File 20111124.2132: Weekly activity report 0216:

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weekly activity report 216 (loughry)
Joe Loughry
Sent: 24 November 2011 21:32
To: Joe Loughry
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Weekly activity report no. 20111124.1358 (GMT-7) sequence no. 0216, week 7 MT

GSS report has been submitted. The CS department 2011 Student Conference wrapped up successfully. I submitted the SF-298 form for publication of the abstract and final technical report for probabilistic redaction. Two current proposals want to use the technology in their systems; I have been assisting the proposal teams to the smallest extent possible.

Security Reading Group met to discuss the article 'Cyber War Will Not Take Place' by Thomas Rid (J. Strat. Studies 2011, pp. 1--28). The author argues that cyber attacks are not warfare, instead falling into one of the categories sabotage, espionage, or subversion. He cites von Clausewitz repeatedly but ignores jus ad bellum and jus in bello, possibly because they weaken his argument. Leaving aside the question of whether the instrumentality of force in the furtherance of political ends must of necessity be destructive, an assertion I can't verify without going back to the original German, I argued that cyber attacks are akin to cold war: an endless progression of harrying, unattributable annoyances carried out by proxies; the differences are that this new Cold War is multilateral, and the proxy combatants are criminal rather than political in nature for reasons having solely to do with ready availability. I am not sure I convinced more than half the group of my alternative interpretation. I speculated that the article was Chapter 1 of a book we have not yet seen. Dr Flchais and I disputed over whether the Enigma cracking of WWII was more subversion or espionage. I argued for subversion, as the instrumentality of the use of information gained thereby was not to direct attacks, but to move convoys away from the wolf packs and get inside the Axis military command and control. I disagree that subversion is necessarily less technical than sabotage. I said I thought this would be a forgotten paper some day, but others predicted it will be heavily cited---as having been wrong.

I met with Dr Martin briefly after reading group. I reported little progress due to assisting two proposal efforts that both want to use the probabilistic redaction algorithm. Proposals are due to the government no later than 1st December, after which Lockheed will have a claim on less of my time. Dr Martin asked if I had talked with Dr Flchais yet; I said no, but have since contacted Dr Flchais to request a formal meeting to discuss how I can make better use of the ATLAS.ti software.

I volunteered for next week to bring the Siri protocol analysis report of Applidium to Reading Group; it has some interesting privacy implications in addition to the technical details of the successful break of the protocol. The original report has since disappeared from sight.

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End of WAR 0216.

References