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## **NEED FOR NATIONAL INTELLIGENCE ADVISER**

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Threats to national security could be external and internal, overt and covert, direct and indirect and conventional and non-conventional.

Before the First World War, external threats to national security mainly arose from other States. The success of the October Revolution in the USSR, the advent of the Communist International and the birth of Communist China were followed by aggressive attempts by the Communist International and the Communist States to export their ideology to the non-Communist countries and to assist the Communist Parties of those countries achieve power, if possible, by legitimate means and, if necessary, by illegitimate revolutionary means.

Such assistance was overt as well as covert. The overt assistance was in the form of propaganda support through the printed and electronic media and the covert assistance was in the form of clandestine supply of funds, military and para-military training for the cadres of the Communist parties of other countries and ideological guidance.

To conceal the role of the Communist States in providing such covert assistance, the technique of front organisations was used. These front organisations were non-governmental groups, ostensibly taking interest in seemingly benign objectives such as

promotion of literacy, encouragement of arts and culture, welfare of the peasants and workers etc.

An international network of such front organisations was formed under the guidance of the Communist Parties of the USSR and China and clandestine assistance was funnelled through this network without the Communist States getting directly involved.

This led to a realisation that threats to national security could arise not only from other States, but also from ideologically-oriented parties and groups and their front organisations, acting ostensibly independently, but really at the behest of other States.

The period of the Cold War saw aggressive attempts by the Western countries, led by the USA, to prevent the spread of Communism and to counter the attempts of the USSR and China to export the Communist revolution through their parties and front organisations.

They adopted the same techniques as the Communist countries. They clandestinely supplied funds to parties and organisations opposed to the Communist ideology and promoted a large number of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) ostensibly taking interest in subjects such as environment, child labour, women's welfare etc and used these organisations for funnelling funds and guidance.

They also set up a vast propaganda network in the form of the Voice of America (VOA), Radio Free Europe, Radio Liberty, the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), the Cable News Network (CNN) and Radio Free Asia to counter the Communist propaganda and to influence public opinion in the non-Communist countries in favour of the West and to create feelings of alienation in the minds of the people of the Communist States.

As a result of the new techniques adopted by the Communist and the Western blocs during the Cold War, threats to national security arose not only from conventional means such as the direct or indirect use of the armed forces, but also from non-conventional means such as softening the minds of the population in different countries, perception management, ideological subversion etc.

The advent of the information technology and the vast information network in the form of the Internet etc, have placed at the hands of external powers and groups new, sophisticated non-conventional means of indirectly influencing developments in other States and in weakening their capability to protect their national security.

Another non-conventional technique, which came into vogue during the 1970s, was the use of the intelligence agencies of other compliant states as surrogates by the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) of the US for its operations in other countries. This technique enabled the CIA to circumvent the various restrictions placed on its operations by the US Congress following the post-Watergate enquiries, which brought to light large-scale abuses by the CIA.

Amongst such restrictions imposed by the President himself or the Congress were the ban on the use of American Christian missionaries for intelligence operations and the requirement of prior approval for covert destabilisation operations in foreign countries. To circumvent them, the CIA has been using the intelligence agencies of compliant countries, which are not subject to such restrictions.

Thus, it has been extensively using the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) of Pakistan for its operations in the Islamic countries, the MOSSAD, the Israeli external intelligence agency, for its operations in West Asia and North Africa and the Australian intelligence for its operations in South-East Asia.

The Australian Intelligence, at its own initiative as well as at the alleged behest of the CIA, is reported to be very active in Thailand (target: Myanmar), Indonesia and Malaysia and there are suspicions that the Australian Intelligence has been playing an active role in the current campaign against Dr. Mahatir Mohammad, Prime Minister of Malaysia, who is not liked by either Australia or the US because of his intensely independent attitude.

With the discontinuance by China in 1979 of the export of its revolutionary ideology and with the collapse of the USSR in 1991, threats to national security from overseas Communist organisations have diminished. However, this has not resulted in a decrease in the efforts of the Western States, led by the USA, to influence developments in other States in a direction favourable to their political, economic, ideological and strategic objectives through the means developed during the Cold War and continuously perfected since then.

New pretexts are used to justify their pressure on other States and their attempts to influence developments there. Such pretexts include promotion of free trade and globalisation, human rights, religious rights, protection of environment, non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction etc.

Amongst the new techniques brought into play are the so-called Track II diplomacy (achievement of diplomatic objectives through the moulding of public opinion) and the floating of new NGOs to create public opinion in the targetted countries in favour of the US objectives on issues such as nuclear non-proliferation, human rights etc.

To conceal the hand of the State in the orchestration of the new NGOs, Western corporate houses and private and other academic foundations are used to fund them. Thus, the major source of funding of the Human Rights Watch in the US, which is suspected to be clandestinely helping the US Government in using the weapon of human rights to achieve its national objectives, is Mr. George Soros, who was accused by Dr. Mahatir Mohammad in 1997 of adding to the economic difficulties of the ASEAN countries to punish them for their support to the Government of Myanmar and for admitting it to the ASEAN.

In the past, the Amnesty International had allegedly worked in tandem with the MI-6, the British external intelligence agency.

Before 1991, the anti-nuclear movement of the peaceniks of the Western countries was largely orchestrated by the Committee of State Security (KGB), the intelligence agency of the USSR, and Stasi, the intelligence agency of former East Germany.

Now, the anti-nuclear movement in Asia, particularly in South Asia, is choreographed by the Non-Proliferation Division of the CIA through reputed academic institutions and think-tanks, which are prepared to collaborate with the CIA. Through the intermediary of such institutions, funds are allegedly being funnelled to promote new think-tanks, which would oppose the policies of the regional governments, which are not in consonance with those of the USA.

Apart from the US intelligence agencies, the US Energy Department, which co-ordinates the functioning of nuclear research institutions, has also been active in this field. A non-proliferation expert of the Energy Department is recently reported to have been posted as Special Assistant to the US Ambassador in New Delhi to keep in touch with various NGOs and think-tanks, which are against nuclear weaponisation and encourage their activities. It is believed that she had previously served in the Defence Intelligence Agency (DIA) of the Pentagon and, possibly, also in the Non-Proliferation Division of the CIA.

After the Second World War, many other groups posing threats to national security have come into being such as terrorist groups, Islamic extremist organisations, narcotics-smuggling gangs and organised crime mafia groups.

The sponsorship of such groups by different States, through their intelligence agencies, to achieve their national objectives against adversary nations without resorting to a direct war led to the intensification and sophistication of what are called proxy war techniques. A proxy war is fought not directly, but through the intermediary of individuals and groups in the adversary nations, which are prepared to take to violence against the adversary State at the behest of external powers.

The old Communist International has now been replaced by an Islamic Jihad International, an amorphous group of Islamic extremist organisations and free-lance terrorists such as Osama Bin Laden of the International Islamic Front for Jihad against the US and Israel and Al Khattab (suspected real name: Habib Abd al-Rahman), another Saudi terrorist of Jordanian origin, who is now assisting the Chechen extremists against the Russian troops.

Components of this Islamic Jihad International, motivated partly by religious considerations and partly by monetary ones, have been a major source of threat to the internal security of the Philippines, Myanmar, India, China, the Central Asian Republics and Russia.

They have had no compunctions in letting themselves be used by various intelligence agencies for achieving their objectives. Thus, the CIA and other Western intelligence agencies used them against the USSR in Afghanistan, the ISI against India and Russia for selling arms and ammunition to India, the Saudi intelligence agency for its operations against Iraq and Iran, the Iraqi intelligence agencies for their operations against Saudi Arabia and Iran and the Iranian intelligence agencies for their operations against Saudi Arabia and Iraq.

Since the end of the traditional cold war and the beginning of what has been described as the "mercantalist cold war", the importance attached to the collection and analysis of economic and technological intelligence has increased. This has, however, not resulted in a diminution of the importance hitherto attached to political and military intelligence.

The priorities in respect of political and military intelligence are also changing following the disappearance of international communism and the emergence of international Islam as a potent destabilising element in national as well as international politics and the increasing concerns of countries over energy security and the possible threats to energy supplies.

Another dimension to the changing priorities has been added by the increase not only in the number of nuclear and nuclear and missile capable States, but also in the number of terrorist and religious groups suspected to be looking for a capability in nuclear, chemical and biological weapons.

Consequently, the political, religious and violence-prone activities of trans-national Islamic organisations are receiving the same priority as internal political and economic developments in neighbouring and regional States. Covert, deniable actions to achieve national security objectives, when the use of normal diplomatic means or conventional military power for the purpose is not

feasible, were resorted to even before the Second World War, but now such actions have been increasing in frequency, intensity and sophistication, thanks to modern technologies.

Past covert actions were essentially of a psychological (psywar) or para-military dimension. The same dimensions, while still valid, have now assumed added nuances. To the concept of political psywar has been added that of economic psywar to damage the economy and competitiveness of a target-nation or a target-industrial or trading group. The increasing dependence of the business world on electronic networks has, on the one hand, led to a tremendous economic growth, but, on the other, made the economy unconsciously vulnerable to attempts at electronic sabotage. The new media technologies and perception-management techniques have placed in the hands of external forces means of making people distrust the claims of their own leaders and experts regarding the state of the economy and thereby creating market turbulence.

Past para-military covert actions led to large casualties of innocent civilians, thereby, not infrequently, shocking public opinion even in the country resorting to such actions and creating a backlash against them. Electronic covert actions through the use of malicious software and other means could achieve the same objective without human casualties and thus make covert actions acceptable to the public.

Consequently, any intelligence community, to be effective, has to keep itself abreast of technologies susceptible to being used in covert actions, and build up for itself not only a defensive, counter-capability, but also an offensive capability, for possible use, if required.

The advent of modern technologies and the mercantalist cold war have markedly changed the concept of counter-intelligence (CI). CI experts have now to contend with not only human moles acquired or planted in a sensitive establishment by a foreign agency, but also microchip moles designed and planted in the information, telecommunication and media systems acquired from abroad. How to detect and neutralise such microchip moles designed to carry out the wishes of their maker without the knowledge of their user is a subject, which has to receive increasing attention

The post-1991 globalised world has given rise to new elements, susceptible to being exploited as surrogates of foreign intelligence agencies for intelligence collection and covert actions. These are the foreign multinationals and other business houses whose ultimate loyalty is to the country of their origin and not to that where they operate. The use of business houses for intelligence collection and covert actions is a technique already used by the West, China and Japan and even Pakistan has made a start with it. The identification of such business houses and the monitoring of their activities have to be a new priority of any intelligence community.

The Indian intelligence community essentially consists of the Intelligence Bureau (IB), the Research & Analysis Wing (RAW), the Directorate-General of Security, the Directorates-General of Intelligence of the three services of the Armed Forces and the

intelligence wings of the para-military forces and the State Governments.

At present, there is no system of co-ordination of their activities, allocation of budgetary resources, assignment of tasks and monitoring of their performance. There is no official who can take an over-all, co-ordinated view of the functioning of the intelligence community as a whole in order to advise the Prime Minister on their performance and ensure that the intelligence produced is relevant to changing national security needs and is cost-effective.

In the US, there is a post of Director, Central Intelligence, whose function is such co-ordination. He also acts as the principal Adviser to the President on all intelligence matters. Till now, this post is being held by the Director of the CIA, who thus functions as the administrative and operational head of the CIA and, simultaneously, as the co-ordinator of the functioning of the intelligence community as a whole.

There have periodically been suggestions for the separation of these two posts and to appoint a separate officer to act as the Adviser and Co-ordinator on all intelligence matters, without any responsibility for the day-to-day running of any single intelligence agency. Germany, France and some other Western countries already have such a functionary.

Keeping in view the past examples of ineffective co-ordination as seen in the case of the Mumbai blasts of March 1993 and the Purulia arms drop of 1995 and in the light of the Kargil experience and the changing complexity of the role of intelligence, it would be necessary for the newly-elected Government of India to create a post of National Intelligence Adviser to supervise and guide the working of all the agencies of the intelligence community and act as the principal Adviser to the Prime Minister on all intelligence matters.

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(4-10-99)

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