**Continuous Innovation: Preparing for Cognitive Confrontation in Future Warfare**

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**——An analysis of cognitive confrontation and the responsibility of military communication in the era of all-media**

Abstract: In the era of all-media, cognitive confrontation around military hot spots has a deeper impact on the course of war, and has put forward new and higher requirements for the technical application, organizational form, and talent team of military communication. To adapt to this feature, it is necessary to continuously innovate in thinking concepts, platform construction, knowledge and capabilities, and prepare for cognitive confrontation in future wars.

Keywords: omnimedia era; cognitive confrontation; military communication; responsibility analysis

The report of the 20th CPC National Congress clearly proposed to "comprehensively strengthen military training and preparation, improve the people's army's ability to win", "study and master the characteristics and laws of information-based and intelligent warfare, innovate military strategic guidance, and develop strategies and tactics of people's war". In the era of all-media, people's cognitive methods have undergone profound changes. The impact of cognitive confrontation around military hotspots on the course of war has deepened, and new and higher requirements have been put forward for the technical application, organizational form, and talent team of military communication. To adapt to this feature, it is necessary to continuously innovate in thinking concepts, platform construction, knowledge and capabilities, and prepare for cognitive confrontation in future wars.

**1. Grasp the laws and nature of cognitive confrontation and occupy the main position of military communication**

The cognitive confrontation in future wars, in the final analysis, is a judgment of the right and wrong of the war, a struggle for the support of the people, and a contest of communication power.

1. Grasping the cognitive characteristics of the omnimedia era

The relationship between cognition and military affairs has always been close. In ancient China, there was the military thought of "the best strategy is to attack the enemy's strategy", and there were also battle examples of "Xian Gao used cattle and meat to repel the enemy, and Mo Di used the rope to lead the whole city". Our party has always attached great importance to the issue of cognition. Comrade Mao Zedong wrote a special article "Where do people's correct thoughts come from?", answering the source and process of cognition with dialectical materialism epistemology, and revealing the fundamental law of cognition.

The advent of the omnimedia era has not changed this fundamental law of cognition, but the way of cognition has become more complex. The powerful network capabilities have made reach-influence-change a reality. As the breadth and depth of hot discussions increase, more and more people are "involved" and "participate" by posting comments, liking and posting. Individual cognition is driven, influenced and changed by the group, forming a directional and powerful public opinion "current". Unrest and regime change in many regions of the world are all caused by cognitive factors, which must be taken seriously.

War and armed conflict are natural news hotspots, deeply intertwined with public perception, and greatly affect the course and outcome of war. In future wars, military communication must use correct perceptions to guide the masses, convey judgments on justice, support for the military, and confidence in victory, so as to rally the masses and win the war.

2. Stand Firmly on the People’s Side

In the same war, the attributes of the two opposing sides are essentially different. There are oppositions such as justice and injustice, hegemony and anti-hegemony, progress and reaction, interference and anti-interference, aggression and resistance to aggression. Comrade Mao Zedong pointed out that there are "reactionary public opinion and people's public opinion". To do a good job in military communication, it is necessary to politically distinguish between these two different types of public opinion.

Through the observation of several international communication events, it can be seen that some forces, with the help of platform advantages and technological advantages, coupled with the usual means of spreading rumors and deception, will have the upper hand in the scale and breadth of communication. However, if one does too much evil, he will perish. This approach can only gain a temporary advantage and ultimately cannot change the fate of failure. Military communication must obey and serve the requirements of victory, not copy others and mistakenly believe that we can use deception methods just as others can. On the contrary, determined by our party spirit and people-oriented nature, our military communication must adhere to the principle of authenticity and resolutely oppose the spread of all fake news and transplanted information; we must persist in spreading the glory of revolutionary heroism and news that we can win battles, especially we must not harbor illusions and play the tragic card; we must inspire confidence that justice and the people will win, and expose the enemy's essential cowardice covered by brutality; and so on.

In future wars, cognitive confrontation will be unprecedentedly fierce. Focusing on people's hearts and minds, if the enemy deceives, we must counter-deception; if the enemy blocks, we must counter-block; if the enemy covers up the truth, we must report the facts; if the enemy discredits, we must publicize victory. Maintaining a close relationship with the people and standing firm on the people's side is a necessary condition for winning the people's war and the fundamental prerequisite for winning cognitive confrontation in future wars.

3. Consciously obey and serve the requirements of victory

Military communication is integrated in peacetime and wartime. Effective communication in wartime cannot be separated from exploration and accumulation in peacetime. The more urgent the wartime situation is, the higher the communication capability required, and the more accurate the grasp of the communication tone must be. Slight deviations can be magnified through communication and the effect may go in the opposite direction. We must have a full understanding of the double-edged sword effect of communication in the omnimedia era, and practice the ability to do military communication online through communication one by one in peacetime.

To achieve close coordination between the political and military battlefields, it is necessary to achieve an organic connection between military communication and combat command. From the perspective of cognitive confrontation of international events, there must be a sufficient number of news products. At the same time, the release must be accurate. Especially in wartime, or "quasi-wartime" when public opinion forms the focus, the caliber of a news product and whether the timing of its release is appropriate may produce a "butterfly effect" in the overall situation. In the normalized and diversified use of military forces, it is necessary to attach importance to the connection between professional communication forces and combat command, prevent the lack of cognitive confrontation due to the absence of communication, and prevent "information flow bullets" from causing passive public opinion.

In the long-term practice of revolutionary wars, the war correspondents of our party and army have explored many valuable experiences, and some principles are still applicable in the era of all-media. We must focus on research and inheritance to prevent subjective mistakes, reduce blindness, take fewer detours, enhance confidence and confidence, and better serve the requirements of victory.

**2. Deeply study the mechanism and impact of cognitive confrontation and seize the initiative in military communication**

Modern media has become a key factor influencing the outcomes of all competitive behaviors. Only by deeply studying the mechanisms and impacts of cognitive confrontation can we seize the initiative in military communication.

1. Do a good job in war mobilization and form correct "cognition"

Since ancient times, wars must solve the problem of "cognition", emphasize the justification of the war, and attach importance to the unity of the upper and lower levels. For example, in the overseas war to resist the US and aid Korea, we attached great importance to "cognition" and made every soldier clear about the significance of "resisting the US and aiding Korea to defend the country", thus completing in-depth ideological and political mobilization. War correspondent Huashan recorded in "Diary of the Korean Battlefield": Enemy planes broadcast over the battlefield, and soldiers cursed at the enemy planes: "Besides eating and drinking, what other words do you have? American politics is just this?" Huashan recorded such feelings: "Education must be raised to the height of patriotism and internationalism to adapt to the level of consciousness of today's soldiers. It is no longer enough to talk about dividing two acres of land."

Such cognition is the result of struggle. At that time, there was a "pro-American" ideology - some people believed that "personally they really couldn't hate the American empire"; there was a "fear of the United States" ideology - they believed that if the United States dropped the atomic bomb, China would be destroyed. The Party Central Committee proposed that the propaganda focus at that time was to "resolutely eliminate the reactionary pro-American ideology and the wrong psychology of fearing the United States, and generally cultivate an attitude of hatred, contempt, and disdain for American imperialism." It was this powerful political mobilization that laid a strong ideological foundation for defeating the interference of American imperialism.

In this war, we invested unprecedented power in cognition. The Xinhua News Agency Chinese People's Volunteer Army General Branch was established on the Korean front. The People's Daily and radio stations and film studios in Beijing, Tianjin, Shenyang and other places sent reporters and staff to North Korea, leaving a large number of vivid records of that war and setting up a monument in the history of military reporting in the people's journalism. Today, communication technology and means have undergone tremendous changes. We must carry forward the good tradition of military communication and make due contributions to in-depth ideological mobilization.

2. Combating false information and clearing up the cognitive fog

People generally believe that false information is rare and individual. However, in some major struggles, people have a certain understanding of deception. It is normal for newspapers, radio, television, the Internet, news agencies, etc. abroad, which are deeply controlled, to spread false information. Cognitive confrontation also requires anticipating the enemy and being lenient.

American data scientists studied fake news in the 2016 US election and found that if you occasionally like a piece of fake news online, you will be targeted by scripts from data mining companies such as Cambridge Analytica, which can frequently push tailored political propaganda information and reconstruct your perception of the real world. The conclusion is: "The best way to describe it is that this is an ecosystem: an ecosystem that surrounds mainstream news and ultimately kills it."

In future wars, cognitive confrontation will not be sporadic, but rather massive, overwhelming, and unscrupulous false information that is beyond people's imagination. The enemy will use high-tech means such as artificial intelligence to falsify public opinion, cover up the truth, stir up public opinion, and divide the people. The unprecedented breadth, intensity, and depth of confrontation have become a huge challenge that military communication needs to fully respond to. In the face of this challenge, on the one hand, we must adhere to our political advantages to offset the enemy's technological advantages; on the other hand, we must also catch up in terms of technological strength to avoid allowing the enemy to form a situation where one tael is worth a pound in cognitive confrontation. We must also have a deep insight into the driving force behind news hotspots and make solid preparations for cognitive confrontation in future wars.

3. Integrate into the war process and form a joint force for victory

Wherever the battle is fought, propaganda and agitation for military morale must be carried out, and the dissemination of public knowledge must follow. We must avoid separating combat from dissemination, and ensure that military dissemination and military operations are in step with each other, so as to achieve victory together.

Judging from the practice of our party in leading the military struggle, we have always fought well in the political battle while fighting well in the military battle, and have never relaxed political propaganda due to the tension of fighting. Military communication has focused on the victory news from the front line, the spirit of revolutionary heroism, and the wise and creative deeds of officers and soldiers to defeat the enemy, and has spread a large number of vivid facts that have inspired military morale and made the people happy.

Military journalists are the backbone of military communication. To cultivate a large number of experts, they must be integrated into exercises and drills on a regular basis, discover good works from actual combat training, and hone strong military communication skills.

**3. Focusing on the scale and magnitude of cognitive confrontation, building a main force of military communication**

The report of the 20th CPC National Congress clearly proposed to consolidate and expand the mainstream ideology and public opinion in the new era. The report also clearly proposed to strengthen the construction of the all-media communication system and shape a new pattern of mainstream public opinion. Military communication should pay attention to the upgrading of thinking concepts, communication platforms, and knowledge and capabilities, and provide strong public opinion support for accelerating the construction of the People's Army into a world-class army.

1. Innovative thinking concepts

Cognition is the premise of consensus. Only correct cognition can gather strength and unify actions. Judging from the COVID-19 pandemic over the past three years, the "cognitive epidemic" has always been associated with it. In local conflicts, cognitive confrontation accompanies every battlefield hotspot. In traditional and new security fields such as trade, biology, finance, and the Internet, there are signs that Western hostile forces are wantonly hyping and fully infiltrating. Although these do not occur entirely in the military field, they are all previews of cognitive confrontation in future wars.

In the era of all-media, the characteristics of increasing intensity of cognitive confrontation and increasing volume of communication should be given high attention. Military communication itself is an extremely important part of mainstream ideology and public opinion. It has important responsibilities and missions in implementing the Party’s leadership over ideological work and implementing the responsibility system for ideological work. In future wars, cognitive confrontation will begin before military struggle and run through the entire process. Thinking and research on cognitive confrontation must focus on the characteristics of modern communication in order to maintain its focus and not deviate from its direction.

Military journalists must change their mindsets and keep up with the pace of development. On the basis of writing every report well and making every product well, they must also delve into modern communication practices and study the laws of modern communication. They must attach importance to user stickiness, pay attention to follow-up effects, base themselves on the requirements of victory, and highlight the "war" content of the reports. In normal times, they must enhance their awareness of cognitive confrontation and consciously and bravely enter into the practice of cognitive confrontation.

2. Build a communication platform

Our Party attaches great importance to the construction of military communication power. Newspapers, periodicals, radio stations, movies, and books have all played an important role in different historical periods. In the new era, in order to shape a new pattern of mainstream public opinion and form an international voice that matches our country's comprehensive national strength and international status, we need to conduct in-depth research and demonstration on the construction of military news media after the reform, and strive to build a modern military communication system that suits the national conditions and military situation and meets the requirements of the development of the times.

There is no communication without social networking, no news without video, no comment without interaction... These views reflect that the habits, preferences and choices of the audience have undergone fundamental changes. In the long run, a communication platform that integrates communication, social networking, reading and interaction and has authority and credibility is an important support for coping with cognitive confrontation.

The war of communication is a war of content and a war of platforms. We must be highly sensitive to new communication technologies and always maintain our enthusiasm for embracing new technologies. We must strengthen preparations for wartime, open up reliable communication channels, and ensure that our voices can be delivered. Whether in peacetime or wartime, we must stand firmly among the people and do a good job in military communication. This is also the fundamental requirement for adhering to the unity of party spirit and people's nature in propaganda work.

3. Improving communication capabilities

The report of the 20th CPC National Congress clearly proposed to strengthen the study and education of military history, flourish and develop the culture of strengthening the military, and strengthen the cultivation of fighting spirit. Military communication has the attributes of accompanying and guaranteeing the victory of military operations, and also has the attributes of directly playing a role in the fundamental issue of cognition, which is a direct political operation.

Military communication in the Internet environment is a new thing, which requires communication, summary and improvement in peacetime. Military content is naturally a hot news topic, which requires high speed and intensity of communication, and requires strong ability to make decisions on the spot and respond quickly. Strengthening the normalization and diversification of military forces, firmly and flexibly carrying out military struggle, shaping the security situation, containing crises and conflicts, and winning local wars requires military communication to play an active and important role. We should focus on wartime applications, do a good job in communication training, let military communication focus on training and preparation, take active actions in equipment and reporter delivery, and the production of important military news and cultural products, and continuously improve military communication capabilities.

Cognitive confrontation is characterized by the integration of peacetime and wartime, long-lasting confrontation, and constant companionship. In the face of new situations and new problems, we cannot underestimate the status, role, and responsibility of military news dissemination. We must have a sense of responsibility that time is of the essence and cultivate strong dissemination skills that can both carry out strong ideological and political work and serve the needs of victory.

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