The ASIS Special Interest Group/Information Policy will offer a Hot Topics session on Information Warfare at the upcoming Annual Meeting in Baltimore, Tuesday, October 22, 1:30-3:00 p.m. As preparation and introduction for that session, the following articles take a look at some of the issues surrounding the topic.

Since the effective statement by Francis Bacon in 1597 that "Knowledge is power. . .," there has been at least some recognition of information being a key strategic resource of nations. However, not until 400 years later have we recognized that the full value and use of information can be a substitute for material and metal in both strategic and tactical warfare.

It is also in the very late 20th century that the power of information as an economic asset is finding its way into corporate and national economic strategies. For example, Alan Greenspan, chairman of the Federal Reserve Board, stated in 1996 that "I stressed. . .the dramatic trends toward an ever-increasing conceptualization of our Gross Domestic Product, the substitution, in effect, of ideas for physical matter in the creation of economic value. . ." (from a speech to the National Governor's Conference, February 1996, Washington, DC).

The following articles address some of the concepts of information warfare, spanning ideas from strict military doctrine to economic competitiveness. In view of the extraordinary growth and rapidly increasing dependence of nations and the world on information technologies and infrastructure (computing, communications and content), the relationship of ideas, issues and vulnerabilities of that infrastructure to information warfare is a timely and important topic for consideration by ASIS members.