



Intelligence Relations in the 21st Century

Edited by

Tom Røseth · John Michael Weaver

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ISBN 978-3-030-34003-2 ISBN 978-3-030-34004-9 (eBook)
<https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-34004-9>

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This Palgrave Macmillan imprint is published by the registered company Springer Nature Switzerland AG.

The registered company address is: Gewerbestrasse 11, 6330 Cham, Switzerland

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The Need for Intelligence Relations during a Time of Uncertainty

Tom Røseth and John Michael Weaver

1.1 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The overarching theme of the volume is the importance of intelligence relations and the sharing of information between states, be it allies or reluctant partners, or between functions in an intelligence organization during a time of uncertainty. Walsh (2009) underscores relations and even goes as far as to say that the sharing of intelligence is paramount for the establishment of stability and security. Still, Sims (2006) states that when establishing a framework for analysis, those considering whether to share intelligence weigh the costs and benefits in terms of what they themselves might stand to lose or gain in the process. The editors of the book are in part inspired by Svendsen (2012a) who looked at relationships and sharing of information with intelligence liaisons to help guide the research. The challenge in portraying and assessing intelligence relations, often labeled as intelligence liaisons, is that their

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partially autonomous system is often regarded even by diplomats as a fenced-off mystery (Herman 1996). Intelligence relations have become a multinational activity that determines the relative strength and power of an intelligence service, often reflecting or enhancing the state's foreign policy.

Following the collapse of the Soviet Union, the subsequent end of the Cold War, and for nearly 25 years, the world was becoming more globalized. With a more globalized world, the intelligence services had to adjust their focus toward transnational threats such as terrorism, organized crime, and cyberattacks. Policymakers may talk of “new” threats related to globalization, information technology or hybrid operations, but their newness label convey more an excuse to ignore lessons from the not-so-distant history (Andrew, Aldrich, and Wark 2020). Rather, it is the post-Cold War period in the 1990s that was the exception seen from Western powers, with the near absence of threats from state actors under a US hegemonic world order. The turbulent conditions in the beginning of the twenty-first century manifest the intelligence organization's role to secure the state and its population, so that normal life can continue (Omand 2010). In addition to globalization, the world has seen other challenges such as the global power shifts, regime transformation, and movement toward populism. The rise of China has led to an increased challenge to Western liberal values as a successful model for economic prosperity. We have seen tendencies toward more authoritarian rule or personalized cults in states such as Russia and China, while Turkey appears to be politically drifting from the West. Additionally, many democratic and transitional states are increasingly witnessing a move toward nationalism and populism. Such changes in the economic and political landscape lead to changes in intelligence relations, both when it comes to content and preferred partners. The political and intelligence professional levels operate separately but are influenced and reinforced by each other “despite practitioners' occasional misconceptions that their professional relationships are insulated” (Herman 1996, 215). Intelligence is therefore not to be considered as isolated from foreign policy.

A trend since 2016 shows that nations are moving toward greater nationalism and are willing to challenge long-standing partnerships, for example, the US and its approach to the North American Free Trade Agreement, the UK efforts to pull out of the European Union, China's increased assertiveness in the South China Sea, and Russia's bellicose stance toward most Western nations. We live in a globalized world some claim contains security challenges that are neglected by the intelligence

agencies (Shiraz and Aldrich 2015). Add nationalism and populism as a challenge to liberal democracy, and the playing field for intelligence agencies becomes even more troublesome and complex. Accordingly, there are implications for intelligence professionals who need to adjust in order to optimize their support to national decision-makers. More pointedly, the book should be seen in light of three main issues: traditional intelligence studies and how these adapt to contemporary changes, international security and how the move to a more nationalistic approach is changing global security, and, finally, what nationalism means to traditional intelligence-sharing relationships.

The book focuses on open sources deemed academically acceptable. Mercado (2019) writes of the value of open source data, especially in the Internet age and the value of products that use it for both practitioners and academics alike. It looks to weave together an anthology of ideas in what the field of intelligence refers to as an “intricate mosaic” (Smith 1989). Intelligence relations are traditionally a secretive topic in which research entails several challenges (Svendson 2012b, 49–54). The book therefore appreciates, like the intelligence services, the value of open source information that is critical to provide intelligence for strategic consumers (Gannon 2001).

Relationships matter and play a vital role for intelligence success or failure accordingly. The past two decades have seen an increased focus on terrorism and cyber-threats and have reconfigured or pushed forward new relations in the intelligence world, both domestically and internationally. These relationships are often convenient in nature, seeking to mitigate common risk. However, intelligence services are not themselves changing quickly to changing threats, and these transnational challenges do not always lead to effective cooperation. Aldrich (2009, 892) argues that intelligence services are creatures of the nation-state and strongly connected to sovereignty. Only if the services attain a certain degree of bureaucratic autonomy will these be able to muster stronger international cooperation (Deflem 2002, 32). The challenge in international cooperation lies therefore in the nature of intelligence organizations within the sovereign state, mixed with the lack of seeing the many challenges connected to globalization among policymakers and intelligence chiefs.

This volume brings out implications for those either working in or interested in learning more about the field of intelligence. Moreover, the work affords consideration to the importance of relations in optimizing intelligence integration, challenges of intelligence oversight, and the com-

plexity in the understanding of intelligence relationships among nation-states. These include the likes of an understanding about or sharing of intelligence with such actors as the permanent members of the Security Council of the United Nations, and the interrelations among the 29 North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) countries. There are a vast number of intelligence partnerships and intelligence clubs, including periodic liaison between adversaries, all here seen as important for handling various situations in uncertain times. That said, nations are still apprehensive about fully disclosing sources and methods that could result in them getting burned by the other party (Aldrich 2009).

Due to globalization and the inextricable linkage among a majority of the nations of this world, most countries cannot afford to pursue a pure isolationist position. An interdependence between states has developed and no nation can fully understand everything that is occurring everywhere at all times. Gaps may be due to a lack of expertise, shortfalls in cultural or linguistic understanding, a lack of human intelligence sources, and/or limitations in intelligence technical collection platform abilities. Information sharing between states is both extremely relevant and of paramount concern for advancing a country's agenda, even while, at times, those nations can simultaneously be seen as foes or in opposition to the country on other issues. This book provides perspectives on these important issues.

There are advantages and disadvantages to almost all aspects in establishing intelligence relations. Provided that the partnership brings to fruition mutual benefit to all concerned, then information and intelligence sharing will likely continue and develop. Conversely, if a country with possession of critical information exposes a key collection advantage (in terms of sources and methods) to others, then the country providing the knowledge might not be as forthcoming with further sharing of intelligence. Such risk to exposure is particularly sensitive between states that are adversaries, where there is insufficient trust in how provided intelligence is used. Positive examples include when the US warned Russia in late 2017 of an imminent terror plot in Saint Petersburg (Kremlin 2017) and the US sharing on Russian election meddling tactics, techniques, and procedures to European allies ahead of the 2017 election cycle. This book looks at when sharing intelligence is more likely to occur, its necessity within the intelligence processes, types of intelligence partnerships, and under what circumstances sharing will not happen.

1.2 INTELLIGENCE AND POWER DURING UNCERTAIN TIMES

On intelligence relations and intelligence sharing relative to a state's executive power, several themes resonate. For one, presently, we find ourselves living in uncertain times (Steinberg 2014; George and Wirtz 2014). It is increasingly necessary to have an open mind in the field on what nations need in terms of the basics required to acquire, dissect, synthesize, and produce intelligence products under fast changing conditions. In essence, intelligence is about stealing and keeping secrets according to Gill (2009), underlining that ethics should not be simply traded in for a promise of greater security. Ideally, intelligence can have a stabilizing function, providing realistic assessments on the opponent's capabilities and intentions, leading to improved decision-making. Intelligence thus mitigates risk, and it contributes to the understanding and narrowing of uncertainty (Phythian 2012). To know more of what you do not know, the "known unknowns" that intelligence services provide, can in some instances frustrate the decision-maker and lead to preemptive action that may create other threats (Gill 2012, 203). The fear of underplaying intelligence warnings and be held responsible for not preventing a major terrorist attack can push decision-makers into counterproductive decisions. In order to ensure ethics, some functional form of transparency, and accountability with proper democratic oversight must be in place in order to secure trust and legitimacy of political bodies and their electorate, an issue increasingly relevant with big data collection.

Why do relational intelligence issues apply to power and rule? Oftentimes, issues arise between intelligence professionals and those who are seen as consumers on the policy side (Steinberg 2014). According to Richard Betts (1978), the best-known cases of intelligence failure are seldom done by the intelligence collectors, sometimes by the intelligence analysts, but most often by decision-makers who consume the intelligence products. Such failures are underscored by the complexity in the relationship between the analysts and the policymakers who ultimately are seen as customers of the intelligence community (Davis 2019). Faulty intelligence to decision-makers often emanate from such things as unrealistic expectations, situations where intelligence professionals historically have been seen as cautioners and naysayers, and that those who work in the field of intelligence do not fully appreciate the political realities of those for whom intelligence serves (Steinberg 2014). Transparency, accountability and

consciousness on the different roles between intelligence officials and decision-makers are efficient tools for lowering the risk for politization of intelligence. Additionally, there is an increased call for strengthening the oversight of international data exchange between intelligence and security services, seen in Europe with the initial cooperation of exchanging methods and best practices between five national oversight bodies (Joint Statement 2018). These institutions seek to fill the oversight gap, as national oversight does not cover relations and cooperation with partners. This limitation is in place in order to protect partner information from being exposed through another state's domestic policies, and to ensure and secure the development of intelligence cooperation.

Underscoring the foreign transmission of classified material is found in the US Intelligence Community Directive (ICD 201 2006). It states that the US has a responsibility to provide national leaders with warning in advance of events, foreign developments, and/or conditions that could not just adversely affect the targeted country but could result in damage to the US as well (Nelson 2014). One can see that in a world inextricably linked economically through globalization, this could universally apply to other countries throughout the planet.

Another ICD encourages those who work in the intelligence community to think outside the box and seek support and input outside its community (ICD 205 2008). The purpose is to improve, support, and enrich analysis. Though many sources are identified (think tanks, academia, US government labs and industry as well as state and local government sources), it does not expressly prohibit reaching out to foreign governments and their agencies. This book presents mainly a state or state agency view on intelligence; in doing so, the editors do not deny that there is a broader security intelligence network through for example of powerful corporate actors and civil society as demonstrated by Gill and Phythian (2012) or Nelson (2014). State actors are the most prominent in the intelligence world, which reflects the dominant position of a functioning state to provide security and foreign policy.

Relationships matter. Relationships are important, especially in the field of intelligence in order to provide decision-makers with tools to ensure not only the state's security but also its population. That said, there are still numerous issues that intelligence services and countries will have to overcome. There will still be problems in sharing information with adversaries, intelligence sharing in NATO and not least sectoral stovepiping within or between services. There is a need for a proactive stance on

intelligence relations to manage the broad list of threats, whether they stem from global power shifts, cyber actors, transnational terrorism or hybrid actions from capable states.

1.3 CHAPTER INTRODUCTIONS

The second and third chapters expand on individual countries' pursuit of intelligence initiatives. Underscored in this section is the notion of living in uncertain times and challenges to conventional ways of looking at intelligence processes.

Chapter 2 affords consideration to an essential phase of intelligence, namely the requirements generation process and how getting this right is imperative. Grongstad demonstrates the difference between tactical, operational and strategic intelligence and how these levels address and process requirements depending on the decision-makers. From an analysis-driven point of view and in order to better predict future developments, the author argues that strategic intelligence has moved from being static and data/collection oriented during the Cold War to a dynamic requirement process where the analyst should take the center stage in a more theory-driven approach, the consequence being that the Intelligence Requirements Management and Collection Management (IRM&CM) process (JP 2-00 2011) should be more analytically driven and influenced by expert analysts. Thereafter, Grongstad articulates the strong need to move from bureaucratic silos to more agile cooperation where collection and analysis are more aligned, according to Treverton et al.'s (2006) recommendations—hence, underpinning the importance of intelligence relations to improve intelligence processes. Further, revisiting the nature of requirements, one can present new avenues to improve concepts, as well as training, and education of intelligence professionals. The main question addressed here is: based on the nature of requirements, how could the process and roles of IRM&CM differ in strategic intelligence production compared to tactical and operational intelligence production?

Chapter 3 provides emphasis on how to classify intelligence relationships by looking at pragmatic (zero-sum game), strategic (win-win), and normative (shared values) partnerships (Røseth 2014, 2017, 2018). Relations can move between these often as a response to general relations between states. Tuzuner (2010) writes that security cooperation gravitates around some form of intelligence sharing that often grows as relationships strengthen. Like in other power relations, ones focused on intelligence are