

# MASTER OF SCIENCE IN DEFENSE ANALYSIS

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## REBUILDING AFGHANISTAN: COUNTERINSURGENCY AND RECONSTRUCTION IN OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM

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International efforts at the stabilization and reconstruction of Afghanistan are confronted by a paradox in their strategy for Operation ENDURING FREEDOM that has crippled their ability to locate and defeat the enemy and establish stability. In their narrowly focused pursuit of the strategy of attrition, coalition military forces have neglected the fundamental principle that guides small wars: that the protection of the population and the elimination of the influence of the insurgent forces are paramount to gathering the necessary intelligence to locate the threat. The disregard for the control of the population has eliminated the coalition's primary source of intelligence, directly impinging on its ability to locate or separate the insurgents from the population and trapping it in an operational quagmire. Additionally, international aid efforts have focused on short-term relief rather than long-term reconstruction, establishing the foundation for continued dependence and instability rather than self-sufficiency. The purpose of this thesis is not to limit or narrowly define the threat in Afghanistan as an insurgency, but to illustrate how the situation, when framed in terms of an insurgency, can be effectively managed and the threats eliminated to produce a stable and self-sustaining country on the world stage.

**KEYWORDS:** Counterinsurgency, Reconstruction, Afghanistan, Malaya, Philippines, Vietnam, Enduring Freedom

## TERRORIST APPROACH TO INFORMATION OPERATIONS

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This thesis provides insight into how terrorist organizations exploit the information environment to achieve their objectives. The study establishes an analytical Information Operations (IO) framework, by integrating U.S. military doctrine with a fundamental approach to IO theory. The framework proves useful in examining the IO tools terrorists have assembled and how they implement them to influence their target audiences. The thesis shows that terrorists are, indeed, naturally linked to the information environment by their nature and strategy. Generally speaking, all terrorists employ IO tactically to enhance their operations. However, many organizations have a profound understanding of the information environment and also have the ability to manipulate information to achieve their objectives. Since terrorist organizations are militarily weaker than the states they face and cannot rely on physical attacks to accomplish their goals, they must adopt an information strategy to achieve their objectives. This thesis emphasizes three primary conclusions. First, terrorists conduct violent attacks in the physical environment to enable operations in the information environment. Second, terrorists integrate offensive and defensive IO to survive and appear legitimate to potential supporters and to the state. Finally, terrorists intentionally target four different audiences, opposing, uncommitted, sympathetic, and active, to psychologically influence their perceptions.

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**KEYWORDS:** Information Operations, Information Warfare, Terrorism, Counter-Terrorism, Intelligence, Counter-Intelligence

### **AMPHIBIOUS AND SPECIAL OPERATIONS IN THE AEGEAN SEA 1943-1945: OPERATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS AND STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS**

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The Aegean Sea during the Second World War drew the attention of both the Allies and the Axis. However, although historians have chronicled the fall of Greece and Crete in the spring of 1941, little attention has been given to the war in the Aegean after 1941. From the early days of the Mediterranean war, Churchill especially believed that the elimination of the Italian occupation of the Dodecanese Islands would facilitate British operations in the Eastern Mediterranean and help to convince Turkey to enter the war on the Allied side. When, in the autumn of 1943, Churchill sought to realize these goals, he succeeded only in creating an operational disaster and provoking a minor crisis between the Western Allies.

For the British, the Italian surrender of September 1943 provided a window of opportunity to thrust through the Aegean into Greece and the Balkans. The Americans firmly rejected Churchill's proposals for operations in the Eastern Mediterranean as designed to serve British imperial interests, rather than those of the rapid defeat of Germany. Despite failure to secure U.S. support, Churchill nevertheless proceeded with operations against Kos and Leros, with disastrous results. However, the British were more fortunate in conducting special operations in the Aegean and against Crete in 1943 and 1944 to the end of the war. This thesis follows the main events that affected the Aegean Sea in the war, stressing issues of inter-allied relations, peripheral strategy, tactical solutions to strategic problems, and special operations.

**KEYWORDS:** 1943-1945, Aegean Sea, Dodecanese Islands, British Interests, Special Operations, Inter-Allied Relations

### **THE UNITED STATES AND ASSASSINATION POLICY: DILUTING THE ABSOLUTE**

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After two years fighting the "war on terror," the U.S. has reached a crossroads with its policy regarding assassination. Executive Order 12333, which explicitly and absolutely prohibits assassination, is still in effect. The ban, however, has been diluted and circumvented since its inception. Past administrations have targeted enemy leaders with "indirect" strikes, such as the 1986 attacks against Libya and the 1998 missile strikes in Afghanistan and Sudan. Currently, the U.S. deliberately targets individual enemies, whether in the context of an armed conflict, such as Afghanistan or Iraq, or in the War on Terror, such as the November 2002 Predator Hellfire missile strike in Yemen. This ostensibly duplicitous policy has caused controversy for the U.S., both internally among policy makers, military leaders, operatives, and the American public, and externally with the international community.

This thesis examines U.S. assassination policy in detail, and proposes recommendations for modernizing the Executive Order. The intent is to provide decision makers with a clear point of reference, and a framework for determining when assassination is the best - or at a very minimum the "least bad" - possible option for dealing with the complex and dangerous threats of modern conflict.

**KEYWORDS:** Assassination, War on Terror, Targeted Killing, Executive Order 12333, Yemen Predator Operation

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## **AIR FORCE TARGETING REFORM: ADDRESSING THE NEED FOR CHANGE**

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One prevailing trend characterizing U.S. operations has been the emphasis on overwhelming military strength and technologies. Heavy reliance on sophisticated weaponry as the JDAM, TLAM, CALCM, and other precision weapons during recent conflicts helps illustrate this present trend. Precision guided munitions, in combination with advanced technology, led the U.S. Air Force to measure success by counting total numbers of sorties flown and tonnage of ordnance employed versus assessing the effects that were achieved and goals obtained. However, as accurate as these "smart" weapon systems have become, without the benefit of a "smart" targeting process to identify the best means to employ these high tech solutions, their tremendous advantages in war are irrelevant. Targeting is a concept that is bound to and defines the very concept of airpower. Without a concept of targeting, the concept of airpower loses all meaning. Currently, the Air Force lacks overarching vision as to how the targeting process and those that perform this vital military function fit into the larger Air Force architecture. This lack of commitment to targeting negates the enormous advantages of America's sophisticated combat arsenal and if uncorrected, offsets the advantages of the precision and technology upon which so much faith is placed.

**KEYWORDS:** Targeting, Air Force Targeting, Targeteer, Targeting Specialist