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Summary

A new “American Way of War” emerged after the end of the Cold War, in successive combat experiences. The CNA Corporation examined the nine main cases of combat from 1989 through 2003 in which the U.S. was engaged, including the latest—Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF)—to discern its characteristics. War-fighting is, of course, at the core of what U.S. forces do. Around that core, we speak of some larger strategic functions, such as deterrence, presence, interaction with allies, and preparation for the future (currently referred to as “transformation”). Those factors provide the strategic contexts in which the American Way of War has been developed and exercised by U.S. administrations.

We examined the following situations: Panama in 1989, Desert Shield/Desert Storm in 1990/91, Somalia beginning in late 1992, Haiti in 1994, Bosnia in 1996 (the Deliberate Force air strikes only), Desert Fox in 1998, Kosovo in 1999, Afghanistan beginning in October 2001, and Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2003.\(^1\) Our objectives were (a) to discern the characteristics of the American Way of War and (b) to illustrate transformational operations or capabilities that became manifest during these combat experiences.

We examined these situations empirically: how the U.S. got into the situations, how it sought and obtained international sanction (or did not), how it assembled the forces, how it conducted combat, and how it got out of the situation—or didn't. The front and back ends—how the U.S. got into the situation and how it picked up the pieces afterwards—are extremely important for assessing the strategic effect of

\(^1\) We did not include the retaliatory strikes against Sudan and Afghanistan after the embassy bombings in Kenya and Tanzania. We also omitted all peace enforcement operations (since they technically don’t involve combat as such) and the limited Tomahawk cruise missiles strikes against Iraq in 1993 and 1996.
operations. Many assessments of the American Way of War have concentrated on the tactical operations without covering the broader political and strategic considerations. This study does not delve into the long history of America at war, the individual services' dreams and plans, Joint Vision 2020, or other theoretical writings as to what the American Way of War ought to be. It is not concerned with contingency plans or abstract scenarios. Rather, it concentrates on actual combat experience in the post-Cold War period.

The American Way of War as it emerged had the following main characteristics:

1. **With the exception of Iraq and the pursuit of al Qaeda in Afghanistan, the U.S. got involved for reasons particular to the situations, not because it was pursuing some grand strategy.** If there was one element in common among most of them it was that the U.S. was in pursuit of an obnoxious leader. These leaders have all proven to be elusive: Noriega disappeared for a few days; Saddam Hussein, Osama bin Laden, Mullah Omar, Dr. Karadzic and General Mladic still have not been found and arrested; and Aidid was not captured. Only Cedras in Haiti was forced into exile. Milosevic was eventually turned over by his own people for trial in The Hague as a war criminal. Nevertheless, all these leaders lost their power or their base of operations.

2. **Until Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF), the U.S. was reactive, and deliberately so. OIF was the expression of a preemptive strategy.** Most of the situations in which the U.S. chose to engage in combat did not come out of the blue. Rather, they simmered for some time before U.S. intervention. Nor has the U.S. reacted in undue haste. In most cases, the U.S. carefully planned the operation before it started. The cases where the planning was not so careful—Somalia and Kosovo—turned out to be the messiest. In all cases, the Combat Commander (previously called the Unified Commander) got to do the planning. But this planning was subject to intense and prolonged iteration with Washington, especially at the policy level. This is not surprising, considering that most of the situations had a high
political sensitivity, especially since many were not viewed as critical to U.S. national security. Only the two wars involving Iraq and the retaliation against Afghanistan for harboring al Qaeda have been critical for national security.

3. **The U.S. generally sought international approval and cooperation for its operations.** This might be in the UN, or in the NATO forum. Sometimes it relied on existing UN resolutions, as for the Desert Fox strikes on Iraq in 1998. It also sought and obtained support from other countries for Operation Iraqi Freedom, but could not obtain enough support in the UN Security Council for a second resolution that explicitly authorized the use of force. Operation Just Cause in Panama (1989) was the only situation for which the U.S. did not seek international approval.  

4. **Given the great distances from the U.S. to the situations in the Gulf area, Afghanistan, and the Horn of Africa, it was remarkably successful in getting access to bases in those areas.** This suggests that the assertion that gaining access around the world is increasingly difficult may be a myth. Of course, it has taken hard diplomatic work to gain access with the countries in the area, and it is not always totally successful—the U.S. didn’t get everything or everywhere it asked for, and sometimes the host country placed restrictions on U.S. operations (e.g., it did not get Turkish approval for the transit of U.S. force forces for Operation Iraqi Freedom, but it did have essential bases on the Gulf side). For Operation Just Cause in Panama, the U.S. still had bases in Panama. Haiti was close enough to the U.S., and NATO bases were available to support coalition operations over Bosnia and Kosovo.

5. **Operations tended to be under tight political control,** in part because the combat situations have tended to be resolved or otherwise ended in a relatively short time before they could

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2. Given the Monroe Doctrine, the U.S. has reserved the right to intervene in the Western Hemisphere without further international sanction. However, for the Grenada invasion, the U.S. lined up the agreement of the Organization of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS).
become routine and authorities delegated downward. Reach-back capabilities have improved so much that Washington and the Combatant Commander’s headquarters had a much clearer picture of the operation. This not only enabled tight control, but also engendered confidence that activities in the field are being conducted according to plan and within the limits established by both political leadership and the Combatant Commander. Political control also entails minimizing own casualties (which the U.S. military wants to do in any case, especially in the age of the All-Volunteer Force) and avoiding collateral damage. Most operations involved political debate in Washington, and thus the political leadership had to remain on top of them (perhaps the least contentious was the retaliation in Afghanistan for the 9/11 attacks in the United States).

6. **Operations were joint and combined.** They were never assigned to just one service (though the operation in Panama was carried out mostly by U.S. Army personnel). The U.S. preferred to use overwhelming force and not to enter operations piecemeal. One exception may have been Somalia, which was a classic case of “mission creep” and changing command relationships, including confusion between U.S. and UN control. Jointness was reinforced by the fact that all these combat experiences involved U.S. forces operating in a relatively confined geographical space. This was in contrast to the “American Way of War” envisaged against the Soviet Union during the Cold War. The Cold War scenarios were global and the forces were expected to be dispersed and stretched in the event of war. Of course, most of the capabilities that characterize the American Way of War in the post-Cold War period were developed for the density of a prospective conflict in central Europe.

7. **Before Operation Iraqi Freedom, the most salient characteristic of the American Way of War in the post-Cold War period was that the U.S. led with air strikes where the situation lent itself to that option and where the U.S. was reluctant to use its own ground forces.** Establishing air superiority and leading with air strikes has been dominant in U.S. strategic culture since World War II, and was the essence of the Nixon Doctrine. In the new
era, it goes hand-in-hand with minimizing own casualties and, given the precision with which strikes can be applied, controlling collateral damage.

8. **In both Desert Storm and Operation Iraqi Freedom, the combination of air and ground forces represented the full flowering of the American Way of War.** Simultaneous air and ground campaigns characterized World War II, Korea, Vietnam, and would have reached new intensities if NATO and the Warsaw Pact had ever gone to war in Central Europe. However, there was a constant complaint by U.S. ground forces that close air support had not been quite realized, in the sense of that close and timely coordination that would permit air-dropped weapons to be dropped very close to the U.S. ground forces. The combination of air and ground devastated Iraqi forces in Desert Storm—but had been led by 39 days of air strikes. New twists to air support of ground forces had been demonstrated in the Afghanistan. In Operation Iraqi Freedom, the U.S. achieved its closest coordination yet of air and ground operations, but there are still difficulties.

9. **Air strikes proved insufficient by themselves to end or resolve conflicts.** The experience of the post-Cold War period showed that either ground forces or diplomacy are needed to wrap up the conflict. Diplomacy can be problematic from the military point of view. It's not like a planned, coordinated military campaign leading to predictable results. But diplomacy averted combat in Haiti and led to peace in both Bosnia and Kosovo (for a more complete explanation of the outcome in Kosovo, see page 22).

10. **The U.S. had the opportunity to test and evolve its war-fighting capabilities across these cases.** In effect, the frequent short episodes of combat permitted U.S. forces to test and experiment in battle with new systems and concepts. These included the assembly and delivery of forces to the area of combat and logistic support at the front and back ends. Especially important was the growing networking of capabilities, especially for air strikes. But the U.S. did not get involved in these situations simply to
get war-fighting experience—it engaged in most of them only with the greatest reluctance.

11. **U.S. forces couldn’t go home easily.** They did leave Panama, Haiti, and Somalia—after several months. But they were saddled with long residual operations for Iraq, Bosnia/Kosovo, and Afghanistan. The follow-on military operations after Desert Storm were particularly prolonged: 12 years of the Maritime Interception Operation (MIO) in the Gulf and the Northern Watch and Southern Watch policing of no-fly zones over Iraq. Now, after “the major combat phase of” Operation Iraqi Freedom, U.S. forces and other U.S. agencies face the longest occupation since those of Germany and Japan after World War II.

As it has emerged, the American Way of War has been based on the mix of, inter alia:

- **A belief in technological superiority.** While this belief was ingrained in American culture as the nation developed its economy, it became an “article of faith” on the military side of U.S. affairs during the competition with the Soviet Union—in part to compensate for perceived numerical military inferiorities.

- **The importance of air dominance.** This was one of the highest realizations for the United States in its pursuit of technological superiority. Both in World War II and the Cold War, it was seen as a way to project power speedily across great distances and as a unique American contribution to allied forces.

- **The importance of having highly capable people in the U.S. armed forces.** This is also ingrained in American culture, including its emphasis on training. It has achieved its military realization in the All-Volunteer Force.

- **Dominance of “the commons,”** i.e. sea, air, space. This is necessary in the first place because the U.S. has had to move across the oceans to wherever it enters combat and would not want to be hindered in its operations en route. During actual combat, the U.S. has relied on satellites, air superiority, and immunity for its rear area facilities and operating areas, including the sea.
It was challenged in the maritime commons by mines and the threat of air and cruise missile attacks in Desert Storm, but has not been since. In Iraq and the former Yugoslavia, its air superiority was challenged by older Soviet air defense systems, and put considerable effort into their suppression. In the cases studied, the U.S. has not been challenged in space.

- **The centrality of accurate firepower.** This has been an ages-old military goal, that is, to be more effective in destroying enemy forces. In the cases studied, the U.S. has demonstrated great efficiency in firepower through technological advances. These advances have also permitted greater economy of force. An additional benefit of the accuracy of firepower is less collateral damage—though this has also brought higher expectations that collateral damage would be minimized.

- **The ability to synthesize all the forces and capabilities,** i.e., through jointness and networking, given the concentration of forces and the need to maintain direction and control.

**Many elements of transformation were progressively demonstrated in the nine combat situations**

Elements of transformation, as we currently understand the term, were exercised in each of the nine case studies. These elements include direction and control of the operation, innovations in the use of existing systems, and the use of new systems. In each case, we examined the contributions of these transformations to the efficiency of the operation, the overall success of the operation itself, and to the resolution of the situation.

The U.S. has believed in applying overwhelming force to solve a situation—a concept that might be regarded as “something more than might otherwise be considered appropriate.” The current administration is now (2003) referring to the concept as “overmatching force.” In the cases we examined, U.S. operations tended to be well-planned and economical in the forces assembled, committed to the operation, and supported. Desert Storm was perhaps the least efficient, in that the plans were to build up to a force matching the size of the Iraqi army and to support the ground forces with 30 days worth of ammu-
nition prior to launching the counterattack into Kuwait. In the event, there had been large numbers of desertions on the Iraqi side prior to U.S.-Iraqi combat and the U.S. ground forces used only 1.5 days of ammunition. The less-well-planned operations—Somalia and Kosovo—involved a series of changes in both the forces committed and the objectives of the operations. But while Somalia turned into a mess once mission creep set in, the Kosovo operation saw progressive advancement in the efficient use of airpower, both in selecting and attacking targets and in controlling collateral damage. In any case, the most visible growth in efficiency was in airpower. This was a product of the networking of air capabilities (greater inclusion of naval air, for instance) and the availability of PGMs (Precision-Guided Munitions, to include Tomahawk). The U.S. and its coalition partners were also able to restrict own casualties in ways unprecedented in history.

Most of the nine operations were successfully conducted in terms of bringing major combat to a conclusion in a relatively short time. The main enemies defeated were Iraq and the Taliban. Both had pre-war mystiques (based on Iraq’s equipment on one hand and the Afghanis’s successful guerrilla war against Soviet forces) that were demolished quickly by U.S. technology, efficiency, and utter domination of the information sphere—to the surprise of those enemies. The Serbs were tougher to crack in the cases of Bosnia and Kosovo, in part because the U.S. and its allies were reluctant to send in combat ground troops against them. The instruments that ultimately caused the Serbs to recede from the battlefields were political and diplomatic.

Finally, total resolution of situations—in the sense of completely restoring order, getting economies functioning, and achieving stability of political leadership—proved difficult, despite the transformations in U.S. war-fighting capabilities. As noted earlier, obnoxious leaders proved difficult to track down, however good the transformation in U.S. eavesdropping and Special Forces capabilities have become. Residual operations after the two wars with Iraq were and are prolonged. U.S. and other NATO forces and civilian authorities must still maintain the peace in Bosnia and Kosovo. However, the awesome efficiency of U.S. forces removed the proximate threats in each of the
cases examined, opening up the opportunities for peaceful evolution in each of the countries involved.

The operations against Iraq were the two comprehensive operations undertaken by U.S. forces and their allies, involving air, ground, naval (though mostly naval aviation), and Special Forces elements, supported by extensive and improved command, control, communications, computers, intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (C4ISR).

Is the past the prologue for the American Way of War?

Operation Iraqi Freedom knocked out the major rogue enemy the U.S. had confronted and created a dramatically new strategic situation in the cockpit of the world—the Persian Gulf area—and thus perhaps for the whole world. The most serious state enemies that remain are Iran and North Korea, especially as they develop and build nuclear weapons and missiles with which to deliver them. The two countries are otherwise contained. Iran and North Korea also do not lend themselves easily to the preemptive application of the American Way of War—Iran’s population is large and its territory is vast, while North Korea could devastate Seoul before being subdued. Some people also wonder whether the U.S. would ever again face as militarily incompetent an enemy as Iraq—but the few armies, air forces, and air defenses the U.S. might face come essentially from the same Soviet mold that the Iraqi military came from. They have the same equipment, now vastly outdated, the same bad training regimens, and the same hierarchical, initiative-stifling, politicized command structure. And they have troubled economies.

The possibility of conflict with China over unification with Taiwan also remains an unresolved issue that is likely to persist well into the future. So long as the U.S. remains committed to defending Taiwan from an unprovoked Chinese attack and so long as China is unwilling to forego the use of force as a last resort, the bleak cloud of conflict will be present. Unlike North Korea and Iran, the Chinese military is inexorably improving across the board thanks to a rapidly growing Chinese economy.
Beyond those problems with other states lies the whole global war on terror. Al Qaeda is a much more diffuse, shadowy enemy, which may take a whole different kind of American Way of War, except if the U.S. had to retaliate in those states in which they attempt to establish a base as they did in Afghanistan. There is also the festering problem of insurgency combined with narcotics traffic in Colombia. Beyond Iran, North Korea, Syria, al Qaeda, and Colombia lies the whole issue of whether the U.S. can dissuade possible future military competitors from entering arms races with the United States. That goes beyond the American Way of War as we have attempted to describe it in this paper.
Introduction

In this study, we examined the new “American Way of War” that emerged after the end of the Cold War. Our task was to examine “the past as prologue:” that is, to examine the evolution of the American Way of War after the Cold War in actual combat situations, starting with Panama, to determine if it would be reasonable to suggest that the U.S. military combat operations that might occur in the next 14 years would be similar to those of the past nearly 13 years. We examined the following situations: Panama in 1989, Desert Shield/Desert Storm in 1990/91, Somalia beginning in late 1992, Haiti in 1994, Bosnia in 1996 (the Deliberate Force air strikes only), Desert Fox in 1998, Kosovo in 1999, Afghanistan beginning in October 2001, and Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2003. Our objectives were (a) to discern the characteristics of the American Way of War and (b) to illustrate transformational operations or capabilities that became manifest during these combat experiences.

We took an empirical approach—looking at the situations as they actually happened, and trying to discern the common patterns across them, despite how different each one was. Given their uniqueness as they arose and their political sensitivities, they involved close political control by Administrations. Many of the U.S. operations were dominated by air strikes (Desert Storm, Deliberate Force, Desert Fox, Allied Force, and Enduring Freedom). However, air strikes were coupled with ground operations or diplomacy for the ultimate resolutions of several of the situations.

Across this nearly 14-year history, 1989-2003, a number of capabilities in the U.S. combat “toolkit” were sharpened. In Desert Storm (1991), the most comprehensive military effort prior to Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2003, most of these capabilities were used. They had greatly matured even in the less demanding scenarios of the rest of the 1990s. By October 2001, when operations in Afghanistan began, they were much more mature. Finally, Operation Iraqi Freedom was the most
awesome demonstration of U.S. military capabilities as all the transformations came together.

Background

Many of the capabilities we now see as part of the American Way of War, from PGMs to AWACS to GPS to Stealth, were initially developed during the Cold War. They had been developed in part because, in the competition with the Soviet Union, especially in the European context, the U.S. figured that quality could offset the presumed Soviet superiority in numbers. But the U.S. also feared that the Soviets might surprise the world with new technologies, as it had most dramatically with the launch of the Sputnik satellite in 1957. The U.S. wanted to stay ahead in the technological competition.

At the beginning of the 1980s, the U.S. also began to fear that the Soviets would be more clever in their utilization of new capabilities, as revealed in Soviet discussions in the early 1980s of “the military-technological revolution” (MTR) and its combination with Operational Maneuver Groups (OMG)—notwithstanding that the Soviet economy and empire were beginning to collapse at about the same time (which the U.S. only realized later). About the same time, some in the U.S. were devising the AirLand Battle doctrine, which was meant to take advantage of new capabilities to strike Soviet and other Warsaw Pact forces in their rear echelons, not just on the front lines.

The emergence of the All-Volunteer (professional) Force after the experience of Vietnam also contributed to the new American Way of War. It reinforced the American cultural tendency to remain ready by carefully selecting people and training them intensively. The pay-off in people came in Desert Storm, where, as Stephen Biddle analyzed, the “synergistic interaction of skill and technology” accounted for much more than the performance of superior weapons themselves.3

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The U.S. didn't have much chance to practice using these emerging capabilities during the Cold War. It didn't consider Vietnam a test case—indeed, the American Way of War that emerged might well be described as “the anti-Vietnam way.” Grenada was too small and messy, though it pointed to the need for improvements in command and control and jointness. U.S. involvement in Lebanon and its dénouement in the bombing of the Marine barracks was an accident—and a main stimulus for jointness, according to the authors of Goldwater-Nichols. For the understanding of intensive conventional warfare, the U.S. relied heavily on Israel’s experience in the 1973 war and in its subsequent air and anti-tank operations against Syria in the Bekaa Valley in 1982 (for example, it learned how some Soviet systems (SA-6, MiG-25, T-72) could be defeated and was able to recalibrate ammunition consumption rates in intensive armored combat).

The collapse of the Soviet Union and the end of the Cold War may have given the U.S. more latitude to intervene in the Gulf area and the Balkans. The Soviet Union under Gorbachev and Shevardnadze was quite cooperative with the U.S. in 1990-1991. Saddam might have thought the Soviets were still behind him, and he probably still did until the U.S. overthrew his regime 12 years later in Operation Iraqi Freedom. It may have been that fear of the Soviets kept Tito’s Yugoslavia together, but most observers said that the country was bound to fall apart upon Tito’s death, and it did—but it took nine years after that for it to happen. If Yugoslavia had fallen apart while the Soviet Union still existed, it is unclear whether Western intervention would have been possible or might have resulted in some kind of clash with the Soviets if it were attempted.

**Post-Cold War Context**

The end of the Cold War may well have had a liberating effect on both operational innovation and innovative use of systems that had entered the inventory during the Cold War. The U.S. no longer had to fear that it would reveal classified capabilities to the Soviets. Moreover, there was no fear that the Soviets would intervene or that U.S. and allied operations might escalate to either regional or global war. There were no concerns about weakening deterrence elsewhere in the world—even though in Desert Storm and Operation Iraqi Free-
dom a substantial portion of the total of U.S. forces was brought to bear. Restrictions on the use of “black programs,” developed to defeat Soviet systems, were lifted and regional commanders were free to employ virtually any conventional capability—including those, like JSTARS, still in an experimental category.

Perhaps the most salient change in the strategic environment that prompted U.S. combat interventions was taking place (coincidentally) at about the same time that the Cold War ended: the enervation and collapse of post-colonial leaderships. Noriega in Panama, the Duvaliers in Haiti, and Siad Barré in Somalia, were representative. The death of Tito and the rise of Milosevic and the collapse of the monarchy in Afghanistan also signaled the end of old regimes. Earlier, in 1979, the fall of the Shah of Iran was also representative of the end of an era. These failures of governance set new conditions for conflict. Perhaps some of these leaders were sustained for too long in office by the Cold War, but in any case, they all lost their capabilities to govern. We also saw classic aggression by one of the six rogue nations in the world—Iraq.\(^5\)

The post-Cold War strategic environment, and its reflection in continuing U.S. military involvement around the world, was much broader than the instances of combat we studied. U.S. forces spent only 6 percent of the time in intense combat operations in the nine cases across nearly 14 years.\(^6\) Moreover, several of these combat operations involved only a small portion of the forces. The exceptions

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4. There was a minor possibility of a clash with the Russians upon their independent intervention in Kosovo—that is, their dash from Bosnia to the Pristina airfield, after the truce with Serbia had been agreed upon.

5. The six rogues are Iraq, Iran, North Korea, Libya, Syria, and Cuba. Syria and Cuba have long been neutralized, but now Syria is under pressure from the U.S. as a spillover from the war in Iraq. Qaddafi has put Libya on the sidelines for the moment. Milosevic was a rogue, and is now being tried in The Hague.

were Desert Storm and Operation Iraqi Freedom, and in the air commitment over Kosovo.7

In the several instances of combat after the end of the Cold War, the advantages inherent in high-end, multi-mission capabilities in systems were demonstrated, especially as those capabilities could be improved upon on the basis of experience. New systems and ways of coordinating the forces were devised throughout the decade as well. Perhaps the most decisive transformational capability demonstrated was the capability to totally negate dense, though aging and obsolescent, air defenses of Soviet origin, in part by suppression and in part by the delivery of ordnance from beyond the range of those air defenses.

Much transformation was demonstrated across the decade. The situations were each unique, with the U.S. using a full range of capabilities only in the two major wars against Iraq. Nevertheless, many of these capabilities, in their continually improving modes, were used piecemeal in other conflicts. The U.S. exercised strong political control from Washington, but allowed the Unified Commander to plan and execute the operation. The U.S. formed coalitions in most cases and the operations were joint from the start. Precision air and Tomahawk strikes were the most dramatic use of force, but were not decisive. Either ground forces or diplomacy completed the action. In any case, the air strikes and the planning and networking that allowed their efficient execution represented the greatest step forward in the American Way of War, and became progressively more successful, at least in the efficiency of combat operations, across the decade. In five of the nine cases, U.S. forces had to carry out peacekeeping or containment actions after the initial combat ended; in the other four, they could go home.

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7. Not included in this study of the American Way of War are the peacekeeping operations in Bosnia (IFOR/SFOR) and Kosovo (KFOR), the long Northern Watch and Southern Watch policing of the no-fly zones over Iraq, which involved sporadic exchanges of fire, especially from 1998 to 2003, and the maritime interception operation against Iraqi smuggling in the Gulf.
Patterns of the American Way of War in the Post-Cold War era

The wide variety of combat experiences, in terms of objectives, geographic diversity, and duration and commitment of forces across the last nearly 14 years led to patterns that we characterize as the American Way of War. The patterns are discussed below.

The nine combat situations we examined were each different

There were great disparities between the challenges that each situation presented: from the lack of military opposition in Haiti, to the enormous capabilities attributed to Iraq in 1990, and from the accessibility of Panama to the remoteness of Afghanistan.

There was high variability in warning time and planning/deliberation time available, from Iraq's seizure of Kuwait out of the blue, to the long festering problems of Bosnia and Kosovo; from the deliberate planning for Haiti and for Desert Storm, to the improvisation of the air strike campaign over Kosovo. The U.S. took about a month to plan the retaliation against al Qaeda and the host Taliban in Afghanistan. Finally, the U.S. itself chose to remove Saddam Hussein and his regime from power, so that it could set the timetable of the action to accomplish this purpose.

If there was any common element among the situations, it was the U.S. focus on obnoxious leadership: Noriega (Panama), Saddam (Iraq), Cedras (Haiti), Aidid (Somalia), Milosevic (former Yugoslavia), Osama bin Laden (the leader of al Qaeda) and Mullah Omar (the head of the Taliban), and finally back to Saddam again. The U.S. and its allies enlisted Milosevic to be the negotiator to end the war in Bosnia, but he was the villain in Kosovo.
U.S. reasons for getting involved in these combat situations were varied

The interventions in Iraq and Afghanistan were undertaken because of world-wide strategic considerations, including counter-proliferation and as initial steps in the global war on terror. The Iraqi invasion of Kuwait and the attack by al Qaeda on 9/11/2001 demanded U.S. responses. Desert Storm was meant to roll back Saddam Hussein’s threat to the oil-rich Gulf region and throughout the Middle East. In the case of Afghanistan, the objective was to break the back of the worldwide al Qaeda. The announced U.S. goals in Operation Iraqi Freedom were to remove a putative threat by Saddam to the United States and to break an asserted connection between Saddam and al Qaeda.

In the other situations, the goals were more modest. The goal in Panama was to seize Noriega and bring him to justice in the U.S. There were humanitarian impulses behind the decisions to intervene in Somalia and Haiti. There was a combination of humanitarian concerns and concern for regional stability in the cases of Bosnia and Kosovo. To put it another way: each of these other situations was regarded as an aggravating problem to be solved, not necessarily as a calculated way to reorder the world.

The U.S. took the initiative in Panama and in ejecting Iraq from Kuwait. It reacted after the failure of diplomatic initiatives in Haiti, Bosnia, and Kosovo. It retaliated in Afghanistan. And finally, it took the initiative in Iraq, where inspections and sanctions had failed to obtain a clear commitment by Saddam to disarm.

A high degree of political control of U.S. combat has been exercised in most cases

The U.S. entered the post-Cold War period under the Weinberger-Powell rules: clear objectives (and no “mission creep”), U.S. public support, overwhelming force to achieve the objectives, and an exit strategy.

Because most cases (except Iraq and al Qaeda) posed no threats to the U.S. or the international system, the U.S. was very sensitive about
taking U.S. military casualties (after the Vietnam experience). This was one rationale for mobilizing overwhelming force as appropriate to the situation. The avoidance of casualties was also a rationale for the use of air strikes as the primary instrument in Desert Storm, Bosnia, Kosovo, and Afghanistan. There wasn’t another big ground forces operation after Desert Storm until Operation Iraqi Freedom. A large force in the latter instance (even if it was only half the size of the force thought necessary for Desert Storm) was unavoidable given that the objective this time was regime change in the heart of the country rather than simply ejecting the Iraqis from Kuwait.

In the situations we examined, the general pattern for U.S. political control of combat was for a high degree of control initially, at both the Washington level and the level of the Combatant Commander, with rather precise restraints. The controls relaxed as time passed and the operations became more routine. In almost every situation we examined, there has been a close dialogue between the Unified Command and Washington in working up the plan due to the political sensitivities and facilitated by excellent communications. Perhaps the arrangements for Somalia strayed from this pattern, which may have led to the particular disaster that occurred.

Once a good plan was worked out in enough time and was in place, it appeared that the President and Secretary of Defense were willing to let the Combatant Commander execute it with minimum interaction with Washington. This was the case with Operation Iraqi Freedom. The situation with regard to Kosovo was much more complicated: there the Combatant Commander reported in two directions—to the U.S. and to the North Atlantic Council (in which the U.S. was nonetheless a member), so that the impression of some in Washington was that the Commander (SACEUR) was not quite under control.

In most of the situations, given that there weren’t threats to the U.S., or to the U.S. economy, or to U.S. citizens, and given the visibility of the situations to the public, senior U.S. officials were quite sensitive about controlling collateral damage. To this end, they insisted on reviewing target proposals and imposition of controls to ensure the minimization of collateral damage. This was especially true in the case of Kosovo, but was the case as well in Panama and even in
Afghanistan—and finally in Operation Iraqi Freedom. In the latter case, the U.S. wanted to preserve both the infrastructure and the good will of the people for reconstitution after regime change. Accidents still happened—for instance, striking the bunker in Baghdad in which civilians had taken refuge during Desert Storm, though it had been clearly identified as a command post, and striking the Chinese embassy in Belgrade, which had been misidentified as a Serbian military warehouse. There were public repercussions from each of these incidents. No such major incident took place in Operation Iraqi Freedom.

The advent of better PGMs and their controls also permitted closer control of collateral damage, to the point where the ability to exercise such control has led to even higher expectations that collateral damage would be minimized.

The U.S. had time to react to most situations. Most of the situations examined developed over a long period of time—even years—before the U.S. felt it necessary to intervene. This generally meant that Congress could be consulted and public discussion could take place prior to the operation. There were also prolonged discussions on the international circuit as well. The U.S. responding with defensive measures to protect against an Iraqi incursion into Saudi Arabia from Kuwait in 1990 (Desert Shield) did not require public discussion, but the ejection of Iraq from Kuwait some months later did, especially given the risks of large-scale U.S. and coalition casualties in the face of Iraqi forces that were then thought to be formidable. In the Desert Storm case, the U.S. got a UN Security Council mandate first, after which the U.S. Congress narrowly voted in favor of military action.

The removal of Noriega from Panama and the restoration of the elected government in Haiti seemed simple, not requiring much congressional or public deliberation, but both situations had dragged on for a long time before the U.S. resolved to settle them. Bosnia was on the public scope for at least two years before the U.S. and its NATO allies intervened with air strikes against Serbian forces. In the meantime, Kosovo festered in the background for even longer. It was certainly of concern to American and other NATO observers. Nonetheless, when the guerrilla war there erupted and Belgrade
responded with great force to drive the Kosovars out of their homes to the periphery of the country, that action was unforeseen and constituted a huge humanitarian disaster. U.S. retaliation into Afghanistan after September 11, 2001, hardly required public debate or negotiations with allies. Finally, Operation Iraqi Freedom was subjected to prolonged debate both in the U.S., where the Congress approved going to war, and in the UN Security Council, where a second resolution to support military action could not be concluded.

The U.S. ended up building coalitions in most cases

In most cases, the U.S. found it necessary to build coalitions, both for legitimacy and to share the burdens.

Even in the Western Hemisphere, where the U.S. has historically declared a right to intervene without international approval, it seeks international legitimacy and would like to persuade other countries to share the burdens of operations, especially on the ground. The exception was Panama, where the U.S. had long had a proprietary interest and local bases. The operation in Haiti did not initially require other countries' participation, but did later, given that the U.S. military by law could not train police.

In most cases, time permitted the consultations and forging of coalitions appropriate for the responses. Most situations, including Somalia, Haiti, Bosnia, Kosovo, and the ejection of UN inspectors from Iraq that led to the U.S. retaliating in Operation Desert Fox in 1998, brewed for some time before the U.S. found it necessary to intervene. The U.S. mobilized the UN and NATO as appropriate, but diplomacy among the G-8 members and then among the U.S., Russia, and the Finnish mediator representing the European Union resolved Kosovo. UN sanction of the peacekeeping operations of KFOR was obtained once Milosevic agreed to withdraw his forces from Kosovo.

For Afghanistan, the U.S. had great sympathy and support around the world for this first stage in the war on al Qaeda's terrorism. For operations, the U.S. needed the cooperation of Pakistan quickly for access, overcoming the support that some Pakistanis (the intelligence service in particular) had been providing to the Taliban beforehand.
Finally, for Operation Iraqi Freedom, the U.S. ended up with a much smaller coalition than for Desert Storm (U.S., U.K., and Australia, plus a small contingent from Poland).

The U.S. was able to get bases or “access to facilities” in other countries

Five of the nine combat situations—the three in Iraq, Somalia, and Afghanistan—occurred beyond the range of U.S. base structures established during the Cold War (those in Europe and Northeast Asia) or within range of the U.S. itself (Panama, where the U.S. still had bases, and Haiti). For the operations in the five remote situations, the U.S. was able to secure new bases in the adjacent countries where it had not had bases before—23 for Desert Shield/Desert Storm, and 13 for Afghanistan, including those in Central Asia (Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan). For Operation Iraqi Freedom, it did not obtain bases in Turkey (although later, Turkey agreed to limited overflight and logistic transit rights), but it also retained essentially all the bases it had before for Desert Storm, with the addition of Kuwait. The Saudis continued the restrictions against strike aircraft operating from Saudi Arabia that they had insisted on throughout the 1990s after Desert Storm. The U.S. was not limited in its en route overflight rights or its transits of the Suez Canal. Some of these bases were arranged by new diplomatic initiatives (e.g., in Uzbekistan, and Pakistan). The careful cultivation of these countries by previous COMCENTs paid off in the Afghanistan case.

While the U.S. did not have bases in Haiti, it was within striking distance by air from the U.S. and Puerto Rico, as well as from the sea. The U.S. also did not have current bases in Somalia when it needed to move there in 1992. It first established a sea base off Somalia. The airfield and port in Mogadishu were reopened once ground forces were inside the country. Kenya was used as a staging area for Somalia.

U.S. operations were joint from the beginning

In the cases we examined, the President and Secretary of Defense have let the regional Combat Commander plan the operations. In most cases, the commanders within the existing operational chain of command conducted the operations.

As it happened, the regional Combat Commanders in most of the cases were Army or Marine officers. In Desert Storm, Deliberate Force (Bosnia), Desert Fox, and Allied Force (Kosovo), the operations were carried out by Air Force and Naval aviation, scheduled and coordinated out of the Joint or Combined Air Operations Center (JFACC or CAOC), commanded by a U.S. Air Force general, who was a subordinate of the Combat Commander. For Operation Enduring Freedom in Afghanistan, Air Force Special Forces were inserted as on the ground as forward air controllers (FACs). All of these elements matured and were brought together for Operation Iraqi Freedom, where General Franks said that the U.S. forces had moved far beyond deconfliction to a true meshing of units in the joint operation.

The situations tended to be concentrated: all the U.S. forces piled into the theater close to one another and needed to be both coordinated and deconflicted. They had no room to fight separate wars.

Dependencies on national and joint systems (e.g., communications, tankers, AWACS, EA-6Bs) characterized the individual services’ forces as they emerged from the Cold War.

No service was automatically first into combat (“to kick in the door”). Rather, the sequencing of forces depended on the situation. In Desert Storm, Bosnia, Desert Fox, and Kosovo, the pattern for the American Way of War seemed to be air strikes first or solely (“to kick in the roof,” as it were). In Panama, Somalia, and Haiti—where little opposition was expected—ground forces went in first. In Afghanistan, the decisive effects began to be registered soon after the Air Force Special Forces Forward Air Controllers (FACs) entered the country and directed air strikes in support of Northern Alliance ground forces. Finally, in Operation Iraqi Freedom air, ground, and Special forces entered Iraq nearly simultaneously.
U.S. application of overwhelming force was generally effective

U.S. combat operations were generally successful in obtaining U.S. objectives, and fairly quickly; major combat lasted only 4-5 days in Panama and 43 days in Desert Storm; there was no combat in Haiti; Deliberate Force strikes in Bosnia went on for 24 days before Milosevic agreed to go to Dayton; the air strikes over Kosovo lasted 78 days; it was 73 days to the end of intensive air strikes in Afghanistan (though the situation drags on); and what the President called “major combat” in Iraq in 2003 last 26 days—though the situation in Iraq dragged on as a low-level guerrilla war and given the difficulties of establishing public security after the total collapse of order. Desert Fox was planned to be only 4 days long. Only in Somalia was there no sense of an expeditious campaign, in part because there had been no expectation of organized combat as such; the U.S. left 5 months after the failed Ranger raid.

Overwhelming force paid off in several of the situations, that is, force that was meant to overwhelm any local resistance and to minimize the risk for U.S. forces, but may have been regarded by some observers as maybe more than needed or appropriate. Thus, 27,000 military personnel were used in Panama, 20,000 in Haiti, 500,000 in Desert Storm, and 1,000 aircraft were eventually used over Kosovo. The U.S. forces inserted in Afghanistan were much leaner because they had specialized functions in support of the local friendly ground forces. The overwhelming part was the airpower brought to bear. Finally, the ground force for Operation Iraqi Freedom was leaner than that for Desert Storm, but the combination of ground force, air strikes, Kurdish ground forces, and an unprepared enemy meant that Iraqi resistance, such as it was, was overwhelmed. After the operation, it was described as an “overmatching” rather than an “overwhelming” operation.

For the biggest operations prior to Operation Iraqi Freedom—Desert Storm, Kosovo, and Afghanistan—the U.S. led with air strikes as the major instrument. For Kosovo, air strikes were the only military instrument. A preponderant reliance on air strikes is not particularly new in American thinking, but these post-Cold War applications were unprecedented in their initial or sole applications.
In Desert Storm, the air strikes were meant to soften up Iraqi ground forces and their command and logistics structure, both to make it easier for ground forces to roll up entrenched Iraqi ground forces, as well as fulfill the strategic goal of limiting Iraq's long-term capacity to further destabilize the region. In Kosovo, air strikes were meant to coerce Milosevic into giving up his control of Kosovo. Air attacks on Serbian ground forces in Kosovo were ineffective and thus indecisive. In Afghanistan, they were meant to defeat Taliban ground forces and so that Northern Alliance ground forces could roll them up in the north, and to prompt Taliban collapse in the south.

- The targets for air strikes varied. On the military side, a spectrum of targets were hit, from command posts at the center, through air defenses, to logistic depots and lines, down to deployed, dispersed ground forces. The U.S. and its coalition partners in these post-Cold War conflicts were not so intent on devastating local economies, with the exception of the Kosovo case, where, at a late point in the campaign, the strikes were intended to bring pressure on Milosevic's cronies to persuade him to stop the war lest they lose their investments. In Desert Storm, strikes meant to disrupt command and control disrupted the electric power supply, and with it the economy and water supplies. In Operation Iraqi Freedom, given the goal of regime change, and after the experience of Desert Storm, strikes on the power grid were eschewed.

- Given the political sensitivities of each situation, collateral damage was estimated and controlled. Military lawyers played increasingly important roles in judging whether it was acceptable to include certain facilities or infrastructure in approved target files.

- Targeting was partly controlled from Washington in Desert Storm, tightly controlled over Kosovo, and left to the Combatant Commander in Afghanistan and Operation Iraqi Freedom (General Franks was the commander in both cases).\(^9\)

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9. Although one armed Predator strike early in the Afghan campaign was nixed by the lawyers at CENTCOM in Tampa, not in Washington.
• In order to carefully control air strikes, and beginning with Desert Storm, the U.S. Air Force’s doctrinal article of faith on “centralized control of the air war” was finally tested and had increasing success in the successive operations covered in this report. The jointly manned command centers (JFACCs or CAOCs), issued Air Tasking Orders (ATOs; modeled on the old SIOP bomber system), and these constituted the key enabling function that allowed the management of hundreds, and even thousands, of U.S. and coalition sorties every day.

• The proportion of PGMs used increased greatly during the period. Only 10 percent of the weapons dropped in Desert Storm were PGMs. The figure rose to 35 percent in the Kosovo operation and 60 percent in Afghanistan. Finally, the figure was 68 percent for Operation Iraqi Freedom. In Desert Storm, several aircraft sorties were required to assure destruction of a target, but by the time of Operation Iraqi Freedom, one aircraft on one sortie could cover several targets.

• In Desert Storm air strikes included Tomahawk strikes for the first time. The reliability, accuracy, and flight path versatility of the Tomahawk system improved from Desert Storm to Afghanistan. But Tomahawks were still an expensive way to deliver a less-than-1,000-pound bomb, so they were used rather sparingly.

• Air strikes involved an extensively netted joint operation, from intelligence, through targeting (including evaluations of collateral damage risks), through supporting aircraft (such as AWACS, JSTARS, EA-6B, Rivet Joint, EP-3s in Afghanistan, uninhabited air vehicles (UAVs), and tankers), to the ATO system.

Ground forces did the job in Panama and Haiti, but were unsuccessful in Somalia. Ground forces did the decisive roll-up in Kuwait and in Operation Iraqi Freedom. Local friendly ground forces did the decisive roll-ups in Bosnia, Afghanistan in 2001 (that is, finally dispersing the Taliban government from Kabul and then Kandahar), and northern Iraq in 2003. Ground forces were eschewed in Kosovo, but the U.S. and its NATO allies prevailed anyway. In that case, the
diplomacy was decisive—in other words, it can be said that “NATO bombed Chernomyrdin to the table.”

In Kosovo, unlike in the case of Bosnia, Milosevic had shown no inclination to negotiate. The bombing seemed to put the pressure on the Russians to in turn persuade Milosevic. Negotiations were held among the EU representative, former President Ahtisaari of Finland, U.S. Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbott, and former Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin of Russia, President Yeltsin’s personal representative. The negotiations took roughly six weeks, with the last two weeks involving a desperate rearguard action by the Russian General Staff to prevent NATO from being in command of all of Kosovo’s territory. They were not successful, and Ahtisaari and Chernomyrdin conveyed an ultimatum to Milosevic. Milosevic asked to consult his parliament overnight; he capitulated the next morning. Milosevic told a confidant that he gave up because of NATO solidarity and Russian betrayal.¹⁰

Special Forces played an important role in Panama by quickly seizing a number of armed Panamanian posts. In Desert Storm, their major role was combat search and rescue. SEALS conducted reconnaissance operations along the coast to determine enemy dispositions and to clear mines, and also called in close air support to destroy an Iraqi observation post on the Saudi-Kuwaiti border. British special forces watched suspected Iraqi reinforcement routes and searched for Scud launchers.¹¹ In Somalia, the Rangers made an unsuccessful raid in


which 18 of them were killed. Special Forces took on the unprece-
dented role as forward air controllers in Afghanistan, calling in air
strikes against Taliban ground forces through new digital connec-
tions coupled to GPS. They also advised the Northern Alliance and
other indigenous militias while carrying out operations on their own.
Their most comprehensive operations ever were in Operation Iraqi
Freedom: an estimated 9,000 to 12,000 operated in the country, espe-
cially in the west and north, and even in Baghdad.

The U.S. took steps to minimize its own combat fatalities and was suc-
cessful: It had 23 fatalities in Panama, 146 in Desert Storm, 29 in
Somalia (including the 18 Rangers), none in Bosnia and Kosovo,
around 25 in Afghanistan, and 138 during the major combat period
in Iraq. Aircraft losses were minimal in both Desert Storm and Iraqi
Freedom. Only one aircraft was lost over Bosnia and two over Kosovo
(including an F-117). Two ships hit mines in the Gulf during Desert
Storm, but both were repaired later.

The need for high-demand/low-density (HD/LD) elements of the
forces was recognized in the 1990s, especially in situations that
dragged on. The HD/LD systems used were AWACS, RC-135, EA-6B,
U-2, Air Force engineers (to open up all the bases the U.S. obtained),
and perhaps others. But most of the demand for HD/LD assets was
for the long routine operations of Northern Watch and Southern
Watch over Iraq. These operations became unnecessary after Opera-
tion Iraqi Freedom, so there may be some relief unless other such
operations are directed by the President and Secretary of Defense.
Some systems continue in high demand for the war on drugs in the
Caribbean.

Altogether, the forces became increasingly networked and connected
to space during the 1990s. GPS enabled ground forces to know pre-
cisely where they were (e.g., in Desert Storm and Afghanistan) and
was used for weapons guidance (e.g., by CALCMs in Desert Storm and
for Tomahawk in later operations, and for JDAMs, first over Kosovo
and then in Afghanistan and Operation Iraqi Freedom).
The U.S. hoped to get in and out of these situations quickly, but the record was mixed.

Most of the situations had festered for a long time before the U.S. decided to intervene. In three of the situations (Panama, Haiti, and Desert Fox), the length of time the U.S. was engaged was short and almost all the U.S. forces departed quickly. In the other six situations, the U.S. was engaged for a long time or had to leave forces behind (along with those of U.S. allies) for prolonged periods.

- Desert Fox was deliberately set as a four-day campaign. Otherwise, Panama was the quickest-in, quickest-out situation, and Haiti was close behind, especially as the situation had been settled peacefully. U.S. forces may have stayed too long in Somalia, but they finally left. (Somalia was almost the exception among all the situations: it began as a peacekeeping-for-humanitarian-relief operation, but turned into a shooting conflict. The Somalis are still at war with one another.)

- In the aftermath of Desert Storm, the U.S. and other countries established the Northern Watch and Southern Watch no-flight zone patrols to forestall Saddam’s ability to kill Kurds or Shias in the south. The U.S. also prepositioned two Army brigade sets, one in Kuwait and another in Qatar, and exercised regularly with them. These continued operations were especially necessary after Saddam mobilized 70,000 troops on the Kuwait border in October 1994 in order to influence an upcoming vote in the UN Security Council on the continuation of sanctions.\(^\text{12}\) The U.S. and its allies also continued the Maritime Interception Operation in the Gulf that had been established as part of Desert Shield to enforce economic sanctions against Iraq. These operations were finally terminated upon the conquest of Iraq in Operation Iraqi Freedom, 12 years later.

- U.S. ground forces were left in Bosnia and Kosovo, constituting about 15 percent of the total multinational peacekeeping forces. As of October 2003, there were about 4,200 U.S. military

\(^{12}\) That was the purpose stated by the Iraqis, in a FBIS broadcast.
personnel still in Bosnia and Kosovo, and another 12,000 in Afghanistan.

• Finally, the occupation of Iraq, following the short period of major combat (26 days) in 2003, was predicted by Senator Lugar to last at least three years, although the administration itself has not made a prediction.
The American Way of War went through considerable transformation from 1989 to 2003

In this empirical study, we did not have a firm definition of “transformation” in mind. As we addressed what had changed or what was newly demonstrated in these situations, we tried to look at more than simply the use of new weapons systems. If there was any synonym for “transformation,” it was “innovation.” We looked at innovations in command, control, and direction; in tactics; and in the systems. It is also necessary to credit the superb training and consequent performance in combat of U.S. professional military personnel, from the “grunt” on the ground to the UAV “pilots” at locations far from the battlespace. We also looked at the gaps in transformation that appeared during the situations, some of which then were filled as U.S. forces learned from experience and as new capabilities became available across the period.

In this section, we will discuss some of the major transformations of capabilities demonstrated during the emergence of the American Way of War in the post-Cold War period, and especially in the two great campaigns against Iraq.

The ability to neutralize dense air defenses

After reviewing its experiences in the Vietnam War and its terrible losses of aircraft and pilots, the U.S. might well have concluded that tactical aircraft could not achieve decisive effects in the face of modern integrated air defense systems. Instead, it has demonstrated in Iraq and the former Yugoslavia that it could indeed negate or neutralize air defense systems and fly at will over enemy territory. These were the only cases in which it faced surface-to-air missile defenses (other than some shoulder-fired weapons), and admittedly these
were rather old and obsolescent Soviet systems, which were all these countries had.

The artful integration of stealth aircraft, airborne jamming, decoys, cruise missiles, and anti-radiation missiles, plus the ability to deliver offensive weapons with precision at altitudes well above the range of anti-aircraft systems, constituted perhaps one of the most remarkable transformations in the history of modern weaponry. In Desert Storm, the U.S. faced what was described as the densest air defense environment in the world, denser than what the Soviets had deployed in Central Europe. But the U.S. suppressed it, and the Iraqis resorted to launching air defense missiles ballistically, as would the Serbs in 1999 and the Iraqis again in 2003. These countries did not dare turn on their radars.

The ability to network and rapidly integrate data, pictures, and voice communications and to use web-based command processes

The combination of satellites, bandwidth, Link 16, UAVs, and receivers in aircraft and in ground forces, all globally interconnected, advanced greatly from Desert Storm to Operation Iraqi Freedom, which were the two operations involving the comprehensive synchronization of all U.S. forces. The individual systems themselves went through evolutionary improvements—from the ability to calibrate the GPS satellites, to the sensitivity of the receptors on the GPS bombs, i.e., the JDAMs that were introduced during the decade. Due to improvements in satellite communications and bandwidth, all the systems were progressively tied together. Thus targeting could be processed by U.S. facilities all over the globe and the times it took to respond to time sensitive targets were greatly reduced—from a day in Desert Storm to 11 minutes in some cases in Operation Iraqi Freedom. From delivery of photographs and videos directly to ground forces, to the internet connections linking all the command elements, the coordination of air and ground forces became much more efficient. Many of these systems had been in development long before the end of the Cold War. It was the flexibility that both computer both and better communications provided, along with the strong ethic of joint operations that developed after Goldwater-Nichols, and the relative doctrinal freedom and integration that became possible with
the end of the Cold War, that made this capability central to transformation.

**The ability to coordinate all assets in a confined air battlespace**

The U.S. developed its ability to routinely coordinate, integrate, and manage thousands of tactical aircraft, UAVs, cruise missiles, surveillance and control, electronic warfare, tanker, and logistics aircraft sorties every day, day in and day out, over a sustained period of time. The major evolution from Desert Storm to Operation Iraqi Freedom, as described by General Tommy Franks, was from deconfliction to a true meshing of the forces. The Air Tasking Order (ATO) was prepared in both cases, but the ability to transmit it and to adapt it quickly had evolved greatly by 2003.

This transformation depended on the ability of the U.S. to develop command and control systems and networks, plus the adaptability to make the doctrinal changes to exploit them. No other nation has these abilities, which give the U.S. tremendous advantages in the application of both sea- and land-based airpower. During the post-Cold War period, the use of unmanned aerial vehicles and surveillance systems has become routine. Moreover, they now incorporate real-time downlinks. Both have matured dramatically over the last decade, up to the point of arming Predator UAVs (thus to make them UCAVs) in Afghanistan and later in Operation Iraqi Freedom.

**The ability to loiter over a battlespace for a long time**

Unmanned air vehicles, married with miniaturized surveillance systems and now smart weapons (i.e., Hellfire), filled a void that had always existed in airborne or spaced-based surveillance: The ability to be more or less “permanently on station,” never losing sight of the area of interest. This ability to “stare” is transformational. Like many of the other capabilities that are maturing, it depends on the high-capacity data links that connect operational forces directly with the system that is “scouting,” to use an old term. The operators can also be far away from the battlespace.
GPS provides the forces the ability to know where they are at all times

Thanks to GPS, neither ground nor air forces need be lost or have doubts about their positions. Moreover, not only can individual units know where they are, but other units and the headquarters can locate them through Blue Force Tracker. GPS also provides the capability to accurately bomb or conduct unspotted indirect fires in all types of weather. In Desert Storm, GPS was most useful to ground forces moving in the featureless desert. Later in the 1990s, Tomahawk cruise missiles were equipped with GPS, which gave them much more flexibility in flight routes. Then JDAMs, with GPS guidance, were delivered to the forces. It is a nice irony that the GPS jammers the Iraqis bought were silenced by GPS-guided JDAMs.

The ability for aircraft to engage more than one aim point per sortie

Aircraft delivering smart weapons can now predictably engage more than one aim-point per sortie. This capability that was first demonstrated on a limited basis with laser-guided weapons in Desert Storm. It was later applied far more extensively over Kosovo, Afghanistan, and Iraq in 2003, especially as the JDAM GPS-guided weapon entered the force.\textsuperscript{13} This permitted more targets or aim points to be addressed consecutively on a sortie, and allowed commanders to achieve the desired effects with fewer sorties. In Afghanistan, for the first time, and then over Iraq in 2003, aircraft could be launched without targets, directed to kill boxes by AWACS (and E-2Cs in the case of Operation Iraqi Freedom), and given coordinates or laser designations by controllers on the ground.

\textsuperscript{13} The first generation of laser-guided bombs were used late in the Vietnam War, but still required several sorties to destroy bridges, for instance. Their accuracy and reliability, including the targeting pods as well as ground illuminators, were greatly improved in the following years.
The maturity of armor and of anti-tank weapons

During the Cold War, the U.S. and its allies considered themselves to be in a race with Soviet armor. Tanks were continually improved, but finally reached their ultimate state with the M1A1, as it performed in Desert Storm. It could shoot on the move, from 3,000 meters, and hit with the first round. It destroyed Iraqi tanks before they could even see it, much less fire back. The armor of the M1A1 then proved decisive in Operation Iraqi Freedom as the tanks led the assaults by both the Army and Marine Corps, and were invulnerable to mines and other weapons fired at them (there were no tank duels reported on this occasion). The M2 Bradley had long been considered too vulnerable for combat, but was firing TOW with its superior optics from the maximum range of 3,750 meters—these optics were also found to be superior for spotting. The Bradley’s 25mm gun itself was found to be a tank-killer in Operation Iraqi Freedom, and the Bradleys deflected rocket-propelled grenades better than expected. The Javelin fire-and-forget shoulder-fired anti-tank weapon finally replaced the inadequate Dragon in Operation Iraqi Freedom. Both Hellfire and Maverick air-delivered weapons performed well in both Iraq operations.

The ability to own the night and see through sandstorms

This ability was first demonstrated in actual combat in Panama and then was steadily improved upon. By the end of the 1990s, U.S. forces had third-generation devices. During the decade, the U.S. military conducted a full range of combat operations at night. A major innovation in Operation Iraqi Freedom was for convoys to reposition the forces at night, lights out, using night vision. Only the JSTARS prototype had been available in Desert Storm. By the time of Operation Iraqi Freedom, 15 were available for deployment. The Iraqis thought they could reposition under cover of the sandstorm, but JSTARS was not inhibited and called in strikes on them.

Summary of changes (transformation) from 1989 through 2003

The major deficiencies that appeared in the otherwise very successful Desert Storm operation were (1) too few PGMs, (2) deficient naval aviation connectivity, (3) under-use of Special Forces, (4) inefficient
tank-plinking, (5) difficulties in the flexibility, retargeting, and appropriate use of Tomahawk cruise missiles (and by extension, CAL-CMs, that is, conventional air-launched cruise missiles, which have remained few in number), (6) too long to respond to time-sensitive targets, (7) ineffective tactical ballistic missile defense, (8) too many incidents of fratricide, and (9) ineffective mine countermeasures.

By the time of Operation Iraqi Freedom, 12 years later, many of these deficiencies had been fixed:

1. Both the Air Force and the Navy, and even bombers and the AV-8Bs of the Marine Corps, had become capable of launching PGMs. Even free-fall bombs could be dropped with more accuracy, including wind-corrected munitions.

2. Naval aviation was now a fully functioning part of the Air Tasking Order.

3. Special Forces had come into their own in Afghanistan, as a great economy of U.S. forces, and were given many more diverse tasks over a broader area in Iraq.

4. The Army had long hoped that Air Force tactics and weapons would focus more on destroying enemy ground forces, especially armor—“tank-plinking,” as it is called—as they approached engagement with U.S. ground forces. Desert Storm did not provide much of a test because the prolonged air campaign had attrited and demoralized Iraqi ground forces before U.S. and allied ground forces were unleashed. The difficulties of finding tanks and other vehicles from the air hindered “tank-plinking” in Kosovo. In Afghanistan, however, the combination of Special Forces Force Air Controllers, GPS, laser designation, and precision weapons finally approached the goal of precision close air support, devastating Taliban forces in close contact with Northern Alliance forces. Finally, in Operation Iraqi Freedom these same capabilities, plus A-10s, with target identification accomplished by JSTARS and UAVs, provided effective suppression of ground forces and their armor from the air.
5. Tomahawk was fully understood, guided by GPS, more reliable, and quickly retargeted, though still a scarce resource (only 802 of 19,948 guided munitions used in Operation Iraqi Freedom were Tomahawks, though this was more than twice the number used in Desert Storm and Desert Fox).

6. Improvements in time-sensitive targeting by air-delivered weapons did not get their ultimate test in Iraq in 2003, that is, against Scuds, because there were apparently no Scuds. However, time-sensitive targeting was called upon for other targets, including leadership targets.

7. Improved Patriot—both PAC-3 operated by the U.S. and PAC-2 operated by Kuwait—were successful against the few shorter-range missiles the Iraqis fired.

8. Fratricide was not entirely eliminated, but was reduced.

9. The remaining Iraqi sea mines were intercepted before they were laid in the Gulf, so the improvements in mine countermeasures that were developed during the 1990s remain to be tested.

These improvements were the most obvious, and mostly technological, fixes. The improvements in the total integration of U.S. forces (and even in interoperability with coalition forces) across the period were also impressive, though harder to portray in such detail. These included increases in bandwidth, more satellites within range of the battle area, better connectivity with the satellites, more comprehensive common operational pictures available in headquarters, better reachback capabilities to distant information processing sites, greater use of intelligence in a rapid (though still not instantaneous) fashion, and increased ability of friendly forces to locate themselves and each other. Moreover, the professionalization of military personnel, which was evident during Desert Storm, persisted. “Just in time” logistics seemed to have worked in Operation Iraqi Freedom, with some risk, as the tracking of container contents improved (as opposed to the sorting out of great piles in the desert that took place in Desert Storm).
But gaps remained, as we have listed in each of the situation case studies that follow. Most prominent are the continuing difficulties the U.S. has in tracking down fugitive leaders. Osama, Omar, and Saddam are still at large—but they have certainly lost their countries, bases, and armies. Large-scale urban warfare has not yet been tested. Rooting out guerrillas in Afghanistan (especially from caves) and Iraq remains difficult. The forces are still not fully connected: it would appear that only Central Command (CENTCOM) headquarters in Qatar had the full picture of where the forces were—but at least that picture is better than the one General Schwarzkopf had in 1991, when he didn’t seem to know that General Fred Franks had not closed the ring on the Iraqi Republican Guard divisions. Bomb damage assessment is still slow, relying as it does on photo interpretation.

Moreover, a number of capabilities have not been put to the test:

- The U.S. has not been subject to en route “anti-access” challenges. The U.S. and its allies were concerned about the sole Serbian Kilo submarine, and set up defenses against it, but it hid in the radar shadow of a freighter at the pier in the inner harbor and never ventured out.

- There were only a couple of tests of air-to-air warfare, in Desert Storm and over Kosovo; the few opposing aircraft were shot down. Suppression of enemy air defenses (SEAD) may not have been tested severely because the Serbs and Iraqis simply didn’t radiate—but that made it hard to find and destroy them. Thus the U.S. and its allies still have to take precautions, even with the use of Stealth aircraft and must still deploy EA-6B jamming aircraft.

- Both Army and Marine attack helicopters proved vulnerable to small-arms fire in Afghanistan and Iraq. The Army and Marines were forced to change tactics, foregoing operations well in advance of friendly forces meant to kill armored vehicles in favor of operations to protective ground fire.

- Amphibious assault was not tested in the Afghanistan and Iraq cases. Marine Corps units were moved from ship to shore expe-
ditiously in Somalia. They moved from ship to shore in Pakistan before being transported by other means into Afghanistan.

• Finally, U.S. administrations and the U.S. military have not quite reconciled themselves to the tasks of peacekeeping and national reconstruction, that is, nation-building. They have had difficulty in Afghanistan and Iraq in establishing security, setting up governments, and getting economies going again. They have benefitted to some degree from their peacekeeping experiences in Bosnia and Kosovo (along with their allies, although it has been mostly the Europeans who conducted civil administration there). Those situations were more benign and of a lesser scale than the ones in Afghanistan and Iraq, especially considering the peace agreements reached with the Serbs.
Is the past prologue?

The nine combat experiences in which the U.S. engaged since 1989 provided real-world validation of the transformation of U.S. forces’ capabilities. The successful application of military force in these situations may presage future successes, depending on the circumstances, reasonably careful planning at the command level, and a willingness to exploit the new capabilities that have been delivered to the forces. Thus, the template of the American Way of War that has emerged in the post-Cold War era suggests that the past is prologue—at least as far as the use of its forces by the U.S. goes. Whether situations comparable to the nine we have examined may arise that require such applications of the forces is another question.

The diversity of situations in the nine cases we examined was very broad, and yet the cases took place over a relatively short period of time (14 years). U.S. engagement in so many of these disparate situations in such a period may be unique in American military history. Given this diversity, we can predict that, in the next ten years, combat experience may be similarly diversified, and thus may not pose many surprises. That is, the adaptability of the forces has been practiced.

As for future situations in which the forces might be used, the major problems that remain on a state basis are Iran and North Korea, mostly because of the threats of their nuclear proliferation (they are otherwise contained) and the uncertainties those threats may create if a crisis were to occur. Syria and Libya also continue to be rogue states, and they apparently have chemical warfare capabilities and may be weaponizing Scud and No Dong-type ballistic missiles. But they also have been contained and have begun to follow more benign foreign policies than the “Axis of Evil” states, although Syria still supports the terrorist Hezbollah in Lebanon and Libya, under the erratic leadership of Qaddafi, could always revert to support of terrorists, if he is not already doing so in his usual covert way. Iran and North Korea do not lend themselves easily to the preemptive application of
the American Way of War. The Chinese threat to Taiwan also persists and might get more acute.

In addition to the problems with the countries mentioned above is the whole global war on terror. Al Qaeda is a much more diffuse, shadowy enemy. Unless another state were to let it set up a base, like Afghanistan did under the Taliban, it would not present the kind of targets or organized opposition against which the American Way of War as developed in the nine situations we examined could be applied. Instead, any combat against al Qaeda is more likely to involve U.S. Special Forces or other covert operations and the exercise of non-military capabilities and operations of a law enforcement nature, plus the continued attempts to dry up their financial resources. A larger task, which goes beyond the capabilities for the American Way of War described here, is that of getting at the root causes of terrorism through reform in the countries from which they have originated. Achieving peace between the Israelis and Palestinians also is necessary.

Even if opportunities for the kind of combat demonstrated in the American Way of War do not arise, the development of that way of war and the transformation of U.S. capabilities that made it possible are likely to have an impact around the world. While some say that other countries—unspecified—may try to emulate U.S. capabilities, the development and sustainment of U.S. capabilities may also have a dissuasive effect. That is, emulation of the American combination of political direction, organization, technology, practice, and trained and motivated career personnel would be difficult. Moreover, the exercise of the American Way of War in the period 1989-2003 has resulted in fundamental strategic improvements: the removal of Saddam Hussein’s threat to peace and stability in the Middle East, the removal of the Al Qaeda base of terror in Afghanistan, and the end of the most serious remaining conflicts in Europe (those in the former Yugoslavia). Each of these situations still requires the internal restoration of governance and economies, but they no longer pose strategic threats.
The American Way of War: the individual cases

The American Way of War that has emerged since the end of the Cold War in actual combat operations is a complex result of decision-making, planning, preparations, formation of joint and coalition forces, the obtaining of bases, movement to the scene, combat, resolution, and aftermath. We looked at the factors in each of the following categories (also shown in charts in the appendix).

Preparations:
- Why the U.S. intervened
- What triggered the intervention
- What were the U.S. goals in the conflict
- Whose help the U.S. sought
- What forces the U.S. mobilized and brought to bear
- How the U.S. got there

The core of the American Way of War:
- How the war was directed and commanded
- How the U.S. fought
- How U.S. forces defended themselves

The aftermath of war:
- How the U.S. stabilized the situation as the fighting concluded
- When the U.S. left
- What the U.S. left behind

The effects of transformation on the situation

Summary comments on each case
Panama: Operation Just Cause 1989-90

Introduction

In 1990, Just Cause was identified in official publications as the largest contingency operation for U.S. forces since the Second World War and the largest military employment since Vietnam. The operation in Panama in late 1989 marked a number of firsts:

• It was the first significant postwar contingency in which Cold War concerns did not feature (except for Noriega's flirtation with Castro, which was not the main reason the U.S. intervened).

• It was the first U.S. military operation in which the strategic goal was removal of a head of state.

• It marked the first post-Goldwater-Nichols “harm's way” operation in which the theater commander was empowered to plan the complete operation.

It was, in its way, a “preemption,” though incidents were used as a casus belli. But preemption by the U.S. in the Caribbean area has occurred before.

Why the U.S. intervened

• Location in the Western Hemisphere.

• Large number of U.S. citizens and troops located in the country.

• Importance of the Panama Canal for U.S. economic and strategic interests.

What triggered the intervention

• Declaration of war by the Panamanian parliament.
• Threats and attacks on U.S. military personnel and civilians.
• Suppression of fair elections and Noriega's declaration of himself as supreme leader.
• Threats against U.S. economic interests in Panama Canal.
• Noriega's involvement in drug trafficking (the proximate reason for the U.S. wanting to bring him to justice).

What were the U.S. goals in the conflict

• Safeguard lives of 30,000 Americans living in Panama.
• Protect the integrity and security of Panama Canal and 142 U.S. defense sites in Panama.
• Help Panama establish genuine democracy.
• Neutralize Panamanian Defense Force (PDF).
• Bring Noriega to justice.

Whose help the U.S. sought

• The U.S. fought this conflict alone.
• It did not seek to build a coalition.
• It did not seek international political approval.

How the operation was directed and commanded

In the year preceding the invasion, the Joint Chiefs of Staff instructed the Commander of the U.S. Southern Command (USCINCSO), then General Frederick Woerner, to draft contingency plans, called Blue Spoon, for U.S. military action in Panama. U.S. objectives were to secure the canal and to aid any indigenous political group attempting to replace the Noriega regime. As the junta's violence increased through the spring of 1989, the first Bush administration issued National Security Directive 17, which ordered U.S. forces in-country to begin a concerted effort of surveillance and intimidation of PDF forces. Further, the President replaced USCINCSO with General
Maxwell Thurman—a shift regarded by some observers as marking the transition to a more combat ready stance vis-à-vis Panama.\footnote{Ronald H. Cole, Operation Just Cause Panama (Washington DC: Joint History Office, Office of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, 1995), 13.}

By late summer 1989, General Thurman had selected the XVIII Airborne Corps to provide SOUTHCOM's operational planning staff. A failed coup on 3 October led General Thurman to anticipate a likely political call for immediate intervention. Consequently, he activated the Joint Task Force South and began revising Blue Spoon plans for quick activation. USCINCSO presented these plans to the Administration on 16 October. Within two weeks, the JCS approved the changes and left USCINCSO to finalize the target list. JCS Chairman General Colin Powell briefed SECDEF Cheney on the OPORD, but plan details were not provided to President Bush.

On 17 December, following the murder of U.S. personnel in Panama, the JCS presented the Blue Spoon CONOPs to the President, who immediately ordered its execution. General Powell advised the relevant joint commanders on 20 December to finalize assault preparations. SECDEF Cheney supervised this activity and made only one change in the OPORD: reducing the number of F-117s tasked to strike Panamanian command centers and bunkers. Ultimately, President Bush authorized the employment of two F-117s against a junta stronghold at Rio Hato. The White House also pressed the command to rescue hostages at the Marriott Hotel and to take two Panamanian radio stations off the air. CINCSO conducted the combat phase of the campaign without additional involvement of Washington—with the exception of diplomatic efforts to peacefully extract Noriega from the Vatican nunciature.

What forces the U.S. mobilized and brought to bear

In Panama, the U.S. carried out the operation against military forces that were under-manned, under-capitalized, under-trained and employed primarily to safeguard the government from internal threats. The PDF had fewer than 20,000 personnel, and only about
6,000 of them were on active duty. The PDF's order of battle consisted of two infantry battalions, ten detached companies, a cavalry squadron with armored cars and 60mm mortars, and a number of anti-aircraft artillery pieces. While the PDF's center of gravity lay in Panama City, it maintained garrisons throughout the Canal Zone.

To neutralize this force and seize Noriega, the President and SecDef asked SOUTHCOM and the XVIII Airborne Corps to update and execute the existing Blue Spoon joint invasion plan for Panama. The plan sought to maximize disruption and shock to the PDF through simultaneous attacks against 27 Panamanian strongholds with both conventional and Special Forces units. Army and Marine units already in country for Canal Zone defense duties were chopped to the joint task force, as well as some 14,000 additional Army and inter-service Special Forces personnel from the continental United States (CONUS). The Air Force provided strategic lift and fire support to ground units. Navy participation was limited to SEALs attached to the Joint Special Operations Task Force.

The Theater Commander employed a force that was predominately Special Forces and light infantry—elements of the 7th Infantry Division, the 82nd Airborne Division, the 75th Ranger Regiment, the 193rd Infantry Brigade, and the USMC 2nd Light Infantry Battalion. They were equipped with M551 Sheridan light tanks, AH64 Apache helicopters, and M113 APCs, which had been prepositioned in preparation for the hostilities.

**How the U.S. got there**

Operation Just Cause benefited greatly from the presence of an established U.S. military presence in country, numbering approximately 12,000 Army, Air Force and Marine personnel. It also benefitted from Panama's proximity to CONUS staging areas. sixty-three C-141s, 19 C-130s, and 2 C-5s transported a division-sized invasion force from six embarkation points in CONUS within 24 hours.

**How the U.S. fought**

Just Cause was a classic coup de main: an offensive campaign that used surprise and simultaneous operations. Rangers, Army and Marine
infantry, Army paratroops and Navy SEALs struck at PDF targets across the country. The U.S. utilized technological advantages across the board, not only in its ability to maneuver, but also in its ability to fight at night using night vision equipment. Air Force AC-130s and F-117s and Army AH-64s and AH-1s provided precision strikes to neutralize Panamanian strongholds and armored vehicles in order to minimize potential losses to advancing U.S. ground forces. U.S. SIGINT assets identified friendly PDF personnel and tracked the dispositions of hostile units. By striking with relative surprise and in multiple areas, the United States held the initiative and retained it as the PDF slipped into disarray. By the morning of 21 December, all Panamanian airfields and naval facilities, as well as all PDF command centers, had been overrun.

Given the location of PDF bases in or near population centers, urban combat operations were unavoidable. Fortunately, the application of close air support from the AC-130s and the numerical advantage of U.S. ground forces led to the end of all organized resistance by the second day of the operation.

**How U.S. forces defended themselves**

The principal threat posed by the PDF, as envisioned during the early mission planning, lay not in its ability to function as a disciplined military force, but in the potential that some units might escape destruction and engage in guerrilla activities and hostage-taking. Consequently, the Theater Commander sought to minimize U.S. losses by crushing the PDF quickly and in-place. U.S. forces used LAVs and M-113s to support advancing infantry and provide limited protection from PDF snipers.

In instances where the U.S. either anticipated pronounced resistance or encountered it, such as at the La Comandancia PDF headquarters, U.S. ground units used close air support for suppressive and preparatory fires. While this limited the exposure of U.S. personnel to hostile fire, it did present significant risks of collateral damage. A proposed

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F-117 strike against a PDF airfield was cancelled because of the high likelihood of civilian casualties. The operation to secure La Comandancia, in response to fierce PDF resistance was not cancelled: despite precision-fires from AC-130s and Apache gunships, most of the surrounding barrio of El Chorally was set on fire, killing a contested number of Panamanian civilians and reportedly creating thousands of refugees.\textsuperscript{16}

**How the U.S. stabilized the situation as the fighting concluded**

At the start of hostilities on 19 December 1989, the United States had nearly 26,000 personnel in country. Once the Joint Task Force attained its operational objectives on 22 December 1989, an additional 2,000 personnel were flown in to support “stability operations,” that is, the provision of emergency medical and food supplies to Panamanian civilians, and to organize a new, de-politicized gendarmerie and local police forces.\textsuperscript{17} Of this number, 200 civil-affairs and 250 PSYOP personnel operated to assist apprehending notables from the former regime, notably Noriega, and in direct support of the new Panamanian government. By 30 January 1990, U.S. leadership declared Panama pacified and U.S. personnel numbers fell to pre-invasion levels.

**When the bulk of U.S. forces left**

- Once major objectives in seizing the territory were achieved.
- Once Noriega was captured.
- When Panamanian paramilitary forces and troops loyal to Noriega had surrendered or been neutralized.


\textsuperscript{17} Joint Chief of Staffs, Joint Military Operations Historical Collection, 15 July 1997, IV-8.
• When the replacement Endarra government was in control of cities and countryside.

What the U.S. left behind

U.S. left behind troops roughly equivalent to its pre-operation levels in the country. These forces were responsible for defending the Panama Canal from possible attack. They were also to provide insurance against possible attempts by Noriega loyalists to wage a guerrilla campaign or carry out a coup against the Endarra government.

How transformation was demonstrated

Command, control, and direction:
• Full authorities under Goldwater-Nichols were exercised for the first time.
• Special care was taken to limit U.S. casualties and to avoid local collateral damage.
• Forces rapidly deployed from CONUS and immediately entered into combat.
• SOCOM provided Special Forces for the first time, given its newly established role as a supporting command.

Tactical innovation:
• A Quick-Reaction Force was designed and employed.
• Multiple, simultaneous night airborne assaults (including use of night vision devices) were made.
• PSYOPS were used (to drive Noriega from his refuge in the Papal Nunciature).

Innovative use of relatively new systems:
• EC-130 jammed enemy communications.
• F-117s were used for the first time.
Gaps showing a need for further transformation:

- Capabilities and tactics for urban warfare.
- Finding a fugitive leader.
- Transitions to peacekeeping and reconstruction.

Summary comments

Operation Just Cause presaged the possibilities of the impact that transformation could have on U.S. operations, especially by demonstrating the disorienting effects on opposing forces of undertaking simultaneous smaller-component operations in many parts of the country. This was made possible by an efficient plan and excellent communications. It was the first post-Goldwater-Nichols operation and was thus a tightly controlled joint operation. It was a relatively easy operation; it had little opposition, and took advantage of the large base structure that the U.S. had not yet ceded back to Panama. The uses of Special Forces, night-vision devices, and PSYOPS were unprecedented and innovative. With a good plan and good communications, the operation was carried out very quickly, even though it did bog down for a few days until Noriega was dislodged from his refuge. Transformation was perhaps represented more by new types of organization and execution than by the introduction of new technologies.
Iraq: Desert Shield and Desert Storm 1990-91

Introduction

Operation Desert Shield/Desert Storm was the first major regional conflict since Vietnam in which the United States engaged both air strikes and large ground forces. It involved two Army corps, over 60 percent of the Fleet Marine Force, 120 Navy ships, and a mix of 1,600 Navy and Air Force combat aircraft. In 47 days of combat operations, this force, supplemented by combat and support units from 38 other states, decimated the fourth largest military in the world and did so at the cost of fewer than 120 U.S. combat deaths.

Why the U.S. intervened

- Iraq's surprise invasion of Kuwait in August 1990.
- The consequent immediate threat posed to U.S. allies in the Persian Gulf area if Iraqi forces were to roll on south, into Saudi Arabia.
- An aggressive, expansionist Iraq, armed with WMD capabilities, posed a threat to other countries in the region, including Israel.
- The global economy would have been threatened if Iraq had continued to seize Gulf oil fields.
- President Bush felt strongly about upholding the international norm of not using aggression to change the sovereignty of another state.

What triggered the intervention

- Sanctions failed to persuade Iraq to withdraw from Kuwait.
- The UN set a deadline for Iraqi withdrawal that was not met.
• Merely defending Saudi Arabia without rolling back Iraq would have conveyed the impression of U.S. and international acquiescence in Iraqi conquest.

• President Bush faced the decision of whether to rotate the Army troops deployed in defense of Saudi Arabia. By keeping forces there and adding to them, he essentially committed to evicting the Iraqis from Kuwait.

What were the U.S. goals in the conflict

Desert Shield goals:
• Deter further Iraqi attacks.
• Defend Saudi Arabia if deterrence failed.
• Build a militarily effective coalition force.
• Enforce economic sanctions prescribed by the UN Security Council.

Desert Storm goals:
• Bring about the immediate, complete, and unconditional withdrawal of all Iraqi forces from Kuwait.
• Restore Kuwait's government.
• Ensure the long-term security and stability of Saudi Arabia and the Persian Gulf.
• Take the opportunity to destroy Iraq's production of weapons of mass destruction (WMD) and delivery means.

Whose help the U.S. sought

The use of force by the United States was supported by most of the countries of the world, including all European states, the Soviet Union, China, and the Arab States.

The UN Security Council voted overwhelmingly to demand Iraqi withdrawal and to impose economic sanctions on Iraq. In the six
months between the Iraqi invasion and the start of the coalition military campaign, it passed 11 resolutions on this issue.

The Arab League voted to condemn the invasion, with only Iraq, Libya, and Palestine opposed and Yemen and Algeria abstaining. (Jordan, Sudan, and Mauritania expressed reservations.)

The coalition received financial or military contributions from nearly 50 countries.

- Eighteen countries provided military forces and others were supportive. These included Afghanistan, Argentina, Australia, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belgium, Canada, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Egypt, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Honduras, Italy, Kuwait, Morocco, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Niger, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, South Korea, Spain, Syria, Turkey, the United Arab Emirates, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

- Naval forces were provided by Argentina, Australia, Bahrain, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Oman, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Spain, Turkey, the U.A.E., U.K., and the United States.

- Several countries, including Saudi Arabia, Germany, Japan, the U.A.E., Kuwait, and South Korea, helped to defray the expenses of the operation, contributing a total of $54 billion of the total of $61 billion in incremental costs. The Saudis also provided free fuel and other services in kind.

**How the operations were directed and commanded**

On 1 August 1990, three Iraqi divisions crossed the Kuwaiti border. Three days later they had taken Kuwait City and were moving south toward the Saudi frontier. On 3 August, Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) Chairman General Colin Powell instructed the Commander of U.S. Central Command (USCINCCENT) General Norman Schwarzkopf to begin preparing for the defense of Saudi Arabia and for an offensive campaign to roll back Iraqi forces from Kuwait. On 4 August, USCINCCENT briefed President Bush and SECDEF Cheney on a
Cold War contingency plan for the defense of the Arabian Peninsula, OPLAN 90-1002. The plan called for the insertion of a Rapid Reaction-Holding Force, followed by 100,000 ground troops over a four-month period. The President and the SECDEF immediately petitioned the Saudis for a robust American military presence in the Kingdom, and on 7 August, they instructed USCINCCENT to execute OPLAN 90-1002.

Within 14 weeks, a defensive force of over 230,000 ground troops, four USN carrier battlegroups (CVBGs), and over 700 USN, USMC, and USAF aircraft were in-theater. That said, President Bush tasked CENTCOM in early October 1990 to complete plans to evict Iraqi forces from Kuwait and destroy Baghdad’s WMD capability. He answered CINCCENT’s request for the U.S. VII Corps by transferring not only the Corps, but also ordering the deployment of an additional Army division, a second Marine Corps division, another two Navy CVBGs, and 300 more Air Force aircraft.

In early December 1990, the Administration gave USCINCCENT a Strategic Directive that provided broad operational guidance for a combined arms campaign to destroy Iraqi military units and occupy southeastern Iraq until the U.S. objectives were met. Throughout the latter phase of the planning process, U.S. leadership explicitly sought not to micromanage the military, but was responsive to Joint Staff and CENTCOM recommendations. On 19-20 December, USCINCCENT submitted the final war plans to the SECDEF, who accepted them while stressing that initiation of ground operations later would require additional presidential approval.


19. Ibid., p. 57.


All U.S. forces in theater reported directly to CINCCENT. Operational control of Special Operations Forces fell to the Special Operations Command component of Central Command. U.S. civilian leadership and the JCS maintained oversight and provided “considerable guidance” to CINCCENT concerning target selection in Baghdad (at least following the strike on the al Firdos bunker, with its political repercussions), the elimination of Iraqi theater ballistic missiles, and the termination of hostilities.23

For both the planning and combat phases of the campaign, coalition management was a significant factor in U.S. strategic and operational decision-making. The principal concern lay in satisfying Saudi political sensitivities. The operation was nominally under joint U.S. and Saudi command—co-commanders. CINCCENT established a coalition command center to ensure coordination of U.S. and Saudi forces, and to satisfy symbolically the terms of U.S. entry into the Kingdom, which provided the Saudi military command with undefined “strategic direction” of American forces.24 CINCCENT received tactical control of French and British forces in-theater. Many of the non-Islamic members of the coalition retained full command authority over their own forces while coordinating operations with either CINCCENT or the Saudi military command.

**How the U.S. (and the coalition) fought**

The United States engaged the Iraqis in a non-linear battlespace—conceptualized in Cold War Aerospace and AirLand doctrine—in which coordinated air, land and sea attacks were conducted against both strategic and tactical targets. Thirty-eight days of air strikes were followed by four days of ground operations. These operations served to isolate the Iraqi leadership from the battlefield, cut off supply lines to forward Iraqi units, and attrit those forces remaining in the Kuwaiti theater of operations (KTO). General Michael H. Dugan, former Air Force chief-of-staff, observed that Desert Shield/Desert Storm


marked the advent of technology “catching up” with doctrine: finally warfare could approach the theoretical ideals of high tempo, 24-7 operations, operational surprise, and precision fires.\textsuperscript{25} Throughout the campaign, attaining and exploiting air supremacy was a key feature of U.S. planning. The Navy, Air Force, and Marine Corps flew over 112,000 combat sorties. The timing of the ground offensive was premised on the ability of coalition airpower to destroy Iraqi C4IS and logistics to facilitate ground operations. Airpower also worked directly to demoralize and denude Iraqi forces. The theater commander set as an objective the destruction of at least 50 percent of all Iraqi armor and artillery in the KTO prior to the assault by coalition ground forces. The operation marked the first time an ATO was used in a real-world operation to schedule, coordinate, and deconflict air strikes conducted by coalition aircraft. It also marked the first use of AWACS to coordinate air operations. UAVs were used to spoof Iraqi air defenses around Baghdad, and were also used for reconnaissance.

The ground forces used M1A1 tanks, firing at 3,000 meters with laser sights, and M2 Bradley AFVs, firing TOW missiles at up to 3,750 meters, in the great “left hook” operation.

The U.S. used the threat of its offshore amphibious forces to pin down the five Iraqi divisions deployed along the coastline, thus to lessen the defenses against the ground-based thrusts into Iraq. The Marine Corps on land plus other coalition forces were initially supposed to fix Iraqi forces along the Saudi border. The preparatory fires of the air campaign, however, had softened the Iraqis to the point that both the holding and flanking forces routed the defenders within four days.

PSYOP and Special Forces also played important roles in the coalition victory. PSYOP units distributed over 29 million leaflets to Iraqi forces in the KTO. According to Iraqi commanders, this effort was second only to the allied tactical air strikes in promoting Iraqi defections. Special Force units assisted in combat search and rescue, provided

\textsuperscript{25} Marsha Loges, 15.
human intelligence of Iraqi movements during the ground campaign, and conducted an unsuccessful effort to locate Iraqi theater ballistic missiles.

How U.S. forces defended themselves

U.S. forces conducted extensive SEAD operations to suppress Iraqi air defenses, using Army Apache attack helicopters to attack the first line of Iraqi radars, jamming by EA-6Bs, F-4Gs, and EF-111As, HARM missiles, etc. Some of these techniques had been pioneered by the Israelis in their 1973 and 1982 wars, but this was the first time the U.S. had used many of these capabilities. U.S. forces also utilized Tomahawks and F-117s to strike Iraqi targets in areas too heavily defended for the safe employment of conventional manned aircraft. Desert Storm marked the first attempted use of Patriot against ballistic missiles—it appeared not to be successful, but Saddam was quoted as saying that “it wasn’t fair” for the U.S. to even attempt it. Also, chemical and biological warfare defensive systems were deployed for the first time since World War II—luckily, they were not tested by actual use.26

How the U.S. stabilized the situation as the fighting concluded

After the U.S. and its allies met their principal objective, ejecting Iraq from Kuwait, but the U.S. took the opportunity to reduce Iraqi production facilities for weapons of mass destruction. Also, the Kuwaiti ruling family was restored, and the Iraqi-set oil-well fires were eventually extinguished. The U.S. moved quickly to prevent a humanitarian disaster in the Kurdish areas of Northern Iraq, but did nothing to stop the Iraqi regime from crushing a Shi’ite rebellion in the south. The difference in response arose from international “complications”: the crisis in the north (the Kurdish area) fueled a refugee surge into neighboring Turkey, whereas the Shi’ites fought (and died) in place.

26. Saddam did not use chemical or biological weapons. At the highest level of government, he was threatened with severe retaliation by the United States. At a lower level, a captured Iraqi brigadier said that the Iraqis didn’t use chemical weapons because they thought that the coalition’s defenses were better than theirs.
Moreover, there might have been some reluctance to protect the Shi’ites lest it invite Iranian intervention. That said, both events led to the later establishment of no-fly zones in Iraqi airspace, which also permitted the protection of the de facto autonomy the Kurds established in their areas (unfortunately, the same could not be established for the Shi’ites in the south of Iraq).

**When the U.S. and coalition forces left**

The U.S. and other coalition members began to pull most of their forces from the region as soon as Kuwait was liberated.

**What the U.S. left behind**

The U.S. left behind a much smaller multi-national force in the Persian Gulf and in Turkey. Over time this force evolved to include only U.S. and U.K. participation.

American and British air forces later established and enforced the no-fly zones to prevent the Iraqi government from repressing Kurdish and Shi’ite ethnic groups in the northern and southern regions of the country. The northern no-fly zone was enforced from bases in Turkey, while the southern no-fly zone was enforced by aircraft operating from Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, and by carrier-based aviation.

After Iraq assembled 70,000 soldiers on the Kuwait border in October 1994, the U.S. and U.K. issued a demarche to Iraq prohibiting any movement of forces on the ground south of the 32nd parallel—establishing a “no-drive zone.”

Naval forces have conducted MIO in the Persian Gulf to enforce UN sanctions against Iraq. Those sanctions were to be in place until the UN verified that Iraq had destroyed its WMD and missile capabilities. This never happened.

Two brigades of U.S. Army ground forces equipment were prepositioned in Kuwait and Qatar. They provided a forward tripwire designed to deter Iraq from further aggression.
How transformation was demonstrated in Desert Shield and Desert Storm

Command, control, and direction:

- CINCCENT ran a major military operation for the first time.
- CINCCENT and CJCS were in close daily contact, and were given better secure voice communications.
- A JFACC was organized and ran the air operation for the first time; it issued a daily ATO.
- Both satellite communications and satellite surveillance were fed to the headquarters and field units.
- AWACS directed air traffic.
- The campaign was planned in a way to ensure low coalition casualties. (Thus, the air strikes and the “Left Hook” meant to decimate opposing Iraqi ground forces before engaging them and also to out-maneuver them.)

Tactical transformation:

- U.S. forces were able to quickly defeat an air defense network denser than that deployed by the Soviet Union in Eastern Europe during the Cold War, albeit an obsolescent one. It used an extensive suppression of enemy air defense campaign, with UAVs, F-117s, EA-6Bs, F-4Gs, EF-111As, HARMs, etc.
- Maritime Prepositioning Ships (MPS) were used for the first time, marrying up with Marine personnel flown in.
- Extensive air strikes (39 days) were used to destroy military facilities, including command and control, and to soften up and attrit forces on the ground, prior to using ground forces to roll up Iraqi ground force. PGMs were used extensively, though the bulk of weapons dropped were dumb bombs.
- The U.S. Army demonstrated “controlling the night” in a large operation (they had also demonstrated these capabilities in Panama).
The combination of the TPS-36 artillery-locating radar, ATACMS, and artillery counter-battery fire provided some suppression of Iraqi artillery. Before the war, there had been great fear that the Iraqi artillery could outrange that of the United States.

The first introduction of GPS receivers—many of which had been bought commercially off-the-shelf in haste—enabled at least the major units of U.S. ground forces to know where they were at all times in the featureless desert.

The JSTARS prototype was tried out over Kuwait.

SLAM and other systems in development were tried out.

The research work that had been done by the NAMRUs (Naval Medical Research Units) in Kenya and Cairo enabled the U.S. to keep desert disease rates far below predictions.

The MIO was planned and executed, and successfully overcame interoperability problems between the many coalition ships.

Innovative use of relatively new weapons and other systems:

- F-117s were used in numbers, in a situation where their stealth characteristics were of critical importance. (They had been used briefly in Panama, but their stealth was not relevant in that situation.)

- UAVs were used to decoy air defenses and for field surveillance.

- Tomahawk cruise missiles were used in combat for the first time (which also means that surface combatants took independent roles for the first time in deep strike missions).

- M1A1 tanks were used in combat for the first time and far outranged Iraqi T-72 tanks. Their transformative character was demonstrated in their mobility, first-shot kill at long ranges (3,000 meters), and true shoot-on-the-move capability for the first time. M-2 Bradleys firing TOW missiles also performed well. (TOW missiles had been first acquired in the late 1960s, and gradually improved in successive upgrades.)
• Attack helicopters with Hellfire and other weapons cleared out radar systems in the path of striking aircraft. They also provided close air support.

• Patriot was used for the first time in an anti-missile role, in Israel and in Saudi Arabia.

• A bunker-busting bomb was invented especially for this operation.

• Fuel-air explosive (FAE) bombs were used to clear landmine fields.

**Gaps showing a need for further transformation:**

• Navy communications connectivity with the U.S. Air Force was poor. The ATO had to be flown out to the carriers. The Navy had difficulty receiving traffic from AWACS, so its aircraft could not be vectored to intercept the two lone Mirages that streaked along the coast of Saudi Arabia. (Saudi F-15s were vectored by AWACS and shot them down.)

• There were not enough PGMs, or targeting pods, especially for the Navy.

• Special Forces were too few and too late. They lacked air support.

• The system had to learn what targets were most appropriate for Tomahawks, though most were used against suitable targets. Tomahawk accuracy needed to be improved. Tomahawk flight paths were too constraining and inflexible.

• Locating/targeting/destroying mobile TBMs (Scuds) was difficult. Downlinks from satellite surveillance did not permit real-time targeting.

27. For several of these gaps, and how they were filled by the time of Operation Iraqi Freedom, see the remarks of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Richard Myers, reported in The Washington Times, June 30, 2003, p.1. For other gaps, see Congressional Research Service, Report for Congress: Iraq War: Defense Program Implications for Congress (Washington, June 4, 2003), pp. 51 and 54.
Avoidance of fratricide could not be ensured.

Patriot in its current mode was incapable of shooting down ballistic missiles.

Mine detection capabilities were inadequate, and wrong assumptions were made as to where the Iraqis would lay mines.

The tactics and techniques of bridge-busting were inadequate.

**Summary comments**

Desert Storm was the first major U.S. combat action since Vietnam. Up to that time, the lessons learned for this type of combat had been drawn from the Arab-Israeli Yom Kippur war of 1973 and Israeli operations in the Bekaa Valley of Lebanon in 1982. In the interim, in the maturing of Cold War capabilities, many improvements and transformations had been made in U.S. forces. But, until they could be used in actual mobilization, deployment, and operations, they could not be tested; questions of whether they would work and could be applied could be only be addressed in theory and in exercises.

Desert Storm became a great laboratory for the U.S. in which to exercise these Cold War transformations. Many old and new systems worked well. Many new systems that had not been tried in combat performed brilliantly, such as the M1 tank and M2 Bradley fighting vehicle (which had raised great concern because of its scant armor protection—a problem obviated in this operation because of its firing at long ranges). Perhaps the greatest problem was the integration and direction of the entire joint and combined force: it was concentrated in a narrow geographical area, yet, was composed of four dimensions—ground, air, sea, and space.

The demonstration of U.S. combat capabilities—technologically, organizationally, and professionally—had a strong impact on military and strategic thought around the world. In the United States, the suc-

28. It is to be noted that the M1 was the product of a long evolution, starting with the aborted MBT-70 project in the mid-1960s. The M1 was a marriage of U.S. laser sights, British laminated armor, the West German 120mm smooth-bore gun, and the U.S. turbine engine.
cessful demonstration of American military capabilities spurred the recognition that a revolution in military affairs had taken place and could be built upon in the leaner, more efficient, post-Cold War force. The military community recognized that precision delivery of munitions, speed of advance, agility, and ubiquitous surveillance, all networked together, were of the essence for military dominance.
Somalia: Provide Relief/Restore Hope/Continue Hope 1992-94

Introduction

The UN intervention in Somalia in the early 1990s, in which the U.S. took a leading role, epitomized the inherent tension in conducting a humanitarian intervention in harm’s way. The history of American combat in Somalia began and ended spectacularly: it started with an amphibious landing on the beaches near Mogadishu “opposed” only by the international media. That was followed a year later with an operation to seize Somali leadership, in which 18 Special Forces were killed and 96 other personnel were wounded. That, in turn, was followed by an essentially an amphibious withdrawal five months later. Humanitarian intervention supposedly depends on restraint and civil-military engagement, whereas combat operations supposedly entail the asymmetrical application of violence in order to eliminate a military threat. U.S. operations fell between these two poles.

Why the U.S. intervened

• Somalia was the victim of large-scale civil war and famine.

• There was a Danger that Somalia’s instability would spread to other parts of the Horn of Africa as refugees flowed out of that country.

• The U.S. felt that it needed to assist the United Nations in order to strengthen that organization’s reputation as a successful peacekeeping organization.

• It was not Bosnia, which had been left to the Europeans.

• The cost of local protection had gotten too high for the non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that were conducting humanitarian relief, especially as the international media
entering the country could afford a lot more. The NGOs needed free protection.

**What triggered the intervention and escalated its operations**

- Stages I and II: Requests from the United Nations.
- Stage III: Desire to avenge the deaths of Pakistani peacekeepers, and the general perception that the security situation was not improving and that more significant measures needed to be taken.

**What were the U.S. goals in conflict**

- Stage I, Provide Relief: Airlift humanitarian relief during civil war and resulting famine.
- Stage II, Restore Hope: Protect aid convoys and create a more stable security environment.
- Stage III: Continue Hope: End the civil war by defeating the most hostile warlords.

**UN goals in UNOSOM II (Stage III):**

- Monitor to ensure that all factions continued to respect the cessation of hostilities.
- Prevent any resumption of violence.
- Maintain control of the heavy weapons of the organized factions, which were to be brought under international control.
- Seizing the small arms of all unauthorized armed elements;
- Secure all ports, airports, and lines of communications required for the delivery of humanitarian assistance.
- Protect the personnel, installations and equipment of the United Nations, its agencies, and NGOs.
- Continue mine-clearing.
- Repatriate refugees outside Somalia and displaced persons within.
Whose help the U.S. sought

The Somalia operations were multinational from the start.

Rather than the U.S. seeking help from others, the UN asked the U.S. to lead and participate in a humanitarian assistance operation that later escalated to peace enforcement.

Military personnel were provided by the following countries: Australia, Bangladesh, Belgium, Botswana, Canada, Egypt, France, Germany, Greece, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Italy, Kuwait, Malaysia, Morocco, Nepal, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, Pakistan, Republic of Korea, Romania, Saudi Arabia, Sweden, Tunisia, Turkey, the United Arab Emirates, the United States, and Zimbabwe.

How the operations were directed and commanded

The humanitarian crisis in Somalia prompted the first Bush administration to task CENTCOM to provide food aid in late summer 1992. As the security situation worsened, the U.S. President advocated a more robust military response and offered U.S. troops to the UN on 26 November. Once the UN approved a resolution for intervention, the U.S. took command of the multinational Unified Task Force (UNITAF) in December 1992, and this became the foundation for the Restore Hope phase of the campaign. U.S. forces in-theater constituted Joint Task Force (JTF) Somalia, under USCINCCENT command. CENTCOM’s mandate was to create a secure environment for relief aid, and then transfer operations to the UN.

A Marine Corps expeditionary force headquarters provided in-country operational and administrative command of the JTF. The JTF also created a Civil-Military Operations Center that coordinated the activities of the task force and the myriad humanitarian relief organizations present in the country. Moreover, the center also provided a channel for U.S. forces to liaise with other UN-member military contingents in Somalia to coordinate military operations. That said, nine states placed their force under limited Marine Corps Central Command (MARCENT) operational control, and a number of other national contingents fell to the control of the Army and Air Force Central Commands (ARCENT and AFCENT).
On 4 May 1993, Restore Hope ended as the UN assumed control over the multinational force, renamed UNOSOM II/Continued Hope. The U.S. commander in-country, MG Thomas Montgomery, USA, fell under USCINCCENT command while concurrently serving as deputy to the UN force commander, and was thus under the operational command of the UN. The command relationships for U.S. forces in Somalia were equally confused: logistical forces under the general were OPCON to the UN, i.e., under its operational control, while CENTCOM controlled the Quick-Reaction Force. MG Montgomery did maintain tactical control over this force.29

The introduction of Special Forces personnel under Task Force Ranger further complicated these command arrangements. This force was led by MG William Garrison, whose chain of command extended directly to USCINCCENT without going through either MG Montgomery or the UN command. On October 3, Task Force Ranger made an ill-fated assault on an enemy stronghold. This action was not coordinated with the coalition forces, who were later called upon to rescue the task force personnel when their MH-60 Blackhawk helicopter was shot down. (Eighteen U.S. military personnel were killed as a result of the action.)

After that debacle, a new JTF Somalia was established that was OPCON to CENTCOM while remaining TACON to MG Montgomery as the commander of U.S. forces Somalia (i.e., under his tactical control). Offshore Navy and Marine Corps units were chopped directly to CENTCOM and thus were outside the control of both the JTF and MG Montgomery.30

What forces the U.S. mobilized and brought to bear

The principal objective for U.S. forces in Somalia was to create a secure environment in which the internecine conflicts between Somali clans could be suppressed, so that relief supplies could be distributed to the civilian population. To achieve this end, the United

States employed Air Force and Military Sealift Command (MSC) assets to ferry food and supplies into the country. The Continue Hope phase of the operation involved over 28,000 military personnel, from Special Forces, Marine Corps units from the First and Second Marine Expeditionary Forces (I MEF and II MEF), and U.S. Army units from the 10th Mountain Division to provide security throughout the country. Navy engineers (SeaBees) were to rebuild infrastructure. An amphibious ready group provided offshore support, including a place for rest and recreation. The U.S. even sent the aircraft carrier USS Ranger down so its aircraft could do a flyover; its effect is not recorded.

As the mission continued, the Somali leadership and population became increasingly restive, and the U.S. role shifted away from protection of humanitarian assistance deliveries. By the end of Continue Hope, peacekeeping and security functions had become indistinguishable from normal combat operations as the tempo of Somali attacks and harassment of U.S. and UN troops increased. As the threat environment shifted, the U.S. responded by reducing its military profile on the ground. The initiation of the Restore Hope phase found the U.S. military presence diminished to 4,500 personnel, of which 1,150 were Special Forces and Army infantry soldiers dedicated to providing a Quick-Reaction Force to support UN military operations.

**How the U.S. got there**

Airlift and sealift made possible both the humanitarian and combat phases of the operation. TRANSCOM conducted 986 airlift missions using both commercial and military aircraft. Eleven MSC ships transported 365,000 tons of cargo and nearly 1,200 containers of “sustainment supplies.”

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31. Allard, 10.
How the U.S. fought

In Somalia, the United States faced motley bands of haphazardly armed Somali irregulars. The enemy was proficient in employing small arms to steal food stocks, though over the course of the conflict, the Somalis increasingly used heavier weapons, such as RPGs and recoilless rifles, against UN and U.S. forces. The principal U.S. response was the use of both mechanized and dismounted infantry patrols supported by helicopter and AC-130 gunships. Care was taken to the utmost degree to limit civilian casualties, with warnings often issued before raids. Further, combat activities were coupled with an extensive PSYOP campaign utilizing both radio and print media to ensure that the civilian population did not regard U.S. (and UN) forces as hostile. Nonetheless, given that Somali combatants freely intermingled with the civilian population—and indeed, deliberately employed them as shields on a number of occasions—the outside forces trying to maintain acceptance by the local population found it increasingly difficult to do so. Efforts to take Somali strongholds and close-air support missions often brought imprecise aerial fires that produced uncounted numbers of civilian casualties. The attempt to extract the Special Forces in their ill-fated mission reportedly resulted in hundreds of Somali casualties.

U.S. units relied on coalition armor assets throughout the operation. While U.S. forces were arguably more mobile than their allies' forces, they paid for this agility by being more vulnerable, i.e., when they ventured into an urban setting.

How U.S. forces defended themselves

Given the historical experiences of Vietnam and Lebanon, U.S. forces were determined not to take casualties. In Somalia, this entailed strong protection of encampments, armored patrols, personal body armor, and the use of pepper spray, as well as less restrictive rules of engagement against clear attackers. There were also preparations as well to use other non-lethal means, at least as part of the final withdrawal. Units in contact with the enemy, or confronting a stronghold, used fires from AC-130s and helicopter gunships to clear away resistance without exposing themselves to hostile fire.
How the U.S. stabilized the situation as the fighting concluded

In late 1993, local resistance to the U.S. presence in Somalia was growing, and Washington was uneasy about continued intervention following the Special Forces debacle in Restore Hope. Thus, the U.S. administration declared its objective (restoration of order so that famine could be eliminated and an economy restored) to be unattainable. A phased withdrawal followed. U.S. interest in the country effectively ceased upon the withdrawal.

When the U.S. left

U.S. forces left in March 1994, as a direct result of the deaths of the 18 U.S. military personnel in the Task Force Ranger assault of 3 October.

At the time of departure, the U.S. had failed to achieve its objectives for the operation, since humanitarian assistance operations were still regularly threatened and internal strife continued unabated.

What the U.S. left behind

The U.S. did not leave any forces behind once the decision to depart was made.

UN forces from other countries that remained in Somalia continued to provide security for humanitarian assistance and food aid missions for a while after U.S. forces left.

U.S. forces assisted in the evacuation of all remaining UN forces in March 1995. Eighteen hundred U.S. Marines secured the withdrawal of the remaining 2,500 Bangladeshi and Pakistani peacekeepers.

How transformation was—or was not—demonstrated in Somalia

Innovations lay in the setting up of a sea base offshore, some use of non-lethal weapons, particularly pepper spray, and learning to interact with NGOs.
The operations in Somalia were conducted in the full glare of media coverage, which might be considered something of a transformation. The coverage was less controlled than it was in Desert Storm.

Gaps showing a need for further transformation:

The gaps discovered included the breakdown of command and direction, including the ambiguity of U.S. command vs. UN direction in the case of the Ranger raid to seize Aidid's leadership. The operation also revealed that the U.S. and others had a lot to learn about military operations in urban areas. Intelligence, including HUMINT, to track down opposing leadership and otherwise to detect opposition, was deficient. Special Operations and light infantry doctrines were violated by inserting light forces into a hostile area without a back-up force at the ready.

Summary comments

The operation was not an overall success, so it is difficult to say whether the aspects of innovation demonstrated in the operation made a difference. There were no particular challenges to getting the forces there and sustaining them. There was some expectation that new non-lethal weapons might be demonstrated, and careful preparations of that sort were made for the final withdrawal of the forces; however, non-lethal weapons were not needed for that part of the operation. Otherwise, pepper spray was used during the operation in the city. Lessons were learned that pointed toward various needs for transformation. These included the need for clear objectives, tighter command and control (especially when dual authorities (U.S. and UN) might be present), and the problems of urban combat (which both the Marine Corps and Special Forces have subsequently worked on). Perhaps the greatest stimulations to transformation were these lessons of urban warfare.
Introduction

Uphold Democracy was a political and humanitarian intervention that was conceived and initially operationalized as a forced entry but ended up as a permissive operation. Because the military junta capitulated, the invasion force of nearly 20,000 personnel, which had prepared for combat, instead had the task of neutralizing scattered paramilitary gangs and providing security for the restored civilian leadership of President Aristide.

Why the U.S. intervened

- The Haitian military's refused to allow the restoration of the elected government. Three years of diplomatic efforts and economic sanctions had failed to persuade the military regime to allow the return of President Aristide.

- Economic problems, resulting partially from U.S. sanctions, were causing refugee flows to the United States. Refugees were becoming a domestic political issue in the United States.

What triggered the intervention

- It was recognized that the economic sanctions had failed to change the regime.

- The UN authorized to use of all necessary force to restore constitutional rule in Haiti.

What were the U.S. goals in the conflict

- Remove military leaders from power.

- Restore civilian rule under President Aristide.

- End the flow of Haitian migrants to United States.
Whose help the U.S. sought

The U.S. diplomatic efforts from 1991 through 1994 were coordinated with the United Nations.

Intervention was endorsed by all relevant international organizations, including the UN, the Organization of American States (OAS), and the Caribbean Community.

The initial intervention involved almost exclusively U.S. forces.

Once on the ground, U.S. forces were gradually supplemented and then replaced by forces from Caribbean states and international police monitors.

The occupation was composed primarily of U.S. forces (17,000 out of 19,000) until the transition to the UN Mission in Haiti (UNMIH) in March 1995.

UNMIH forces were provided by Argentina, Bangladesh, Canada, the Caribbean Community, Guatemala, Honduras, India, Nepal, the Netherlands, Pakistan, Suriname, and the United States. Approximately 40 percent of the UNMIH forces were American.

How the operation was directed and commanded

Following the junta’s refusal to permit a democratic transition and its resistance to the introduction of police training personnel from USS Harlan County in late 1993, the Clinton administration established JTF 180 in January 1994 and authorized planning to commence for an opposed intervention. The XVIII Airborne Corps, commanded by LTG Henry Shelton, provided administrative and operational support.

A second joint task force, JTF 190, was established to prepare for a permissive entry. MG David Meade of the Army’s 10th Mountain Division commanded this task force.

By July 1994, the Administration had directed an amphibious ready group to assume station off Haiti to prepare to extract American and other Western nationals. At the end of that month, the United
Nations sanctioned the use of multinational forces to reinstate the lawful government. UN attempts to achieve a peaceful resolution failed and USACOM/XVIII Airborne planners began finalizing invasion plans (OPLAN 2370) on 7 September 1994. The plans for a permissive entry (OPLAN 2380) were completed a week later.\textsuperscript{32}

The U.S. Administration began mobilizing USA, USN, and Reserve assets in preparation for an assault. But the Administration also dispatched former President Jimmy Carter, retired JCS Chairman General Colin Powell, and Senator Sam Nunn to Port-au-Prince on 18 September in a last-ditch effort to persuade General Cedras to leave peacefully. At the eleventh hour, the delegation convinced the junta to stand down.

**What forces the U.S. mobilized and brought to bear**

Uphold Democracy was a joint effort involving all of the services. The United States marshaled an invasion force three times the size of the regular Haitian military, complete with AC-130s and F-15s, and prepared to employ it against a regime incapable of territorial defense. The Haitians had no coastal or air defenses, a few antiquated heavy weapons, and a military establishment whose raison d'être was brutalizing the civilian population.

The U.S. decided to send overwhelming force, in the Panama pattern. It had its effect: by informing Cedras of the airborne forces that were in the air and the larger force that would follow, negotiators convinced him to capitulate. Both JTF 180 and JTF 190 participated in the invasion, with the commander of the latter force taking a subordinate role in the former. JTF 180 was an exclusively U.S. and military-oriented force in keeping with its forcible entry mandate. While JTF 180 reflected traditional service component arrangements, JTF 190 consisted of 15 subordinate commands for logistics, PSYOPS, engi-

neering, and other support functions, in addition to operational commands. JTF 190 also provided theater coordination with the UN, and held TACON of Caribbean country units and some other national contingents.

**How the U.S. forces got there**

In some respects, Uphold Democracy in Haiti was a repeat of Just Cause in Panama, with the key difference being the absence of any established U.S. military personnel and facilities in-country. At the time when the junta stood down, considerable U.S. military force was en route from CONUS, Puerto Rico, and Guantanamo Bay: Air- and sea-lift were configured to bring an overwhelming U.S. force to the island and overwhelm the Haitian defenders. The vehicles included:

- 61 transport, combat, and combat support aircraft. The transports carried Special Forces and 82nd Airborne paratroopers.
- 16 helicopters on board USS America, USS Eisenhower, and the USS Wasp amphibious ready group to ferry 3800 Special Forces and Marine personnel ashore.
- A hospital ship, and 12 roll-on/ roll-off ships carrying M-2/ M-3 IFVs, tanks, and howitzers.

**How the U.S. fought**

D-Day was 19 September. During the first few hours of the operation, Army and Marine infantry secured Port-au-Prince and Cap-Haitien, respectively. Special Forces units conducted simultaneous landings at 27 locations, sometimes accompanied by support personnel. Within the first week of the operation, Uphold Democracy quickly transitioned into a peacekeeping operation given the absence of any organized resistance.

Through early October, U.S. forces engaged in raids to disarm paramilitaries and to deter former regime supporters from further victim-

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izing the civilian populace. Indeed, most actions involved separating former local police personnel from civilian protesters.

Throughout the seven-month operation, only one significant Red-Blue confrontation occurred; it produced ten Haitian fatalities and no U.S. casualties. The success of the operation arguably lay in the PSYOPs, civil affairs, engineer, medical, and military police units that entered the theater as essentially peacekeeping forces.

**How the U.S. defended itself**

There was practically no resistance or military capability for the U.S. to defend against. The U.S. used the threat of overwhelming force to persuade the regime to capitulate, and later used its presence to suppress any disorganized resistance.

**What the U.S. did to stabilize the situation at the end of the conflict**

By 15 October 1994, all of the junta leadership either had been persuaded to leave the country or were in detention. The junta was dissolved.

The return of President Aristide in October 1994 marked the transition from peace enforcement to peacekeeping.

**When the U.S. left**

The U.S. began to pull out its forces once its major objectives had been achieved. By 6 November 1994, the first 6,000 U.S. personnel had left Haiti.

In March 1995, the UN Secretary General determined that a safe and secure environment had been established. At that time, the United States handed control of further efforts to stabilize the country to UN organizations.

**What the U.S. left behind**

The U.S. left behind a multinational peacekeeping operation (see above).
The remaining U.S. contingent of 2,400 personnel included a Quick-Reaction Force, Special Operations Forces, military police, medical personnel, command staff, trainers, engineers, and logistics personnel. These forces were to ensure that a safe and secure environment was maintained after the departure of U.S. troops. They also provided security for the restored Haitian government.

**Summary comments**

Haiti posed no new challenges for U.S. forces. Communications were good enough that the combat forces actually in the air were turned back after the threat of their arrival led to the successful conclusion of the Carter-Powell negotiations with Cedras. The forces themselves were able to shift from combat preparations to peacekeeping. This provided an example of the adaptability and flexibility of U.S. forces, which was also demonstrated in later operations.

Perhaps the main innovation in the operation was “adaptive force packaging,” i.e., the transport on the aircraft carriers America and Eisenhower of Army helicopters and troops. This innovation had been proposed earlier in the 1990s by Admirals Bill Owens and Paul David Miller, but had been resisted. One might note that the exigencies of dealing with actual situations can overcome resistance to innovations better than preplanned exercises.
Bosnia: Operation Deliberate Force, 1995

Introduction

The 3-week Operation Deliberate Force was the basic U.S./NATO combat action against the Bosnian Serbs. It was meant to drive the Serbs to the negotiating table and end Serbia proper’s support to the Serbians in Bosnia. Since 1993, the allies had enforced a no-fly zone over Bosnian airspace. While this operation involved limited combat action against the Serbs—the first for NATO—the allies were unable to deter Serb depredations on the ground. Through 1995, the Serbs had overrun a number of safe havens for Bosnian Muslims, massacring thousands at Srebenica. They resumed the shelling of Sarajevo and seized back heavy weapons that had been sequestered. By August of that year, the NATO countries pledged a “disproportionate response” to the next significant Serb outrage.

The reality of the air campaign, however, was decidedly mixed. Using air strikes, with mostly PGMs, and a few Tomahawks, the allies destroyed Serb weapons depots, C4I facilities, and weapons emplacements, with the loss of a single aircraft. Moreover, they did so averaging only 1.5 sorties per designated mean point of impact (DMPI). The assault provided an additional hammer against the Serbs, who by September 1995 found themselves losing territory to a Bosnian-Croat Federation offensive. The combination of ground and air attacks persuaded Yugoslav President Milosevic (but not the Bosnian Serb leaders) to come to Dayton to negotiate a settlement.

We have limited this analysis of Bosnia to the air strikes of Operation Deliberate Force, and not to the Implementation Force (IFOR) peacekeeping force that followed, since our mandate was to examine combat, not peacekeeping. The objective of the air strikes was to drive the Serbs to the negotiating table. They succeeded, but, importantly, they did not do so alone. Rather, the Croatians and Bosnian Muslims
had mounted a ground operation against the Serbs and their success predated the air strikes of Deliberate Force.\(^\text{34}\)

**Why the U.S. intervened**

- The Bosnian Serbs were conducting ethnic cleansing, with assistance from Serbia.
- The war could have spread to other Balkan states.
- Civil war in Bosnia was causing heavy casualties among civilians and generating refugee flows to the rest of Europe.
- The UN, the EU, and an ad hoc coalition of European states were all unable to resolve the crisis.
- The United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) was unable to protect humanitarian relief flows and prevent ethnic cleansing. It had insufficient numbers, a lack of forceful rules of engagement, and dual command.

**What triggered the intervention**

- Serb artillery attacked a Muslim market in Sarajevo. Serb’s also violated existing agreements with the UNPROFOR, including those relating to safe areas.
- The UN Security Council requested to member countries to protect humanitarian assistance operations.
- The U.S. perceived that European states and organizations were unable to solve the problem on their own, despite a long series of statements from the U.S. that it was “Europe’s problem.”

NATO’s goals in the conflict

The NATO air campaign of Deliberate Force was meant to provide critical support to allied diplomacy to bring the warring parties to the negotiating table.

NATO was also retaliating against the artillery batteries and other units that were attacking civilians in Bosnia.

Specific missions included, conducting air strikes against Bosnian Serb targets in order to protect Muslim and Croatian safe areas within Bosnia, and to support the UN Protection Force (UNPROFOR) ground operations.

Whose help the U.S. sought

The operation was conducted at the request of the UN and in close coordination with it. It was a NATO, i.e., multinational operation.

The air strikes were carried out by the U.S., the U.K., the Netherlands, Spain, Turkey, Germany, and Italy.

How the operation was directed and commanded

Operation Deliberate Force was a de jure NATO campaign. Operational responsibility for air strikes in the Bosnian theater-of-operation was given to the 5th Allied Tactical Air Force (5ATAF), whose commander was Italian. The chain of command extended from him up through the American-held billets of COMAIRSOUTH, to CINC-SOUTH, and finally to the Supreme Allied Commander, Europe (SACEUR) who reported to the NATO Military Committee in his NATO hat (and effectively to the North Atlantic Council) and to U.S. civilian leadership in his CINCEUR hat. As the tactical situation in Bosnia worsened, and NATO member governments agreed to a more robust allied military response, Lt. Gen. Joseph Ashey, USAF, commanding AIRSOUTH, established a Combined Air Operations Center (CAOC) that would technically be subordinate to the 5ATAF, but would in practice communicate directly with COMAIRSOUTH. This arrangement maintained the NATO command structures while concurrently ensuring U.S. control. All major staff positions in both
the CAOC and AIRSOUTH were held by U.S. officers. However, eight other NATO air forces participated at both the staff and operational levels.  

Given the political mandate extended by the North Atlantic Council, CINCSOUTH coordinated with UNPROFOR on targeting and air-ground coordination. After the Bosnian market attack, the CAOC revised an existing operations plan in preparation for alliance air strikes against Serb targets.

As the campaign unfolded, the new COMAIRSOUTH, Lt. Gen. Michael Ryan, USAF, oversaw air operations. Once Milosevic decided to go to Dayton to work out the truce, CINCSOUTH and the UNPROFOR commander jointly declared an end to offensive operations.

This was the first time the NATO chain of command had been exercised in an actual operation. The complicated arrangements raised the delicate question of how the U.S., which had most of the air assets and the intelligence for identifying targets, would balance consensus within the alliance and coordination with UN authorities of UNPROFOR, with firm control of the operation.

What the U.S. and other NATO countries mobilized and brought to bear

U.S. decision-makers at first envisioned only air operations for U.S. forces in the Bosnian operation. To this end, Navy, Air Force, and Marine Corps aircraft based at NATO airfields and at sea provided the U.S. contribution to the campaign. Special Forces and Marine Corps units provided combat search and rescue (CSAR). There was a plan, but no movement of forces, for a NATO ground force to extract UNPROFOR personnel. That plan became the one used by the IFOR peacekeepers after Dayton.

How the U.S. got there

Most U.S. assets were already present in the region at U.S. bases scattered across NATO Europe or present on rotationally deployed USN carriers and amphibious ships.

How NATO fought

The initial objective was to destroy all identified Serb air defense sites in Bosnia. Sixty percent of all SEAD missions were performed by U.S. Navy and U.S. Marine Corps EA-6B sorties. The U.S. also employed Tomahawk strikes against a Serb radar facility. Other missions were directed at Serbian artillery sites. Allied aircraft also provided close air support (CAS) to UN forces on the ground. Target selection outside of air defenses was limited, to minimize collateral damage. That said, by day eight of the operation, NATO planners assessed that 80 percent of the initial target list had been destroyed and began to expand the target sets to include Serb industrial plants, power generation facilities and oil refineries. These were politically sensitive, but NATO members did not have to face the issue of striking infrastructure targets in Bosnia because the Serbs capitulated late in the second week of the air campaign.

How the air forces defended themselves

The U.S. invested considerable resources to ensure that U.S. and allied aircraft could operate unmolested in Bosnian airspace. EC-130s and EA-6Bs jammed Serb communications and radar frequencies; attack aircraft launched anti-radiation missiles and guided bombs; and the Navy launched Tomahawks against Serbian air defense sites.

What the allies did to stabilize the situation after the end of hostilities

By March 1996, the situation was stable enough to allow warfighting forces to be replaced by a peacekeeping force.

In accordance with the Dayton agreements, the U.S. and its allies introduced a 20,000-person peacekeeping force that was designed to maintain security so that the UN civil administration of Bosnia could
It was called first the Implementation Force (IFOR) and later the Stabilization Force (SFOR), and its objective was to prevent the resumption of ethnic warfare in Bosnia. This multinational force remains in Bosnia at the present time, though reduced in numbers.

Participants in IFOR included all NATO states except Iceland, as well as Austria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Pakistan, Poland, Romania, Russia, Slovakia, Sweden and Ukraine. These countries sent a total of approximately 50,000 military personnel.

The U.S. contributed a substantial U.S. Army presence that came from German bases to the peacekeeping force. At the time, the Administration was at pains to publicly announce that the U.S. commitment was only for one year, a claim that was received with skepticism in Washington. The forces, though reduced, are still there.

The U.S. and allied air forces stood down from their combat missions once the Dayton peace accords, which ended the conflict, were signed in December 1995.

**How transformation was demonstrated in Bosnia**

**Command, control and direction:**

- This was the first actual experience of combat for the NATO chain of command.
- Selective bombing was used to bring about a political, rather than a military, result. That is, it was used to coerce the Serbs to negotiate, not to defeat Republika Srpska forces.

**In terms of innovation in the use of relatively new systems, the air strikes demonstrated some features of the new American way of war:**

- SEAD was used in order to avoid allied losses.
- PGMs were used.
- Tomahawk’s were guided by GPS for the first time.
- Collateral damage was avoided, so as not to complicate fragile political support of the operation.
- The Predator UAV was used for the first time in combat.

Gaps showing the need for further transformation:
- As in Desert Storm, the candidate targets for air strikes had not been comprehensively identified and planned prior to the operation.

Summary comments

For the U.S. and its NATO allies, Operation Deliberate Force was an air-only operation meant to change the situation on the ground—i.e., to get Bosnian Serb leaders Karadzic and Mladic to back off their attacks on Sarajevo, Bosnian Muslims, and Croats in Bosnia. It was characterized by selective and careful targeting, based on a lot of prior study of target sets, suppression of air defenses, and use of a higher percentage of PGMs than ever before. However, the Serbs were being rolled up on the ground by the Bosnians and Croats at nearly the same time, so it is hard to know which—the air or the ground campaign—was decisive in bringing Milosevic to the negotiating table in Dayton (Karadzic and Mladic never gave up). It is not clear that either one alone would have been decisive, so perhaps it was the synergy that counted. The air campaign did set the pattern for NATO consultations on targets, control of the air strikes, use of PGMs, and control of collateral damage, thus setting a precedent for the more extensive air campaign four years later with regard to Kosovo.
Iraq: Desert Fox, 1998

Introduction

The 1991 Gulf War marked the start of an enduring U.S. policy to contain and disarm the Iraqi regime led by Saddam Hussein. Operation Desert Storm ended with an UN mandate for Iraq to submit to a Special Commission—UNSCOM—that would oversee the destruction of the regime's weapons of mass destruction in return for Iraq's reintegration in the international community and the lifting of economic sanctions. In the seven years following the war, Iraq worked extensively both to conceal its biological and chemical weapons programs and to evade the sanctions regime.

In February 1998, Iraq denied UNSCOM access to presidential palaces believed to function as weapons depots or factories. UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan had brokered an agreement with the Iraqis for full cooperation with UN inspectors in return for renewed debate on the lifting of sanctions. The U.S. had assembled the Desert Thunder operation in the area as a way to bring pressure on Iraq. The agreement provided only a temporary respite as Baghdad ended cooperation with UNSCOM in August 1998. The Iraqis then permitted the inspections to resume in late November, but this phase was very brief, as they denied the inspectors the documents necessary for verification. This time, the UN personnel were withdrawn permanently.

Beginning on 16 December 1998, the United States and the United Kingdom launched four days of attacks by both manned aircraft and cruise missiles. While these strikes may have damaged Iraqi WMD facilities, they did not force Baghdad to resume cooperation with UNSCOM or prevent a pattern of continuing confrontation between Iraq and U.S./U.K. aircraft enforcing post-Gulf War no-fly zones over two-thirds of the country.
What triggered the conflict

Following Iraqi intransigence in November 1998, UNSCOM Chairman Richard Butler formally declared on 15 December that verification of Iraq's compliance with UN resolutions was not possible given the legacy of Iraqi obstruction. Both the United States and Britain had once pressed for a UN-sanctioned military response during the February 1998 crisis, but faced resistance from the pro-Iraq members of the Security Council. The so-called “Butler Report” provided a legal reason for the Anglo-American strike, as it affirmed Iraqi non-compliance with UN resolutions 687, 715, 1154, and 1194.

What were the U.S. goals in the conflict

Ultimately, the United States sought to compel Iraq to comply with UN demands on disarmament. The USCINCCENT at the time, General Anthony Zinni, declared that coalition aims were to:

- Degrade facilities linked to WMD production and storage;
- Degrade military units providing security to WMD sites;
- Damage infrastructure used to evade UN sanctions, principally natural gas and oil smuggling;
- Degrade Iraqi C4IS capabilities;
- Undermine national support for Saddam Hussein’s regime;
- Diminish the potential Iraqi threat to regional peace and stability.

Whose help the U.S. sought

Only the United Kingdom, Oman, and Kuwait directly supported these combat operations. The U.K. participated directly, while the other countries provided base access and overflight rights. Strike missions originated from Kuwait. Bahrain and Saudi Arabia permitted support operations only.

The U.S. failed to enlist support elsewhere, and criticism over the operations was voiced throughout the Arab League, as well as from Iran, France, Russia, and China.
What forces the U.S. mobilized and brought to bear

The Air Force flew combat missions with tactical aircraft—F-16s, A-10s, and F-15s—out of Turkey and Kuwait. Battle management and other support platforms were supported from Saudi airfields, notably AWACS, RC-135s, and KC-135s. B-52s armed with CALCMs flew from Diego Garcia. B-1Bs operated from Oman, marking that platform’s first-ever combat employment. The USN contributed carrier air strikes from USS Enterprise and USS Carl Vinson. The coalition flew 650 sorties (about 628 were U.S.), and expended 325 USN Tomahawks and 90 CALCMs. The Saudis’ refusal to allow combat missions from their territory ensured that nearly half of all U.S. combat aircraft in the theater were unable to join the campaign.

USCINCCENT said that over 30,000 soldiers, airmen, sailors, and marines participated in the operation, with a third of this number active outside the CENTCOM AOR. U.S. Army personnel defended Kuwait against possible Iraqi retaliation. Hundreds of Special Forces personnel were also active in-theater for combat search and rescue and other duties.

How the U.S. got there

Many of the U.S. forces involved in Desert Fox had been operating in-theater for some time in support of operations Northern Watch, Southern Watch, and the Iraqi maritime interdiction operation (MIO). In November 1998, the U.S. dispatched an expeditionary air wing, including four B-1Bs and seven B-52s, from CONUS.

How the operations were directed and commanded

In addition to the planning that had gone into Desert Thunder, some planning for Desert Fox was done in October 1998 by the Joint Chiefs of Staff and CENTCOM, as the obstructions to the inspections worsened. CENTCOM drew up preliminary target lists that prioritized C4I, WMD, and short-range ballistic missile sites, in addition to four other target categories. They also drew on UNSCOM reports of facilities to which they had been denied access, as well as other intelligence. USCINCCENT had apparently finalized the operations planning by November. During the operation itself, USCINCCENT
How the U.S. fought

While careful control characterized the coalition effort over Iraq, the range of targets was remarkably varied. U.S. forces struck 100 targets with gravity bombs and used a range of PGMs, from HARMs to cruise missiles. The targets included television transmitters, Republican Guards barracks, surface-to-air missile (SAM) sites, missile production centers, airfields, an oil refinery, and even L-29 trainer aircraft that were believed to be undergoing conversion into UAVs for carrying biological weapons.

Military targets were hit with considerable ferocity: USCINCCENT claimed at least 1,600 Republican Guard fatalities over the course of the 70-hour campaign. CENTCOM planners hoped to maximize the political significance of the strikes by mauling Saddam’s support base, thus to either demoralize or kill outright the regime’s praetorians.36

The military planners attempted to minimize collateral damage, and especially tried to avoid strike-related releases of biological or chemical agents. Consequently, strikes against nuclear-biological-chemical facilities were limited throughout the campaign.

How U.S. forces defended themselves

Attacks on Iraqi C4IS facilities provided the near-term benefit of disrupting any Iraqi air defense effort. Coupled to this, the coalition also conducted a dedicated SEAD effort. After-action reports noted that, even though fewer than half the targeted air defense sites were destroyed or severely damaged, the Iraqis did not turn on their radars and did not prevent coalition aircraft from striking their targets.37 There were no Iraqi attacks on ships in the Gulf.


How the U.S. stabilized the situation as the fighting concluded

On 19 December, President Clinton declared that mission objectives had been met and that the coalition would end hostilities. The Iraqi government, however, not only still refused to submit to UN inspections, but also terminated all ties to UNSCOM. Further, while the United States continued to safeguard Saudi and Kuwaiti sovereignty, it did not take any steps to support regime opponents in Iraq (beyond continued protection of Kurdish autonomy). In the days and weeks following the strikes, Saddam consolidated his power through a wave of executions of high-ranking military and civilian personalities. Moreover, he divided Iraq into four new military districts to hamper any possible mutinies by the Iraqi regular military forces.

When the bulk of U.S. forces left

By early February 1999, the order of battle of U.S. forces in CENTCOM had returned to mid-November 1998 levels with the withdrawal of nearly all CONUS-based tactical and strategic aircraft.

What the U.S. left behind

More than 300 combat and support aircraft continued to operate in-theater in support of the Operation Northern Watch and Operation Southern Watch no-fly-zones. The U.S. Navy continued routine deployments of carrier, amphibious, and other surface ships, and, with its coalition partners, the MIO, while the Army maintained a battalion-level presence in Kuwait to deter Iraqi aggression against that country.

How transformation was demonstrated in Desert Fox

Command, control, and direction:

- JFACC was set up again. Thus, there was central control of air operations.
- Additional bandwidth permitted Navy to take ATO electronically on the carriers.
Better communications also permitted faster Tomahawk targeting.

Collateral damage was controlled: some NBC sites were not targeted for fear of spreading their effects.

**Innovative use of existing systems:**

- Tomahawk was more flexible. It used GPS for guidance and thus could take advantage of terrain features without being dependent on restricted flight paths.

- A higher proportion of PGMs was used.

- The B-1 was used in actual combat for the first time.

**Gaps showing the need for further transformation:**

The operation was short (4 days), and meant to be punitive. It was not clear that the NBC capabilities were materially suppressed, given the lack of inspectors on the ground. It may well be that the attacks destroyed much, since the Iraqis lacked such capabilities both then and later, in Operation Iraqi Freedom. There were also hopes that attacks on leadership might lead to local uprisings; however, no such uprisings took place.

**Summary comments**

In terms of the efficiency of the operation, the U.S. accomplished what it set out to do: it efficiently hit chosen targets—i.e., it used mostly PGMs, as had become the custom, including the even more efficient Tomahawk, and did so in a short time. The contribution to further transformation of the forces was probably minimal.

In terms of the success of the operation, it is hard to judge whether the U.S. reached its goals. It may well have reduced the Iraqis' capability to manufacture WMD, but the U.S. decided over the next five years that it hadn't sufficiently done so and that Saddam Hussein could restore his capabilities without the inspectors being around. In short, the situation had not been resolved: Saddam was still in power and could pursue his programs.
Kosovo: Allied Force 1999

Introduction

To stop yet another episode of ethnic conflict in the Balkans, the NATO allies launched an operation in Kosovo. They hoped to repeat the success of Deliberate Force in Bosnia: they planned a few days of precision attacks to demonstrate their opposition to Serb aggression and to compel the Yugoslav leadership to submit to NATO policing of the province. Instead, the alliance pursued 11 weeks of air and Tomahawk strikes and failed to prevent the dislocation of 800,000 Kosovars or the increase of Serb military strength in Kosovo. The air campaign nonetheless facilitated diplomatic resolution of the conflict and maintained NATO solidarity despite Yugoslav President Milosevic's hopes of splitting the alliance.

When the initial air strikes did not bring Milosevic to the negotiating table, NATO escalated with strikes against Serbian economic targets. In the event, diplomatic efforts succeeded before the allies could have mobilized ground forces for an assault; thus, such mobilization was moot, even though the allied governments had increasingly discussed the possibility. Yugoslav forces withdrew from Kosovo almost entirely intact. NATO prevailed for political reasons: its own cohesion in the face of its shattered credibility, and the pressure that Russia put on Milosevic to withdraw from Kosovo.

Why the U.S. intervened

The main reason for the U.S. intervention was that Serbia's ethnic cleansing in Kosovo created a major humanitarian crisis.

Other rationales were also advanced:

• Fighting in Kosovo threatened Balkan stability. The main fears were that:
  — It could spread to other ethnic Albanian-populated countries, i.e., Albania and Macedonia.
  — It could undermine the Dayton accords and restart the Bosnian civil war.
  — It could conceivably spread to Bulgaria and Greece, starting a general Balkan war.
• Milosevic's conduct prior to war threatened NATO's credibility.

What triggered the U.S. intervention

• Diplomatic efforts had failed to restore peace and end the ethnic cleansing, culminating in Serbia's refusal to accept the Rambouillet accords.
• The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) mission to prevent ethnic cleansing had failed.
• Evidence showed that Milosevic had resumed the ethnic cleansing campaign in defiance of international demands.

What were the U.S. goals in the conflict

• Demonstrate the seriousness of NATO's opposition to Belgrade's aggression in the Balkans.
• Deter Milosevic from continuing and escalating his attacks on civilians, and create conditions to reverse ethnic cleansing.
• Damage Serbia's capacity to wage war against Kosovo in the future or spread the war to neighbors, by diminishing or degrading its ability to wage military operations.

Whose help the U.S. sought

The U.S. tried to get the UN Security Council engaged in this issue, but did not succeed because of opposition from China and Russia, who were concerned about intervening in the internal affairs of sovereign nations.
The operation was planned and carried out by NATO, with the participation of most NATO member states. It did not have UN authorization.

**How the operation was directed and commanded**

Planning for Allied Force actually began in May 1998, as SACEUR and CINCSOUTH mapped contingencies in response to a deteriorating political situation in Kosovo. Through the remainder of that year and into early 1999, the North Atlantic Council issued successive activation warnings and activation orders for proposed air operations as diplomacy with Belgrade waxed and waned.

Once hostilities commenced in March 1999, operations were shaped by a complicated chain of command and considerable civilian political oversight. First, the allies held parallel command chains with national and NATO commands. While this had also been true for Deliberate Force, the problem for Allied Force lay in the fact that the dual-hatting of U.S. commanders in NATO regional commands led certain commands to operate outside “doctrinal bounds.”

The roles of CINCSOUTH and COMAIRSOUTH were diminished when SACEUR/USCINCEUR assumed personal control over the campaign.

COMAIRCENT held a leading role in organizing Air Force operations, given his dual-hatted role as COMUSAFE. COMAIRSOUTH was designated the NATO operational commander of all air operations included in the ATO, and received TACON and OPCON of allied units. COMAIRSOUTH continued to adhere to the NATO chain-of-command and funneled communications through CINCSOUTH.

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39. Western interest in Kosovo first emerged in December 1992 when the United States warned Serbia that it would face consequences should it expand its pattern of ethnic violence to region. In the interim, however, the U.S. and its allies were distracted by the then much more violent war in Bosnia.

40. Lambeth, 210-211.
Second, some NATO governments reserved the right of review prior to any proposed strikes on Serbian population centers. France was particularly concerned about strikes in Belgrade and there was general agreement to avoid striking Montenegro. The North Atlantic Council delegated approval of individual targets to the Secretary General. The United States also had its own channel for the approval of targets. Particular emphasis was given to the legality of all strikes. U.S. government approval required vetting by the Legal Counsel to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and by the DOD General Counsel.  

An additional feature of campaign planning arose from the assumption that operations would end after a few days. The intensity and duration of Allied Force showed that the CAOC (under AIRSOUTH) was unprepared to provide flexible targeting and airspace management. It took CAOC until the fifth week of operations to be fully staffed, create an airspace management system, create a smoothly running target development and review mechanism, and build an integrated priority target list.  

**What forces the United States mobilized and brought to bear**

The United States planned to conduct air strikes only; the option for a ground invasion had been publicly ruled out by U.S. decision-makers. The first strikes were conducted by the coalition, including U.S. and U.K. Tomahawks, followed by B-2 and B-52 bombers, coupled to 250 Air Force fighter and support aircraft already based in Europe as well as other countries’ tactical aircraft. In the second week of operations, carrier aviation from USS *Theodore Roosevelt* joined the campaign. As Yugoslav forces proved adept at deception and camouflage, and the war on the ground in Kosovo dragged on, SACEUR requested nearly 400 additional aircraft, which necessitated the mobilization of 33,000 Reservists and National Guardsmen.

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42. Lambeth, pp. 211-212.
The Army deployed a unit of AH-64s to Albania for battlefield interdiction, but U.S. civilian and military leadership in Washington kept them out of the campaign in favor of more survivable AC-130s and A-10s. Special Forces and Marine Corps units provided a combat search and rescue capability in reserve.

**How the U.S. got there**

The U.S. deployed aircraft from elsewhere in Europe and from CONUS, to Italian bases. B-52s operated from England, B-2s from Whiteman Air Force Base, Missouri, and F-117s from Germany. Supporting elements were deployed to Albania.

**How the U.S. fought**

NATO pursued a gradual escalation in its air campaign against Yugoslav forces in Kosovo, transitioning from tactical targets to a mix of military and economic targets throughout Serbia and (less so) Montenegro that included strikes against infrastructure and industries. Throughout the opening weeks of the campaign U.S. planners placed a premium on force security and limited operational altitudes to 15,000 feet. This altitude was appropriate for the launching of the new PGMs—JDAM and JSOW. By the end of Allied Force, altitude restrictions within Kosovo itself fell to 5,000 feet due to a weakened Serb air defense effort. UAVs, JSTARS, and other battle management systems provided situational awareness, though these systems were limited by both topography and poor weather.

**How the U.S. defended itself**

As in the past, U.S. forces, strove to secure the air space through a concerted SEAD effort. At least one HARM missed its target and hit an apartment house in Bulgaria.
What the United States did to stabilize the situation after hostilities ended

Both Army and Marine Corps units provided the U.S. contribution to NATO-led peacekeeping forces (KFOR) that assumed responsibility for internal security in Kosovo following the withdrawal of Yugoslav forces.

When the U.S. left

The U.S. left after Milosevic agreed to all NATO conditions for ending the conflict in June 1999.

These conditions included:

• Stop all military action in Kosovo and end violence against civilians.
• Withdraw Serbian military, police, and paramilitary forces from Kosovo.
• Agree to the stationing of an international military presence in Kosovo.
• Agree to the unconditional return of all refugees and unhindered access to them by humanitarian aid organizations.
• Provide credible assurance of Serbia’s willingness to work for the establishment of a political framework based on the Ram-bouillet accords.

What the U.S. left behind

The end of the military campaign led to the introduction of a multinational peacekeeping force in Kosovo (KFOR).

KFOR was authorized by a UN Security Council resolution and initially included contributions from Canada, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Lithuania, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Sweden, Turkey, the United Kingdom, and the United States. The initial U.S. peacekeeping ground forces were Marines, who landed near Thessa-loniki and drove up through Macedonia.
The objective of these forces was to establish and maintain a secure environment in Kosovo; to monitor, verify, and enforce compliance with the agreements that ended the conflict; and to provide assistance to the UN Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK).

By the end of 1999, KFOR consisted of 50,000 personnel from 28 countries.

The U.S. contribution comprised approximately 7,000 personnel, who were responsible for the southeastern sector.

Currently, in 2003 U.S. troop strength in Kosovo is 5,300.

**How transformation was demonstrated over Kosovo**

**Command, control, and direction:**

- Decision-making among NATO members was both timely and politically sensitive, thus maintaining the solidarity that Milosevic cited as his reason for giving in.

- The secure video-teleconference (VTC) capabilities linking headquarters permitted quick communications.

- A CFACC (the Combined version of the JFACC set up for Desert Storm) was established to direct the air strikes.

- Collateral damage was carefully calibrated. Something like four tiers of increasing precision in the calculations were taken into account as necessary, with each level involving successively more intense calculations—but the process was done expeditiously and efficiently.

**Tactical innovation:**

- When the expectation of a three-day bombing campaign was disappointed, the Alliance improvised and escalated, changing target sets, scrambling to calculate the best effects.

- Real-time targeting of Tomahawk land-attack missiles (TLAMs) was done in one instance, to catch fighter aircraft on an airfield.
• Better coordination of SEAD and air defense evasion and jamming, especially once it was realized that F-117s flying down the same path, without jamming cover, were vulnerable.

• Use of artillery-locating and mortar-locating radars (TPS-36, TPS-37) to provide information to the CFACC (though real-time targeting was still not possible).

• Targeting of Milosevic's cronies' economic assets, in the hopes that they would bring pressure to bear on him. Information systems, e.g., the TV station, were also targeted.

Innovative use of relatively new systems

• B-2s were used in combat for the first time.

• JDAMs were used extensively for the first time.

• HARM-equipped F-16CJs were used for the first time.

• Drones and Predators were used.

Gaps showing a need for further transformation

• It was still difficult to get real-time targeting information to weapons systems.

• It was still difficult to defeat camouflage and concealment of enemy ground force equipment.

• It was also still difficult to target and destroy silent air defense systems.

• Allies did not have secure voice communications in their cockpits.

• There were few allied PGMs.

• JSTARS had trouble because mountains blocked its radar.

• Better up-to-date intelligence, including maps, on targets (e.g., the location of the Chinese Embassy) was needed.
Summary comments

The air strikes were carried out with great efficiency and elaborate control of collateral damage. This was a benefit of the transformations throughout the whole of the air strike system: PGMs, supporting aircraft, rapid calculations about targets, etc. But air strikes alone did not resolve of the situation. That was done largely by diplomacy. At the same time, that diplomacy was successful in part because of the solidarity of the NATO alliance, and this solidarity was maintained through participation in the strategy (by all 16 members) and the specific target selection by the major countries (U.S., U.K., France, Germany, Italy), without the political disruptions that indiscriminate strikes might have caused. The other part of the diplomatic equation that brought Milosevic to the table was the effect that the allies’ bombing had on the Russians: it was not the transformational aspects they were worried about so much as the sheer magnitude of NATO’s military effort. However, both Russia and China were so struck by the strategic effects of the operation that they feared they could be next.
Afghanistan: Operation Enduring Freedom, 2001-present

Introduction

The terrorist attacks against the United States on 11 September 2001 were a direct challenge to U.S. national security. For first time in 60 years, and on an unforeseen scale, the continental United States had been directly attacked by a foreign foe. Instead of a state adversary, the aggressor was a transnational terrorist organization given sanctuary by a movement of religious fanatics, which had taken over as a national government in Afghanistan.

The U.S. response was decisive and innovative. The U.S. relied on Afghan ground forces, that is, the Northern Alliance, and American Special Forces personnel to identify and designate targets after quickly neutralizing the weak Afghan air defenses. Within two months, the Taliban regime had collapsed and the al Qaeda organization, which had been responsible for the attacks on the United States, had been disrupted. Indeed, the air campaign completed most of its objectives and dropped off considerably after the 73rd day—as compared to the 78-day campaign over Kosovo. The process of securing the country continues.

Why the U.S. intervened

The terrorist organizations responsible for the attacks and their leaders were based in Afghanistan and supported by the Taliban regime there. After 9/11, the U.S. had promised to attack any country that harbored terrorists.

If the terrorist groups were allowed to retain safe havens and training bases in Afghanistan, they would use these facilities to plan new terrorist acts against the United States.
Triggers for intervention

- Terrorists attacked the World Trade Center and the Pentagon.
- The Taliban refused to hand over Osama bin Laden and other terrorist leaders after receiving an ultimatum that failure to do so would result in a U.S. attack.

What the U.S. goals were

- Kill or capture Osama bin Laden and other top terrorist leaders.
- Eliminate al Qaeda bases in Afghanistan.
- Eliminate the Taliban regime and establish a stable and friendly government in Afghanistan in its place.

Whose help the U.S. sought

The U.S. gained UN Security Council authorization for the use of force against terrorist groups and the Taliban regime.

Many countries offered military assistance, although in some cases the U.S. initially turned down the assistance because it was not needed.

The OEF coalition eventually included:

- Naval forces from Australia, Bahrain, Canada, Britain, France, Italy, Germany, Japan, and the Netherlands
- Air forces from Australia, Bahrain, Britain, Canada, Denmark, France, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, and the U.A.E.
- Special operations forces from Australia, Britain, France, Denmark, Germany, and Turkey.

How the operation was directed and commanded

On the day after the terrorist strikes in Washington and New York City, the SECDEF instructed USCINCCENT to assess likely alternatives for a retaliatory assault on al Qaeda and the Taliban regime in
Afghanistan. General Tommy Franks briefed the administration on a
course of action on 21 September, and the final plan was approved by
the SECDEF on 1 October. President Bush was informed the next
day, and at that time, designated 7 October as the launch date.

Of the five primary operational sub-commands in CTJF Enduring
Freedom—SOCCENT, NAVCENT, ARCENT, AFCENT, and the
Joint Interagency Task Force (JIATF)—only the JIATF has been actu-
ally present in-country. This arguably reflected the heavy reliance on
Special Forces and intelligence units during the initial phase of the
campaign. The other commands were situated elsewhere in the AOR,
with CINCENT itself located in CONUS.

COMARCENT established a forward Coalition Force Land Compo-
nent Commander (CFLCC) on 11 November. The CFLCC held
OPCON over the Marine Corps' Combined Task Force 58, which pro-
vided the bulk of conventional troops in the opening months of the
campaign. Special Forces assets, included all Coalition Special Forces
units, were OPCON to COMSOCCENT’s Combined Joint Special
Operations Task Force.

COMARCENT also established a Coalition, Joint Civil-Military Oper-
ations Task Force, located in-country. This organization was responsi-
ble for coordinating coalition humanitarian relief efforts.

In June 2002, USCINCCENT partially divested its oversight of the
campaign in favor of the Combined Joint Task Force 180 (Afghani-
stan). This command, led by LTG Dan McNeill, used half of the XVIII
Airborne Corps staff.

**What forces the U.S. mobilized and brought to bear**

Given the political imperative to strike decisively at Taliban and al
Qaeda forces in Afghanistan, combat operations began about a
month after the terrorist strikes. The Navy was available immediately
for the campaign, given the presence of rotationally deployed naval
forces, namely those of the USS Enterprise battlegroup. Air Force
strike and combat support missions—including B-1s, B-52s, UAVs,
and battlefield management platforms—flew from existing bases in
Oman, Bahrain, and Diego Garcia. B-2s from Whiteman Air Force
Base, in Missouri, carried out only a couple of missions. Special Forces units and CIA operatives provided the initial U.S. ground presence to assist local anti-Taliban forces. USS Kitty Hawk became a Special Forces staging platform, performing a role similar to that of USS America during Operation Uphold Democracy in Haiti.

Special Forces and Army light infantry units operated from Oman and in Uzbekistan. USMC units relocated to Afghanistan from amphibious ships in the Indian Ocean, through staging areas in Pakistan. The Marines provided a battalion-size force, which moved eventually to occupy the airbase in Kandahar, southern Afghanistan—the first U.S. ground force to occupy Afghan territory independent of Afghan opposition forces.

Through December 2001, five Navy carrier battlegroups and four amphibious ready groups in rotation had supported the operation. The Air Force and the Navy contributed over 400 aircraft—a number that included the entire active-duty, strategic lift fleet of USAF C-17s and C-5s. The total number of U.S. personnel assigned to the CENTCOM area-of-responsibility (AOR) surged to 50,000, with half of this number on Navy combat and amphibious ships in the Indian Ocean.

How the U.S. got there

Strategic and tactical airlift were critical to Enduring Freedom. Through October and November, 78 C-17 transport planes, and five C-130 and 128 KC-135 tanker aircraft flew from EUCOM to provide logistical support to units operating in Afghani theater.43

The Marine units were initially nearby in the Indian Ocean on their amphibious ships. They were transported by LCACs (air-cushioned landing craft) to the port of Pasni in Pakistan, and then were flown by helicopters, C-130s, and C-17s through a staging base at Shamsi airfield in Pakistan. Supporting aircraft used Jaccobabad airfield in Pakistan.

How the U.S. fought

The U.S. supported the Afghan Northern Alliance during the campaign to defeat the Taliban. Mullah Omar and other senior Taliban leaders fled Kandahar on 6 December 2001 and went into hiding, ending Taliban rule in Afghanistan. By the time of the Taliban's rout, there were fewer than 4,500 U.S. personnel on the ground.

Following the collapse of the Taliban, dismounted infantry and Special Forces personnel, acting in concert with coalition and Afghan forces, conducted a series of operations and small-unit fights with Taliban and al Qaeda remnants in the east of the country. In these subsequent operations, especially in the White Mountains near Tora Bora, al Qaeda forces escaped—possibly because the coalition had to depend on Northern Alliance and other local forces, rather than on properly trained infantry. Subsequently, Operation Anaconda demonstrated that even trained infantry, supported by massive precise airpower, can have difficulty in rooting out well-concealed, tenacious opponents who are willing to stand and fight (for at least one day). In this regard, Operation Anaconda might be viewed as an example of the difficulty the U.S. could have on the ground against North Korea.

How the U.S. forces defended themselves

U.S. planners moved quickly to gain air supremacy through early strikes on the Taliban’s meager air defense network. However, given the continued possibility of attacks by shoulder-fired anti-aircraft weapons, defensive measures were taken constantly by U.S. support aircraft. Marine Corps units, and later the U.S. Army’s 10th Mountain Division and 101st Airmobile Division, plus units at staging areas at Bagram and Kandahar air bases, set up perimeter defenses.

How the United States stabilized the situation

The United States has given full political support to the new pro-Western government in Afghanistan. It has sought to maintain the local

The legitimacy of this government by minimizing collateral damage and erroneous air strikes. Peacekeeping, police, and humanitarian operations have been left to coalition forces and NGOs.

**The U.S. military has not yet left Afghanistan.**

Special operations designed to capture hiding al Qaeda and Taliban leaders are ongoing.

Most of the naval and air forces that conducted strike operations have been redeployed.

Naval forces, including those of U.S. allies, are continuing maritime interception and leadership interception operations (MIO/LIO) in the Indian Ocean and Mediterranean Sea designed to capture terrorist leaders who might try to move around by sea.

A multi-national peacekeeping force is maintaining security in Kabul and its immediate environs.

The U.S. is also providing security for top Afghan political leaders.

**How transformation was demonstrated in Afghanistan**

**Command, control, and direction:**

Reachback was so good that the operations was commanded directly from CENTCOM headquarters in Tampa, without a CJTF on the ground, for the first several months.

Air strikes were directed to their targets by Special Forces forward air controllers, within a network of satellites, AWACS, EP-3s, JSTARS, and Rivet Joint RC-135s. Remotely controlled Predators also provided target information and, in some cases, carried out attacks with Hellfire missiles.

**Tactical innovations:**

- The now-famous Special Forces with their laptops on horseback demonstrated not only tactical innovation but also the type of creative thinking that transformation depends on.
• Near-real-time targeting was used, given aircraft loitering in the area.

• All tactics were coordinated with rather primitive and alien ground forces (the Northern Alliance).

• Special Forces and CIA equivalents were closely coordinated.

• Kitty Hawk was used as a sea base for Special Forces, creating a new term—AFSB (Afloat Forward Staging Base). This was similar to the use of carriers in the Haiti operation to deliver U.S. Army forces.

• There was a coordinated joint effort to move Marines from their sea bases (amphibious ships), through two staging areas, supported by a third, into land-locked Afghanistan.

Innovation with relatively new systems:

• Predators were used, including with Hellfire.

• Thermobaric bombs were used to attack caves.

• Secure satellite links, using essentially cell phone technology, were used.

• C-17s were flown into fairly crude air fields, in combat conditions, for the first time—as they had been designed to do.

Gaps showing a need for further transformation:

• It was difficult to track small groups, especially if not in vehicles.

• Targeting was still not quite real time, except perhaps with Predator.

• Small units were unable to fight at high elevations in the cold. Similarly, attack helicopters were unable to fight at high altitudes and in non-hovering modes.

Summary comments

This experience—the quick toppling of the Taliban by the Northern Alliance, other local militias, and the U.S. in 73 days—was very different from the prolonged Soviet attempts to pacify Afghanistan in the
1980s. This success would not have been possible without the radical transformation presented by U.S. air strikes with PGMs guided by Special Forces controllers on the ground. Most of the air strikes were delivered from great distances—from the carriers, from Diego Garcia, even from Missouri, and from bases in other countries. In turn, these air strikes could not have been conducted without the network of tankers, AWACS, JSTARS, UAVs (especially Predator), EP-3s, U-2s, and RC-135s, all connected by satellite links. Also, Afghanistan is reachable only by air, and C-17s showed their versatility in delivering logistics and people. Of course, Afghanistan is still a primitive and barely governed country; Omar, Osama bin Laden, and al Qaeda operatives are still at large; and the country could disintegrate once again. Transformation is good for winning battles. It is not clear that transformation also applies to nation building.
Operation Iraqi Freedom's major combat phase, 19 March-14 April 2003

Introduction

The situation with regard to Iraq had been a continual aggravation for the U.S. all across the 1990s, ever since Saddam Hussein's invasion of Kuwait in August 1990 and his subsequent ejection from that country in early 1991 by Operation Desert Storm. Inspections to eliminate Saddam's WMD had dragged on through the 1990s, with some successes and much frustration. They ended in December 1998, were restarted in November 2002, and were frustrated once more. The U.S. set up Operations Northern Watch and Southern Watch early in the 1990s to prevent Saddam from continuing to attack his own people. From roughly 1998 on, these operations turned into a war of attrition against Iraqi air defenses. Several strikes took place during the 1990s, culminating with Desert Fox in 1998 (one of the earlier cases in this set). The MIO to intercept Iraqi oil smuggling in accordance with UN sanctions continued from Desert Shield on.

After 9/11, the Bush Administration was determined to end the Iraqi program of WMD, and realized that this would require the “regime change” the U.S. Congress had urged and the Clinton Administration supported. It had also adopted its National Security Strategy, with its preemption option, following 9/11, to defend the United States against states harboring terrorists and building WMD. To bring pressure on Saddam Hussein to disarm, the Administration sponsored a resolution by the U.N. Security Council (1441) that declared Iraq was in material breach of its obligations to disarm, decided to give Iraq a final opportunity to comply, and set up an enhanced inspection regime. The resolution was passed on November 8, 2002.

The Administration began to build up forces in the area beginning in late 2002, while the latest round of UN inspections was taking place.
Given the apparent lack of full cooperation by Iraq in the new round of UN-sanctioned inspections, the Administration sought a second UN resolution to support military action against Iraq. However, it became clear that France, Russia, and Germany would block it in the Security Council. The Administration was unable to line up even a nominal majority in the Security Council. Together with the U.K. and Australia, plus support from a number of other countries (altogether constituting “the Coalition”), the Administration decided to take action without further UN sanction.

Saddam did not otherwise respond to the pressure, and, following a period of a little less than the 48 hours posed in an ultimatum, the U.S. attack began. First, penetrating weapons were dropped on houses where Saddam was believed to be, and shortly thereafter ground forces moved from Kuwait into Iraq.

**Why the U.S. intervened**

The U.S. firmly believed that Saddam retained and was building WMD, and feared that he might provide them to al Qaeda terrorists.

The U.S. also feared that Saddam was harboring al Qaeda terrorists.

Saddam was circumventing UN sanctions and smuggling oil, which presumably enabled him to finance continuing WMD programs.

Saddam posed a continuing threat to his neighbors, particularly Kuwait.

A deep-seated reason, but not one sufficient for international justification, was the terror that Saddam visited on his own people.

The Administration has also said that the elimination of Saddam’s regime would open the way for democracy in Iraq, which in turn would serve as a model and inspiration for democracy throughout the Middle East.

**What triggered the intervention**

The Administration viewed Saddam's cooperation with the UN inspectors who returned in late 2002 under UN Resolution 1441 as
less than full, especially given the inspectors' failure to uncover any WMD and to receive adequate documentation from the Iraqis. The Administration declared that by the time the Iraqi WMD capability materialized, it would be too late.

**What the U.S. goals were**

- Overthrow Saddam Hussein's regime.
- Eliminate Iraq’s WMD capabilities and programs for good.
- Break the putative connection between Saddam and al Qaeda or any other terrorists.
- Eliminate the Saddam regime’s threat to other countries in the region.
- Maintain the integrity of the Iraqi nation-state—that is, not letting it break apart, descend into civil war, or be vulnerable to outside interference, e.g., from Iran or Turkey.
- Create the conditions and arrangements for the internal stability of Iraq, including broad-based governance and an economy, even if based on oil, that would share the benefits widely among the Iraqi people—summed up as democracy and a free market. This new Iraq would also serve as an example for other countries in the region.

**Whose help the U.S. sought**

The U.S. wanted UN approval for a military operation; however, a resolution that directly and explicitly authorized the use of force, did not pass in the U.N. Security Council.

The U.S. then formed a coalition of the willing. This eventually included the U.K., Australia, and Poland.

The U.S. was successful in lining up and using bases in Saudi Arabia (for support, not for strike operations), Kuwait, Bahrain, Qatar, the U.A.E., and Oman. It did not get bases in Turkey, but Turkey later permitted overflights and the passage of logistic support on the ground. The U.S. had little difficulty in obtaining overflight and tran-
sit rights; e.g., it had no difficulty in transiting through the Suez Canal.

The U.S. gained general political support from around 60 countries; the support from 11 of them was not publicly acknowledged.

**How the operation was directed and commanded**

The operation was planned by COMCENT and his component commands. It was subject to long discussion and iteration with the Secretary of Defense. CENTCOM headquarters in the area were set up in Qatar. The air commander and the CAOC remained at Prince Sultan Air Base in Saudi Arabia and issued the ATO from there. Ground forces were in standard formations, and tended to be maneuvered by brigades in the case of the Army, and regimental combat teams in the case of the Marines (or teams in the case of Special Forces). It would appear that once the plan was set and the operation had begun, there was little if any back-and-forth decision-making with Washington.\(^45\) This may have been the case because the goals were quite clear and the plan was worked out in detail. News reports indicate some debate about progress at the time of difficulties in getting around Nasiriyah and during the sandstorm, but the Administration denied that there had been a pause. Otherwise, the Administration and COMCENT said they were following the plan.

**What forces the U.S. (and U.K.) mobilized and brought to bear**

The U.S. moved three major ground force units—the 3rd Infantry Division, the 101st Airborne Division, and the First Marine Expeditionary Force (I MEF)—to Kuwait in preparation for the invasion. The British deployed a division. There were additional ground

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\(^45\) An exception seems to have been that air war commanders were required to obtain the approval of the Secretary of Defense to cross a particular collateral damage threshold. More than 40-50 such strikes were proposed, and all of them were approved, according to an interview of Lt. Gen. Michael Moseley, USAF, reported by Michael Gordon, "U.S. Air Raids in '02 Prepared for War in Iraq," *The New York Times* (July 20, 2003), and Bradley Graham, "U.S. Moved Early For Air Supremacy," *The Washington Post* (July 20, 2003).
units—a brigade from the 82nd Airborne Division, for instance, plus additional armored cavalry units. They were supported by Patriot and artillery batteries. After the invasion began, the 173rd Airborne Brigade was transported by air from Vicenza, Italy, to the Kurdish area of Iraq. The 4th Infantry Division's equipment was in the area on seafight ships, and was meant to enter Iraq from Turkey, but an agreement for transit of Turkey was not successfully concluded, and they sailed from the Mediterranean, through the Suez Canal, Red Sea, and Arabian Sea, and into the Gulf. They reached Kuwait after major combat was over.  

News reports say that 9,000-12,000 Special Forces personnel entered Iraq, especially in the west and north.  

There were also 1,801 aircraft, including 786 fighters and bombers (but not counting U.S. Army helicopters) within striking distance. Some of those were on five aircraft carriers—three in the Gulf and two in the Mediterranean. Other surface ships and submarines capable of firing Tomahawk cruise missiles were within range.

How the forces got there

The U.S. (and British) undertook a gradual build-up of forces, in order to bring pressure on both Iraq and the UN Security Council, while not providing Iraq with unambiguous warning of intention to attack. The movement was not according to a TPFD (Time-Phased Force Deployment) concept, but was broken up into modules that were then reassembled at the other end. Much of the force was deployed by sea. Two brigades' worth of Army equipment was already prepositioned, one in Kuwait and the other in Qatar. The rest of

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U.S. Army equipment was brought in mostly by sealift, with the personnel flying in to join up with the equipment. As noted above, a battalion of the 173rd Airborne Brigade was para-dropped from C-17 transport aircraft, and the rest was flown in to air strips. Some of the U.S. Marine personnel were flown in to join up with equipment moved in on Maritime Prepositioning Ships (MPS), while others arrived with their equipment on amphibious ships.

**How the coalition forces fought**

The concept for the invasion was that of simultaneous air, ground, and Special Forces actions. The war began when an opportunity to kill Saddam Hussein arose in Baghdad and was attacked by F-117s with the new EGBU-27 penetrating bombs and by Tomahawks. 49

The ground invasion by the 3rd Infantry Division, I MEF, and British units was moved up a day, partly because it appeared that the Iraqis were beginning to set the southern oil wells on fire, whereas the later recovery of the Iraqi economy was going to depend on the continued export of oil. The First Marine Division moved to the outskirts of Basra and was then relieved by the 1st Division of the U.K. Royal Army. The British laid siege to Basra and opened up Umm Qasr port in order to permit the earliest possible delivery of humanitarian relief supplies, while the two U.S. divisions moved quickly toward Baghdad in order to overthrow Saddam’s regime. The 3rd Infantry Division and I MEF encountered a combination of regular forces, Fedayeen, and other irregular opposition. There were limited direct encounters with elements of the Republican Guard units. 50

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50. For a particularly good description of Marine Corps operations, see Bing West and Ray L. Smith: The March Up: Taking Baghdad with the 1st Marine Division (New York: Bantam Doubleday Dell, 2003).
At the same time, Special Forces grabbed the H-2 and H-3 airfields and other sites in the west in order to preclude Scuds being fired at Israel, thus to keep Israel out of the war (there have been no reports that Scuds were found or destroyed and in any case none were fired). They were also to destroy weapons of mass destruction if they found them. They also joined up with the Kurdish Peshmerga in the north in order to pin down possibly reinforcing Iraqi regular divisions. The Kurds and Special Forces seized control of the key northern Iraqi cities of Mosul and Kirkuk. There were parallels to Afghanistan in the operation in the north, where Special Forces called in air strikes in support of indigenous forces opposing the existing regime. Other Special Forces teams apparently roamed throughout the country, and even penetrated into Baghdad. Information operations were also carried out, including the dropping of leaflets urging of Iraqi forces to capitulate.

Air and Tomahawk strikes were conducted in Baghdad to suppress air defenses and knock out government command and control and some ministries, while exempting government ministries that could support a new government after the old regime had been removed (later, looting stripped those ministries). Most air strikes were conducted to support the ground forces and to interdict Republican Guard divisions and their equipment as they moved toward contact with U.S. ground forces.

The plan had been to bypass cities and not engage in urban warfare until Baghdad, since that might otherwise tie down the forces short of the main strategic objective. Nonetheless, some hard fighting took place in Basra and Nasiriyah. The Marines’ route to Baghdad passed close to Nasiriyah, and intense fighting took place along “ambush alley”—the road between two bridges on the edge of the city. Iraqi urban defenses in Baghdad quickly collapsed as tanks and other armored vehicles thundered down the freeways and other main roads.

**How the coalition forces defended themselves**

The main challenges to coalition ground forces were by Iraqi ground forces, who were either defeated or dispersed themselves. There was
no challenge by the Iraqi air force. Iraqi air defenses posed few problems (though Iraq fired 1,660 SAMs, presumably mostly ballistically, and 408 HARMs were fired against their radars). U.S. and Kuwaiti Patriot batteries shot down most of the missiles fired by Iraq. Iraqi barges serving as minelayers were intercepted in the Kwar Abd Allah channel leading to the port of Umm Qasar, and mine removal teams searched for and blew up some mines that had been dropped in that channel before the first ship with relief supplies (Sir Galahad of Royal Fleet Auxiliary) could tie up. Special Forces stopped the Iraqis before they could lay any sea mines in the Gulf or spill oil from offshore platforms.

How the coalition forces have been stabilizing the situation

As of May-June 2003, the monumental task of restoring order, services, and an economy in Iraq was still being carried out, by nearly 200,000 American and British troops plus civil administrators under L. Paul Bremer. Just as the defense by the Fedayeen and other irregular forces was something of a surprise early in the operation, the extent of looting and the breakdown of civil order were also surprises. The task of the occupation in creating a new country was being compared to the tasks of restoring Germany and Japan after World War II—but with even fewer existing institutions. By the end of the period of major combat, Saddam Hussein and his two sons had not been caught (the two sons were killed by U.S. forces later, in July, and Saddam himself was captured in December 2003), but high-ranking members of his government and forces (the list of 55) were gradually being found. No WMD had been found.

It is not yet clear when U.S. forces will be able to leave the country or whether Iraq can be successfully set up as a democratic, free-market nation.

The greatest benefit from the intervention is that Saddam Hussein can no longer threaten to invade, or invade, his neighbors, especially Kuwait. And his aspirations to build weapons of mass destruction have

also been ended. A particular benefit to the U.S. and U.K. from the intervention was the ending of the prolonged Northern Watch and Southern Watch no-fly zone operations over Iraq and the MIO in the Gulf meant to deter and intercept Iraqi smuggling in violation of UN sanctions. The end of the no-fly zone operations has allowed the U.S. to leave Saudi bases and frees significant U.S. Air Force and U.S. Navy air assets for employment elsewhere if necessary. It also eased dependence on Turkish bases. MIO operations in the Gulf and Indian Ocean must continue at some level to intercept possible al Qaeda movements at sea.

How transformation was demonstrated in Operation Iraqi Freedom

Command, control, and direction:

The plan—a preemptive plan—was transformative in the leanness and efficiency of the ground forces that Secretary Rumsfeld sought, as compared to the force that essentially matched the size of Iraqi forces for Desert Storm 12 years earlier. This enabled speedy execution and the rapid march to Baghdad.

General Franks described the joint operation as a thorough meshing of the force. This was the realization of the unified planning that had been developed since Goldwater-Nichols.

The evolution of the capacity of the network permitted more information and coordination than had been possible before. This included connections among satellites (with 70 percent commercial), flying command posts (e.g., AWACS and E-2Cs), combat aircraft, ground forces, and the various headquarters—and all with secure connections. The locations of ground forces were more visible through Blue Force Tracker. All the surveillance elements were connected to the network as well—satellites, JSTARS, U-2, RC-135, etc.

With the evolution of planning mechanisms, all air activity was coordinated in the CAOC, which was located at Prince Sultan airbase in Saudi Arabia.
In contrast to the earlier cases described in this paper, information and planning flowed much more freely, and fewer briefings and papers were needed among headquarters during the operation. This was partly due to the greater bandwidth and connections that permitted chat rooms to be set up on SIPRNET.

Adaptive planning and execution was exercised: The Administration started the war earlier than planned because it saw the opportunity to hit a leadership target. It then moved some of the ground units earlier than planned, because it feared that the southern oil fields would be torched.⁵²

**Deployment to the area**

Large medium-speed roll-on/roll-off (LMSR) sealift ships were available and were used for the first time.

C-17s dropped paratroops for the first time, and once more demonstrated their ability to fly into bare bases in near-hostile territory (not under fire this time, though).

The Third Infantry Division fell in on the prepositioned equipment in Kuwait and Qatar, and the Marines fell in on equipment delivered by two MPS squadrons.

**Tactical innovation:**

- Time-sensitive targeting (TST) became more efficient as compared to previous operations, particularly Desert Storm. Of the missions, 4 were anti-terrorist missions, 50 were against leadership, and 102 were listed as against WMD targets, though no destruction of Scuds has been reported.⁵³

- Ground forces demonstrated extraordinary speed of advance (over 60 km. a day on average).

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⁵² Cordesman, p. 5.

• As in Desert Storm 12 years earlier, tanks had critical leading roles during the ground forces’ advances, especially when opposition was encountered (that is, the utility of tanks had persisted).

• Special Forces operated with local indigenous forces, just as they had in Afghanistan (but by this time those local Kurdish forces did not engage in pitched battles, unlike the local forces in Afghanistan).

• Special Forces were given much more expansive roles and allowed to roam the country in this war, after having been restrained in Desert Storm, and given their successful experience in Afghanistan.

• Special Forces and conventional forces were integrated in urban warfare. In Basra, the British used an innovative combination of special forces to smoke out opposition, followed by raids by conventional forces.

• Further extensive use of UAVs, with some Predators being used in an armed mode (ten different types of UAVs were used).

• JSTARS demonstrated its capability to see through sandstorms.

Altogether these tactical innovations gave the commander the ability to rapidly bring joint forces to bear on his strategic objective. He was able to actively manage the shifting of focus and application of the forces so as to press ahead toward the objective.

**Innovative use of existing systems:**

• Apache-Longbow was used for the first time.\(^54\)

• The EGBU-27 penetrating laser-guided bomb (the “E” stands for enhancement through GPS guidance) was available and used for the first time.

• The Javelin fire-and-forget ground-launched anti-tank weapon was used for the first time.

• U.K. Storm Shadow GPS weapons were used for the first time.

• A-10s were equipped with 500 lb. bombs for the first time.
All aircraft were now PGM-capable, even AV-8Bs and bombers.

B-1s and F/A-18E/Fs were used extensively, including for support of the ground forces. (They had also been used in Afghanistan, with the first deployed E/Fs available then.)

Patriot PAC-2 upgrade and PAC-3 were deployed and proved effective against missiles.

It should be noted that none of these innovations, with the exception of practically all fighter aircraft being capable of launching PGMs, were as decisive as the prior list of tactical innovations. The upgrading of Patriot capabilities for the engagement of ballistic missiles might have been more critical if Iraq had possessed and deployed anything like the Scuds they used in Desert Storm in 1991.

**Gaps showing a need for further transformation:**

- Connectivity of ground forces not complete. Connections and displays weren't available in all vehicles. Ground forces were reliant on VHF communications, which could not reach from one end to the other of the greatly elongated columns.

- Fratricide was still a problem—the Patriot shot down a U.K. Tornado aircraft and a U.S. Navy F/A-18C.  

- Saddam Hussein was not tracked down.

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U.S. and British forces achieved a remarkably quick victory to over-turn Saddam Hussein’s regime. They took only 21 days, and even fewer American personnel were killed in action in those 21 days than in Desert Storm. The complete pacification and restoration of the country is taking much longer.

In the first place, it turned out that the U.S. faced an ill-prepared, ill-equipped enemy, despite all the warning time that the Iraqis had been given. Iraq’s ground formations seem to have broken down, not least because of the tremendous pounding from the air by coalition forces. Its dense air defense system seems to have been easy enough to suppress (408 HARMs were used, and the long campaign to attrit air defenses in the course of Northern Watch and Southern Watch seemed to have taken a toll). Iraq’s aircraft did not fly, and at least some were buried in the sand. Its urban defenses in Baghdad collapsed quickly. Its surface-to-surface missile threat was minimal.\(^5^6\) Iraq did not use chemical or biological weapons, and may not have even had them—though the reason that Iraqi troops were equipped with defensive suits and atropine injectors remains a mystery.\(^5^7\)

The coalition took only 21 days to reach and occupy Baghdad, thanks to the thorough netting of the forces, their adaptability given the intelligence available, the pounding of Iraqi ground forces by air strikes, and the coordination of air strikes with ground forces.

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57. See the report of the interview with David Kay by James Risen, “Ex-Inspector Says C.I.A. Missed Disarray In Iraqi Arms Program,” New York Times, January 26, 2004, p. 1. As noted in the article, “Interviews with Iraqi military officers and others have shown that the Iraqis kept the gear because they feared Israel would join an American-led invasion and use chemical weapons against them.”
(although work still needs to be done between the U.S. Army and U.S. Air Force to refine this coordination). The air strike capabilities, including their coordination with Special Forces, had been refined in the Kosovo and Afghanistan operations. But the greater part of the ground forces had not had such practice since Desert Storm, 12 years earlier.

Most of the platforms and many of the weapons used in Operation Iraqi Freedom had been in the forces for a long time: AWACS, A-10s, M1 Abrams and M-2 Bradleys, Mavericks, Hellfires, HARMs, Tomahawks, and F-14s, for example. The training of ground, air, and Special forces had been refined both in exercises and in previous combat operations. But bringing all these systems, new and old, together in a netted system on a transparent battlefield represented a maturing of the totality of the netted forces. Each force was given missions with limitations, i.e., missions that might not have been optimal for that force, but that supported the strategic aims of the command. Even if these missions posed some operational and tactical risk, they together, enhanced all the forces' capabilities. If the ability of dissimilar forces to take rapid coordinated action is a transformation, then key enablers are the willingness to accept risk and the planning of common communications and common tactical pictures.\(^58\)

Conclusions

What is the American Way of War, as it has emerged after the Cold War, was exercised across the 1990s, and then waged in Afghanistan and Operation Iraqi Freedom? We looked at the empirical experience, rather than the theoretical and conceptual writings undergirding defense programs. That experience was quite varied, but the dominant feature—governed by the situations—was to lead with air strikes. These strikes started with air defense suppression, ran up into capitals, and ran down to attacks on ground forces. The air strikes did not resolve the situations by themselves, but set the stage for diplomacy or ground forces to do so. The U.S. arranged bases and formed coalitions, as well as making air strikes from the sea, to prosecute these situations.

The operations were joint—no one service was relied upon. They were for the most part under close political direction and Unified Command control, due to their relatively short durations, the desire to minimize U.S. casualties, and the desire to minimize collateral damage. The operations were technologically sophisticated and became more so over time, with greater networking and precision deliveries. The only nearly comprehensive uses of the U.S. toolkit in combat were in the two major operations against Iraq—Desert Storm and Operation Iraqi Freedom. Other operations, notably those for Kosovo and Afghanistan, used only portions of the toolkit. But many elements of the toolkit were improved over the years, through upgrade, training, exercises, and other combat experience.

The American Way of War in the post-Cold War period evolved from U.S. technological pursuits and high readiness created during the Cold War. But this American Way of War existed largely on paper, in theory, and in exercises, for the U.S. didn't really have the opportunity to practice it during that period. The Vietnam War was not the preferred American Way of War; the American Way of War that has evolved since then might be described as “other-than-Vietnam.”
operations in Grenada and Lebanon during the Cold War were not tests or exemplars of the American Way of War, though some lessons were learned from them. More lessons for the future American Way of War were learned from the 1973 Arab-Israeli war than from the smaller American operations since it was a more classic technological war—given that technology is one of the elements at the core of the American Way of War.

It was only after the Cold War that a new American Way of War blossomed. New systems and ways of fighting matured as experience was gained and lessons learned. Some would say that the U.S. may have passed up opportunities to engage in war during the Cold War because it feared Soviet intervention, or feared that diverting U.S. forces to a distant war might leave a vacuum into which Soviet forces would pour. However, we have examined that period, and cannot say that opportunities arose but were passed up.

U.S. combat operations over the past nearly 14 years (1989-2003) have been a proving ground for the American Way of War. The cases we examined—in which the circumstances necessitated combat—enabled the American Way of War to be developed more rapidly and realistically than exercises might have permitted before (although the earlier development of doctrines, practice of tactics, and training on equipment contributed greatly to the successes of the forces). In virtually every case, new or improved concepts, capabilities, and command arrangements were employed with some degree of success. Over the period commanders were willing to test new systems still in development in actual combat situations—UAVs and JSTARS, for example. The combination of dedication and real-world necessity overcame bureaucratic inertia and pushed transformation forward. The rapid, successful progress of the evolving American Way of War

59. The U.S. diverted substantial manpower, equipment, and ammunition from Europe to Vietnam in the late 1960s, and it was not restored until after 1973. The U.S. also stripped much equipment and ammunition from the forces in Europe to resupply Israel during the Arab-Israeli war of 1973. It took nearly four years to restore this equipment (lead times in U.S. procurement back then were 4-5 years).
came about largely because U.S. forces were used so frequently in combat in this period.

We can expect that the American Way of War will continue to evolve—to transform—over the next 14 years, as further challenges to U.S. security arise. At issue will be the pace of that transformation. The ongoing global war on terrorism will provide some particular challenges. Less certain may be the need to conduct large-scale and comprehensive combat on the order of Desert Storm or Operation Iraqi Freedom. In the first place, the list of rogue countries is getting shorter—Iran and North Korea pose the greatest remaining challenges. Second, the long-term commitments facing U.S. ground forces in Iraq and Afghanistan, as well as the forces that continue to be stationed in Bosnia, Kosovo, and South Korea, suggest that additional operations involving substantial ground forces cannot be undertaken unless the U.S. Army and U.S. Marine Corps are increased.

On the other hand, U.S. air and naval forces will continue to be available to conduct the sorts of operations that the U.S. and its allies conducted over Bosnia, Kosovo, in Desert Fox against Iraq, and, with the aid of a few forward air controllers on the ground, in Afghanistan. Indeed, at one point, the pattern of air strikes (albeit often coupled with local ground forces, which do not represent transformation) appeared to be the dominant characteristic of the American Way of War. The deterrent value of this demonstrated air power is not to be underestimated. The main challenge in the near future, however, may well lie in the small actions required to root out terrorists.
Appendix: Summary Charts

AWW: PATHS TO COMBAT

US STAYED READY IN 1990s
- Situations persisted in world
- Fear of “out of the blue”
- Professional forces stay ready
- Long distances to any conflict

WHO U.S. FOUGHT
- Obnoxious leaders
- Iraq and Saddam Hussein
- Humanitarian offenders
- Terrorists and those harboring them
- Incidents against Americans
- Leadership intransigence
- Humanitarian crisis intolerable
  The 9/11 Attack on homeland
  Negotiations/diplomacy fail
  Possession of WMD

WHERE U.S. FOUGHT
- Caribbean area
- Iraq and in the Gulf
- The former Yugoslavia
- Surprise: Afghanistan

TRIGGERS TO COMBAT

U.S. GOALS IN COMBAT
- Minimal in Caribbean
- Other NATO countries in Balkans and Gulf
- U.S. helped UN for Bosnia and Somalia
- Other NATO countries SOF in Afghanistan
- Gulf countries’ bases
- Central Asian bases
- Change regime
- Humanitarian – protect people and relief supplies
- End aggression
- Destroy terrorist base

WHOSE HELP U.S. SOUGHT

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AWW: GOING TO WAR

Consultations:
- Congress
- Allies
- Int’l orgs.
- Political winds

Common capabilities:
- Space
- Lift
- ISR
- Refueling
- Contractor support

Forces (as needed):
- Five services
- Overwhelming force
- Sea, air, ground
- Reserves

POLITICAL DIRECTION

COMBAT COMMAND PLANNING

WHAT US MOBILIZES

HOW US GETS TO WAR

HOW US FIGHTS WARS

(next chart)

Intense iterations

- Review existing plans
- Review TPFD
- Calculate forces needed
- Alert components

• Arrange staging
• Arrange end-basing
• Load up per TPFD
  (most weight by sea)
• Break out prepo
  (including MPS)
• Move forces forward
• En route protection
• Assemble logistics

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AWW: HOW THE US FOUGHT

UNIFIED COMMAND DIRECTION

LOGISTICS

RESUPPLY

FORCES DEFENDSELVES

Avoid US casualties

ROLL IT UP WITH GROUND FORCES

ROLL IT UP WITH DIPLOMACY

FROM CAPITAL DOWNTOB’FIELD

Minimize Collat. Dam.

LEAD WITH AIR STRIKES

The Network

PK CLEAN-UP AND OCCUPATION

• SEAD
• MCM
• Ready for: ASW
  ASUW

• JFACC/CACOC
• ATO
• CAS
• Targets
• JAG reviews

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AWW: USES OF FORCES

- Roll up opposing ground forces
- Air Strikes (USAF, USN, TLAM, maybe SOF designation)
- Interim force, sometimes
- MC moved in from sea; Army delivered by sea; sustained by sea
- Sanitize sea approaches; MIO/LIO; SLOC protection
- Surveillance/Control/Refueling
- Airlifts and delivery
- Roll up opposing ground forces
- Occupation

AWW: AFTERMATH OF WAR

ROLLED UP WITH GROUND FORCES
• Eliminate remaining belligerents

ROLLED UP WITH DIPLOMACY
• Truce agreement
• Occupation agreement
• Line up other PK & occupiers
• Arrange civil government help
• Let the NGOs in

PK CLEAN-UP (OCCUPATION?)

RESTORE GOVERNMENT (Monopoly of force)

RESTORERESIDUAL PKO & TRAINERS (Build local forces)
• Lessons learned
• Resume “transformation”

RESIDUAL US BASES & PREPO

HUMANITARIAN AID
• Replenish consumables
• Restore maintenance, training, deployment routines

RESTORE US FORCES

NEW ALLIANCES

RESTORE ECONOMY

REBUILD ECONOMY

RESIDUAL PKO & TRAINERS (Build local forces)
WHAT DIFFERENCE DID TRANSFORMATION MAKE?

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AWW: Salient Characteristics

Panama 1989
- Planned
- Regime change
- Overwhelming force
- U.S. bases
- Mostly Army
- SOF prominent
- Couple of messes
- Short
- No residual

Desert Storm 1990
- Planned
- UN Resolution
- Long build-up to overwhelm. force
- Coalition
- Feared enemy
- Limited objective (out of Kuwait)
- Air strikes first
- Ground forces roll-up
- Short war
- Long residuals: Northern and Southern Watches, MIO, prepo

Somalia 1992
- UN auspices
- Mission creep
- Ground forces
- Sea base & stage through Kenya
- Mixed in with NGOs
- Eventually, regime change failed
- Urban warfare lessons
- Out of there; no U.S. residual

Haiti 1993
- Planned
- Regime change
- Overwhelming force
- Ground forces
- Sea & air delivered
- Diplomacy averted conflict; no combat
- Others took the residual jobs

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AWW: Salient Characteristics (cont.)

**Bosnia 1995**
- Op. Deliberate Force (only)
- Retaliation (for market mortaring)
- NATO operation
- Force Serbs to negotiate
- Air strikes, TLAM (Croats and Bosnians did ground ops)
- High PGMs, high PKs
- Bases in Italy, sea
- Short – 18 days
- IFOR as follow-up, after Dayton

**Desert Fox 1998**
- Planned (earlier as Desert Thunder)
- Threat, then punishment
- US & UK
- Sea & other bases (Saudi bases only for support a/c)
- Short plan -- 4 days
- TLAM & PGMs
- Destroy WMD sites
- No follow-up; just continue N/S Watch, sanctions

**Kosovo 1999**
- NATO operation
- Force negotiations
- All air, no ground
- 3 days hoped for; stretched to 78
- US 6 bases in Italy; Hungary, Albania; at sea, too
- Collateral damage controls (but China)
- Serb ground forces elusive
- Diplomatic resolution: bombed Chernomyrdin to table
- KFOR follow-up

**Afghan 2001**
- Retaliation (for 9/11 attacks)
- Regime change
- Planned
- Initially run from Tampa (no CJTF)
- Coalition
- Air strikes
- Got 13 bases
- SOF designators and PGMs
- Sea & air delivered
- Ground forces later (first: Northern Alliance)
- Ongoing

The latest combat experience: Operation Iraqi Freedom...

- Decided on soon after 9/11
- Rationales: WMD, terror, rogue regime
- Regime change this time (beyond Desert Storm)
- Thoroughly planned
- UN Resolution 1441, but no second resolution
- Joint and coalitional (UK, Australia, Poland)
- Air and ground together; big ground; major SOF role; most complex operation
- Network, space, CAOC-FACs, PGMs, accuracy from air, combat vehicles, infantrymen
- All enabled rapid speed of advance on ground
- Long occupation to follow

(Turned out to be a lousy enemy – but sanctions and superb U.S. forces left Iraqis that way)
EVOLUTION OF AWW AFTER COLD WAR

OUT OF COLD WAR
- Big, sustained forces
- High readiness
- High technology
- Political control and Joint
- Professional forces
- Comprehensive capabilities

INTO DESERT STORM
- Expeditionary lift
- Relations around the world
- Other than Korea & Vietnam, little opportunity for major combat
- Air strike lead
- More networked
- Toolkit improved

THROUGH OTHER COMBAT OPS TO OIF
- Distant
- Coalitional – new bases
- Concentrated theater
- Units deployed from Europe
- SOF raids
- Police work
- Dry up financing

TO WAR ON TERROR?
- Regime change
- Ground or diplomacy roll-up
- Peacekeeping residuals
- State-on-state almost gone?
- But North Korea after Iraq?
- Force transformation

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