

Strategic Intelligence in an Age of Polarization, Politicization and Fake News

Michael Andregg, University of St. Thomas in St. Paul, MN, USA, mmandregg@stthomas.edu
For the ISA conference in Toronto, Canada, March 26-29, 2019

abstract

Strategic intelligence has always been a dwarf cousin to much larger tactical intelligence as measured by budgets, dedicated personnel, or policy-maker time. There are two fundamental reasons for this. First, political time horizons are notoriously short, while strategic intelligence looks over long periods of time. Second, attention of analysts and interest of policy makers skews toward secret intelligence, while strategic intelligence is almost all derived from open sources. One example would be the series of “Global Trends” forecasts produced by the US National Intelligence Council. These great interagency documents were much appreciated by scholars, but scarcely read (if at all) by active policy makers driven from one crisis to another. They typically seek immediate solutions to proximate problems. In war, for another example, there is typically great demand for tactical information to identify enemies and win battles, but relatively little attention is spent on why wars begin or how they can be prevented.

The current period increases these distortions by global proliferation of “news” sources and the ever-growing sophistication of propagandists exploiting social, alternative and even mainstream media. This problem is compounded by the flow of information over networks instead of on mediated, edited, and limited channels, that once were devoted to more or less “objective truths” (at least in theory). Donald Trump has exploited these trends quite successfully, and amplifies them by constant devotion to selling things indifferent to anything close to objective truth. He also commands obedience from the largest, and in some ways the most sophisticated intelligence community on this earth. Politicization and polarization are thus becoming US-IC norms at the same time that the meme “Fake News” tarnishes the products of every mainstream media source. This paper will develop these themes through examination of cases. Intelligence professionals must still try to find their way through the wilderness of mirrors and professional disinformation to the goal of evidence-based advice for leaders with real lives in their powerful hands. But the task is made much harder by advances in modern propaganda techniques enabled by the internet, while “strategic intelligence” falls ever further behind responses to the urgencies of each day.

Russian Active Measures and the Election of Donald Trump

Propaganda has been with us for a very long time, but it is being transformed at blinding (or at least dazzling) speed by the internet revolution. States have also interfered with the politics of neighbors since before democracy was invented. The USA has been as active in that as any other nation (ask anyone in Latin America for many examples). The campaign of active measures by Russia in our 2016 elections is a dramatic example of the power and perils of these trends today.

There is now zero doubt that Russia was aggressively involved in hacking our 2016 US election, as cited by our entire intelligence community to both Presidents Obama and Trump.¹ Reasonable differences of informed opinion remain about whether these were successful enough to swing the election from Hillary Clinton to Mr. Trump, but they probably were according to Kathleen Hall Jamieson, Director of the Annenberg Public Policy Center at the University of Pennsylvania.² Obviously, if Russian efforts were enough to swing an American Presidential election this would be a profound political effect at minimal cost in national security expenditures (for the Russians anyway). But I want to focus for a moment on some other meta-goals of the Russian effort that were unambiguously successful, regardless of whether they tipped the election to Mr. Trump.

- a. Doubt in the validity of electoral process in America in general was greatly amplified.
- b. Doubt in the legitimacy of many basic institutions, like of our intelligence community, law enforcement, media, the Department of Justice and other departments was increased.
- c. Polarization of politics in America, already severe, was also increased, and
- d. Hatred among various American communities was increased. **Sewing division, uncertainty and illegitimacy** were arguably among Russia's main strategic goals.
- e. Relationships with long-term allies were put under great stress. NATO suffered. This was another Russian goal. Fractured US relations with Canada and Mexico were bonuses.
- f. The term "Fake News" became a meme, with pernicious effects far beyond the obvious. Democratic intelligence systems depend on concepts like **evidence-based analysis** and on objective presentation to policy makers of "truth" as best that can be discerned. When these fundamental concepts are shattered, trust evaporates, and hell can result.

Special Counsel Robert Mueller's report on these topics has not been released to the American public at the time of writing this paper, but it will probably have significant effects on both academic conclusions and on practical politics in America. I can still conclude with high confidence now that this was one of the most effective applications in recent history of what we call "psychological operations" and what Russians often call "active measures."³

The general dilemma of election meddling with practical consequences for neighbors is nothing new to Eastern Europe. They have dealt with Russian (and other) meddling for a very long time. America is just now learning the hard way why so many people in so many countries hate us for past acts when we manipulated their elections. That negative reaction is a vivid example of blowback from an intelligence practitioner's or policy maker's point of view. Policy makers chose a somewhat evil method (manipulating a neighbors' elections) to support some allegedly good end (like containing communism) but found that in the long run, this also creates much hatred of your country. Hatred has national security consequences too. The internet evolution to distributed networks of information flow, and the special power of "social media" to mold public perceptions of reality are technical aspects of this problem, but the moral dilemma is eternal.

Excellent technical reviews of evolving methods of manipulation through social media and other emerging fora can be found by Matteo Bonfanti of Zurich's ETS, and James Pamment et al. of Lund University and Sweden's Civil Contingencies Agency (MSB).⁴ They describe new

techniques so exotic they require a new language, as noted in this quote from Bonfanti's article. *"They include socio-cognitive and psychographic hacking via dark advertisement, social hacking, band wagoning, digital disinformation and fakes, exploitation via bots, botnets and sock-puppets, trolling and flaming."*⁵ Greg Treverton has also written about these challenges for the Swedish Defense University.⁶ Finally, the Canadian Security Intelligence Service published a very good workshop overview on such techniques, but as is their practice all papers are anonymous.⁷ By tapping into and enflaming local prejudices, the Russians spread lies faster and further than truth* broadcast by establishment, mainstream media.⁸

Should we promote truth and goodness in our public diplomacy and private (even secret) actions, or descend to deception and evil in order to gain advantage in our competitions for power, wealth and basic security? Well in war, this seems simple. If you do not win, you and all you love may die young. But in cold wars or normal competitions, this is not simple. Evil methods tend to yield evil outcomes far more often than not. Unintended consequences abound, and are often negative. A similar dilemma occurs when people consider assassination (or "targeted killings") as they have throughout the centuries and to this day. A particular and interesting contemporary case lies at the intersection of these phenomena, the much-publicized murder of Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi at the Saudi Arabian consulate in Istanbul, Turkey, on October 2, 2018.⁹

Assassinations of Journalists and other Suppressions of "Objective Reality"

"Fake News" can be created in very large volumes by active propaganda efforts funded by states. This can be enhanced by suppression of alternative "narratives." One very harsh method for that is the murder of journalists who do not comply with official stories.¹⁰ There are many other methods short of murder, like arresting, intimidating or buying off large numbers of independent or critical journalists. And police-states simply own all significant media and fire any journalist who strays from party lines, as occurs in North Korea, China and other police-states these days.

Many more countries than Saudi Arabia use such tactics. Some are not police-states. For one sad example, NATO ally Turkey, which exposed the especially gruesome and egregious murder of Jamal Khashoggi, imprisons more journalists today than any other nation on earth (as best we can measure such tragedies) due to President Erdoğan's campaign against supporters of Fetullah Gulan.^{11, 12} Those include many journalists, professors and whole media outlets and schools in Turkey (many since closed down by the government). Turkey is not yet a police-state, although it trends in that direction in 2019. Venezuela provides another example from another continent, as Nicolás Maduro drives his formerly prosperous country towards failed-state conditions. In most such cases, control of the media is a prelude to rot within, but both Russia and China prove that police-states with controlled media can endure for very long periods.

True police-states have always been in the vanguard of these kinds of efforts to control people's thoughts by controlling the information available to them. But even undeniable and relatively healthy democracies can be guilty of egregious controls on information, including kidnapping

journalists and whistleblowers, imprisonment of critics and even assassinations of people who tell inconvenient truths. The saddest examples of all to me come from Israel since it once aspired to be a leader in law and moral thought. Then they kidnapped Israeli citizen Mordecai Vanunu overseas because he told the London Sunday Times about Israel's clandestine nuclear weapons program.¹³ They then held Vanunu in solitary confinement for years lest he share more with international media. After 18 years and release, they convicted him again, for speaking to foreigners about his plight. Meanwhile, every child in neighbor nations knows they could be burned alive by Israel's nuclear arsenal. Israel has also assassinated many hundreds, probably thousands of its neighbors in Lebanon, Egypt, Syria and Iran. Those include both Palestinians working for their own freedom (and sometimes fighting for their freedom, of course) and nationals of those neighbor states, for many reasons detailed in the incomparable record of Israeli assassinations called "Rise and Kill First," a book reviewed and approved by IDF military censors in 2018.¹⁴ This source is unique, because it includes the moral dilemmas and angst faced by top Israeli intelligence officials as they decided to kill many, many hundreds of possible enemies of their state. Despite strenuous efforts to avoid injuring bystanders, innocents and witnesses nearby were also killed more often than anyone wants to admit. Hence the intense secrecy about "targeted killing" operations, even in a state that aspires to moral leadership.

I will not detail assassinations attempted, conducted or enabled by my own United States of America because it continues to deny such things. The official denials are lies, but they are important to keep practitioners loyal to my country that also once aspired to moral leadership.

It appears that no nation is immune to the temptation to use unconventional methods to attack people or institutions that appear to be threats to the state. "Unconventional methods" include here (more or less) precise targeted killings and massive information operations against whole populations that exploit every dimension of the internet including social media in particular. What happens to strategic intelligence in this context of constant battle against endless enemies? The short answer is that strategic intelligence is commonly ignored, so the enemies never end.

Nuclear Weapons, other WMD, the Developing Global Crisis, and Strategic Intelligence

Strategic intelligence is often ignored simply because most of the system is very busy every day with current intelligence about active armed conflicts and responses to the blizzard of modern propaganda operations. Already a dwarf compared to tactical intelligence, strategic intelligence becomes irrelevant to most taskings, far too long-term, a purview of mostly elder analysts on end of career assignments, and is almost never attended to by active policy makers.

I will illustrate this by reference to something virtually everyone agrees is a real threat to all of human civilization, nuclear and other WMD, which proliferate as we chat about terrorists. I will also describe very briefly a "Developing Global Crisis" that underlies much of the lethal conflict on earth today. Few policy makers or analysts will dispute that each of those causes of threat to everything under heaven are real, and powerful. But little is done about any of those ultimate

causes of armed conflicts, because they are very difficult to deal with, and some are protected by “taboos” (like population pressure). Finally, everyone is so busy fighting the perpetual wars they are trapped in. So the wars continue. Intelligence professionals can describe in detail why they so often ignore ultimate threats to focus on the mosquitos that are biting states today.

Many factors contribute to the “Developing Global Crisis” so descriptions can be cumbersome, but all include at least four factors: 1) Population Pressure, 2) Corruptions of Governance, 3) Militant Religion, and 4) Authoritarian Law.¹⁵ These are powerful causes of wars over long periods of history. They are especially relevant today as we become ever more global, economically and in many other ways. But they typically underlie more obvious proximate causes of each particular conflict. This is especially true of the first two. Everyone knows that competition for resources is a perennial cause of wars, for example. But few note (in print) how population pressure guarantees competitions for resources, as when Syria’s population growth rate of 2.4% per year in 2010 meant doubling every 30 years. Their economy could not keep up. The corrupt government then used ruthless methods to repress protests, which metastasized into hyper-complex civil wars that eventually displaced fully half of Syria’s pre-war population. At least one-fourth fled the country entirely, spreading their chaos into neighboring nations and even far-away Europe. But most people, including policy makers, focus on particular political actors like Bashar al-Assad and Vladimir Putin rather than on long-term causes of such conflicts.

Whoever wins in Syria today will inherit a country mortally wounded by the incredible damage caused by civil wars, which are fueled especially by corruptions of governance and authoritarian law. And who will fund research on corruptions of governance? Not, usually, governments. But many of them will fund projects to study how to corrupt other governments, or how to exploit policy makers therein, or how to damage adversary economies, rather than on searching for solutions to the common problems facing all of us during this difficult century.

Meanwhile, every nation that currently owns nuclear weapons is modernizing (a.k.a. improving the lethal potentials of their arsenals) while condemning any other nation that tries to join that ‘club.’ This, even though leading thinkers (like former Secretaries of State Henry Kissinger and George Schultz, former Secretary of Defense William Perry, Senator Sam Nunn and others) point out that the system we have built is unstable.¹⁶ In short, the doomsday MAD system¹⁷ that we built with the best of intentions will eventually result in a nuclear war if we wait long enough. Escalation chains, key individuals and decisions by computers will decide whether any triggering event becomes a general thermonuclear war. Does this danger dominate threat analysis today? No. Catching or killing endless retail terrorists consumes far more attention, time and money.

The nuclear arms control regime that brought a bit more stability and a lot more surveillance, verification, and other measures to restrain the nuclear arms race for decades is unraveling now. Most attention, time and resources are devoted instead to endless wars against untold millions of unemployed and often unemployable teenaged males from failed states. These dispossessed and poorly educated men were created by population pressure. Now they are inspired by militant

religious enthusiasts to attack corrupt governments there, here, and increasingly everywhere. None of those problems can be solved by more, or more sophisticated nuclear or other WMD.

What applies to nuclear weapons applies with modifications to chemical, biological and other, more novel weapons of mass destruction. For various reasons, the logic of forbidding these whole categories of weapons from “civilized” arsenals resulted in non-perfect, but very effective bans on most national programs in biological and chemical weapons, overseen by international agencies with resources to detect violations and initiate response contingencies.¹⁸ With nuclear WMD, however, we sleep-walk toward an Armageddon no general or politician says they want.

Conclusions

1. **Russian efforts to disrupt the 2016 American Presidential election were remarkably successful, consequential and efficient.** Rather than trying to excel at this kind of destructive, black politics, we should implement radical defensive measures, and reflect on how many other nations view America today because of our historic efforts to manipulate their elections, particularly in Latin America. Strategic intelligence attempts to discern those situations that call for response in kind (like an armed invasion of home territories) and other situations where violating core American principles like truth and democracy is short sighted and self-destructive.
2. **Many other countries are getting into the social media disinformation game, and black money is as important as black propaganda. But China is still the rising threat, not Russia.** Black money can also swing elections, and the US Supreme Court’s “Citizens United” decision opened a door for hostile foreign powers to inject black money into our political system using simple cutouts (like the NRA)¹⁹. Retaliating in kind would be an imprudent, expensive and ineffective response. Still, defense against black money is as essential to democracy as defense against black propaganda through novel methods. Defense is not always retaliation. In each case we should recognize that China is the rising threat, not Russia, even though Russia was first to injure us by those particular methods. China’s police-state is way ahead of us in using facial recognition, artificial intelligence, and other technologies to repress dissent at home ever more efficiently. Such tools will be used against free people everywhere if we do not react.²⁰
3. **A Civil Defense style response to Russian election meddling is more appropriate than “active measures” in response. This differs from cyberwarfare, or kinetic warfare, where offensive capability is as important as defensive resilience.** Points one and two allude to this distinction. Some kinds of attack, like direct warfare, call for ruthless, active responses, and practitioners know that you cannot win with defense only. However, when evil information operations threaten freedom and democracy, there are other ways of responding that do less damage to core American values and are arguably more effective over time. Examples would be public education, the Voice of America and similar efforts that spread light and truth, rather than darkness and evil through lies and deception. Strategic intelligence highlights such distinctions.

4. A new emphasis on strategic intelligence over tactical urgencies is also required. This should include specific things like:

- a. Recognizing that Climate Change is a new ‘common enemy’ of humankind, and that Information Operations are critical to effective countermeasures.** Such “operations” include classical, intelligence led, pro-democracy tools like VoA, but also substantial public education at home to counter ordinary ignorance and to stress that the emerging world faces problems that no nation can solve alone. Among other virtues, this would put America on the side of youth worldwide, who are quite tired of elders arguing while their climate burns and nature decays in a thousand ways.
- b. Recognizing that Population Pressure is killing the living system of our planet slowly and fueling wars worldwide while we focus on religious and political enemies, and “triggering events.” Those tactical issues do not disappear; most must be dealt with, but they often obscure ultimate causes and therefore prevent effective solutions.** As noted earlier, population pressure is one of the four most important ultimate causes of global conflict today, but discussing it is virtually taboo in practical politics. Yet immigration issues that are driven by population pressure are dominating domestic politics in ever more countries, while the “Sixth Great Extinction” endangers everyone everywhere.²¹ Strategic intelligence does not eliminate a single terrorist, evil dictator or rogue-state nuclear weapon, but it does highlight responses that can be effective at dealing with the causes of conflicts instead of just symptoms of them. In practical medicine this distinction between symptoms and causes is absolutely critical, and it should be in intelligence analysis as well.²²
- c. Examples of Syria and Myanmar** Other papers have described in detail how such forces contributed to the collapse of Syria (growth rate in 2010 = 2.4% preceded by four years of climate change-driven drought that intersected with a very corrupt and authoritarian regime, and rising militant religion).²³ That collapse spread population pressure to many other nations including much of Europe. Myanmar faces a similar dilemma, where even genocide of southeastern Rohingya brought no lasting peace, while civil wars fester to the north. Tactical intelligence to “win Myanmar’s wars” does nothing to help it solve its long-term problems, which are becoming profound.

I am Vice President of an “International Society for the Comparative Study of Civilizations.” One perennial topic of concern is whether our emerging global civilization is in a “decay phase” where corrupt and authoritarian leaders fiddle while modern “Romes” burn. People who studied the collapse of ancient civilizations intensively report that sometimes their elites had ample warning of problems to come, from very good sources, but simply ignored them because to consider various taboos was too disturbing to their worldviews.^{24,25} It is our task today to avoid such catastrophes, and courageous strategic intelligence is a way that intelligence professionals can educate policy makers to do the right things, both morally and practically.

¹ Department of Homeland Security, USG, “Joint Statement from the Department of Homeland Security and Office of the Director of National Intelligence on Election Security,” October 7, 2016, accessible at:

<https://www.dhs.gov/news/2016/10/07/joint-statement-department-homeland-security-and-office-director-national>

² Jamieson, Kathleen Hall, *Cyberwar: How Russian Hackers and Trolls Helped Elect a President, What we Don’t, Can’t and Do Know*, London, UK: Oxford University Press, 2018.

³ Russian “active measures” include more brutal acts than propaganda, like torture, assassinations and such, while the US tries to keep “psychological operations” within the larger domain of information operations, eschewing “wetwork,” another Russian term of intelligence tradecraft. These are linguistic nuances parsing ugly realities. In the hidden parts of each nations’ history, there are many examples of choosing evil methods to win some conflict, not least of which was the very long “Cold War” between our nations that impacted so many other countries.

⁴ Pamment, James, Howard Nothhaft, Henrik Agardh-Twetman, & Alicia Fjallhed, *Countering Information Influence Activities. The State of the Art*, accessed at: <http://www.msb.se/RibData/Filer/pdf/28697.pdf> , pp. 20-21, 2018.

⁵ Bonfanti, Matteo E., “An Intelligence-Based Approach to Countering Social Media Influence Operations,” presented at the 24th IKS conference in Bucharest, Romania, in October, 2018, to be published soon in the *Romanian Intelligence Studies Review*.

⁶ Treverton, Greg, “The Intelligence Challenges of Hybrid Threats: Focus on Cyber and Virtual Realm,” produced for the Center for Asymmetric Threat Studies, Swedish Defense University, 2018, is accessible at: <http://www.diva-portal.org/smash/get/diva2:1250560/FULLTEXT01.pdf> .

⁷ Canadian Security Intelligence Service, authors anonymous, *Who Said What? The Security Challenges of Modern Disinformation*, January, 2018. This includes an executive summary followed by ten papers involving case studies from Eastern Europe and six nations outside that region. Russian efforts to influence Britain’s “Brexit” vote were especially noteworthy (pp. 51-58).

⁸ Mark Twain allegedly wrote, or at least said: “A lie can travel half way around the world while the truth is putting on its shoes.” Hard research confirms this tart observation, especially when “news” flows through the internet.

⁹ Hundreds of articles have been written about the murder of Jamal Khashoggi at the Saudi consulate in Istanbul in October, 2018, and about its consequences. This story continues to evolve in details, so we cite below just one of the more recent and comprehensive, by David Ignatius of the *Washington Post*, “How a chilling Saudi cyberwar ensnared Jamal Khashoggi,” December 7, 2018, accessed at: https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/global-opinions/how-a-chilling-saudi-cyberwar-ensnared-jamal-khashoggi/2018/12/07/f5f048fe-f975-11e8-8c9a-860ce2a8148f_story.html?utm_term=.8fd853fb265d&wpisrc=nl_headlines&wpmm=1

¹⁰ In Russia alone at least dozens of journalists have died suspicious deaths or been clearly murdered in recent decades, and some sources allege that hundreds of journalists have been killed there since Stalin’s time. Wikipedia has a good review of this complicated topic at “List of Journalists Killed in Russia” accessible at: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_journalists_killed_in_Russia . However, as noted often in this paper, this is not a problem confined to Russia or even to “police-states.”

¹¹ “Report: Turkey has Imprisoned More Journalists in 2018 Than Any Other Country,” *National Review*, Dec. 13, 2018, at: <https://www.nationalreview.com/news/turkey-imprisoned-more-journalists-in-2018-than-any-other-country/>

¹² “Hundreds of Journalists Jailed Globally Becomes the New Normal,” a report of the Committee to Protect Journalists, Dec. 13, 2018, accessed at: <https://cpj.org/reports/2018/12/journalists-jailed-imprisoned-turkey-china-egypt-saudi-arabia.php>

¹³ “Israeli nuclear whistleblower Mordechai Vanunu convicted again over meetings with US citizens,” *The Telegraph*, UK, January 23, 2017, accessible at: <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2017/01/23/israeli-nuclear-whistleblower-mordechai-vanunu-convicted-meetings/> .

¹⁴ Bergman, Ronen, *Rise and Kill First: The Secret History of Israel’s Targeted Assassinations*, New York, NY: Random House, 2018.

¹⁵ Andregg, Michael, *On the Causes of War*, St. Paul, MN: Ground Zero Minnesota, 1997, 1999, 2001, especially chapters 12, 13 and 14, pp 47-94.

¹⁶ Fücks, Ralf, “Global Zero or Nuclear Anarchy” describes the “Global Zero Initiative” of George Schultz, Henry Kissinger, William Perry and Sam Nunn, March 9, 2010, accessible at: <https://www.boell.de/en/navigation/foreign-affairs-security-global-zero-nuclear-weapons-conference-8755.html> .

¹⁷ “MAD” is an acronym created early in the nuclear arms race that stands for “Mutual Assured Destruction.” MAD describes a strategic theory that the probability of global wars in the future would be reduced if all involved knew that their destruction was guaranteed. That theory, unfortunately, depended on an assumption called the “rational actor assumption,” which basically concluded that no world leader would be foolish enough to start a nuclear war if his (or her) nation was guaranteed to be destroyed after any attack scenario. The problem there is that not all leaders are “rational” especially at times of crisis. Some never were “rational.” Probabilities of accident or miscalculation are also never reduced to zero. Two current scenarios illustrate this. Kim Jong-un of North Korea frightened much of Asia as he developed his small nuclear arsenal, precisely because he was considered less stable than “mature” leaders of major nation states with much larger nuclear inventories. How long before some leader with such weapons has a brain tumor, or severe delusions, or decides to attack a neighbor anyway for whatever reason? If that probability is not zero, then the worst will most likely occur someday, and statistics can put expectations on that. How long can we expect Pakistan to be stable enough to not sell or give a single functional nuclear warhead to Islamic enthusiasts of jihad who might then target Tel Aviv, Israel by novel delivery methods? If Tel Aviv goes up in nuclear smoke and the guilty parties are not certain, there is a substantial risk that many Arab capitals, and Tehran in Iran and Islamabad in Pakistan will suffer nuclear attacks within an hour or a day. No one knows where escalation chains will lead in such scenarios. But when our Pentagon war games them, most simulations result in general thermonuclear war some short time after the initial triggering event. The point is that this is an unstable deterrence system, so if the probability of an initial detonation by anyone is just 1 percent per year, the probable half-life of human civilization is a mere 69 years. That is one example of “strategic intelligence,” but every nuclear power on earth today is modernizing its WMD arsenal despite many solemn pledges by many nations to not do that in the landmark 1970 nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT).

¹⁸ E.g. the Biological Weapons Convention of 1975, <https://www.un.org/disarmament/wmd/bio/> and several chemical weapons treaties starting with Geneva Conventions created after World War I which led to the Chemical Weapons Convention of 1997, monitored by the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, housed in The Hague, Netherlands, <https://www.opcw.org/chemical-weapons-convention> .

¹⁹ It has been established that convicted Russian spy Maria Butina arranged for donations from intelligence connected oligarchs to the NRA, and that the NRA donated at least \$30 million to the Trump campaign. Were there hidden, nefarious and illegal connections? Lawyers can debate such questions for years, but you can be certain that this is one option that adversary intelligence entities have considered for corrupting American elections. See the Washington Post’s “Russian agent’s guilty plea intensifies spotlight on relationship with NRA,” Dec. 13, 2018, for more details, accessible at: https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/russian-agents-guilty-plea-intensifies-spotlight-on-relationship-with-nra/2018/12/13/e6569a00-fe26-11e8-862a-b6a6f3ce8199_story.html?utm_term=.f74d13d53d46

²⁰ Snyder, Timothy D., On Tyranny: Twenty Lessons from the Twentieth Century, New York, NY: Tim Duggan Books, Random House, 2017. Another good source of insight on this process is Madeleine Albright’s Fascism: A Warning, New York, NY: Harper, 2018.

²¹ Kolbert, Elizabeth, The Sixth Extinction: An Unnatural History, New York, NY: Picador, 2015.

²² Marrin, Stephen and Jonathan D. Clemente, “Modeling an Intelligence Analysis Profession on Medicine,” in the International Journal of Intelligence and CounterIntelligence, 19: 642-665, New York, NY: Taylor & Francis Group, Routledge, 2006.

²³ Andregg, Michael, “*The Developing Global Crisis and the Current Wave of Migrant/Refugees Heading for Europe*” delivered to the 21st “Intelligence in the Knowledge Society” conference of the National Intelligence Academy of Romania “*Mihai Viteazul*,” October 16, 2016.

²⁴ Tainter, Joseph A., The Collapse of Complex Societies, London, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1988.

²⁵ Diamond, Jared, Collapse: How Societies Choose to Fail or Succeed, New York, NY: Penguin Books, 2005.