

... training process is going on through the various tests conducted to exercise the national systems tactical applications. Many of the lessons have been negative; question 4 applies. A fundamental problem stems from optimizing the design of systems for specific national and tactical needs. The former generally do not offer timely response, accessibility, and assured availability for tactical needs under trans- and post-attack conditions. The latter on the other hand by necessity include features which are marginally useful or unnecessary for normal peacetime operation. This problem won't be solved unless a higher priority and preference in system selection are given to systems which feature adaptability to requirements across the spectrum of operating conditions--peace, trans- and post-attack. In the case of individual systems, such a choice usually entails added cost and some compromise of the most cost-effective performance in the normal unperturbed environment. However, such a strategy offsets the demand to develop two parallel and redundant systems, one for national and one for tactical purposes, or, an even greater risk, the failure to meet tactical requirements at all.

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All of the identified issues apply. The institutional issue is probably the most difficult with which to cope. It has its roots in the national/tactical distinction. The issues are basically abstract rather than concrete, dealing with perceptions of ownership, control, and dependability, but they are nonetheless real and critical factors in the decision process of command and control under combat conditions. Under such conditions, it is probable that a limited number of closely focused systems with precisely known capabilities and assured responsiveness are most useful to the tactical forces.

This is a serious problem. Progress has been made by lateral exchanges and efforts are under way in EUCOM to establish multinational intelligence cells. All of these arrangements are cumbersome and ill-suited to a fully effective command and control system. Eventually, major changes in disclosure policy will be required to ensure an operationally ready NATO command and control structure. For the present, the most important action is to proceed with setting up US systems for acquisition, transferring and processing data which can be extended to other parties and the policy problems are resolved.

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