

Excerpt from:
THE WAR WITHIN:
A Secret White House History 2006-2008
By Bob Woodward

Beginning in about May 2006, the U.S. military and the U.S. intelligence agencies launched a series of TOP SECRET operations that enabled them to locate, target and kill key individuals in extremist groups such as al Qaeda, the Sunni insurgency and renegade Shia militias, or so-called special groups. The operations, which were either Special Access Programs (SAP) or part of Special Compartmented Information (SCI), incorporated some of the most highly classified techniques and information in the U.S. government.

Senior military officers and officials at the White House have asked me not to publish the details or the code word names associated with these groundbreaking programs. They argue that publication of the names alone might lead to unraveling of state secrets that have been so beneficial in Iraq. Because disclosing the details of such operations could compromise their ongoing use, I have chosen not to include more here. But a number of authoritative sources say these covert activities had a far-reaching effect on the violence

and were very possibly the biggest factor in reducing-it. Several said that 85 to 90 percent of the successful operations and "actionable intelligence" had come from these new sources, methods and operations. Several others said that figure was exaggerated but acknowledged their significance. Once again, it was American innovation that provided an edge.

Lieutenant General Stanley McChrystal, the commander of the Joint Special Operations Command (JSOC) responsible for hunting al Qaeda in Iraq, employed what he called "collaborative warfare," using every tool available simultaneously, from signals intercepts to human intelligence and other methods, that allowed lightning-quick and sometimes concurrent operations. Derek Harvey, the DIA intelligence expert and adviser to Petraeus, said privately that the operations were so effective that they gave him "orgasms."

When I later asked the president about this, he offered a simple a "simple answer: "JSOC is awesome."