CI for the War School graduates;
- reinforcement of IMO in the Special Forces;
- creation of career paths in CI for intelligence officers.

At the same time, the development of this new strategy of influence in the armed forces cannot be truly effective without synergy with actors from other ministries. Indeed, in a theatre of operations, the signing of economic contracts is elaborated by protagonists outside the Ministry of Defence. An increase in the number of posts on external mobility (MOBEX) at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Economy and Finance would make it possible to outline the features of efficient coordination between state officials.

Ultimately, in order to respond to our country's economic challenges, the government is tending to review certain prerogatives, particularly within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. On the side of the armed forces, the development of a new strategy of influence seems unavoidable. Indeed, the personnel of the Department of Defence can, without a doubt, take its place on the chessboard of inter-state confrontations other than armed confrontations. They are engaged in the front line in theatres of operations where the signing of major contracts is at stake during the stabilisation and normalisation phases. Thus, some senior officers could, through appropriate training, become facilitators for the highest local authorities. They would then prepare the ground for officers from other ministries who would come to initiate and finalize the signing of economic contracts. This major change in our modes of action depends irrevocably on the understanding of influence as a tool of national power.

1) New strategic paradigm according to Sir Rupert Smith.

2) These actions are called "indirect". They are part of certain modes of action of COS units.

3 | PIA 03-152: Joint Information Operations Concept - 2005

PIA 03-252: Joint Information Operations Doctrine - 2006

IAP 3.252-1: Joint Operational Communications Doctrine - 2007

DIA - 3.10.01: Military Influence Operations - 2008

CIA-3.10(A)_INFLUENCE(2012): Influence in Support of Operational Commitments - 2012

AJP 3.10.1: Allied joint doctrine for psychological operations - 2007 (NATO)

Concept for EU PSYOPS in EU-led military, (DR) - 2004 (EU)

4) Actions on perceptions and the operational environment. Formerly Information Operations (IO).

5 | Operational communication.

[6] Civil-military cooperation.

[7] At the closure of the Enterprise Day on 9 April 2013.

[8] Traveller representing the usher.

9] "A system of actors interacting on the basis of partial congruence of interests and objectives" -Dagnino G.B., Le Roy F., **Yami S.**- "A system of actors interacting on the basis of partial congruence of interests and objectives" -Dagnino G.B., Le Roy F., **Yami S.**- "The dynamics of cooperation strategies"» - 2007

10] General Vincent Desportes: "Influence is a weapon that one must learn to master". www.communicationetinfluence.fr - "External Operations and Influence Operations" - January 21, 2013.

[11] www.infoguerre.fr - "Les risques d'échec économique de la France au Mali" - 19 September 2013.

12] "Economic intelligence corresponds to all actions of research, processing and dissemination of information useful to economic actors with a view to its exploitation (...). This useful information is that which is needed by the various decision-making levels of the company or the community in order to improve its position in its competitive environment" - Manual of economic intelligence - PUF 2012.

13] Joint Center for Environmental Action. It was created by the merger, on 1 July 2012, of the joint civil-military action group (GIACM) and the joint military influence operations group (GIOMI).

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