



Ex Verba Victoria

POVA LEAFLET DROP - September 2023

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Greetings and welcome to the expanded September Leaflet Drop. In addition to the PSYOP News, this edition features two interesting articles from our members and an announcement about the upcoming PSYOP Ball in Fayetteville on 18 November.

This month's PSYOP news features articles about disinformation, deepfakes and the unfortunate demise of the creator of PowerPoint.

Our website update is in its final stages. Thanks to those of you who sent in photos and suggestions.

Your Board of Directors held our monthly meeting on 20 September.

Mike Rogers, Hammond Salley, Dan Wood and I were present for duty. Anyone who would like a copy of the minutes can email me at: Dietz.POVA@gmail.com and I will send a copy.

I am also pleased to report that POVA received a very generous donation from Lindsay London in honor of SGT Ryan Knauss. Thanks for your invaluable support!

Our Life Member roster has increased with the very welcome addition of Albert Viator.

Here are the Statistics for the August Leaflet Drop

- Sends: 584
- Opens: 342 (59%)
- Clicks: 22
- Bounces: 1
- Unsubscribes: 1

There is nothing significant to report on our discussions with PRA or setting up a virtual office call with the CG of SWC.

If you missed the August Leaflet Drop, you can find it at:

<https://conta.cc/450TK3n> Our next virtual Board meeting is 15 November at 1900 Eastern Time. If you are interested in attending, please email me for an invite.. All POVA members in good standing are welcome to attend.

Thank you for your continued support!

All the best,

Larry

Lawrence D. Dietz, President

PSYOP NEWS - SEPTEMBER 2023

PSYOP Events

The Psychological Operations Ball 2023
18 November 23, Embassy Suites, Fayetteville, NC

November 18th for the PSYOP Ball where Active, Reserve and Retired members of the PSYOP Regiment will celebrate the past year. Social hour starts at 4:30 with dinner service starting at 6:30. Uniform for military is the ASU/AGSU. This will be a formal attire event. We look forward to seeing you as we celebrate our Regiment!

Details at: <https://www.tickettailor.com/events/prancevents/1005092>

Articles of Interest

19 Sep 23

Beyond ChatGPT: Experts say generative AI should write - but not execute - battle plans

WASHINGTON — Chatbots can now invent new recipes (with **mixed success**), **plan vacations**, or write a **budget-conscious grocery list**. So what's stopping them from summarizing secret intelligence or drafting detailed military operations orders?

Nothing, in theory, said AI experts from the independent **Special Competitive Studies Project**. The Defense Department should definitely explore those possibilities, SCSP argues, lest China or some other unscrupulous competitor get there first. In practice, however, the project's analysts emphasized in interviews with Breaking Defense, it'll take a lot of careful prep work, as laid out in a **recently released SCSP study**.

And, they warned, you'll always want at least one well-trained human checking the AI's plan before you act on it, let alone wire the AI directly to a swarm of lethal drones.

"Right now you can go on ChaGPT and say, you know, 'Build for me a schedule for my kids' lunch boxes for like the next five days,'" said **Ylber Bajraktari**, a veteran Defense Department staffer now serving as a senior advisor to SCSP. With a little more programming, he added, "it could connect to Instacart or whatever [and] can order all of those

instantaneously, and that will get shipped to you.”

“The technology is there,” Bajraktari said. “The question is plugging those in.”

https://breakingdefense.com/2023/09/beyond-chatgpt-experts-say-generative-ai-should-write-but-not-execute-battle-plans/?utm_campaign=BD%20Daily&utm_medium=email&_hsmi=274965522&_hsenc=p2ANqtz-h_pslw45HweyL3_glhX4qatwl9rSsdMmDELNYeEttpaNPibdQ_CT83Vhvl7HkmGXIHbacdSG0x_tln8rQrTDT99CYHg&utm_content=274965522&utm_source=hs_email

14 Sep 23

NSA, FBI warn of expanding use of ‘deepfakes’ in new report.

Criminals and intelligence services are expected to increase the use of “deepfakes” — manipulated and misleading audio and video images — to target government and the private sector for disinformation operations or financial gain, according to a new joint intelligence report.

“Deepfakes are a particularly concerning type of synthetic media that utilizes artificial intelligence/machine learning (AI/ML) to create believable and highly realistic media,” wrote the authors of the joint report by the National Security Agency, FBI, and Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency.

The 18-page [report](#), “Contextualizing Deepfake Threats to Organizations,” was published Wednesday.

<https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2023/sep/14/nsa-fbi-warn-expanding-use-deepfakes-new-report/>

13 Sep 23

PowerPoint creator, unwitting pioneer of military lethality dies

Dennis Robert Austin, one of most significant — and unintentional — contributors to fury-fueled lethality in military history, passed away Sept. 1 at his home in Los Altos, California, family members announced. He was 76.

As the principal software developer of PowerPoint when it debuted in 1987, Austin intended the platform to facilitate improved presentations that would simultaneously put an end to the tediousness of overhead projectors.

And while the Pittsburgh native’s mission was indeed a success, the software soon took on a painfully banal role in workplace environments, one that pits employee against boss, student against teacher, and perhaps most pronounced, junior service member against officer.

<https://www.militarytimes.com/off-duty/military-culture/2023/09/13/powerpoint-creator-unwitting-pioneer-of-military-lethality-dies-at-76/>

12 Sep 23

Pentagon Funded Study Wars Dementia Among US Officials is National Security Threat

As the national security workforce ages, dementia impacting U.S. officials poses a threat to national security, according to a first-of-its-kind study by a Pentagon-funded think tank. The report, released this spring, came as several prominent U.S. officials trusted with some of the nation’s most highly classified intelligence experienced

public lapses, stoking calls for resignations and debate about Washington's aging leadership.

<https://theintercept.com/2023/09/12/national-security-dementia-mcconnell-feinstein/>

11 Sep 23

China Sows Disinformation About Hawaii Fires Using New Techniques

Beijing's influence campaign using artificial intelligence is a rapid change in tactics, researchers from Microsoft and other organizations say.

When wildfires swept across Maui last month with destructive fury, China's increasingly resourceful information warriors pounced.

The disaster was not natural, they said in a flurry of false posts that spread across the internet, but was the result of a secret "weather weapon" being tested by the United States. To bolster the plausibility, the posts carried photographs that appeared to have been generated by artificial intelligence programs, making them among the first to use these new tools to bolster the aura of authenticity of a disinformation campaign.

For China — which largely stood on the sidelines of the 2016 and 2020 U.S. presidential elections while Russia ran hacking operations and disinformation campaigns — the effort to cast the wildfires as a deliberate act by American intelligence agencies and the military was a rapid change of tactics.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2023/09/11/us/politics/china-disinformation-ai.html>

11 Sep 23

Treat AI as you 'crazy drunk friend' no like 'peanut butter': CIA tech chief

WASHINGTON — Can intelligence agencies trust artificial intelligence? From ChatGPT's **plausible but erroneous answers to factual questions**, to Stable Diffusion's photorealistic human hands with way too many fingers, to some facial recognition algorithms' **inability to tell Black people apart**, the answer is looking like "hell no."

But that doesn't mean the government shouldn't *use* it, as long as officials take its insights and outputs with a healthy grain of salt. And even when it's wrong, the CIA's chief technology officer said this week, in some situations AI can be useful if its answers — regarded with appropriate suspicion — do nothing more than force analysts to examine the problem a different way and push them out of what he called "conceptual blindness."

In those cases, treat AI, he said, not as an infallible oracle but "what I call the crazy drunk friend."

<https://breakingdefense.com/2023/09/treat-ai-as-your-crazy-drunk-friend-not-like-peanut-butter-cia-tech-chief/>

[utm_campaign=BD%20Daily&utm_medium=email&_hsmi=273886965&_hsenc=p2ANqtz-977DT0vZMoi_LpTIVxK-YPPYeUstAoELNw_sKQ-AoDIcF1tu6NDz2qh8J20e4io0DqjhXCcshag15pl5aha8oo85KbFQ&utm_content=273886965&utm_source=hs_email](https://breakingdefense.com/2023/09/treat-ai-as-your-crazy-drunk-friend-not-like-peanut-butter-cia-tech-chief/?utm_campaign=BD%20Daily&utm_medium=email&_hsmi=273886965&_hsenc=p2ANqtz-977DT0vZMoi_LpTIVxK-YPPYeUstAoELNw_sKQ-AoDIcF1tu6NDz2qh8J20e4io0DqjhXCcshag15pl5aha8oo85KbFQ&utm_content=273886965&utm_source=hs_email)

8 Sep 23

Bootlegged Barbie defeats Kremlin propaganda movie

The hit [American film Barbie](#) has taken Russia by storm, beating a dour propaganda blockbuster produced by the Kremlin to promote its war in Ukraine.

Despite failing the Kremlin's morality test, bootlegged versions of Barbie have now been dubbed into Russian.

"Let's go!" the company that has produced the new Russian-language version of Barbie said on Thursday. "From today, the movie of the year is dubbed."

Hollywood film studios pulled out of Russia last year after the invasion of Ukraine, but with Russian cinemas on the brink of collapse and determined to sustain an air of normality, the Kremlin has turned a blind eye to bootlegged versions of American films.

But now this strategy risks undermining the Kremlin's [propaganda message](#).
<https://www.msn.com/en-gb/news/world/bootlegged-barbie-defeats-kremlin-propaganda-movie/ar-AA1gJiR9>

8 Sep 23

CIA seeks to recruit Russian officials with video about truth

MOSCOW, Sept 8 (Reuters) - The U.S. Central Intelligence Agency, which is trying to recruit more Russians as spies, has released a video targeting Moscow officials with an appeal to tell the truth about a system it said is riddled with lying sycophants. CIA Director [William Burns](#) said in July that disaffection among some Russians over the war in Ukraine was creating a rare opportunity to recruit spies, and that the CIA was not letting it pass.

The agency released the video in Russian entitled "Why I made contact with the CIA - for myself" on social media which shows what is clearly supposed to be a Russian official walking through the snow of what looks like a Russian city.

<https://www.reuters.com/world/us/cia-seeks-recruit-russian-officials-with-silky-video-about-truth-2023-09-08/>

8 Sep 23

China Unleashes AI-Powered Imanage Generation for Influence Operations

China has unveiled a new cyber capability powered by artificial intelligence, enabling the automatic generation of images for influence operations. These operations aim to mimic US voters across the political spectrum, fueling controversy along racial, economic and ideological lines.

The findings come from a new report released by Microsoft Threat Analysis Center (MTAC) on Thursday. Titled "Sophistication, scope, and scale: Digital threats from East Asia increase in breadth and effectiveness," the research underscores the expanding threat of influence operations and cyber activities in the East Asia region. In particular, China-affiliated actors are employing AI-generated media to target politically divisive topics such as gun violence and disparaging US political figures and symbols. This technology surpasses previous campaigns with eye-catching content. The extent and timing of its mass deployment remain uncertain.

[Microsoft emphasized](#) the urgency of addressing the weaponization of AI technology by cyber and influence threat actors.

8 Sep 23

Air Force Chief of Staff issues warning of PLA recruitment of US Air Force members, veterans

ARLINGTON, Va. (AFNS) -- In a memorandum released Sept. 8, Air Force Chief of Staff Gen. CQ Brown, Jr., issued a stark warning about a growing threat to national security - the recruitment and exploitation of current and former Air Force members by the People's Liberation Army of China, or PLA.

The memorandum also explains that individuals who accept contracts with foreign companies may be imposing risks to national security that could have legal and criminal implications.

"Our vastly superior capabilities and overwhelming airpower are key in deterring increasingly aggressive behavior in the Indo-Pacific and, if necessary, defeating threats," Brown said. "I have made it clear since publishing the original CSAF Action Orders that I am committed to ensuring Airmen have what is required to compete, deter, and win in a high-end fight."

Brown stated that the PLA is seeking to exploit the expertise of current and former U.S. Airmen to bridge capability gaps throughout their ranks.

https://www.globalsecurity.org/military/library/news/2023/09/mil-230908-usaf01.htm?_m=3n%2e002a%2e3712%2erg0ao0ejdg%2e3g5s

6 Sep 23

Russian Disinformation Campaigns Influence Sweden's NATO Aspirations

Just to show how [Russian disinformation campaigns](#) reach all parts of the globe, look no farther than the meddling going on in Sweden currently. Two events have played a part in the concerted false narrative that actually are real:

- Sweden has overtly joined a desire to join NATO which has manifested since the Russian invasion of Ukraine
- An Iraqi refugee in Sweden burned copies of the Quran in front of one of the country's largest mosques twice this summer, a few months after a similar event took place in another part of Sweden

What does one have to do with the other? NATO membership requires all 30 nations who belong to organization must agree to a new country becoming a member. Turkey, a predominately-Muslim nation, has shown opposition to Sweden's membership, mainly due to the Quran burning incidents and a perceived lack of action by Sweden's government.

https://news.clearancejobs.com/2023/09/06/russian-disinformation-campaigns-influence-swedens-nato-aspirations/?_hsmi=273187479&_hsenc=p2ANqtz-1L8OVc-nvPiLueLVUQPIg_jkrrF4s-w9X-rR8xl54bsjax8FblsFrPBEo23DPZs8Ni1q3MyaUDaPPHVepyO1867dTPA

4 Sep 23

A psychological weapon: inside a Ukrainian factory making decoy kit

In a dusty workshop, a unique group of Ukrainian weapons experts race to produce

artillery guns that will never be fired, radar trucks that cannot detect anything, and missiles without explosives.

The pieces are decoys that aim to draw Russian fire, wasting enemy ammunition, missiles and drones while protecting real equipment and the soldiers manning it. The team's skill, honed over more than a year, is shaping plastic, scrap wood, foam and metal into copies of advanced weapon systems, precise enough to convince Russian operators of drone cameras and battle-seasoned troops on the ground that they are real military targets.

They measure success by how quickly their products are destroyed. "When the military come to us and says 'we are out of these', it means we were totally successful in our job," says one.

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2023/sep/04/a-psychological-weapon-inside-a-ukrainian-factory-making-decoy-kit>

1 Sep 23

Welcome to the Military Meta-verse:

The environment in which our militaries are operating is changing at pace. Rapidly proliferating, increasingly multipolar threats means the battlespace of tomorrow will be more contested and congested than ever before.

It is a shifting picture which will increasingly require a connected, multi-domain response, with assets from the outer reaches of space to the depths of the ocean seamlessly networking to ensure superiority and mission readiness in a world dominated by growing volumes of data. Those who are able to successfully harness, interpret and use that data on the battlefield will hold a critical advantage. With the need to operate in new ways to combat the emergence of new environments and new threats comes the need to train the militaries of tomorrow in new ways too.

<https://www.defensenews.com/native/BAE/2023/09/01/welcome-to-the-military-meta-verse/>

Editor's Note: Wherever people go, they are influenced. PSYOP needs to be there too!

30 Aug 23

The Dark Side of LinkedIn: China's Espionage Playground

It has been said many times and warrants saying again, China will never take its foot off the accelerator when it comes to nation state espionage, they are running full throttle, no brakes. The UK media is all abuzz with headlines on how an [individual located in China over the course of five years used several personas on LinkedIn](#) to engage and attempt to compromise individuals with access to information of interest. To readers of Clearance Jobs for the past ten years, that is a bit like saying "water is wet."

LinkedIn is fertile hunting ground

For years the UK, U.S., Australia, Germany and other security services have been publishing their annual counterintelligence reports, studies and warnings highlighting the use of the "commercial recruiter" or "commercial consultant" ploy by China to

entice the unsuspecting. To China's credit, they are using the tools provided by LinkedIn to populate their targeting matrix. One need only review the case of Dickson Yeo (aka Jun Wei Yeo) a Singaporean now sitting in a U.S. prison for his work with the Chinese Ministry of State Security (MSS) who used the LinkedIn algorithm to "aggressively target and build contact for Chinese [intelligence](#)." https://news.clearancejobs.com/2023/08/30/the-dark-side-of-linkedin-chinas-espionage-playground/?_hsmi=272333658&_hsenc=p2ANqtz-_gVjDuCCse1KpzWhgPOKExfZT6jV2pAVWY_CstiyacvOkOjGI7qzgrpU_SRUx4VCvhOOodbQtP4ch1ozaQcVCuMnTCgw

29 Aug 23

Texas Guardsman spied on migrants via WhatsApp, mishandled secret docs
When officers from the Texas National Guard showed up to their 7 a.m. meeting with federal agents from Homeland Security Investigations in El Paso, they didn't arrive empty-handed.

Six military intelligence officials turned over a list of names at the February 2022 meeting. The Texans were part of an intelligence directorate supporting Operation Lone Star, Gov. Greg Abbott's state-run border mission. The officers, which included the group's top two leaders, told federal agents they'd secretly infiltrated invite-only WhatsApp group chats filled with migrants and smugglers and wanted their help investigating the targets they'd identified, according to a sworn statement attached to a whistleblower complaint filed later that month.

The Homeland Security officials in the meeting rebuffed the Texans on the spot — with one official saying that they were an investigative body and "not an intelligence agency," the whistleblower recalled.

<https://www.armytimes.com/news/your-army/2023/08/29/texas-guardsmen-spied-on-migrants-via-whatsapp-mishandled-secret-docs/>

29 Aug 23

Russian Disinformation in Africa: No Door on this Barn

Bottom Line

- Recent gains by Russian disinformation in Africa make up one of the quickest propaganda victories in history.
- Wagner Group-Kremlin narratives work to Russia's material advantage, and to Africa's strong disadvantage.
- Understandably, Western governments are skittish toward employing underhanded tactics to counter Russian lies.
- An alternative to inaction could be to marry Western government resources with the work of non-governmental organizations in Africa and elsewhere.
- As is sometimes said about climate change, it may already be "too late" to mount efforts to remedy the situation. But that is hardly a reason for doing nothing.

<https://www.fpri.org/article/2023/08/russian-disinformation-in-africa-no-door-on-this-barn/>

29 Aug 23

Meta's 'Biggest Single Takedown' Removes Chinese Influence Campaign

The campaign began at least four years ago and spanned thousands of accounts on Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, X, Substack and Chinese websites, Meta said.

On Feb. 27, an article claiming that the United States was behind the [bombing of](#)

[the Nord Stream](#) underwater pipelines in the Baltic Sea was published on the Substack and Blogspot blogging platforms.

Within 24 hours, the article — and other versions of it — had been posted to more websites, including Reddit, Medium, Tumblr, Facebook and YouTube. Translations of the article in Greek, German, Russian, Italian and Turkish also began appearing online.

The posts were part of a Chinese influence campaign that stands out as the largest such operation to date, researchers at Meta said in a report on Tuesday. The effort, which the company said had started with Chinese law enforcement and was discovered in 2019, was aimed at advancing China's interests and discrediting its adversaries, such as the United States, Meta said.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2023/08/29/technology/meta-china-influence-campaign.html>

26 Aug 23 From SOF News

SOTG-C, MC-130Js, and JASSMs. U.S. Ninth Air Force (Air Forces Central) service members demonstrated the capability for the MC-130J Commando II to load, unload, forward arm, and arm the aircraft with the Joint Air-to-Surface Standoff Missiles, or [AGM-158 JASSMs](#) (SOF News), as part of Rapid Dragon, at Al Udeid Air Base, Qatar, Aug. 6, 2023. JASSM is a low observable standoff air-launched cruise missile, intended to keep aircrews out of range of hostile air defense systems without compromising lethality. Rapid Dragon is a precision munitions capability for medium-sized or larger cargo aircraft that allows U.S. forces a flexible rapid response option. [“AFCENT Special Operations Task Group prepares JASSM capabilities”](#), by Jennifer Zima, *U.S. Air Force Central*, August 26, 2023.

PSYOP Bulletin Board - September 2023

Near death @ 2,000 feet

By Albert Viator

From his book, *An Accidental (PSY) Warrior* Published
April 2021

Early on a Sunday morning I had driven my Jeep out to the airstrip on the outskirts of the base camp at Lai Khe, home of the 1st Infantry Division and formerly a rubber plantation owned by the French tire maker, Michelin.

A long narrow swath had been cut out of the tall trees and paved with interlocking metal grids that provided traction and a firm runway for small, fixed wing aircraft and helicopters. It was quiet and still. The faded orange windsock hung limply from its pole atop the control tower. “Control tower” perhaps gives the structure more credit than it deserves. It was not much more than a two-story metal flight of stairs with a wooden box on top that had windows on all sides. There was

nobody up there. In fact, there was nobody anywhere around but me.

I sat in my Jeep and waited. This was my first PSYOP mission and I had been briefed the day before on what to expect. As the new PSYOP Specialist for the Big Red One, my job was to put a prerecorded cassette into a player that was connected to an array of speakers that was hung below the overhead wing on the small aircraft that was coming to pick me up. The equipment had been installed and tested before the pilot took off from Tan Son Nhut Air Base about 45 miles to the southeast, outside Saigon. All I had to do was push the play button when the pilot told me to. Easy enough I thought.

Breaking the silence, I could hear a small aircraft approaching the landing field. It flew overhead and floated in slow motion toward me along the metal grid. As it pulled up next to me the pilot leaned over and pushed open the passenger door.

My previous year's Army training kicked in immediately as I spotted the rank insignia on his shoulders and I snapped to attention, delivered a smart salute, and called over the roar of the engine, "Good morning, Sir!" to the Air Force Colonel in the pilot's seat. He returned my formality with a casual two-finger wave, just touching his forehead as if to say, "Hey kid, thanks, but let's skip the formality, it's Sunday morning and I'm just up for a nice flight to log some air miles and flesh out my flight pay".

Lai Khe was situated on a hill, which probably added to its value as a defensible position. The runway ran right up to the perimeter so as we lifted off, we didn't have to climb much as the land fell off gently below and in just minutes, the pilot decelerated a bit so we could talk.

We would be flying in support of a rifle company in the jungle below and we would drop down from 3,000 feet a bit and he'd tap me on the arm when I was to hit the play button. We were broadcasting a Chieu Hoi ("open arms") message, a program designed to encourage Viet Cong combatants to surrender. After the tape played its 2-minute run he'd pull up, we'd circle, and then do it again a few more times. He reached over to the radio controls in front of me and, clicking the small knob that located the frequencies, he showed me the "freq" he'd be on. "If you need me, I'll be right here...click...click, on 756. (I forget the actual number). He then clicked over to Armed Forces Vietnam Radio; "Up, Up and Away, in my beautiful balloon" by the pop group, 5th Dimension was playing in my headsets.

Again, I thought to myself, easy enough.

We arrived at the coordinates we'd been assigned. The Colonel checked his map and gave me a thumbs-up to say we were about to go into action. I reviewed in my mind what I had learned in my briefing the

previous day. (I call it a briefing because that was what the sergeant from the operations tent had called it). Really it was about a 10-minute session on what I was supposed to do on my first mission that amounted to: 1. Show up at the airstrip early. 2. Make sure my seat belt was secure as I belted into the plane and 3. Do what I was told.

It seemed surreal that while we cruised comfortably at 3,000 feet, safely out of the range of small arms fire, a full-blown life and death firefight was raging below. (It's an experience that I would become all too familiar with only a few weeks later).

Music was still playing in my headset. The pilot tapped me on the arm as we dove to make our first run and I hit the play button: The message played; calling out in a loud voice over screeching background music that the Vietcong below should throw down their weapons, raise their arms above their heads and they would be treated humanely, fed well, and reunited with their families.

We did this a couple of times, and I was growing confident that I had a handle on this whole PSYOP thing and that maybe it wouldn't be all that bad...

That thought quickly exploded in my head as we finished another run, and I looked out the window and down to the jungle...an F100 fighter jet was just pulling up and blasting straight toward us at whatever rate of speed they travel after completing a strafing run.

I screamed at the pilot, but he didn't respond, as it was near impossible to hear me over the sound of our own engine and the wind noise. And he was probably still listening to Sunday Morning Music from AFVN Radio in Saigon.

I tried the intercom, clicking back and forth from one freq to the other in vain but gave up on that and looked out the window. The F100 was way closer...I could clearly see the fighter's pilot, his green visor flipped up over the top of his helmet. His arms reaching down and forward as he gripped the jet's controls. His eyes wide open.

I turned to my pilot and threw him a hard chop to the ribs with my elbow screaming, "Jet, Jet", and pointing. I knew he could not possibly see the oncoming jet as I had to look out and down from my small window to see it, but I guess he could see from my face and gestures that this was a very serious situation.

I remember him pulling back full on the wheel and turning to the left in one rapid motion.

Suddenly I was hanging upside down, held only in place by my seat belts

as we were buffeted violently by the backwash from the fighter as it screeched by just feet above us. Even with my headset and the roar of our own engine the jet's engine was deafening, and our small plane took huge, erratic jumps in the air as the force of the jet's exhaust hit us.

Neither of us said a word or even looked at each other and after he righted our plane we headed back to Lai Khe and floated to a landing on the metal grid where I climbed out, shut the door, latched it with a half turn and walked away without looking back...without a salute.

I sat in my Jeep, all alone at the airstrip and watched as the Colonel turned the plane, revved up and headed down the runway, lifting slightly as the ground sloped down gently below him.

Albert Viator served on a 3-man PSYOP field team in Vietnam during the years 1968 and '69. After his discharge in 1970 he began a 35-year career shooting and producing news and documentaries for most of the US news and cable TV networks such as CNN, PBS, and The National Geographic Channel.

As a result of publishing his book, *An Accidental (PSY) Warrior* Albert has participated in a number of national podcasts and was recently a guest speaker at the 6th PSYOP Battalion at Fort Liberty, North Carolina.

[https://www.amazon.com/dp/1649908393/ref=sr_1_1?
dchild=An+Accidental+%28PSY%29+Warrior&qid=1619805908&sr=1-1](https://www.amazon.com/dp/1649908393/ref=sr_1_1?dchild=An+Accidental+%28PSY%29+Warrior&qid=1619805908&sr=1-1)

Ray's Story

Major Raymond P. Ambrozak, U.S. Army, Retired

Major Raymond P. Ambrozak was born in Nanticoke, Pennsylvania and entered the Army in 1957 after attending Johns Hopkins University in Maryland. In 1959 he was commissioned as a 2LT Infantry officer via OCS at Fort Benning, Georgia. His first assignment was with the 1st Leaflet and Loudspeaker Company at Fort Bragg, North Carolina.

Major Ambrozak's 21 year Army career included over ten years in Psychological Operations (PSYOP) at both unit and theater levels long before either the PSYOP branch or Regiment were formed. He planned and executed operations involving extensive interface with foreign counterparts and every U.S. governmental agency operating overseas. Since the 10th Special Forces Group, granddaddy of current Special Forces units, was organized in 1952 under the Psychological Warfare Center, two of his many PSYOP assignments may be of particular interest to Chapter 78 members:

In 1961 he deployed to Laos as part of U.S Special Forces mission known as OPERATION WHITE STAR, training Royal Lao forces combating the Communist Pathet Lao. He was directly responsible for completion of a radio station dedicated to the King of Laos – airing the country's first nationwide broadcast of a live event and designing and implementing a retraining program

for Pathet Lao P.O.W.'s. He was directly involved with "Operation Genie" with this story told below.

In 1964 he deployed to Vietnam for his first tour as part of a PSYOP Detachment assigned to MACVSOG where he played a key role in establishing and putting on the air the Voice of Freedom radio station broadcasting to North Vietnam. He was managing station operations when the Gulf of Tonkin incident occurred.

This is Ray's story about how he became involved in "Operation Genie":

"In 1961 I was a member of a PSYOP team that was deployed to support Operation White Star in Laos. The team was organized on a voluntary basis and established a six week training program to prepare for the mission. The most impactful training was provided by Special Forces soldiers just returning from a tour. One of those soldiers was a Col. "Bull" Simons who we peppered with questions for two hours. Training took place in an abandoned WWII building in a remote area of Ft. Bragg, in order to maintain as much secrecy as possible. Our first departure date was postponed due to a Coup d'état in country. After another six weeks of training, we finally had wheels up. When we arrived in Bangkok, we had two days of briefings before departing for Vientiane. During the briefings, we learned that the concept for our employment in Laos was not as we had been briefed at Ft. Bragg. Instead of the team operating together from a central location, individual advisors were to locate in each of four military regions. This meant that as a butter bar Lt. I was to be the information consultant with frequent contact to the MR-1 Cmdr. General Bounlut in Luang Prabang. Fortunately, we were in civilian clothes, since foreign military personnel were not allowed in country, so my youth and experience level was not as noticeable.

As it turned out, being assigned to duty in Luang Prabang was like winning the advisor assignment lottery. All of the US personnel were seasoned pros truly devoted to their work as US foreign officers and genuinely interested in assisting the Lao government in their effort to remain non-communist. The US effort was anchored by two individuals who were my closest working team mates. Stewart Methven (Stu) was the CIA case officer and Frank Corrigan was the USIS representative both of whom are on my personal hero list to this day. There was very little break-in period because there simply wasn't time to take the new guy by the hand and slowly familiarize him with the area. Most of the knowledge of the area was dispensed in jeep rides between villages or in helicopters or STOL aircraft while on leafleting missions. The thing that surprised me most, for which I was grateful, was that I was immediately being accepted as a team member expected to contribute and help carry the load. The other welcome aspect of our activity was that nothing was undertaken without considering directly or indirectly the psychological impact of a proposal. There was also no limit on how audacious a particular action could be before considered for implementation. You didn't have to worry about thinking outside the box, because we were never in the box to begin with. A good example of this was "Genie" which we managed to make happen about a month after my arrival.

Some of what happened was chronicled by Stu in his book "Laughter in the Shadows". Below is an excerpt from Stu's book. Some names of Laotian people and places are altered to meet security requirements."

"Operation Genie" was the brainchild of Frank Corrigan. Although USIS was prohibited from engaging in covert activities, Frank wasn't bothered by bureaucratic constraints and liked to skirt these by playing spy. Operation Genie centered around the "Pi," the mystical spirits revered and feared by the Cham. The Pi were invisible but were believed to be omnipresent in clouds, rain, forests, and the breezes wafting over the rice paddies.

Frank's plan called for collecting all the bottles we could find in Luang Prabang. We would then stuff them with leaflets before air-dropping them over villages known to be under Pathet Cham control. On the way down, the bottles would sound like the Pi making a whistling noise. They would break open and scatter the leaflets when they hit the ground, illustrated leaflets urging the villagers to "break" from the Pathet Cham like the "imprisoned" Pi had done.

The proprietor of the Palace Hotel supplied us with all the bottles we needed. Since most Cham couldn't read, Frank drew caricatures of fang-toothed Pathet Cham, and Voran ran off the leaflets on his mimeograph machine. I requested a small plane from Viensiang to drop the leaflets.

When the plane arrived, we briefed the pilot, and at dusk, when the villagers would have returned from the rice fields, we took off. Once over a target village, the pilot would throttle back the engine and the plane would glide almost silently as we threw out the bottles. He would then gun the engine and fly on to the next village to repeat the operation.

We dropped bottles over twelve villages before returning to Luang Prabang. It was dark when we returned, but Colonel Nelson's team had set out flares on the airstrip to guide the pilot. We had jettisoned our entire supply of Pi bottles.

"Genie" was a one-shot operation, and its success was hard to gauge. We did get some feedback, however. An itinerant rice merchant told the province chief he had been stopped by a Pathet Cham patrol, which warned him that American planes were dropping poison gas in the area. Another source reported that a village chief had called for a goat sacrifice to appease the wounded Pi that had crashed through his roof.

MAJ Ambrozak retired from the Army in 1978 and worked in Department of the Army civilian assignments at Fort Hood, Texas for 11 years. Included among Major Ambrozak's many awards are the Silver Star, Distinguished Member of the PSYOP Regiment and recipient of the McClure Gold Medal, and his 2018 induction into the USSOCOM Special Operations Hall of Fame.

Notes on Pictures:

The first picture below is Ray and a Pathet Lao POW taking a break sitting on an antenna.

Picture Back Story: Frank Corrigan had promised the king a radio station. Parts were coming in to include an antenna field.

Frank was killed in a plane crash

USIS director asked me to run their station in L.P.

I got a work force from the local POW camp to help build the antenna field

The second picture is at the funeral of King Sisavang Vong, who ruled for 50 years. We arranged to make a live broadcast of the event to the entire country.

Ray is standing in front of the carrier used to transport the King's body, in a gold-leaf encrusted sarcophagus guarded by the naga dragons, from the palace to the cremation site.

Some background on Operation White Star:

<https://sofrep.com/news/58394white-star/>

Article Courtesy of Ray Ambrozak and "The Sentinel", Chapter 78 Special Forces Association (<https://www.specialforces78.com/>)



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