

Lights Out

by Maj Terry Branstetter

General

Yesterday, large-scale power outages occurred throughout metropolitan regions of the United States. Millions of Americans remain without power. The National Security Agency (NSA) has identified the source of these attacks as the Matrix. The Matrix has long been believed to sponsor and lead training for anti-American terrorism. This is their first confirmed cyberattack. The NSA claims that a man called Neo Khalid masterminded this recent attack.

The Matrix has a training compound in the country of Futeria. The Futerian Government has taken no action against Matrix because computer attack is not illegal in Futeria.

The Matrix compound is believed to be a modern training facility. The Matrix is well-sponsored and is believed to have access to a variety of modern light weapons. It is estimated that the compound maintains an active force of about 70 trainers and trainees.

Late today, the State Department persuaded the Futerian President that the Matrix initiated these attacks from his country. He has authorized a restricted retaliation by the United States against the Matrix, specifically to capture Khalid. It is unknown if Khalid knows that he has been discovered as the source of these attacks. National assets indicate that the Matrix compound is in a normal state; however, it must be assumed that the Matrix has prepared for retaliation. The Matrix compound is near the sea and in an isolated part of Futeria.

Situation

You command a Marine expeditionary unit (special operations capable) (MEU(SOC)), currently afloat. You have just received a directive authorizing military action against the perpetrator of these attacks. You and your staff are quite familiar with the Matrix. They have been on your list of possible enemies for some time. Your MEU is the quickest response

to prevent further offensive action by the Matrix.

As part of the Department of State agreement with the Futerian President, air delivered munitions may not be employed. Offensive actions are restricted to the immediate compound area. Lastly, you are directed to capture Khalid and other Matrix members and computer or electronic equipment employed in this attack. You are currently 100 miles from the coast of Futeria and the sun is setting.

Requirement

Draft a mission statement, commander's intent, and a concept of operations to start your staff's planning. For this operation, assume any standard MEU task organization or propose a nontraditional organization with justification for current/future relevance. Submit your solution to *Marine Corps Gazette*, TDG #02-3, P.O. Box 1775, Quantico, VA 22134, fax 703-630-9147, or e-mail <gazette@mca-marines.org>.

