



Soldiers from 2nd Battalion, 22nd Infantry Regiment, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division, conduct a combined arms live-fire exercise at Fort Drum, NY, on 6 February 2024. (Photo by SPC Kaylan T. Joseph)

ing a COA. It is the basis under which a leader takes what is available and successfully employs it against the adversary, outlining in the doctrine that those deductions should provide an information advantage whenever possible. FM 3-0 recognizes that maneuver and attrition are valid options for approaching a situation.²⁰ Whether conducting maneuver warfare or attrition, having an information advantage can be decisive. Understanding how to leverage persistent ISR to enable targeting and ground maneuver can provide opportunities to defeat the enemy. Still, our tactical-level doctrine does not specify those deductions beyond that one should seek an advantage. Information advantage is not the only thing a leader should seek when analyzing relative combat power, but it is one area they should consider. It should be clearly articulated in doctrine. This will help frame how leaders approach analyzing relative combat power and how they can use those deductions to bridge into generating options, arraying forces, and developing a concept of the option.

Currently, doctrine does not include much in-depth information during COA development, which again does not serve company-grade leaders well. Leveraging the warfighting functions towards achieving an information advantage is employing a combined arms approach. Doctrine should clarify this to leaders attempting to understand how to

develop a plan. Ultimately, commanders have to make decisions through planning and execution based on their understanding of the situation. ADP 6-0, *Mission Command*, clearly states how information relates to commanders' activities: "In the context of decision making, information is data that has been organized and processed in order to provide context for further analysis."²¹

Brand new platoon leaders should first master fire and maneuver and then, with experience, how the other warfighting functions are equally as vital to success. As leaders grow in a unit, they articulate concerns beyond fire and maneuver. This is a positive development, as leveraging the whole spectrum of assets available to achieve that edge in decision-making will serve the unit well. Again, information advantage is not the only way to frame what type of deductions leaders should search for while analyzing relative combat power. Still, it should be a key one and given consideration in doctrine. Leaders who understand how information provides opportunities for success will also better understand their framing of tactical risk.

Tactical Risk

An improved appreciation of information within ATPs 3-21.10 and 3-90.1 would better inform the understanding of tactical risk and how a commander can mitigate that tacti-

cal risk. Tactical risk falls into two general categories: Deliberate choices the commander makes in friendly actions or allowing an enemy action, and this understanding is informed by mission analysis.²² Improving how maneuver company-grade leaders incorporate information into mission analysis yields a better understanding of tactical risk. The adversary will properly integrate information into mission planning, and maneuver leaders must understand this to account for it.

A commander's chosen action to assume risk in information may provide a temporary advantage, but it must be mitigated. A commander may mitigate risk by using operations in the information environment. A unit may use EW to cue the redeployment of forces from one avenue of approach in the defense to another. A commander may employ deception to lure the enemy into an engagement area. EW jammers may reinforce a smaller force to induce confusion in an engagement area synchronized with direct and indirect fires. A commander has multiple options available, but he or she must appreciate that operations in the information environment exist and account for them during the troop leading procedures.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Information is relevant to company-grade maneuver leaders, and our doctrine should reflect information as a mission variable. Information does not belong solely to a public affairs team; it is not only relevant to civilian considerations or solely confined to messaging. Information is the connective tissue between all the warfighting functions, enabling leadership and decision-making. Terrain, weather, and the adversary can challenge assured communication to create an effect supporting an objective. Friendly forces can do the same thing. Cyber and space capabilities bring a lot to bear on operations in the information environment, many of which are beyond the ability of a rifle company commander to influence, but they are not the only areas. Camouflage, deception operations, EW, and smoke screens are capabilities internal to a brigade combat team that fall within the umbrella of information. ADP 3-13 defines information as "data in context to which a receiver (human or automated system) assigns meaning."²³ A maneuver company commander can manipulate the data, challenge how it is received, and even take advantage of the context.

The Army must update ATPs 3-21.10 and 3-90.1 to better incorporate information as a mission variable. FM 5-0 provides a good starting point, but it should not just be copied and pasted. Current conflicts reveal that the information environment is contested, and those at the tip of the spear need doctrine that reflects this reality and provides

Information is relevant to company-grade maneuver leaders, and our doctrine should reflect information as a mission variable... Information is the connective tissue between all the warfighting functions, enabling leadership and decision-making.

the necessary tools to operate successfully in this contested environment.

Notes

¹ Field Manual (FM) 3-0, *Operations*, October 2022, 1-23, https://armypubs.army.mil/epubs/DR_pubs/DR_a/ARN36290-FM_3-0-000-WEB-2.pdf.

² Army Doctrine Publication (ADP) 3-13, *Information*, November 2023, viii, https://armypubs.army.mil/epubs/DR_pubs/DR_a/ARN39736-ADP_3-13-000-WEB-1.pdf.

³ FM 5-0, *Planning and Orders Production*, May 2022, A-2, https://armypubs.army.mil/epubs/DR_pubs/DR_a/ARN36775-FM_5-0-001-WEB-3.pdf.

⁴ General Valerii Zaluzhnyi, "The Commander-In-Chief of Ukraine's Armed Forces on How to Win the War," *The Economist*, 1 November 2023, <https://www.economist.com.usnwc.idm.oclc.org/by-invitation/2023/11/01/the-commander-in-chief-of-ukraines-armed-forces-on-how-to-win-the-war>.

⁵ Army Techniques Publication (ATP) 3-90.1, *Armor and Mechanized Infantry Company Team*, October 2023, 1-1, https://armypubs.army.mil/epubs/DR_pubs/DR_a/ARN39568-ATP_3-90.1-000-WEB-1.pdf.

⁶ ADP 3-13, 1-12.

⁷ FM 5-0, A-4.

⁸ ADP 3-13, 1-1.

⁹ ATP 6-02.53, *Techniques for Tactical Radio Operations*, February 2020, 3-13, https://armypubs.army.mil/epubs/DR_pubs/DR_a/pdf/web/ARN20819_ATP_6-02x53_FINAL_WEB.pdf.

¹⁰ Franz-Stefan Gady, "How an Army of Drones Changed the Battlefield in Ukraine," *Foreign Policy*, 18 December 2023, <https://foreignpolicy.com/2023/12/06/ukraine-russia-war-drones-stalemate-frontline-counteroffensive-strategy/>.

¹¹ ADP 3-13, 1-12.

¹² Paul Mozur and Aaron Krolik, "The Invisible War in Ukraine Being Fought over Radio Waves," *The New York Times*, 19 November 2023, <https://www.nytimes.com/2023/11/19/technology/russia-ukraine-electronic-warfare-drone-signals.html>.

¹³ Dr. Lester W. Grau and Charles K. Bartles, *The Russian Way of War* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Foreign Military Studies Office, 2016), 290, <https://permanent.fdlp.gov/gpo106676/2017-07-The-Russian-Way-of-War-Grau-Bartles.pdf>.

¹⁴ ATP 7-100.3, *Chinese Tactics*, August 2021, 7-2, https://armypubs.army.mil/epubs/DR_pubs/DR_a/ARN34236-ATP_7-100.3-001-WEB-3.pdf.

¹⁵ FM 3-0, x.

¹⁶ ATP 3-21.10, *Infantry Rifle Company*, May 2018, B-24, https://armypubs.army.mil/epubs/DR_pubs/DR_a/pdf/web/ARN8519_ATP%203-21x10%20Final%20Web.pdf; ATP 3-90.1, B-24.

¹⁷ FM 3-0, 1-22.

¹⁸ FM 5-0, 7-6.

¹⁹ ADP 3-13, 2-14.

²⁰ FM 3-0, 1-3.

²¹ ADP 6-0, *Mission Command*, July 2019, 2-4, https://armypubs.army.mil/epubs/DR_pubs/DR_a/ARN34403-ADP_6-0-000-WEB-3.pdf.

²² ATP 3-90.1, B-9.

²³ ADP 3-13, 1-1.

MAJ Chris Salerno is currently a student at the Naval War College. He previously served as a Maneuver Captain's Career Course small group leader at Fort Moore, GA. His other assignments include serving as an observer-coach-trainer (OCT) on the Cobra Team at the National Training Center at Fort Irwin, CA; headquarters and headquarters company commander in 1st Squadron, 5th Cavalry Regiment and a troop commander in 4th Squadron, 9th Cavalry Regiment, both in 2nd Armored Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division; and as a lieutenant in the 2nd Infantry Brigade Combat Team, 10th Mountain Division.