



Land of the Morning Calm, Land of the Daily Demonstration: *Leveraging Police Intelligence Operations to Combat Civil Disturbances*

By Major Chad B. McRee

In the past year, U.S. forces in Seoul, Republic of Korea (ROK), have experienced a large number of demonstrations and civil disruptions targeting our personnel, our installations, and our presence. One precipitating event for this unrest occurred on 13 June 2002 when two Korean girls were struck and killed by a tracked vehicle that was traveling in convoy formation adjacent to a 2d Infantry Division training area. As a result of this incident, the U.S. Forces Korea (USFK) and the Korean National Police (KNP) tracked, reported, combated, and braced for more than 700 peninsulawide demonstrations (97 percent of which are anti-United States in nature). The largest gathering involved more than 100,000 protesters. Demonstrations often focus on ideas such as *P'yong-tong-sa* (People Who Open the Doors for Reunification and Peace). One active group is called "Citizens Against the Planned Move of USFK to Pyongtaek."

Due to the magnitude of this civil unrest, unprecedented coordination between multiple agencies has been required to predict and proactively respond to potentially violent demonstrations. Neither the Joint

Intelligence Staff Directorate nor the multiple defense intelligence resources were able to predict the civil disturbances, conduct a timely analysis, or recommend sound courses of action for response. Therefore, the USFK provost marshal became responsible for developing a predictive analysis system for anticipating demonstrations and advising the command about dealing with them.

The police intelligence operations (PIO) function has become the most important operational-level function for the U.S. and ROK forces dealing with civil disturbances in Korea. The USFK Provost Marshal Operations-Intelligence Fusion Working Group (OIFWG) conducts PIO to generate most of the peninsulawide civil demonstration analysis and then implements appropriate response actions. While there are certainly some who believe that the conventional intelligence community should be orchestrating these actions, the following challenges led to the USFK provost marshal's willingness to step up to the plate and get the job done:

- The intelligence community was focusing on the traditional hostile elements, using a traditional

intelligence preparation of the battlefield process.

- From a daily workload perspective, the traditional threat (North Korea) did not disrupt day-to-day activities to the extent that the civil disturbances did, but the threat in the North continued to be the intelligence community's principle focus.
- Multiple U.S. intelligence sources were disseminating information, but none of them were systematically painting a picture for the command.

Because of these issues, the USFK provost marshal directed his chief of operations to organize a working group that brought the intelligence, the MP, the public affairs, and the KNP communities (and their supporting directorates) together to accomplish the following:

- Identify and track civil gatherings to predict unrest and conduct risk assessments for commanders.
- Construct a method for disseminating timely and highly accurate peninsulawide information.
- Prepare an accurate common operational picture briefing for the command.¹

The OIFWG meets on a recurring basis and analyzes the installation threat data relating to the demonstrations and their impact on the military community. First, the group conducts a risk analysis of each demonstration as it pertains to the anticipated behavior of the group that is conducting the civil gathering; then, it identifies the appropriate level of installation and host-nation response. This data is also used to recommend appropriate safety measures for the community personnel. An officer or noncommissioned officer within the 8th Military Police Brigade S2 serves as a member of the OIFWG and provides information about the various dissident groups. He catalogs and tracks these groups in an effort to identify themes and anticipated actions that can be linked to other terrorist-type violent actions.

The processes used by the OIFWG directly contribute to the daily Crisis Action Team (CAT) update that the provost marshal gives to the senior leadership. The common operational picture is focused by the work of the OIFWG, which involves verifying, validating, and tracking the intelligence on a particular demonstration. All pronouncements presented at the CAT update are closed out through the OIFWG process and briefed the following day. This process is important

because the information flushed out in the OIFWG directly impacts senior-level force protection/antiterrorism decisions.

The tragic incident of June 2002 (and its aftermath) validated the need for the U.S. Army Military Police Corps to retain PIO as a principal function. The essence of PIO is captured by the OIFWG on a daily basis, and this process can be easily adapted to any environment. Military police should be leveraged to play a critical enabling role in the combined arms fight for several reasons:

- PIO focuses on the nontraditional warfighting threats that have already been discounted.
- "This kind of war" falls directly into the PIO arena. Threats caused by civil disruptions, criminal operatives, and global terrorism—coupled with the mere change in social violence—will impact our military operations during wartime, peacekeeping, security, stability and support operations, and armistice.
- The USFK MP community in Korea can call upon numerous U.S. and foreign law enforcement agencies to help identify threats, conditions, and social views that are generally discounted as unimportant by the warfighter. This "insider trading" can determine the right force package that is needed to nullify the disruption, therefore making it transparent to the conventional warfighter.

During one demonstration, KNP deployed more than 5,000 riot control Police in preparation for the potential move to Yongsan Army Garrison. KNP "circled the wagons" to contain demonstrators that wanted to march from their gathering location. The demonstrators' efforts were thwarted by this enormous KNP tactic.



Orchestrating demonstration updates for the entire country is an enormous undertaking, and the OIFWG has implemented some initiatives to help the provost marshal use his information resources. One is the Global Command and Control System-Korea (similar to the Secret Internet Protocol Router Network [SIPRNET]). These systems have been installed at all Provost Marshal Offices throughout the peninsula. This system facilitates their sending local real-time reports with proximity map resolutions that provide more precise information and graphics. Hot lines, which link directly from the local KNP stations, have been installed at all 15 of the USFK military police desks. The desk radio/telephone operators just pick up the phone, and it rings at the other end.

Another initiative is a biweekly national- and local-level police coordination meeting. The players can coordinate and understand the current imperatives and tactics, techniques, and procedures. Maximizing the media to disseminate information was also very effective. Daily television updates were placed on the local command television channels. The Armed Forces Network broadcasted radio “demonstration updates” twice daily (they’re akin to traffic reports heard in the Washington, D.C., area), and serious, high-risk demonstrations triggered the “ticker tape” on the television channels. The Joint Police Information Center operates a “115” telephone line that personnel may call to receive the most up-to-date information about demonstrations, such as the areas to avoid and the actions to take if you encounter a demonstration.

Demonstrations have certainly burdened the system in the ROK. They’ve caused curfews to be adjusted, wreaked havoc on traffic patterns, and disrupted several extracurricular events. But through it all, the alliance between USFK and the KNP has been strengthened. The KNP has gained a far better understanding of U.S. concerns and considerations, while the USFK military police have learned about cultural differences and dealing with large-scale demonstrations. We’ve all come to realize that interdependence is vital to maintaining the stability and security of the ROK.

PIO serves the entire command. It has access to criminal intelligence information that the conventional intelligence gatherers might not. As criminal elements continue to gain notoriety as definitive players on the modern battlefield, military police must offer this extraordinary capability to support the warfighter. Police agencies have the best knowledge of criminals and their activities, and PIO will continue to gain importance and focus on areas that have been systematically overlooked by the conventional systems as being of little value to the fight. However, as the Military Police Corps continues to be the “force of choice” for combating civil threats in Iraq, Afghanistan, and certainly Korea, PIO will gain popularity due to its enormous enabling capabilities.

Endnotes

¹ This informational briefing, the Crisis Action Team (CAT) update, is a daily requirement for the Commander, United Nations Command/U.S. Forces Korea.