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Essential To Success: Historical Case Studies in the Art of Command at Echelons Above Brigade

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Essential to Success

Historical Case Studies in the Art of Command at Echelons Above Brigade

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Editor
Michael L. Hogg

Dedication: To the commanders and staff officers at echelons above brigade;
Past for their sacrifices and example
Present for their service and dedication
Future for the continuance of liberty

Foreword

Lieutenant General Mike Lundy

"In today's volatile operational environment, our Army must remain ready to answer the Nation's call anywhere and anytime, with little or no notice. Because of this, readiness for large-scale ground combat is our first priority."

– GEN Mark A. Milley, 39th Chief of Staff of the Army

The United States Army exists to deter conflict through credible readiness and, when the nation commits its forces to war, to prevail in large-scale ground combat as a part of unified action. To win, the Army must be trained and organized to seize, retain, and exploit the initiative to shape and dominate the operational environment while continuously consolidating gains. The largest and most complex Army organizations – divisions, corps, and theater armies – play a critical role in doing this. Each is structured to orchestrate and converge the capabilities of forces assigned them to defeat enemies in battle, consolidate gains, and set conditions to win in unified land operations. It's critical to provide robust, large-scale combat operations training for commanders and senior staff. Enemies will not give us the luxury of preparation after a war begins.

Here, the United States Army Combined Arms Center has gathered a formidable group of scholars and leaders who have researched and commanded at theater army, corps, and division levels to share their hard-won wisdom and experience to support the continued professional learning among our leaders at these echelons. Pre-emptive thinking and planning now will help to ease the pressure of wartime demands and preserve national blood and treasure in the long run.

To get the most out of this book, the reader should reflect on each chapter and historical case study. Analyze each situation, identify the doctrines in play, evaluate the actions of each leader, and what differentiated the successful teams from the unsuccessful ones. Each unit faces unique and complex challenges, often very different from the ones for which they trained and prepared. We should continuously think about how these lessons may apply to similar situations in the future, remembering that while each case is unique, the nature of war is timeless even as its characteristics change. Use this book as a tool to discuss and debate the lessons learned by our predecessors at echelons above brigade and their application to today's doctrine, organizations, and training.

As the operational environment continues to evolve, so must the Army and the Joint Force. Peer and near peer adversaries are aggressively modernizing, adapting their methods of warfighting, and can now contest us in domains where we've enjoyed superiority for decades. Coupled with the speed of human interaction, rapidly evolving technological trends, and significant shifts in the geo-political landscape, large-scale land combat is more likely today, than it has been in a generation. Unlike the last 15 years of largely brigade-centric stability and counter-insurgency operations, the units of action *essential to success* in large scale ground combat are our divisions, corps and theater armies. This now requires a shift in not only our doctrine, but our culture, studies, and training. This body of work is a part of that shift.

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Introduction

By Kelvin D. Crow and Dr. Joe R. Bailey
General Editors

No one arm wins battles. The combined employment of all arms is essential to success. The special characteristics of each arm adapt it to the performance of special functions in execution of the mission of the unit in which the action of all is combined. It is the task of higher commanders to coordinate and direct the action of each arm with a view to the most efficient exploitation of its powers and the adoption to the ends sought.

– Field Service Regulations 1923

In 1881 Commanding General of the Army Major General William Tecumseh Sherman was concerned. Since the end of the Civil War his Army had been engaged in small unit led guerrilla type wars with technologically inferior opponents. But industrial development, population growth, and technical innovations in the wider world had ominous implications for the next war. "The more we improve the firearm the more will be the necessity for good organization, good discipline, and intelligence on the part of the individual solider and officer," he wrote.[1] Sherman's own experience in the Civil War revealed that the skills necessary to handle major formations in battle were often won at a terrible cost in blood. In reaction to these concerns, he took several steps to improve the quality of the Army and its leaders, among which was the founding of the School of Application for Infantry and Cavalry at Fort Leavenworth.[2] Sherman's initiatives, and the work of many others, eventually resulted in the development of a small stable of officers who were trained to work together to command and control large formations in the First World War. The number of officers trained proved far too few and their training was imperfect, but it was certainly a vast improvement over the conditions Sherman confronted.[3]

In 2016 during our initial interview with Lieutenant General Michael D. Lundy, newly-appointed Commander of the Combined Arms Center at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, he expressed similar concerns.[4] The Combined Arms Center (CAC) is the proponent for the Army's largest formations – the division, corps and theater army. This responsibility requires blending concepts in doctrine, training, leadership, material solutions, and more to produce a nested set of fight-ready force levels. The years of combat against a global terrorist threat where combat operations above the brigade level were infrequent limited the Army's attention to these levels of command. The proliferation of threats, the growth of mega-cities, and technological developments are but a few of the challenges for future combat. At the end of the interview we offered our professional support to this "wicked problem" in any way we could help. A few days later, we received the mission to prepare this volume and our office has not been the same since.

This book is a collection of historical case studies drawn from the past 75 years, organized into three sections or books, one each focused on the division, corps, and theater army or Army Service Component Command (ASCC). We have sought diverse environments, units, and levels of operation for inclusion. It is intended as a tool for the development of commanders and staff of these higher level units based in a thoughtful reflection on past experience, good and bad, for no operation is uniformly successful. This is not a doctrinal publication. Rather, it is a work of history and should be approached as such; as a tool used to teach situational critical thinking. Consider it a series of staff rides for the mind. A staff ride, fully realized, immerses the student in the doctrine, technology, personalities, and terrain of a specific battle. With that grounding the student can more fully appreciate the goals, limitations, and capabilities of each combatant. He can begin to really understand why decisions were made, how they were implemented, and what their outcome was at a depth more casual study does not afford.

In the final, integration phase of a full staff ride, the student is asked to reflect on what this means for his situation today and tomorrow; to take the fruits of this study and plant them for a future harvest.

We recognize that we have burst the bonds of history by bringing this work to the present day with chapters on the current situation in the European and Pacific theaters. But even these chapters have the "problem – analysis – action" format, lacking only a knowledge of how things turn out. They too can be fruitfully studied by the reader, who may place his or her bets in real time alongside the commander, without the benefit of historian's hindsight.

In our instructions to the authors, we asked them to help the readers get right to the point with chapters short enough to prohibit a comprehensive telling of the story. Their orientation to the situation is brief and only elements of the situation critical to understanding the chosen decisions are highlighted. The critical decisions are those chosen by the actual commander or the expert historian as primary to the successful (or otherwise) outcome of the engagement. Where the information was available, we asked them to highlight how things operated inside the headquarters and the between levels of command. In the end we wanted the reader to have a good, not perfect, understanding of the capabilities and limitations of at least one important challenge at this echelon and situation, the process used for addressing it, and the outcome. But a chapter is not complete at this point. For this work to be successful, the reader must engage with reflection on what he has read, analyze for himself the cause, effect, and outcome of this situation, and apply the fruit of this thought to his own life, time, and experience.

Our stylistic decisions imposed further limitations on the authors. As this was not intended as a scholarly work, we did not ask for endnotes, but some authors have included them. Others have chosen to list works for further study that will amplify their necessarily brief treatment of the situation, or direct readers to the authorities from whom they drew their work. Many of the authors did neither, as they are the primary sources; they were the commanders and senior staff at the time, and have simply told their stories for our benefit.

This work would not have been possible without the voluntary time and work of the authors; they are the experts. Some are commanders and staff officers who have borne the battle, peered through the fog of war, and matched wits with friction and a living enemy who wanted to live and win every bit as much as they did. Some are scholars who have given a lifetime of study to master the sources, understand the context, ponder the details, and develop a skill for narrative. One contributor not listed as an author is Colonel Thomas "Andy" Shoffner, who provided invaluable insights regarding organization and potential authors during the "Oh God, what do we do now" phase of this project. We are deeply indebted to all.

We also owe thanks to the staff of Army University Press for putting this book into physical and electronic form, especially Mr. Ken Gott for production, Ms. Robin Kern for graphics, Ms. Jenna Fike and Mr. Michael Hogg for the copy editing and layout. The staff of the Combined Arms Center should also be mentioned for their assistance.

As the general editors of this project, we alone are responsible for the errors, omissions, or limitations of this work.

Notes

1. William T. Sherman, *Memoirs of Gen William T. Sherman: By Himself* (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1875), 395.

2. Boyd Dastrup, *The US Army Command and General Staff College: A Centennial History* (Manhattan, KS: Sunflower University Press, 1982), 13.

3. Peter Schifferle, *America's School for War: Fort Leavenworth, Officer Education, and victory in World War II* Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 2010) 10, 11.

4. Interview with Lieutenant General Michael D. Lundy, 2 August 2016, by Kelvin Crow and Joe Bailey. On file in the Combined Arms and Fort Leavenworth Archive.

Book I

The Division

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Chapter 1
The Army Division: The Cornerstone of the Army's Fighting Force

Lieutenant Colonel (Ret) Scott Znamenacek

Organizations created to fight the last war better are not going to win the next.

– General James M. Gavin

For 100 years, in places like the Meuse-Argonne, Normandy, Korea, Vietnam, and most recently, the deserts of Iraq and the mountainous terrain of Afghanistan, American Soldiers take no greater pride than the patch that they display on their shoulder. For those serving in combat divisions, that patch comes with a history, forged in blood and recorded in the annals of US Army history. Regardless of the unit, from the "Big Red One" to the "Screaming Eagles," current and former veterans understand and internalize the significance of the accomplishments of those units on the battlefield, past and present.

The Army division remains an integral component of the US Army with its history originating in the fires of the American Revolution and enduring today as a vital element to the "operational art that involves the maneuver of large-scale units, both corps and divisions, to achieve victory."[1] To understand the importance of the division, we must examine how and why the division evolved over time. First, new technologies and capabilities routinely forced the Army to analyze and modernize its organizational structure. Today as we consider the impact of cyber and space, we should remember how prior technological advances such as radios, aircraft, tanks, and computers transformed the way the armies around the world prepared to fight their next war. Secondly, concepts for forces and formations, the structure of how we prepare to fight, have changed over the years. In the early days of the Republic Army, leaders looked to innovations in other nations. Our Army moved to the forefront of force design in the 20th century and today Army leaders look towards the future to determine the composition of the Army in 2025 and beyond.

Foundations of the US Army Division

The origins of today's division dates back to Greek phalanx of Alexander the Great and the Roman legions. These formations allowed commanders to organize and mass their forces to attack or counter the enemy advances. Hundreds of years later, the army of Gustavus Adolphus in the Thirty Years' War in Germany (1618–1648) brought together pikemen and musketeers into mixed, flexible formations that exploited their strengths and covered their weaknesses. When combined with dynamic leadership and artillery and cavalry support, the formations proved highly successful.[2]

French leaders and military theorists influenced the design of and patterns that gave rise to the division organization. At the beginning of the 18th century, Maurice de Saxe, Marshal of France and author of *Reveries on the Art of War*, created the organization for an autonomous infantry division that consisted of two infantry brigades, two cavalry brigades and artillery units. He often denounced the lack of flexibility and mobility in current formations and, thus, created an organization that leveraged mobility, maneuver, and supply to achieve decisive success on the battlefield. In addition, he advocated for unit identification, music, and permanent regimental identification to boost morale and promote a sense of service.[3]

The American Army's first divisions were organized by General George Washington during the Revolutionary War on 22 July 1775. Although early American divisions were primarily territorial and were administrative in nature, the impact of foreign military officers such as Baron Fredrick von Steuben, Marquis Marie Joseph de Lafayette, and Baron Johann De Kalb influenced

their transformation into tactical organizations. Throughout the Revolutionary War the Continental Army continued to be based on battalions, brigades, and regiments, of which the brigade was the core building block of a division.[4] Later in January 1777, Washington reinforced this concept with Congress, recommending three 700-man regiments for each brigade and three brigades for each division. He noted that brigades and divisions should have the flexibility to move jointly or separately as circumstances dictated.[5]

For a century following the Revolutionary War, French military concepts continued to dominate division concepts. French Emperor Napoleon Bonaparte's tactical and operational vision of warfare would influence armies through the 1800s. Regiments and battalions were moved about the battlefield to accomplish a military objective, but he observed minimal synchronization between the infantry, cavalry and artillery units. Napoleon believed in the creation of the *corps de armee* with a general or field marshal reporting directly to him regarding the effective operational employment of the corps' divisions. French Army Colonel M. Dugue MacCarthy in a May 1965 *Military Review* article titled "The Corps of the Army" noted:

> By grouping the divisions, coordinating their maneuver, and combining their efforts in battle [Napoleon] had permitted a more centralized control to be exercised and had prevented dispersion of efforts from taking place. It was the latter which had wrecked the division organization when it had been applied to mass armies.[6]

US military leaders, such as Generals Winfield Scott, Henry Wager Halleck, and Silas Casey were key proponents for the perpetuation of French military doctrine in US organizations and tactics. Aligning with Napoleonic concepts, division formations continued to consist of mass formations of companies, battalions, and regiments with limited maneuver (except to flank, halt enemy attacks, or to avoid obstacles/terrain).[7]

Between the Revolutionary War and the Civil War the Army divided the nation into geographically-oriented, administrative units called Divisions (later Departments) and Districts. Initially oriented north and south, they switched to east and west as the nation expanded, and were never tactical formations.[8]

US Division Design: Civil War to World War I

The Union Army continued to use the pre-war department structure early in the conflict. But the Industrial Revolution of the pre-war period, the growth of manufacturing combined with innovations in technology and weaponry, forced military strategists to reconsider the viability of Napoleonic doctrine and territorial organization. The increased range and accuracy of both small arms and artillery were but two of the advancements that compelled military theorists to reconsider both organization and tactical theories to adapt to this new environment. US Army historians note in *Army Lineage Book, Vol II, Infantry*:

> It seems clear that the rifled musket was more modern than the organization of the infantry and the resultant formations used in the assault. Otherwise stated, organization and tactics were basically those of the beginning of the nineteenth century, while the weapons were fifty years more modern.[9]

The American Civil War would be the proving grounds in which the first large armies in United States history formed, with divisions supporting operational movements of Army corps. At the onset of the Battle of Manassas, the Union Army under Major General Irvin McDowell formed a division comprised of militia, volunteer, and regular units. In all, his force of 35,732 men was organized into five divisions. The division size was non-standard and ranged from two to four brigades in size. One of the greatest challenges of this period was the lack of experience in commanding units of this size. Historian Russell F. Weigley remarks in *History of the United States Army:*

> When the Civil War began, only the division commanders of the Mexican War had experience in leading any really sizable body of troops, and those men were generally too old or otherwise disqualified to be considered for field command. There was no staff school, no adequate theory of staff work upon which to found adequate assistance to army, corps, and division commanders in the complex work of caring for and moving thousands of men.[10]

Throughout the Civil War, division composition varied, but relied on a mix of infantry, cavalry and artillery. But there was no standardization, no formal Army-wide table of organization, and often the organizational structure was not formalized until the brigade and regiments assembled for combat. In spite of early experimentation with placing artillery and cavalry at the division level, by the end of the war these remained corps assets, apportioned as the corps commander saw fit.[11]

The Civil War era also introduced the now traditional means of identifying troops assigned to a certain division and corps with a unique insignia, in the early days a badge or patch of cloth. Originally intended to control stragglers as much as direct forces, this practice increased morale and also helped to establish discipline and control when the troops were away from the unit. Wearing a designating bit of cloth enhanced both unit pride and esprit de corps and became accepted practice the world over.[12]

Following the Civil War, the field armies disbanded along with their subordinate army corps, divisions, and brigades. The only higher level structure to the remaining regiments was the administrative and geographic departments and districts. As directed by Congress in 1869, the Regular Army retained 25 infantry, ten cavalry, and five artillery regiments. Most units were dispersed to the South and the Great Plains as post-war constabulary missions and westward expansion became the Army's focus. Field operations during this period normally involved less than a regiment and *ad hoc* organizations were created by temporarily gathering elements of multiple regiments to address the task at hand.[13]

In April 1898, the US Congress declared that a state of war existed with Spain following the sinking of the USS Maine. After this declaration, President McKinley approved the formation of eight army corps of three or more divisions each. Each triangular division would consist of three brigades of three regiments each, totaling approximately 11,000 troops. To provide staff support, each division headquarters would have a staff consisting of adjutant general, quartermaster, commissary, surgeon, inspector general, and engineer. In June 1898 before all training and organization was completed, these new formations (one dismounted cavalry division and two infantry divisions) departed for Cuba. Other units departed for expeditions in the Philippines and Puerto Rico. As hostilities wound down in August 1898, the Army again began to disband with the final corps being deactivated in April 1900.[14]

In 1905, the War Department, recognizing the need for standardization of organizations across the Army, established a blueprint for the organization of wartime divisions in the Field Service Regulations. Five years later, the General Staff advanced the concept further and drew up plans for three infantry divisions to be composed of designated Regular Army and National Guard regiments. As the First World War raged on in Europe, Congress passed the National Defense Act in 1916 which authorized permanent divisions resulting in a dramatic departure from Army's force structure challenges of the past. For the first time, the division was the base element of the United States Army and remained as such until the Global War on Terrorism, when the Army switched its emphasis to brigade-centric formations.[15]

Despite the provisions of the National Defense Act of 1916, the division and brigade organization structure for the Regular Army had not been implemented and was of concern to influential former Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson, an advocate of the "maneuver division." As tensions continued to grow on the US-Mexican border, Stimson persuaded Congress to authorize the first peacetime units larger than a regiment in 1917. This "maneuver division" consisted of three brigades, one field artillery brigade, one independent cavalry brigade, and support troops.

This division was part of a "mobile" army intended for offensive operations, "a self-contained unit made up of all the necessary arms and services, and complete in itself with every requirement for independent action."[16] This experimental triangular concept became the first modern design of the 20th century and would continue to transform as new capabilities, technologies and the battlefield itself evolved over time.[17]

US Army General Staff continued to observe operations in Europe during the first three years of the First World War and soon realized that the three-brigade triangular division construct would not meet the demands of trench warfare on the western front, especially to support General John J. Pershing's vision for that combat. He advocated for divisions with the strength and mobility to move troops from the trenches and engage enemy forces directly where doctrines of fire and movement would again rule the battlefield. Pershing sought a million troops by the end of 1918 to meet wartime requirements. He called for five army corps, each consisting of four combat divisions, accompanied by a replacement and school division, a base and training division, and pioneer infantry, cavalry, field artillery, anti-aircraft, artillery, engineer, signal, aviation, medical, supply, and other support units.[18]

To further examine Army organization for combat, Secretary of War Newton D. Baker directed a panel of officers to study the British, French, and Belgian armies. The panel's report, known as the *General Organization Project*, described a division of 25,000 troops. This division would boast two infantry brigades, a field artillery brigade, an engineer regiment, a signal battalion, and support trains. As the project proceeded, both Pershing and Baker reversed their earlier concepts of the division. Instead of a combat force that could easily move in and out of the trenches, they envisioned a division that could fight prolonged battles. Both planning groups felt that both French and British military leaders wanted the same, but lacked the resources due to the extensive losses of three years of warfare. To succeed on the European battlefields now needed more combat power.[19]

Using the results of the General Organization Project, the War College Division prepared new tables of organization, which the War Department published on 8 August 1917. This new concept became known as the "square division." This formation was composed of two brigades with two regiments in each, and consisted of more than 27,000 Soldiers (twice the size of comparable European units). This gave US commanders greater power to penetrate the trench systems than the triangle formations. Again, emerging technology forced planners to consider new division designs which integrated motorization, armored forces, machine guns, artillery, trench mortars, and aircraft common in the new battlefield environment.[20]

It is at this point, with the restoration of mobility and maneuver, that the division commander and his staff were now wholly responsible for the control and actions of their division. A division commander now had the authority to coordinate the actions of his subordinate brigades and regiments to weight attacks, adjust frontages and react to enemy penetrations. This "modern" division could now maneuver and deliver fire not dissimilar to concepts envisioned by Napoleon. But the demands on the division commander and staff continued to grow, as the mechanization and modernization of military forces continued at a rapid pace in the 20th century.[21]

Army Divisional Design for the Second World War

The period between the First and the end of the Second World Wars saw significant organizational change for the United States Army as a result of experience in World War I, pre-World War II maneuvers, and early combat in the Second World War. The interwar period introduced new concepts and technology that were first integrated during the Louisiana and Carolina Maneuvers in 1941. Although these maneuvers proved some concepts sound, initial combat action in North Africa exposed that problems with US Army division design.[22]

In 1920, General Pershing became an advocate for an "elastic and mobile" three-unit system with mobility as the primary concern. However, with hostilities on the horizon and the nation's adoption of an independent foreign policy, Congress was not willing to support a large standing peacetime army. Almost ten years later, the modernization debate arose again as former First World War allies experimented with new designs-the British with armored concepts and the French focusing on motorized forces.[23]

During the interwar period, the United States Army continued to develop divisions based around infantry units despite the growing demand for armored units to deliver swift and decisive effects on the battlefield. Other branches of the United States Army competed with the infantry to define their doctrinal role, and a November 1920 *Infantry Journal* article attempted to define the role of infantry in comparison to other services. The article, entitled "Infantry-Its Role, Capabilities, Limitations and Relation to Other Arms," was a transcript of a lecture delivered by Colonel Robert McCleave at the School of the Line at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. In it, he noted that, "It has so long been recognized that infantry is the dominating arm, and that all military organization is grouped around the infantry arm, and that all battle plans are based upon insuring success to the infantry that we may accept these facts as self-evident."[24] The 1939 edition of the United States Army Field Service Regulations 100-5, *Operations* reinforced the central role of infantry on the battlefield and that all other branches support the infantry mission.[25]

In 1935, General Malin Craig, the new Army Chief of Staff, ordered a review of organization and tactics and in 1936 created a Modernization Board to examine the Army's organization. The board chose to focus on the infantry division. Based on expertise from a number of sources to include the General Staff, prior studies of foreign armies, and the Army education system, the board endorsed the triangular concept. In the initial design, the new organization consisted of three regiments of infantry with three infantry battalions each, two field artillery regiments, and was supported by engineer, signal, ordnance, quartermaster, medical, and military police, with a fire support element at each echelon. This construct gave the division improved mobility and increased flexibility. By its reduced size, it could deploy from movement formation faster than the square division. Flexiblility increased as the three-regiment design enabled the commander to use the third regiment as the reserve. Most important was the need to exploit new technology, weapons, and firepower. General Craig specifically directed the War Department staff to examine reorganization and tactical changes that optimized motorization, mechanization, and increased firepower.[26]

With the start of the Second World War in 1939 and German attacks in Western Europe in the spring of 1940, Chief of Staff of the Army General George C. Marshall directed the creation of an Armored Force. This force was to be independent of the other combat arms and would initially consist of I Armored Corps and both the 1st and 2d Armored Divisions. These new armored divisions were formed by an armored brigade containing two light tank regiments, one medium tank regiment, and a regiment of artillery. An infantry regiment of two battalions, an artillery battalion, a reconnaissance battalion plus engineers and support troops completed division structure and totaled 11,200.[27]

In the years prior to World War II, armor and artillery remained as supporting units to the infantry until the GHQ Maneuvers in Louisiana in September-November 1941 demonstrated the need to reform maneuver doctrine and organization. These exercises repeatedly exposed the need for mutually supporting infantry, armor and artillery forces. As a result, the doctrinal armored division structure was reinforced with more infantry battalions, while three field artillery battalions became organic to the division structure.[28] The new armor units, utilizing their high-mobility, armored formations repeatedly out-maneuvered their infantry-heavy opponents and won impressive

Figure 1.1 Armored and mounted cavalry forces share a road during the Louisiana Maneuvers of 1941. Photo courtesy of the US Army Signal Corps.

victories. In addition, the Louisiana Maneuvers identified the need for specific anti-tank units to counter increased use of armor by other nations. With advent of increased armor on the battlefield, tank destroyer doctrine emerged and specified that highly mobile and lethal tank destroyer units would move to the area of an enemy armored penetration and destroy enemy tanks through the use of ambushes.[29] Another result of the GHQ Maneuvers was the creation of a *combat command* within the division to improve tactical control and coordination of US forces.[30] The intent of this organization was to create a task force that could be tailored with forces for the designated mission, similar to German Wehrmacht *Kampfgruppen* (battle groups). Under the combat command, infantry, armor and artillery forces could be mixed in such a way to provide enough combat power to accomplish a specific mission while allowing interaction and coordination between units. Despite initial problems during Operation Torch in 1942, few blamed the new design and the combat command remained throughout the war.[31]

A reorganization of the armored division in 1943 created a leaner and more flexible division as a way to more effectively use Army manpower. The division organization now included three tank battalions, three infantry battalions, and three field artillery battalions while a third combat command was added. Overall, the division lost nearly 4,000 troops, decreasing total manpower from 14,618 to 10,937. Much of the savings is attributed to the elimination of headquarters and logistics units.[32] During early combat operations it was discovered that the three authorized armored infantry battalions for armored divisions were insufficient. Often conventional infantry units and engineers were tasked to provide security and support urban operations for armored units. As a result, the authorization of infantry battalions for the armored divisions was increased to four battalions of four companies each. In addition, a heavy tank battalion was added to replace the former anti-tank units while the number of combat engineer companies was increased from three to four.[33]

Shortly after the end of World War II, the Army began a review of operations to determine what organizational modifications were required for the postwar period. The General Board of the European Theater of Operations Review of 1945-1946 and the Infantry Conference Lectures of 1946 both assumed an active role in determining the future of the combat division. As post-war mission requirements developed and changed, organizational changes focused on both future combat operations and the establishment of a constabulary force in Europe.

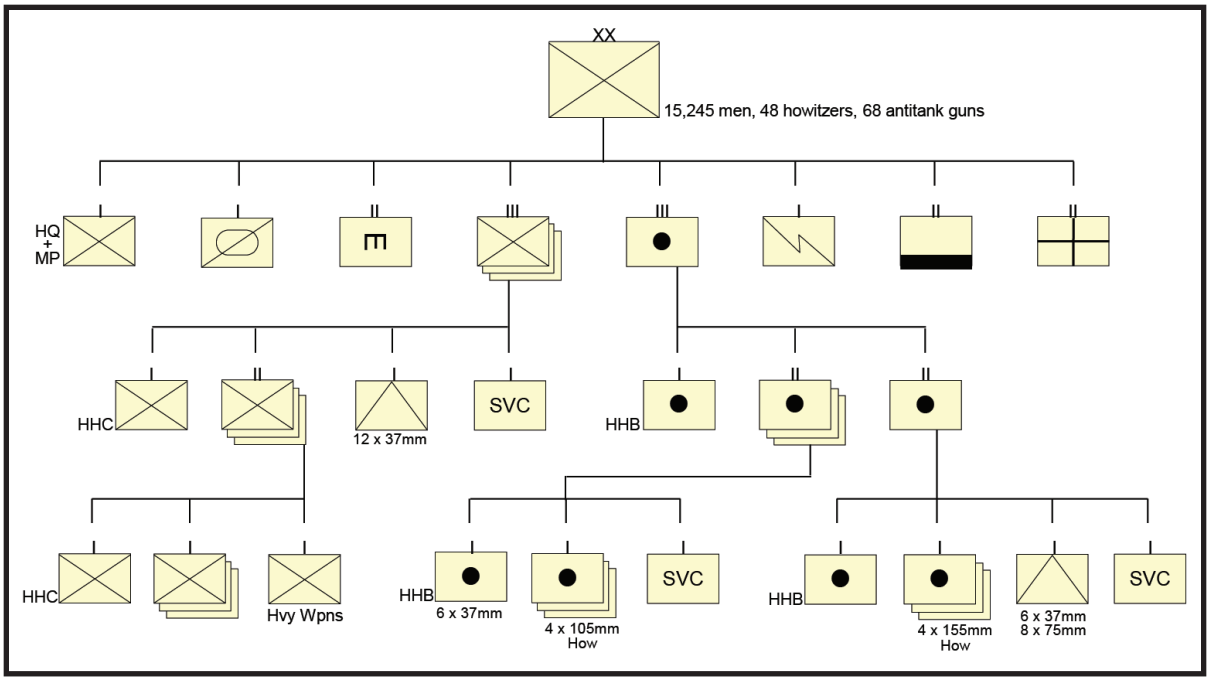

Figure 1.2 US Triangular Infantry Division, June 1951. Graphic created by CAC History for the authors.

During the Infantry Conference Lectures of 1946, Commandant of the Infantry School Major General John W. O'Daniel further defined the role of the Army division in his opening remarks to the representatives in attendance:

> The division should be considered as a whole and not as three combat teams. You either have a three-regiment division or a division composed of three regiments. I prefer a three-regiment division. Some divisions properly outlawed the term "Regimental Combat Team." The Combat Team, is an organization for road movement – not combat. The idea originated about 15 years ago in order to promote Infantry – Artillery cooperation. The Division Commander must control the fight. Fight by combat team denies to the division commander the flexibility of employment which he must have.[34]

Evolution of the Division from the Korean War to the Vietnam War

In postwar Europe, the TALISMAN Plan (later known as the ECLIPSE Plan) shaped the occupation forces and their authorizations. For the next two years, US Army - Europe (USAREUR) attempted to define the roles, missions, and organization for both the 1st Infantry Division and the US Constabulary force. The Regimental Combat Teams (RCTs) of the 1st Division received additional armor, field artillery, engineer, and medical assets in order to act as the designated strategic reserve for USAREUR. In contrast, the constabulary forces faced significant reductions in strength. By June 1947, the loss of combat equipment in the constabulary forces decreased unit efficiency to fifty percent, in spite of units having a full complement of personnel. In subsequent years, constabulary regiments were modified to become light cavalry regiments and would consist of a mix of cavalry, recoilless rifle, and light armor units to meet new requirements for tactical operations.[35]

Deficiencies in units assigned for occupation duty in the Pacific would have significant consequences in 1950. As a result of post-World War II demobilization and the requirements for occupation forces, the combat strength of the four divisions assigned to occupation duty in Japan remained 66 percent of their combat authorization. Each of the divisions only had one tank company and was missing

33 percent of its infantry and field artillery forces. Once these units were committed to combat in Korea, the shortfalls became apparent. Commanders were unable to counter North Korean armor due to the lack of tanks and infantry regiments were left without a reserve battalion to reinforce their operations. The combination of the organizational shortfalls, training deficiencies, and the Korean terrain left US units isolated and allowed North Korean units to bypass and cut-off American units. [36]

Following the Korea War, the vast destructive power of nuclear weapons now drove discussion, with the key point being that armies could no longer mass to launch offensives or to hold along a solid front. The new doctrine envisioned the establishment of dispersed, mobile, well-armed units that could concentrate quickly to carry out their missions and just as rapidly disperse when a nuclear counterattack threatened. To do this, the Army replaced the triangular infantry and airborne divisions with units consisting of five self-contained battle groups capable of independent action. Manned by 13,500 Soldiers (rather than the usual 17,000), these "Pentomic" divisions had artillery and missile units armed with both conventional and nuclear warheads. [37]

Due to the need for increased capabilities to fight in the nuclear age, new weapons and equipment was needed, to include: improved rifles and mortars at the company level; to new ground vehicles (such as the M113 armored personnel carrier and the M60 tank); to powerful rockets and artillery. Initial conversion started in 1955 with regular Army units, and the last units Army National Guard and Reserve units completed transition in 1960. Although the Pentomic Division introduced new technologies and capabilities, the battle group concept proved difficult to control and supply, and many of the technological innovations turned out to be immature.[38]

The Army addressed the shortfall of the Pentomic Division in 1961 by revising its divisional structure once again in an attempt to ensure greater flexibility and a balance between mobility and firepower. Planners envisioned that the Reorganization Objective Army Division (ROAD) division could operation in all environments – from conventional warfare in Europe to light/unconventional combat in other regions of the globe. The ROAD concept formed four types of divisions: infantry, armor, airborne, and mechanized. Each contained a base and three brigade headquarters. The base contained a headquarters company, a military police company, a reconnaissance squadron, division artillery, and a battalion each of supply and transportation, engineer, signal, medical, and maintenance troops. The advantage of the ROAD concept over the Pentomic construct was that a standard ROAD division with eight infantry and two mechanized battalions could, if the need arose and the terrain permitted, modify the composition of its brigades to increase or decrease standard number of infantry, armor, and mechanized units. The concept was initially tested in 1962 with both the 1st Armored and 5th Infantry Divisions and based on successes in the fielding, the Army completed conversion by 1964. As the United States entered the Vietnam War, the ROAD concept reflected the Army's embrace of the concept of flexible response and proved eminently suitable for operations in Vietnam. [39]

During this same period, the Army began to examine how to use its aviation assets to increase both mobility and close air support. After the Korean War, the Army Aviation School conducted a number of experiments mounting guns and rockets to rotary wing platforms. In 1962, the Tactical Mobility Requirements Board (also known as the Howze Board) was established at the request of Secretary of Defense McNamara to test and integrate airmobile operations into US Army doctrine and tactics. General Hamilton H. Howze led a board of officers to conduct a study of tactical mobility at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, and subsequently established trial units at Fort Benning, Georgia. In light of this guidance, the 11th Air Assault Division (Test) was formed in 1963 at Fort Benning. Beginning with a very austere organization consisting of a single battalion, a small brigade headquarters and a growing Air Transport Brigade, the test division began to develop air mobile tactics

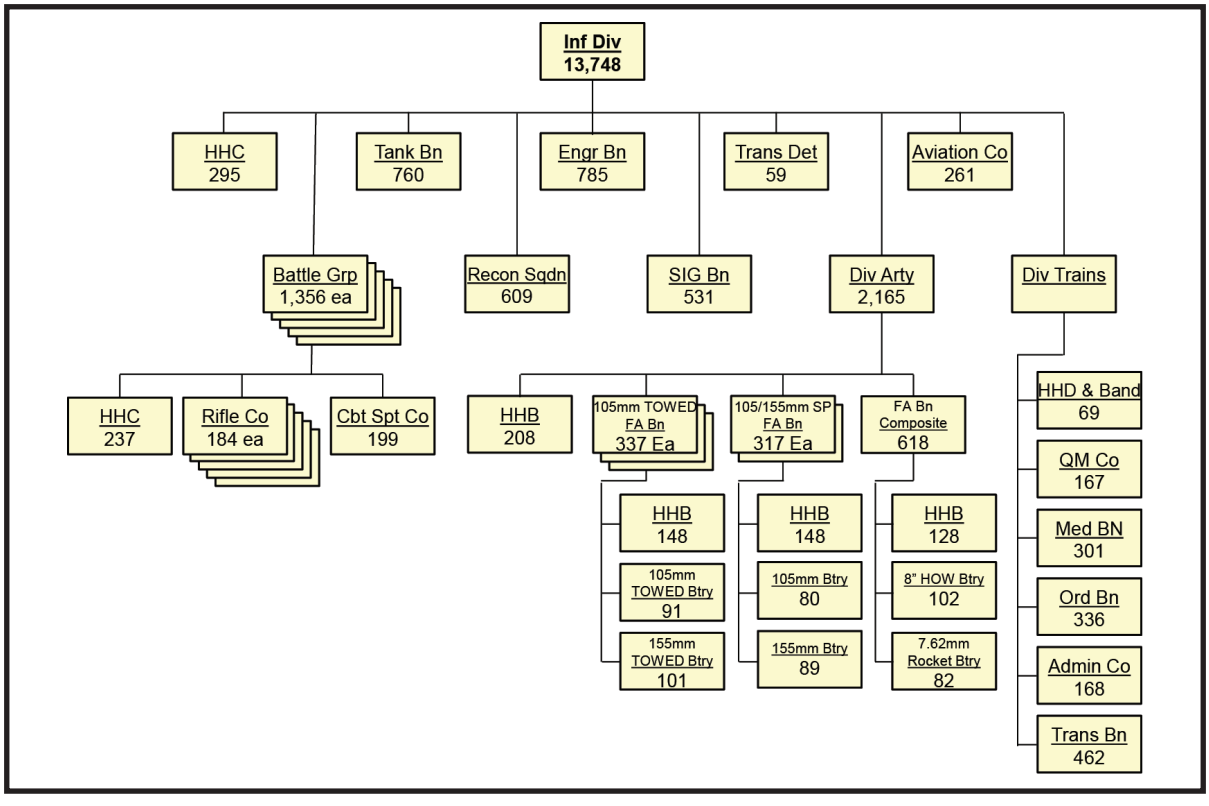

Figure 1.3 Pentomic Infantry Division, 1 February 1960. Graphic created by CAC History for the authors.

that would be later used in Vietnam. As conceived, the new air assault division would be similar to the ROAD division, but have the organic capability to lift 33 percent of the division at any time. This would require between 400 and 600 aircraft and the replacement of some equipment with lighter versions that could be transported by air. One such area was the replacement of the 155mm howitzer by newer 105mm howitzers, Little John rockets, and helicopter mounted air-to-ground rockets. In 1965, the board recommended that the Army recognize the revolutionary change in land combat tactics integrate the use of the helicopter into doctrine. The results of this three-year study led to the activation of the 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile) on 1 July 1965 and was ordered to Vietnam later in the month. Consisting of the core of the 11th Air Assault Division (Test), the 10th Air Transport Brigade, and 2d Infantry Division elements, the division would execute the Army's new air mobility doctrine in combat.[40]

The Army's experience in Vietnam would generate new thought regarding combat division designs. Virgil Ney, author of the Combat Developments Command study *Evolution of the US Army Division, 1939-1968* notes:

> The infantry division of the future will be influenced considerably by the combat experiences of divisions in Vietnam. In a sense, Vietnam is a proving ground for the concept of the modern infantry division. However, future wars may or may not be similar in pattern to Vietnam. They may be entirely conventional, or a mixture of both the conventional and unconventional, as is Vietnam. The airmobile concept appears to be an effective divisional structure for fluid warfare. By this is meant where the frontline is not well defined on the ground and the "front is everywhere."[41]

AirLand Battle Doctrine – Restructuring the Division for Conflict in Europe

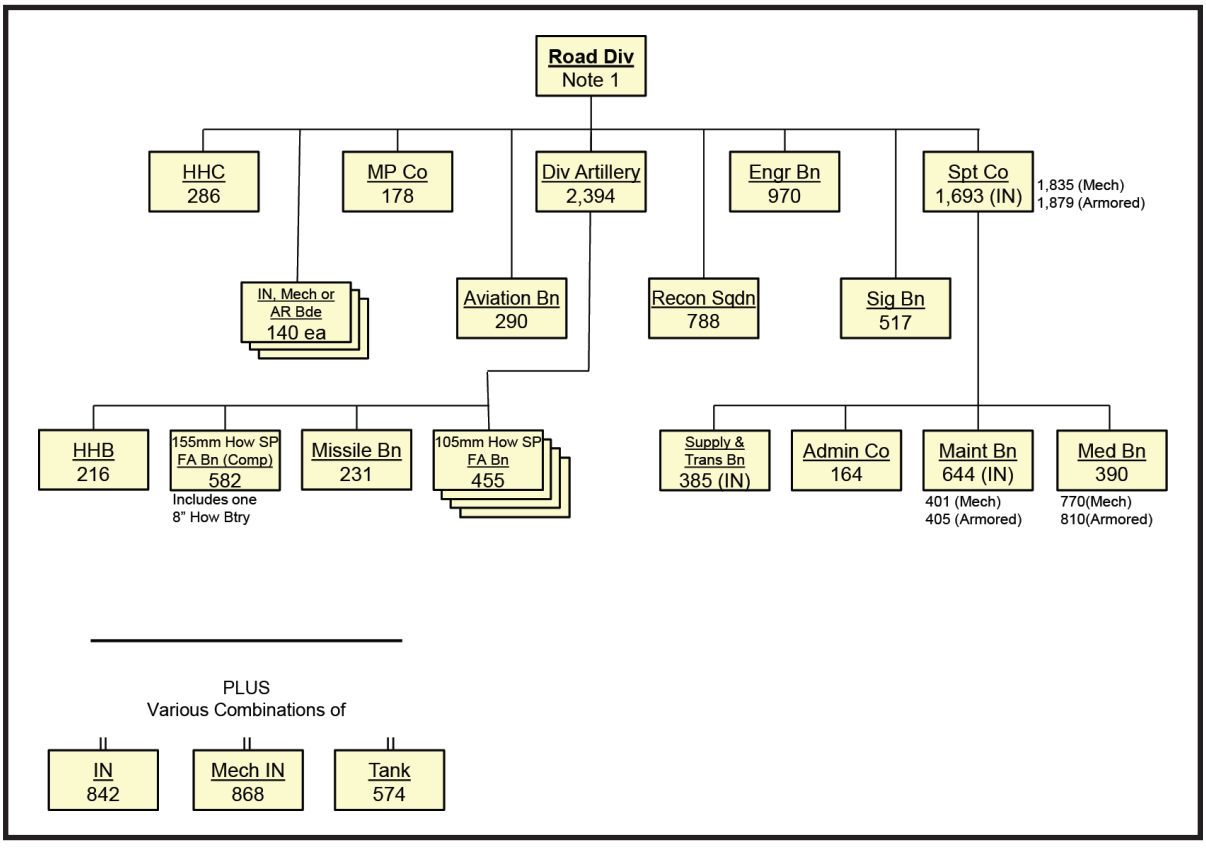

Figure 1.4 ROAD Division Base, 1961. Graphic created by CAC History for the authors.

As the Vietnam War drew to a close, the Army was again examining new concepts to focus on the Soviet threat in Europe. Using lessons learned over the previous decade in Southeast Asia, the TRICAP (triple capability) concept was tested, again using the 1st Cavalry Division as the test unit. The test unit activities commenced in May 1971 and consisted of an armored brigade, an airmobile infantry brigade, and an air cavalry combat brigade. While the armored ground forces would provide "fire power, mobility and shock action," the airmobile units would provide tactical and operational mobility to fix enemy forces and deliver firepower to support ground operations. The test concluded in 1974 with little institutional support to implement the new organizational structure. After observing the outcomes of the 1973 Yom Kippur War in the Middle East, the Army recognized the need for more armored divisions in the force structure.[42]

In the mid-1970s, the Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) analyzed the division's ability to counter Warsaw Pact forces. This study, the Division Restructuring Study (DRS), directed by TRADOC Commander General William E. DePuy, recognized the inefficient use of current weapons technology and recognized that the division would not be able to maximize the use of the weapon programs slated for fielding in the 1980s. As a comparison, the capability of a 1983 mechanized division equaled six times the firepower of its World War II predecessor. The objective was to design an organization that would integrate new weapons and ensure their optimization, to include the integration of indirect fire and air-delivered munitions to support the combined arms battle. Concluding in 1979, the DRS provided minimal insights that warranted force structure changes, but established a way-ahead for future efforts.[43]

Figure 1.5 Airmobile operations during testing of the 11th Air Assault Division. Photo courtesy of the US Army.

Following the DRS, the new TRADOC commander, General Donn A. Starry, directed the Division 86 study in 1978. He believed that force designs should be conceived from a vision of the battlefield. Critical to this process was the identification of unit tasks and functions, so that planners could not only study the new unit, but also the perceived threats for which that organization must counter. To note, during the development of Division 86, the newly emerging doctrine and force design efforts continued to inform the other as the concept proceeded. In previous eras, concurrent development was rare and often emerging technologies and tactics forced doctrine to change. The new Air-Land Battle doctrine was developed concurrently with the division design effort and each informed the other as analysis progressed.[44]

The new structure, although resembling the ROAD design in some aspects, differed significantly in other areas. The division consisted of a 19,855-man division (armor), with a division headquarters, headquarters company (HHC), three brigade headquarters, combat maneuver elements, a division support command, a reconnaissance squadron, division artillery, and other support and combat service support companies and battalions. The new organization included an air cavalry attack brigade (ACAB) to unify Army aviation operations. Tank and mechanized battalions were now organized with an HHC and four tank companies. The division artillery increased firepower to three 155mm battalions with three batteries of eight guns each, one battalion of 16 eight-inch howitzers, and nine general-support Multiple Launch Rocket System (MLRS) launchers. The engineer battalion increase mobility, with consolidated armored vehicle launched bridges (AVLBs) and the air defense battalion consolidated all the division's Stinger antiaircraft missiles. The Division Support Command (DISCOM) placed critical battlefield support functions in three battalions to provide direct support to maneuver brigades.[45]

Figure 1.6 M60 tank participating in REFORGER '82. Photo courtesy of Department of Defense.

In August 1980, Army Chief of Staff General Edward C. Meyer approved the implementation of the new heavy division structure. Armored divisions consisted of six armor battalions and four mechanized battalions, while their mechanized counterparts had an equal number of armor and mechanized battalions. Due to Congressional caps on Army end strength at 780,000 (836,000 required) and challenges to fund and procure new equipment, the heavy division modernization delays extended for almost ten years. [46]

As the heavy division modernization progressed, Army leaders became convinced that powerful and mobile light infantry forces were needed to rapidly deploy and fight in both forested and urban areas. The 1979 Islamic Revolution in Iran and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan brought the realization that the Army had focused too much on the Soviet threat in Europe and failed to consider options in other regions. Additionally, the unwillingness of the Air Force and Navy to resource Army transportation requirements for overseas deployments further complicated the problem.[47]

To counter this new operational environment, General Meyer directed the establishment of the High Technology Test Bed (HTTB) / High Technology Light Division (HTLD) in the summer of 1980 to integrate with the 9th Infantry Division to develop, evaluate and implement concepts related to operations, organization, doctrine, and technology. As the test progressed, the emphasis shifted from equipment testing to developing new and innovative operational and organizational concepts. In the years following, the 7th Infantry Division (Light) tests from 1983-1986 gave the Army viable force that could be leveraged for a number of operational contingencies. Following the tests, the light infantry division found criticism from many sectors of the Army. Some criticism said it was too light to face heavy forces, lacked tactical mobility, and emphasized combat power at the expense of support units. The ability of reserve component "roundout" brigades to maintain minimum readiness standards to support contingency deployments was also a concern. Despite this criticism, the light division concept showed its value in Operation Just Cause in Panama and later in Operation Desert Shield / Desert Storm.[48]

Facing the reality of static numbers of active Army personnel and the twin dilemmas of continuing, serious Soviet threats in Europe and a rising necessity for light, rapidly-deployable contingency forces to meet third world crises, Army Chief of Staff General John A. Wickham, Jr. pushed through a force design initiative that placed a premium on trimming support strength and adding combat units. The Army of Excellence (AOE) redesign and related force structuring decisions would add first one and then a second active division to bring the total active duty divisions to 18. It would also add two Army National Guard divisions, bringing the Guard total to ten. The concept focused on a rapidly deployable, yet capable, light infantry division that could counter a variety of threats. When acting as a response force, the division must be able to "stabilize the trouble spot, demonstrate a show of force and secure a base to expand."[49]

The Army of Excellence design was first briefed to Army leaders at the Army Commanders' Conference in October 1983 by Colonel Richard Burke, the director of the combat developments force design director. At the core of the light infantry division re-design was a three-brigade organization supported by nine battalions of infantry, with a total strength eventually of 10,800 Soldiers. Deployable by airlift, it was adapted specifically for contingency actions worldwide where rapid response in the first hours of a crisis were critical. Operation of this light infantry division centered on the tactical offense. The basic concept envisioned a force that would

> Strike and maneuver to evade enemy firepower and mobility, would exploit terrain to block the enemy's own terrain corridors and separate his heavy and light forces, and would conduct multiple small-unit attacks while also protecting the avenue and staging base into which heavier US forces would follow.[50]

For the heavy divisions, the Army of Excellence design modified Army 86 designs. Although many Division 86 modifications, such as the eight howitzer batteries, forward support battalions, and ten four-company heavy-division maneuver battalions remained, other force structure changes were introduced. Significant transfers of field artillery, air defense, and aviation from division to corps reduced the division's overall combat power. [51]

Despite the reduction in organic capability, the heavy divisions benefitted from a robust heavy corps. The new additions to the corps enabled it to fight the AirLand Battle and created a more formidable fighting organization at the operational level of war. The AOE design of heavy divisions and corps aligned operational and tactical forces with Army warfighting doctrine. The Chief of Staff of the Army approved the basic AOE designs developed by TRADOC in decisions of October and November 1983.[52]

An Army in Transformation

In the final decade of the 20th century, the Army again found itself at a doctrinal crossroads. The impetus behind this change was an evolution in the nature of war and the experience after Desert Shield/Desert Storm, which indicated that formations optimized for land campaigns against similar forces were not as effective in low-intensity or hybrid environments. TRADOC Pamphlet 525-5, *Force XXI Operations*, foreshadowed emerging Army requirements and defined five key characteristics: doctrinal flexibility, strategic mobility, tailorability and modularity, joint and multinational connectivity, and versatility to function in war and operations other than war. Under this new concept, future force designs would be "smaller, yet have new, expanded, and diverse missions in an unpredictable, rapidly changing world environment."[53]

Based on the Force XXI concepts and ongoing US operations in the Balkans during the 1990s, Army Chief of Staff General Eric K. Shinseki called for a force that would be responsive, mobile, and capable of deploying to any location in the world within 96 hours. In 2003, to further reinforce this

concept, Army Chief of Staff General Peter J. Schoomaker visualized a more effective fighting force based on a brigade-centric structure, instead of the legacy division-based doctrine. Testifying before the House Armed Services Committee on 21 July 2004, he further outlined the realities of a new world environment in which the Army must operate:

> The single most significant component of our new strategic reality is that because of the centrality of the ideas in conflict, this war will be a protracted one. Whereas for most of our lives the default condition has been peace, now our default expectation must be conflict . . . a foreseeable future of extended conflict in which we can expect to fight every day, and in which real peace will be the anomaly.[54]

To sustain operations for the duration of ongoing wars and win decisively, the Army required a redesigned force. A combat division was no longer fit to fight an adaptive enemy across a variety of environments around the world. General Schoomaker believed that smaller units were the optimal response to the new operational environment. FM 3-0, published in 2008, reinforced this thought, "No single, large fixed formation can support the diverse requirements of full spectrum operations."

The goal was to design a modular force – self-contained and sustainable force packages that were organized for a wide range of missions and contained a wide array of organic capabilities. Unlike brigade combat teams of the past where combat enablers would be attached based on mission requirements, artillery, engineer, reconnaissance, intelligence, and support assets became organic brigade assets.[55] With that in mind, the Army now returned to a brigade-centric construct. The CSA noted that with the shift, "we can significantly improve the tailorability, scalability, and "fightablity" of the Army's contribution to the overall joint fight."[56]

The Brigade Combat Team (BCT) would provide the "building block" for the new force with tailorable command and control. Assigned brigades would be formed as heavy (HBCT), Stryker (SBCT), or infantry (IBCT) brigades. The type of brigades assigned to a headquarters would vary depending on the mission and requirements. In addition to maneuver brigades, aviation, fires, battlefield surveillance, maneuver enhancement, and sustainment brigades could be added to the unit's organization.

Despite the force design changes, the need for the Army division remained. As for the current division-based task-organized force, General Schoomaker noted: "Tailoring and task-organizing our current force structure for such operations renders an *ad hoc* deployed force and a non-deployed residue of partially disassembled units, diminishing the effectiveness of both."[57] Command and control architecture was designed around a construct named "Unit of Employment X" (UEx). This concept was to replace the tactical Division HQ with a modular organization with an Operational focus that could perform duties as Joint Task Force (JTF) or Joint Force Land Component Command (JFLCC) to conduct decisive, shaping, and sustaining operations. Organized along functional lines, the new force design concepts were to have full joint connectivity. [58]

The key benefit of a brigade-centric organization was greater flexibility and more options for force projection over a division-centric design. Brigades now had many of the same capabilities that were previously exclusive to a combat division. For staff planners, this also afforded the Army greater flexibility to generate ready forces for deployment. No longer would brigades' operational relationships be tied to a single division headquarters, but instead would be tasked based on requirements of the theater service component command.[59] Modularity allowed for efficient organization of the Army with more standardized brigades. This in turn enabled compatibility of personnel and equipment when units were exchanged in theater.

The Evolving American Division

Since its inception, the division has evolved to reflect the changing operational environment in which it is expected to fight and win. First, improving technology and new capabilities forced changes

in the division structure not only to integrate, but also to maximize the effect of those new capabilities on the battlefield. Secondly, the Army division structure was continually refined to leverage ever changing capabilities (aviation, field artillery, support) being integrated into US Army doctrine and tactics. Army leaders, regardless of era, had to realize that their current organizational design had become obsolete and required modification to meet the threats of the current battlefield environment.

Today the Army looks to the future to determine what kind of forces and formations we need to fight the next war and the war after that. As current Chief of Staff of the Army General Mark A. Milley noted at the Association of the US Army Annual Meeting in October 2016, "I suspect that the organizations and weapons and doctrines of land armies, between 2025 and 2050, in that quarter-century period of time, will be fundamentally different than what we see today."[60] Future conflicts may be radically different, but in all likelihood the division will remain an organizational cornerstone of the United States Army.

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Chapter 2

Attack! Attack! Attack!
MG Ryder and the 34th Infantry Division in Central Italy

Major Jason M. Merchant

Figure 2.1. MG Charles Ryder (16 January 1892 to 17 August 1960). Photo courtesy of Wikimedia Commons.

The 34th Infantry Division (ID), under the command of Major General Charles Ryder, holds the rare distinction of fighting at both Cassino and Anzio during the Italian Campaign of World War II (WWII). From January to June 1944, the division prevailed against formidable opponents, complex terrain, and bitter weather conditions. As part of the US II Corps' attack into the near impregnable Gustav Line, the 34th ID secured the first tenable crossing along the Rapido River, as well as the initial foothold in Cassino and the adjacent heights around the Monte Cassino Monastery. The division was then relieved to reconstitute before moving to the US VI Corps' Anzio beachhead where they assumed the front line defense through which the Anzio breakout would occur. During the breakout, the 34th ID shifted to the attack and dynamically pivoted on their axis, which contributed to the capture of Rome, an Allied coalition objective.

MG Ryder and the 34th ID provide a valuable example for today's commanders and operational artists for planning, leading, and executing operations during protracted battles in rapidly changing environments. The commander and his planners must be able to logically arrange actions to not only accomplish the defined objectives; but also allow flexibility to adjust to emerging operational variables, extend organizational endurance under the duress of combat, and mitigate risk through well planned transitions that maintain organizational momentum. The 34th ID's battle record during this portion of

the Italian Campaign provides an example of an intelligent and violently executed operational approach, incredible organizational endurance, and the ability to rapidly shift roles in the operational framework.

Charles Wolcott Ryder was the son of a Topeka, Kansas medical doctor. His family background combined with his studious, meticulous mannerisms earned him the nickname "Doc" while at West Point. He was considered amiable, but also firm in his convictions. Commissioned as an Infantry officer in 1915, he served with several regiments before being sent to France in 1917 as a company commander in the 1st Infantry Division. After almost a year training with the French army he was promoted to Major and took command of the 1st battalion 16th Infantry. He led his battalion in the Battle of Soissons and the Meuse-Argonne offensive and was decorated with the Distinguished Service Cross, the Silver Star, and the Purple Heart for his actions, which left a sliver of steel in his heart that he carried the rest of his life. Between the wars he served on occupation duty in Europe, taught tactics at West Point and the Infantry School, attended CGSC at Fort Leavenworth and the War College at Carlisle Barracks, and was commandant of Cadets at West Point from 1937-41. At the start of WWII he was Chief of Staff of VI Corps, but was soon promoted to BG and made Assistant Division Commander for the 90th Division. By reputation he wasted no time on recriminations for errors of judgement or shortages of equipment or personnel. One of his comrades described him later as "asking no favors and demanding no special consideration. He never raised his voice above a normal conversational tone, but there was never any doubt as to his intentions or requirements. He readily accepted responsibility for the actions of his subordinates and as quickly gave them credit for their accomplishments. In combat he was seen daily among the attacking echelons of his command."[1]

Like its commander, the 34th ID saw service during WWI. Formed in 1917, the division was constituted with National Guard troops from Minnesota, Iowa, the Dakotas, and Nebraska. During post-mobilization training in New Mexico, the division patch emerged as a red steer skull on a backdrop of black in the shape of an olla, a Mexican water flask, to symbolize the intense training and harsh conditions in which the organization was forged. During WWII, German troops dubbed this symbol and the soldiers wearing it as "Red Bulls," a nickname that remains intact. Although, the 34th ID did not reach Europe in time to fight as a division, several elements did earn battle streamers in WWI. The 34th ID was again mobilized in 1941 for potential service in WWII. The division participated in the Louisiana Maneuvers, reorganized to the new triangularized configuration, and deployed to Northern Ireland in January 1942. It was here that MG Ryder took command in May 1942, and later led the 34th ID during the invasion of North Africa in November 1942 and the subsequent battles in Tunisia. In September 1943, the division landed at Salerno, Italy and the Red Bulls would remain at the forefront of the fighting for the next four months. By the end of WWII the 34th ID held the distinction of having the most days in combat in the European Theater, capturing the most defended hills, and suffering the highest per capita casualties of any US division.[2]

The Italian Campaign of WWII emerged out of the Allied strategic debate of 1943 and formed the crucial link between North Africa and a cross-channel invasion into northwestern Europe at Normandy in 1944. The campaign was characterized by competing national interests and drastic differences in leadership and operational approaches between the primary Allies. From the United States' perspective, Italy was considered the 'third European front,' yet the campaign unified the United States civil-military discourse and set conditions for the US role for the duration of the war and the post-war global order. More discreetly, these variables, combined with Italian governance and topographical considerations, formed a complex operational environment for the divisions that fought for tactical advantage on the march on Rome. Despite the Allied individual strategic goals and methods for post-Sicilian operations, the three principal states agreed on the two strategic aims for an Italian Campaign, to "eliminate Italy from the war and to contain the maximum number of German forces."[3]

The Allies achieved the first aim in August 1943, as the Italian's brokered a conditional surrender in concert with the Allied invasion onto the Italian peninsula. However, the Italian surrender hardened the German resolve, rather than weakening it. General Eisenhower initiated the Italian Campaign in September 1943 with General Bernhard Montgomery's British Eighth Army pursuing the Germans across the Straits of Messina, while Lieutenant General Mark W. Clark's Fifth Army landed at Salerno.[4] However, the lack of coordination between the two armies resulted in a missed opportunity to cut off the withdrawing German forces in southern Italy. By November 1943, Hitler placed all German forces in Italy under Generalfeldmarschall Albert Kesselring, who had designed the active defense plan south of Rome where his ten divisions could best use the terrain to drain Allied strength and disrupt momentum towards Rome and the Po Valley industrial region.[5]

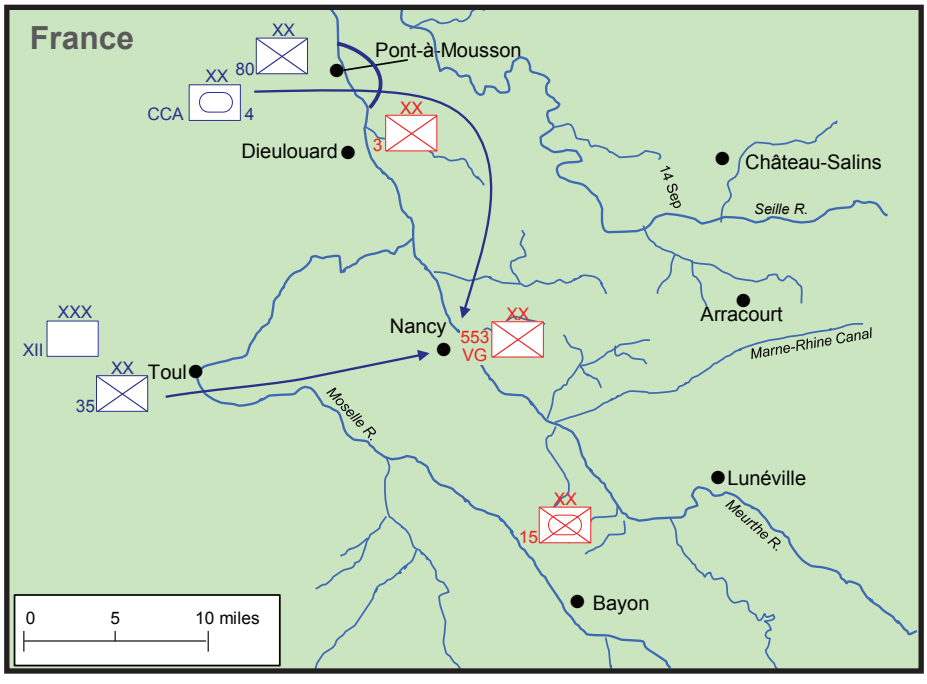

Figure 2.2. The US Fifth Army's Plan for Cassino and Anzio, January, 1944. *Rome – Arno 1944* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2003). Map created by CAC History for the author.

The Italian terrain presents numerous natural obstacles, most predominantly the central Apennine Mountains and the numerous rivers that descend rapidly to the coast.[6] This range forms a "spine" that extends the length of the peninsula, and reaches heights of 6000 feet with "a succession of mountainous ribs" that protrude to the narrow coastal plains.[7] In the Cassino area, the Rapido, the Liri, and the Garigliano Rivers converge to present a continuous linear obstacle from the Tyrrhenian Sea to the central mountains, and is over-watched by towering heights to the west. The Anzio plain was crisscrossed with an extensive irrigation and drainage network, dotted with hundreds of stone houses, and surrounded by heights on three sides and the coast to the west.[8]

Since Ancient Rome, Italy's mobility corridors dictated the movement of any sizable force, a restriction that marginalized the technological advances in mechanization that emerged during the inter-war period. On the western side of the Apennines these corridors consolidate to constitute a twenty to twenty-five-mile front, while on the eastern side of the peninsula only a five to fifteen-mile front is possible. In the west, Highway 7 closely followed the narrow coastal plain, while Highway 6, the historic Rome-Naples corridor, passed through the Mignano Gap and into the broad Liri Valley.[9] Scarce east-west corridors throughout central Italy and the central obstacle of the Apennines negated coordi-

nation between the east and west fronts.[10] The Germans further complicated the canalized ground lines of communication by destroying road and rail bridges as they withdrew north, while retaining critical transportation arteries in northern Italy.

In this defensible terrain, Kesselring constructed a series of fortified defensive lines south of Rome with the German Todt Organization and the forced labor of thousands of Italian civilians.[11] Kesselring used the southernmost lines, the Volturno and Barbara Lines, to control Allied tempo while the Gustav Line fortifications were completed.[12] The western half of the Gustav Line included two lesser lines, the Bernhardt (Winter) Line to the southeast and the Hitler Line to the northwest. The Gustav Line overlooked the entire length of the broad Rapido and Garigliano River valleys, which spans three miles wide in the Cassino area.[13] Concealed in the heights overlooking the rivers, the Germans constructed steel-reinforced concrete fighting positions that afforded superior observation and employment of direct and indirect fires over well-developed engagement areas. The key to the Gustav line defense was Monte Cassino, a Benedictine monastery that still guards the mouth of the Liri Valley and overlooks the town of Cassino, Route 6, and the historic Rapido crossing points.[14] Between Anzio and Rome, the Caesar Line was tied into the Alban Hills to form the final defense for Rome.

Weather effects during the Italian winter of 1943 and 1944 formed another critical component of the operational environment during the opening moves of Cassino and Anzio. The realities of the Italian winter quickly dispelled any imaginations of a Mediterranean resort. By the First Battle of Cassino, heavy winter rains had swollen the Rapido River and increased its current in excess of twelve feet per second, making bridging operations not only difficult, but deadly. In conjunction with the blown bridges, the Germans opened sluice gates and destroyed dams on the Rapido and Garigliano Rivers, creating muddy roads and marshy plains that impeded motorized or armored vehicle movement up to a mile from the river.[15] Additionally, since November 1943 the exposed troops endured strong winds, sleet, and unusually cold temperatures that inflicted scores of non-battle injuries to the exposed troops.

The First Battle of Cassino's opening moves began two days after MG Ryder's 34th ID seized Monte Trocchio and first observed the Rapido River, Cassino town and the mouth of the Liri Valley resting under the domineering wall of Monte Cassino and the adjacent Abruzzi heights. The battle occurred 12 January to 12 February 1944, along the southern front of the Fifth Army's two-front plan to break the Gustav Line, destroy the German forces in central Italy, and capture Rome. LTG Clark, US Fifth Army commander, envisioned a four phased operation along the Gustav Line with the French Expeditionary Corps' (FEC) attack to secure the right flank, the British X Corps' attack to establish a bridgehead and capture the heights overlooking the south side of Liri Valley, and a final shaping attack by the US II Corps to establish a bridgehead across the Rapido River south of Highway 6, well out of reach of the Monte Cassino bastion. These combined actions would open a suitable avenue of approach for the US 1st Armored Division (AD) to deliver the decisive exploitation into the Liri Valley and open the ground line of communication to the planned Anzio front. Clark's intent for the broad frontal attack was to draw in and pin down German reserves from the vicinity of Rome before the landings at Anzio commenced, to break through the Gustav line and open Highway 6 to consolidate his force, and thereby trap the German Tenth Army from withdrawing to northern Italy.[16]

Both the Führer and Generalfeldmarschall Kesselring considered the Gustav Line decisive to the defense of Italy and Rome.[17] Along the Gustav Line, Kesselring also believed Monte Cassino was the crucial anchor and feared its fall would make the entire line "untenable and force the [German] Tenth Army to withdraw toward Rome."[18] Generalleutnant Frido von Senger's XIV Panzer Corps defended the twenty-mile-wide front west Apennine range with the 5th Mountain Division, the 15th Panzer Grenadier Division, and the 44th and 94th Divisions.[19] Cognizant of the risk associated with an Allied amphibious assault along the Tyrrhenian coast that could encircle the German Tenth Army, von Senger

positioned a fifth division, the 71st Division, near Anzio, while Kesselring also retained the 29th and 90th Panzer Grenadier Divisions in reserve near Rome.[20]

The Fifth Army assault on the Gustav Line began as planned with General Alphonse Juin's FEC attacking before daybreak on 12 January 1944, but despite significant gains of nearly four miles across the defended slopes, the FEC was forced to pause on January 15 from exhaustion and exposure.[21] From 16 to 17 January, Lieutenant General Richard McCreery's British X Corps launched a series of successive attacks across the Garigliano River south of the Liri Valley to set conditions for II Corps' attack into the Liri Valley.[22] The British joint operation achieved initial success against the German 94th Panzer Grenadier Division, but Kesselring committed his reserve divisions from the Anzio-Rome to the Garigliano sector and prevented the British from securing the heights overlooking the Rapido-Liri confluence.[23] Despite the French and British efforts, the Gustav Line defenses were not sufficiently shaped to support II Corps' breakthrough.

Nevertheless, LTG Clark met with MG Geoffrey Keyes, II Corps commander, and MG Fred Walker, 36th ID Commander on 20 January to apprise them of the situation and reinforce the necessity of the 36th ID's objective, a tenable Rapido crossing site, to Fifth Army's broader operational plan.[24] Clark's critical concerns extended well beyond the 36th ID's front; Operation Shingle, the amphibious assault on Anzio, had already begun with the US VI Corps' naval convoy already steaming north and strategic constraints dictating that the Anzio landing take place on 22 January. With grave misgivings, Walker attacked at the Rapido River between Sant' Angelo and Cassino on the evening of 20 January.[25] The 36th ID's attack was preceded with air and artillery fires for nearly twenty-four hours, followed by a demonstration in the 34th ID's sector to divert German attention.[26] Despite these supporting efforts, the German 15th Panzer Grenadier Division's lower Rapido engagement areas diffused the 36th ID's energy before they reached the river.[27] The 36th ID's attack culminated two days later failing to secure the bridgehead necessary for II Corps' exploitation into the Liri Valley, but succeeding in holding German attention sufficiently to allow the VI Corps to land at Anzio virtually unopposed.[28]

On 22 January 1944, the amphibious invasion at Anzio commenced and rapidly achieved their intermediate objectives due to Allied deception efforts and the attacks on the Gustav Line that had drawn in and held the 29th and 90th Panzer Grenadier Divisions.[29] By 25 January, the beachhead was expanded to a depth of twelve miles but short of the Alban Hills as General Alexander, the Allied Armies in Italy commander, had envisioned. MG John P. Lucas, VI Corps commander, was concerned that further advances would overextend his force, so he halted the attack to consolidate and reorganize his beachhead with supplies and two more divisions, the 45th ID and Combat Command A (CCA), 1st AD.[30] The Anzio landing solicited an immediate German response, both strategically and operationally. Within days Hitler sent units from Yugoslavia, France, and Germany, and within the first week, Feldmarschall Kesselring's thirteen divisions from northern Italy and the Adriatic front began consolidating around the Allied beachhead under Generaloberst Mackensen's Fourteenth Army command.[31]

On 23 January, Clark met with his three corps commanders along the Gustav Line to reinvigorate the breakthrough into the Liri Valley. He ordered Keyes to renew his attack to open the Liri Valley, while Juin was to support the renewed offensive by swinging south towards Mount Belvedere to cover the II Corps' right flank.[32] Keyes in turn ordered the 34th ID to attack across the Rapido River to seize Cassino and the adjacent heights, while the degraded 36th ID would support with a feint south of Cassino. The purpose of II Corps' renewed attack remained unchanged, to establish a crossing site [north of Sant'Angelo] through which to pass the 1st AD exploitation force.[33]

Since the beginning of the Fifth Army attack at the Gustav Line, the 34th ID had conducted extensive reconnaissance along their Rapido River front.[34] The patrolling confirmed that the Rapido River was fordable in the 34th ID's sector, a risk the German defenders had mitigated by clearing fields of fire, flooding the plain, and developing extensive engagement areas.[35] Illustrating the extensive prepa-

rations along the Gustav Line, the S3 of 3-133 Infantry observed that, "the Germans had staked out enough barbed wire on both sides of the Rapido River to fence in all the farms in Iowa and Illinois."[36] British historian John Ellis observed that "all of the 34th axes of attack were hideously difficult" and faced a network of pillboxes and bunkers, "aprons of barbed wire" to depths of six feet, and minefields to depths of 400 yards lined the river.[37] The heights beyond the mined and flooded morass offered no better terrain. Ryder recorded that, "these slopes, seamed with deep ravines, rose precipitously 450 meters in 1000 meters and were thoroughly organized with wires, mines, felled trees, concrete bunkers and steel-turreted machine gun emplacements."[38]

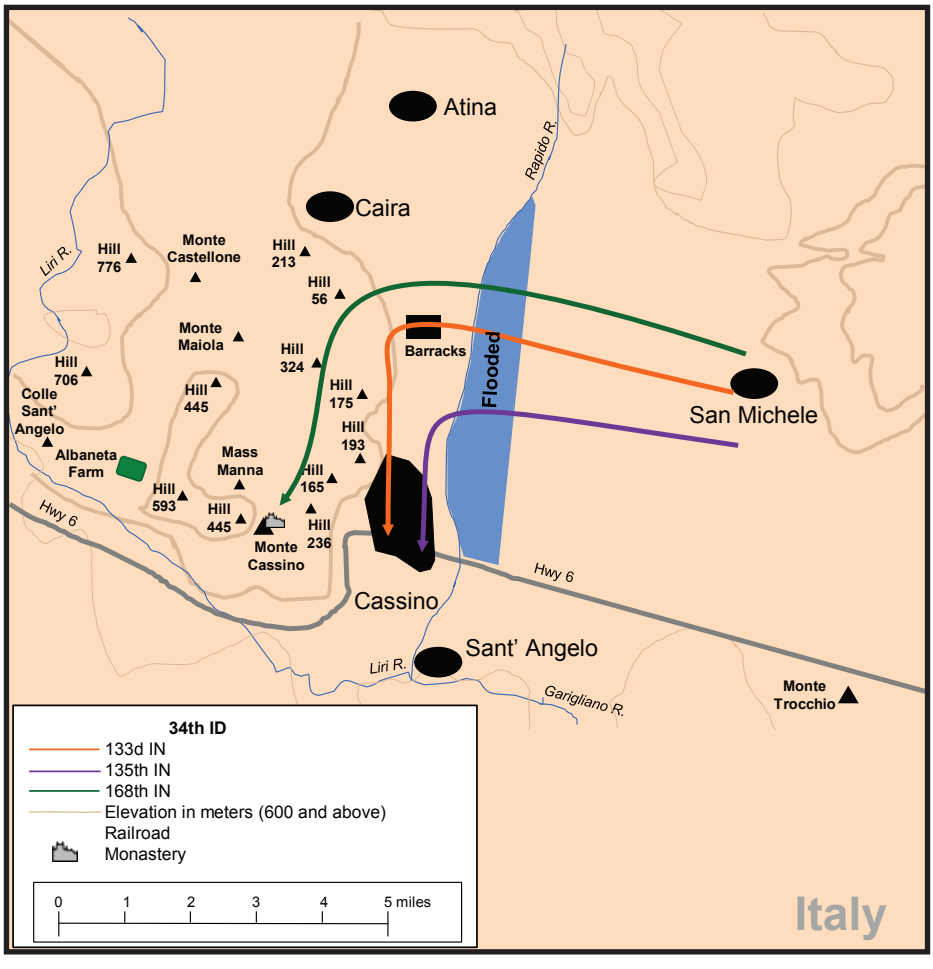

Figure 2.3. The 34th ID Initial Lines of Operation (24 January 1944). Author compiled from the following sources: *Cassino: The Hollow Victory* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1984), xii; *Dogfaces Who Smiled Through Tears* (Lake Mills, IA: Graphic Publishing, 1987), 437. Map created by CAC History for the author.

Within MG Keyes' intent and his understanding of the battlefield developed through reconnaissance, MG Ryder developed an initial operational approach to punch a hole in the Gustav Line and open a line of communication with the VI Corps at Anzio.[39] Ryder's operational plan was a two-regiment assault across the Rapido River with his remaining regiment held to reinforce success. The 135th Infantry was to cross north of Cassino and then turn south along the western bank into the village, while the 133d Infantry was to cross further north near the Monte Villa Barracks to seize points along the foot of the Cassino massif and the road that ran south into the town.[40] Ryder then

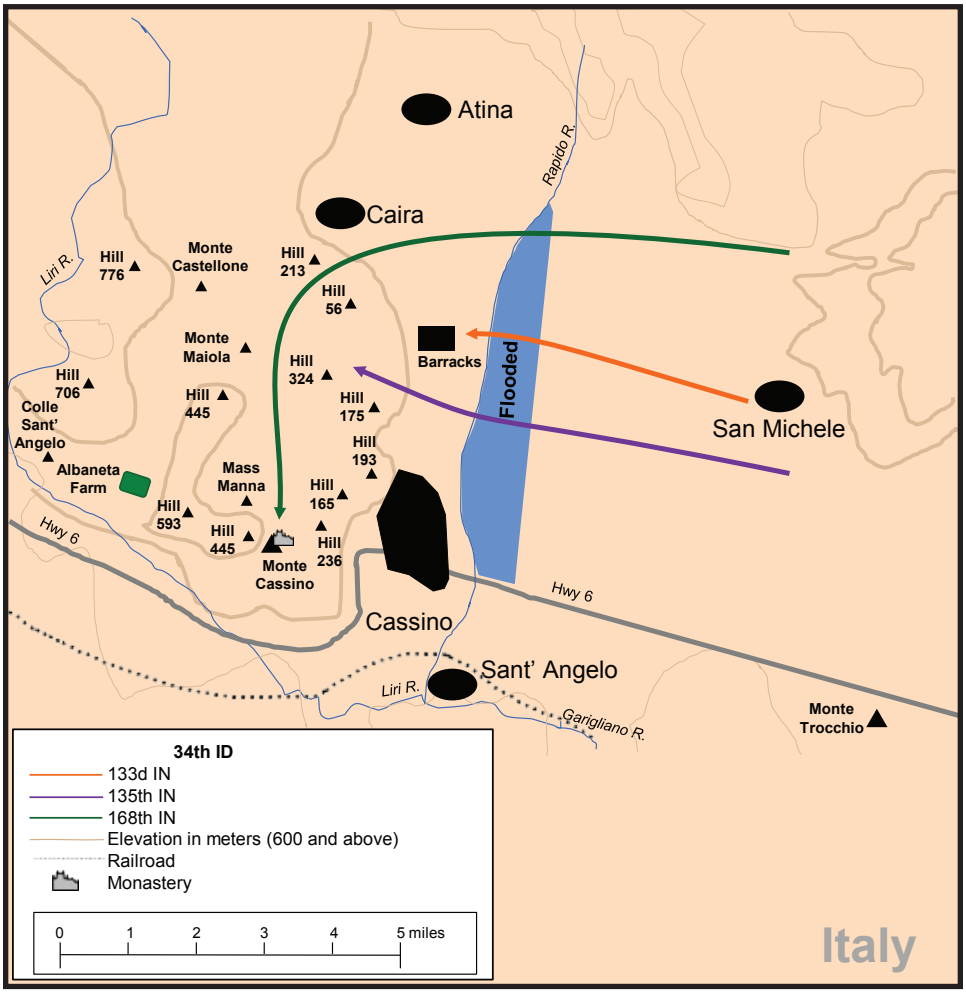

Figure 2.4. The 34th ID Initial Lines of Operation (26 January 1944). Author compiled from the following sources: *Cassino: The Hollow Victory* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1984), xii; *Dogfaces Who Smiled Through Tears* (Lake Mills, IA: Graphic Publishing, 1987), 437. Map created by CAC History for the author.

intended to use those gains to project the 168th Infantry through the bridgehead in a broad sweeping arch between the FEC and Cassino to seize the heights beyond the monastery and gain control of the Liri valley opening.[41] To aid in breaching the extensive minefields, Ryder attached elements of the 756th Tank Battalion to his regiments.[42]

Although assigned a tertiary role in Fifth Army's and II Corps' initial plans, the 34th ID attacked the Cassino front in a primary role at 2200 on 24 January to open the Liri Valley for the exploitation force. The opening artillery barrage coincided with the 133d Infantry's attack to establish a bridgehead and seize the Monte Villa Barracks. Throughout 25 January, the 133d Infantry fought a series of advances and withdrawals through the mine-wire defensive belts, without the benefit of armor, and under the registered German guns, eventually securing a shallow bridgehead on the west side of the Rapido by midnight.[43] The same day, the FEC attacked south to capture Mount Belvedere, a task that took two days to accomplish.[44] On 26 January, Ryder ordered the 133d Infantry to expand its bridgehead, while the 135th Infantry was to attack at points closer to Cassino and subsequently attack Hill 213 from the south.[45] The 133d Infantry's 100th Battalion attack was repelled and the 135th Infantry managed to cross only one company to the far side of the Rapido during the night.[46]

During the minimal gains of 26 January, Ryder extended his focus beyond the Italian Barracks – Cassino area and he ordered the 168th Infantry to pass through the 133d Infantry to seize the heights beyond, from which the Germans had stalled the 34th ID's attack. US Army historian Martin Blumenson noted that Ryder's shift in approach demonstrated an "increasing awareness of the situation: the need for better ground for river crossing operations; the strength of the German defenses in Cassino; the necessity for depriving the Germans the high ground; the urgency of reaching the Liri Valley; and the course of developments taking place still farther north in the French sector."[47] Ryder realized his intermediate objective, a durable bridgehead, was only possible if the 168th Regiment gained control of Hills 56 and 213 before the energy of the 133d and 135th Infantry Regiments were exhausted along the river. If successful, he could consolidate his gains; if the attempt failed, so too would his mission and risk having an entire regiment isolated on the far bank.

With this in mind, Ryder organized the 168th Infantry into a regimental combat team (RCT) to cross at two points, at the 133d Infantry crossing and a point 1000 yards further north towards Caira, and then to seize and hold Hills 56 and 213 and prepare for follow-on objectives.[48] Ryder's order specified a two-battalion front with a platoon of tanks per battalion attacking in front of the infantry to destroy pillboxes and clear paths through the anti-personnel mines and wire.[49] The *34th ID Lessons Learned in Combat,* compiled in September 1944, dedicates a chapter to the infantry-tank-tank destroyer team's necessity in Italy, foreshadowing contemporary relevance. Lieutenant Colonel John L. Powers, commander of 2-168th RCT during this attack, stated that the tanks of the 756th Tank Battalion provided a passageway through the anti-personnel mines, breached the high barbed wire, and deterred German machine gunners from firing from fortifications for fear of drawing tank fire. The infantry reciprocated the support by securing engineer construction of ramps along the Rapido bank and destroying antitank and self-propelled anti-tank guns.[50]

At 0630 on 27 January, the 168th RCT attack opened with nine battalions of light and medium artillery concentrated on Hills 56 and 213.[51] Two regiments with attached tank platoons crossed the line of departure at 0730, but the tanks quickly became bogged down in the marshy ground, requiring the strenuous efforts by the division's engineers to emplace suitable corduroy roads. Nevertheless, several infantry companies from the 168th RCT managed to reach Hill 213 by nightfall but concerns from overextended lines caused a withdrawal back to the Rapido.[52] While the 168th RCT reconnoitered a better approach for their attached tanks, Ryder sought ways to increase the tempo of the attack. He augmented the 168th RCT with the 235th Engineer Battalion and 1108th Engineer Group, the 760th Tank Battalion, and the 175th Artillery Battalion to organize a force for the task of seizing Hills 56 and 213.[53]

Although, the FEC held Mount Belvedere at this time, it was a precarious position considering its southern neighbor, Monte Castellone was not yet in the 34th ID's control. MG Keyes recognized the risk that the seam presented, but also realized the potential to "unhinge the Rapido defenses" with a deeper sweeping attack behind Monte Cassino in coordination with the FEC.[54] To accomplish this, Keyes attached the 36th ID's 142d Infantry to the 34th ID to form an additional RCT to be led by BG Frederic Butler, the 34th Assistant Division Commander.[55] Butler's selection to lead the 142d RCT mitigated friction and rapidly integrated the needed force into the operational plan while in stride of a major offense.

Early on 28 January, the 168th RCT renewed their attack and made steady progress across the mile and a half approach to their objectives. That afternoon, Ryder committed the remainder of the 756th Tank Battalion to the assault through a newly discovered approach further north that allowed twenty-three tanks to assemble northeast of Hill 213 and capture the town of Caira.[56] This enabled the 168th RCT to seize and retain Hill 56 and 213 by nightfall, despite three strong German counterattacks over the next two days. During the 168 RCT's attack, the 133d and 135th Infantry struggled to make any significant gains against the German defenses in their sectors along the Rapido.

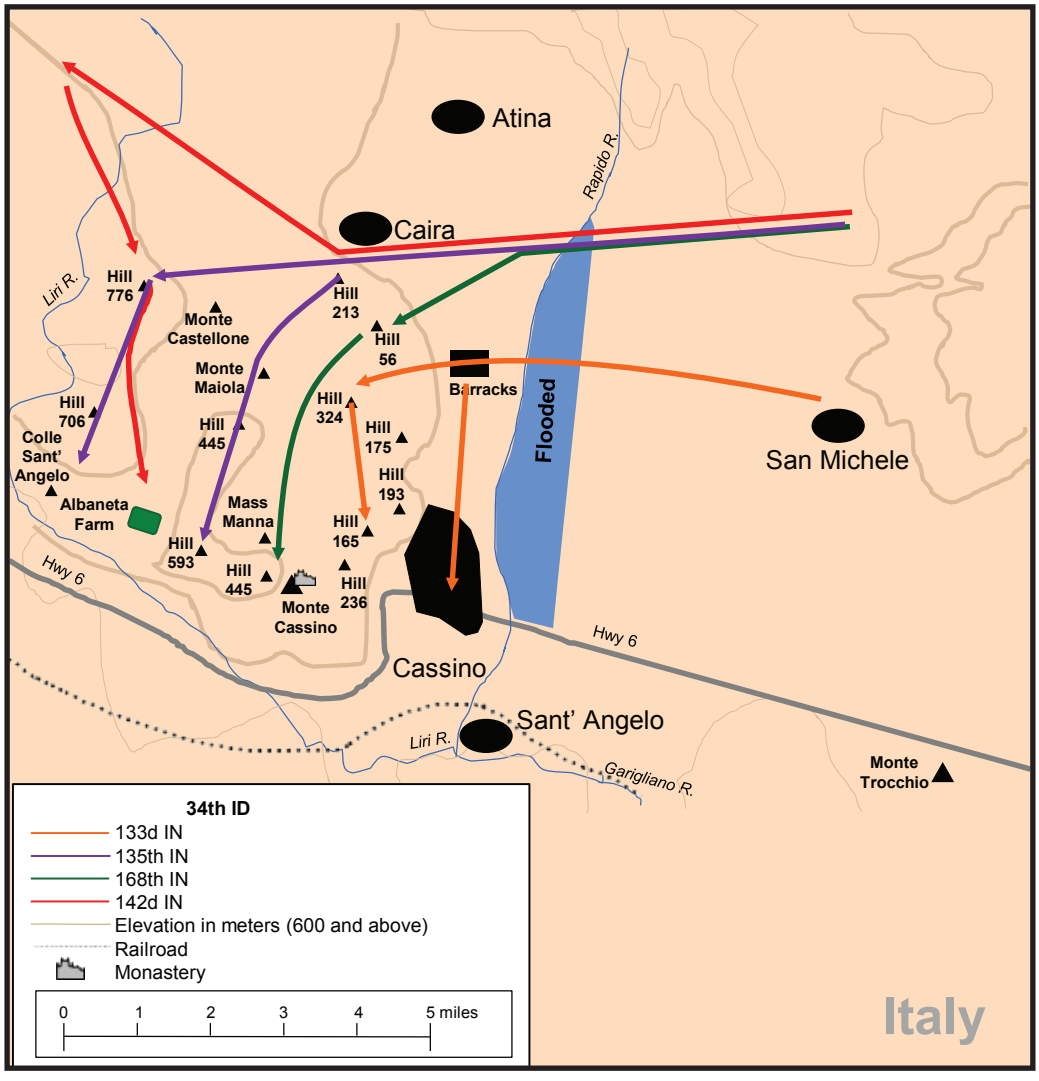

Figure 2.5. The 34th ID Initial Lines of Operation (1 February 1944). Author compiled from the following sources: *Cassino: The Hollow Victory* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1984), xii; *Dogfaces Who Smiled Through Tears* (Lake Mills, IA: Graphic Publishing, 1987), 437. Map created by CAC History for the author.

As the fifth day closed on the 34th ID's attack, Ryder modified his operational approach again, armed with a clearer understanding of the situation and augmented with additional forces. He envisioned a two-pronged sweeping attack against the across the Cassino massif to secure the heights from the German 44th Division and ultimately open the Liri Valley. For the outer prong, the 135th Infantry would conduct a forward passage of lines with the 168th Regiment at Hill 213 and attack towards Monte Castellone and Colle Maiola, while the 142d RCT would attack Mass Manna to secure the vulnerable seam between the 34th ID and FEC.[57] Attacking along the inner prong nearest to Cassino, the 168th Infantry would seize Hill 593, also known as Monte Calvary. Rudolf Böhmler, a German paratroop battalion commander during the battle, recorded that Hill 593 was the "tactical center of the Cairo Massif."[58] Along the Rapido line, the 133d Infantry received the 760th Tank Battalion to form an RCT to seize the Monte Villa Barracks and then turn south to capture Cassino and Route 6.

On 1 February, Ryder's Red Bulls again attacked the Gustav Line. Dense fog obscured their movements in the mountains, enabling the 135th Infantry to reach their objectives on Monte Castellone and

Colle Maiola by 1000.[59] Over the next five days, the 34th ID made significant gains along Ryder's envisioned lines of operation. Along the Rapido line and with the 135th Infantry protecting their right flank, the 133d RCT captured the Monte Villa Barracks, Hill 175, Hill 193, and gained a secure foothold in northeast Cassino against the 211th Grenadier Regiment.[60] The 142d RCT assumed the defense of Monte Castellone, which protected the right flank and rear of the 135th Infantry's attack along their axes of attack oriented on Colle Sant'Angelo and Hill 593.[61] By 6 February, the cooperation between the 135th and 168th Regiments nearly pierced the Liri Valley and held the "key to Cassino", capturing Hill 445, Hill 593, Hill 706, and briefly Colle Sant' Angelo; perhaps the most brutal and bitter mountain warfare that occurred along the Gustav Line for both sides.[62]

The German reaction to the 34th ID's February offensive is a testament to its effectiveness, as forces were drawn from other critical fronts and committed just in time to prevent an Allied breakthrough into the Liri Valley. In the heights, the 90th Panzer Grenadier Division rushed to counterattack through the 44th Division's crumbling defense at Hill 593, while the Schulz Battle Group arrived from the Anzio front to reinforce the foothills above Cassino, as well as the line between Hill 593 and Monte Castellone.[63] Böhmler recorded that during this period of the battle, the German defense "hung almost literally by its eyebrows" on the slopes overlooking Highway 6 and "a determined onslaught on it might well have sent the defenders hurtling down into the valley below."[64] Despite the 34th ID's herculean accomplishments, the division "reached the limits of human endurance," as German reinforcing responses exceeded II Corps and Fifth Army's ability to turn Ryder's hard tactical gains into operational success.[65]

Nevertheless, Ryder had protracted the combat effectiveness of his division against the Gustav Line defenses through skillful innovation. Ryder's logisticians developed unconventional sustainment methods to support his adaptive approach and extend the division's endurance and reach. These methods allowed the 34th ID to present multiple simultaneous dilemmas to the German forces in the Cassino area despite the complexity of the environment. While the joint base for Fifth Army during the Cassino and Anzio battles was centered around Naples' modern transportation hub, the 34th ID based their actions from the less developed Monte Trocchio area. From this forward position the 34th ID logisticians overcame the terrain and the environment to provide supplies and medical evacuation essential to Ryder's plan.

Former US Army officer and professor Peter Mansoor recorded that for the 34th ID to "sustain itself in the mountains, the division used eleven hundred mules and seven hundred litter bearers over and above the normal allotment of transportation and medical personnel."[66] War journalist Ernie Pyle observed that one mule-pack outfit could sustain a battalion during intense mountain fighting, but that raw human effort formed a critical leg of the supply chain. Pyle described that an average night's resupply for a battalion fighting in the jagged heights moved "85 cans of water, 100 cases of K rations, 10 cases of D rations, 10 miles of telephone wire, 25 cases of grenades and rifle and machine-gun ammunition, about 100 rounds of heavy mortar shells, 1 radio, 2 telephones, and 4 cases of first-aid packets and sulfa drugs."[67] Although Ryder's force failed to achieve his end state, the 34th ID's sustainment during this battle undeniably prevented an earlier culmination.

In concert with these logistic operations, Ryder also managed the tempo of his assaults during the First Battle of Cassino to extend the 34th ID's organizational endurance. Over the course of the three-week battle, Ryder orchestrated three significant offensive thrusts, or what Böhmler called "hammer-blows," into the Gustav Line to break the German defenses and endurance. The importance of the rhythm over time becomes apparent when one considers that attacks elsewhere on the Gustav Line lasted no more than ninety-six hours, and those were against more favorable force ratios than what Ryder's Red Bulls faced. He balanced the tension between breaking his division and breaking the Gustav Line

Figure 2.6. Cassino – Anzio Stalemate, Spring 1944. *The Mediterranean Theater of Operations: Salerno to Cassino* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1993), 497. Map created by CAC History for the author.

defenses, overcoming terrain, weather, and superior numbers, while fighting against time to open the Liri Valley corridor to Anzio.

On 12 February, Ryder's final offensive culminated and he ordered his exhausted force to dig in. The Red Bulls were relieved six days later by the British Eighth Army's New Zealand Corps and transitioned to consolidation and reorganization activities. Ryder's objective of securing the mouth of the Liri Valley for II Corps' exploitation and Fifth Army's consolidation at Anzio had remained unchanged throughout the first battle of Cassino. Yet he exercised flexibility in his approach as he synthesized his emerging understanding of the enemy, the terrain and environmental effects, and his own force. As a testament to their heroic efforts, Cassino veteran Fred Majdalany wrote, "The performance of the 34th Division at Cassino must rank with the finest feats of arms carried out by any soldiers during the war."[68] It would take three more months of combat before the Gustav Line fell. The Allies launched three more major offensives, amassed a force five times that of Ryder, and paid an enormous price in lives and resources yet never expanded on the gains the 34th ID had achieved in those three weeks during the First Battle of Cassino.[69]

On the Anzio beachhead to the north, MG Lucas had attacked on 30 January towards the Alban Hills, just as the 34th ID prepared to launch their final assault against the Gustav Line. The timely arrival of German forces had halted VI Corps' attempt to reach the Alban Hills and then followed up with a series of counterattacks throughout February to eliminate the beachhead.[70] On 23 February, MG Lucian Truscott, formerly the 3d ID Commander, replaced Lucas as VI Corps commander. By 4 March, neither side had achieved their objectives, and the exhausted adversaries paused in a defensive stalemate.

So while VI Corps fought desperately to prevent the beachhead's collapse, Ryder began his retrograde from the Cassino front to prepare for future commitment at Anzio. Alexander and his two Army commanders had realized by late January that the weight of the Eighth Army must shift to the Cassino front to free up Fifth Army forces for Anzio if the Allies had any chance of breaking the Gustav Line, saving the Anzio beachhead, eliminating Generaloberst Vietinghoff's Tenth Army, and capturing Rome. Ryder's withdrawal from the Cassino front was a deliberate operation that involved relief by elements of the 2d New Zealand Corps, movement under pressure to assembly areas, movement to the rear area, and consolidation and reorganization. Considering the challenges presented by the enemy and terrain, absent in the 34th ID record but present in the 4th Indian Division's narrative, this was no small feat. Once the exhausted 34th ID was relieved from the Cassino front, the division was loaded into trucks at San Michele for a thirty-five-mile movement to Saint Angelo de Alife to receive long overdue medical attention and sustenance.[71] The Red Bulls would eventually complete their retrograde to the Benevento area east of Naples.

Ryder's retrograde occurred within his higher commanders' plans, and perhaps this is where the most significant lesson for the operational planner is seen. The transition between the 34th ID and the 4th Indian Division of the 2d New Zealand Corps was a tactical success. However, it was a relative failure in the scope of the broader operational plan because it occurred after the 34th ID had culminated. Rather than commit the fresh New Zealand Corps into the gains the waning 34th ID had achieved, the allied pause in tempo provided German defenders adequate time to recover and prepare for the next Allied attack. Consequently, since Clark had held no reserve on the Cassino front by this point, and Alexander's transition plan had failed to position a suitable force or account for the time it would take to transition forces, the opportunity to break the Gustav Line in February was missed.[72]

Once the division's retrograde was complete, Ryder transitioned to rebuilding his force for future combat operations. He utilized the brief month respite from active combat with replacement operations, individual weapon and survivability training, and combined arms live fire exercises.[73] Homer Ankrum, a Red Bull non-commissioned officer who received a battlefield commission in the Italian Campaign, noted that teamwork between seasoned Italian veterans and replacements was essential to successful integration, reorganization, and increased training proficiency at all echelons throughout the organization.[74]

By mid-March 1944, the 34th ID transitioned from refit operations to movement, and from 18 to 25 March the division loaded transport ships at the Port of Bagnoli, just west of Naples, for their movement to the Anzio beachhead.[75] Ryder had participated in LTG Clark's mid-November 1943 meeting about the importance of Anzio to Allied designs in Italy, and now that possibility was about to become a reality.[76] Upon debarkation at the Anzio beachhead, the 34th ID immediately moved to the front to relieve the 3d ID for an overdue refit.[77]

By April 1944, VI Corps' beachhead was 90,000 troops strong defended by the British 5th and 1st IDs, the US 45th and 34th IDs, and the 36th Engineer Regiment, while the 3d ID, 1st AD, and 1st Special Services Force (SSF) formed the reserve, and a substantial sustainment force operated from the Anzio-Nettuno area.[78] During the same time, Generaloberst Mackensen's Fourteenth Army surrounded the beachhead with the three divisions under the I Parachute Corps and two divisions under the LXXVI Panzer Corps, for a total of 70,400 troops.[79]

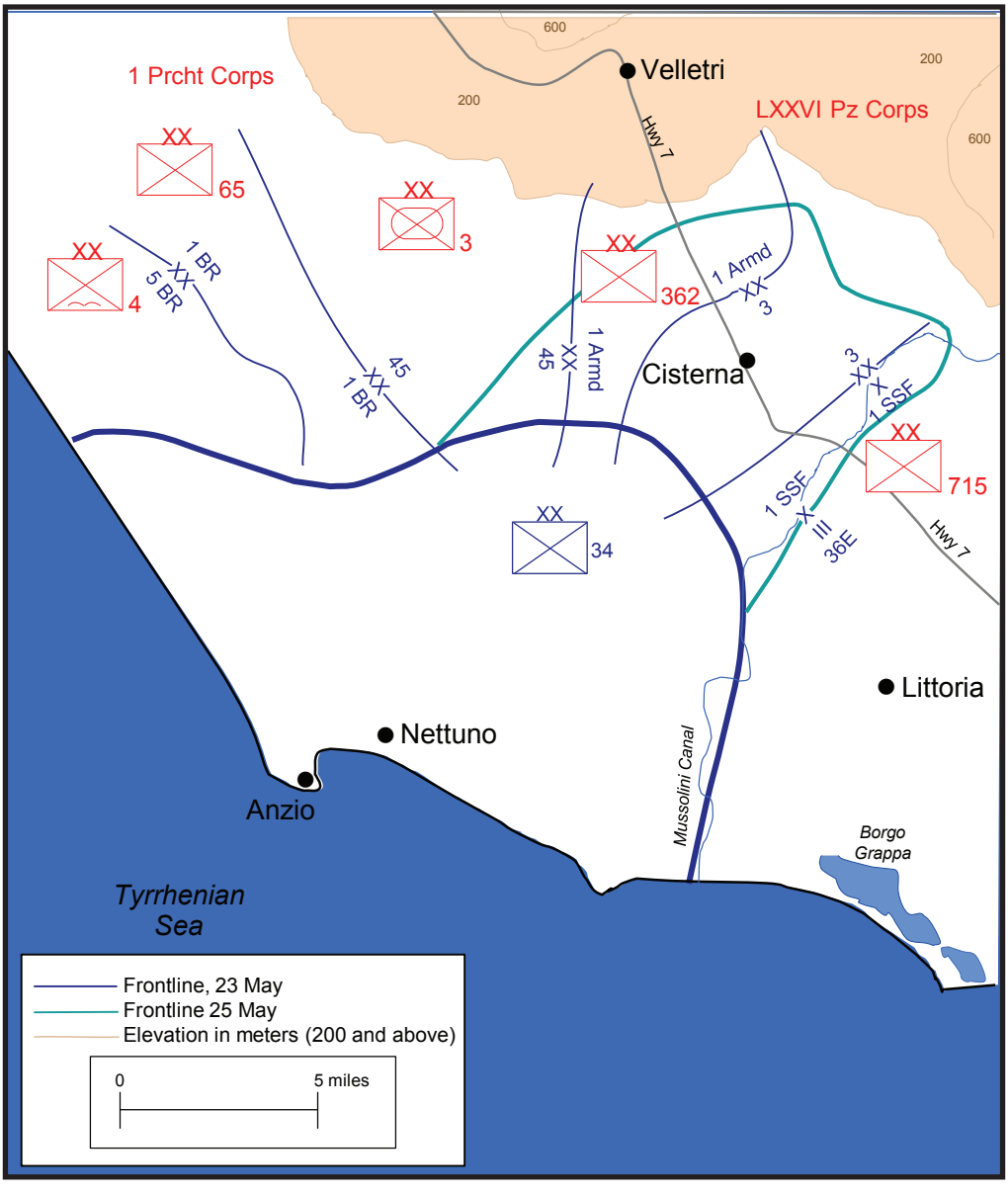

Figure 2.7. Anzio Breakout (Operation Buffalo), May 1944. *The Mediterranean Theater of Operations: Cassino to Alps* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1993), 589. Map created by CAC History for the author.

The 34th ID held the five-mile-wide Cisterna front from the Fosso de Carano on the left to the Nettuno-Cisterna Road on the right.[80] MG Ryder ordered the 168th and 135th Infantry to assume the left and right front line positions, respectively, and the 3-133d Infantry to develop a defense in depth to their immediate rear, while the remainder of the 133d Infantry constituted the division reserve.[81] During April and early May 1944, Ryder developed his defensive line and conducted aggressive patrolling, both in anticipation of a spring breakout offensive. Engineer-infantry teams constructed mine-wire defensive belts and marked lanes in the haphazardly laid minefields that were emplaced by both sides in the February fighting.[82] On 11 April, Ryder rotated the untested 2-133d Infantry, who had recently arrived from security detail in Africa, to the front to gain experience. On 20 April, he conducted a successful pre-breakout offensive on the division's left flank with the 3-168th Infantry Team that straightened the division's defensive line and gained favorable positions.[83] Ryder demanded aggressive patrolling along

his front to conduct reconnaissance and ambushes, with an emphasis on capturing German prisoners to develop a better understanding of the enemy disposition.[84]

In early May 1944, General Alexander unveiled the final plan for the Allied spring offensive to break the two front stalemate in Italy (Operation Diadem).[85] The main blow would strike the Gustav Line, to be delivered by the British Eighth Army and elements of the Fifth Army.[86] Once the Gustav Line collapsed, the next blow would be the breakout from Anzio towards Valmontone along Highway 6 to cut off and destroy the German Tenth Army between the two converging Allied fronts. Subsequently, the entire force would pursue the German Fourteenth Army north of Rome to seize key airfields and cities.

However, Clark's designs differed from "Alexander's strategic concept," and he directed Truscott to develop an attack plan for VI Corps to capture Rome, in addition to the base plan developed within Alexander's intent.[87] Truscott's plan (Operation Buffalo) would be a penetration of the LXXVI Panzer Corps defenses along the Cori-Valmontone axis, executed by a breakout force of 1st AD, 3d ID, and 1st SSF. During Phase I, the breakout force would isolate and reduce Cisterna to establish a firm base on the X-Y Phase Line, and during Phase II the forces would occupy the O-B Phase Line to capture Cori and advance to cut Highway 6 at Valmontone.[88] In addition to the main attack, the British 1st and 5th IDs would conduct diversionary attacks to the northwest, and the 45th and 34th ID would protect the left flank and control gaps in the rear area, respectively.

Before and during the breakout, MG Ryder had several shaping and supporting tasks that required him to be flexible. The 34th ID was to screen the VI Corps' final preparations and clear lanes in the Allied mine-wire defensive belts for the breakout force's forward passage of lines. For the attack, Ryder provided two battalions from the 135th Infantry to support CCA 1st AD's attack. Once the attack passed through the 34th ID line, Ryder would reform and prepare to relieve the 1st AD or 1st SSF.[89]

On 11 May, Operation Diadem opened sixty miles to the south of Anzio and penetrated as far as the Hitler Line by 19 May; meanwhile, VI Corps finalized attack preparations and maintained deception activities. This included a 20 May shaping attack by the 1-133d Infantry across Mussolini Canal to gain needed maneuver room for the 1st SSF's attack, which resulted in terrain seized, forty-six German prisoners captured, and a battalion-sized armor-infantry team repelled.[90] During this time, Clark and Alexander debated initiation criteria for Operation Buffalo in relation to operations along the Gustav Line. Alexander finally acquiesced and ordered the Anzio breakout to commence at 0630 on 23 May.[91]

Throughout the night of 22 May, the VI Corps' assault forces moved to the line of departure while the 34th ID's 109th Engineer Battalion led the "tedious and hazardous work of clearing gaps through the Allied minefields."[92] At 0600 on 23 May, the preparatory fires commenced with a simultaneous firing of some 1500 artillery pieces at the previously identified minefields and positions. At 0630, additional blasts along the front joined the cacophony, as mine-wire breaching 'Snakes' widened the 400-foot long lanes Ryder's force had cleared.[93]

On the first day of the Anzio breakout, the 1st AD attacked on the breakout's left flank and closed on the coastal Highway 7. In the center, the 3d ID attack stalled against the Cisterna area defenses, and on the right flank, the 1st SSF was reinforced with a battalion from the 133d Infantry after incurring heavy losses along the Mussolini Canal near Highway 7. Additionally, the 45th ID launched a limited attack in the direction of Campeleone to stabilize the gains along the left flank.[94] On 24 May, the 1st AD force launched a two-pronged attack towards their objectives of Velletri and Giulianello that opened a five-mile gap to their rear. These gains required the 34th ID to reposition north to control the breakout force's rear area. The 3d ID renewed their attack in the center and encircled Cisterna, and on the right flank, the 133d Infantry screened along the Mussolini Canal in preparation for the 1st SSF attack the next day.[95] On 25 May, Operation Buffalo's success appeared imminent as the 1st SSF captured Monte Arrestino south of Cori, the 3d ID captured Cisterna and Cori, the

1st AD was ten miles from Valmontone, and elements from Clark's II and VI Corps' had linked-up twelve miles south of Cisterna.[96] In response to the collapse of the German Tenth Army in the south, Hitler approved Kesselring's plan to withdraw the LXXVI and XIV Panzer Corps into the Caesar Line south of Rome.[97]

These developments affirmed Clark's determination to disregard Alexander's strategic concept and pivot most of VI Corps' from the Valmontone axis towards "the most direct route to Rome."[98] Historians have debated the motives, decisions, and consequences associated with Clark's decision, but with Alexander's light-handed leadership style, Truscott and his division commanders had neither the time nor the compunction to do anything other than regroup and reorient in stride. Although VI Corps had planned for this sequel, Truscott recorded that it was a drastic change that required a sweeping shift in disposition and mission for the 34th ID.[99] In less than twenty-four hours, Ryder consolidated his dispersed elements by truck and foot movement and transitioned to the attack towards Lanuvio by the morning of 26 May. The 34th ID would clash against the Caesar Line defenses at the southwest base of the Alban Hills until 3 June, with marginal gains achieved. However, the 34th and 45th ID combined efforts did hold the German I Parachute Corps and elements of the LXXVI Corps from blocking Clark's consolidated corps' advance on Rome. Ultimately, the Allied breakout had been a success, and Rome fell under LTG Clark's Fifth Army control on 4 June 1944.

From February to May 1944, Ryder used phasing to logically organize and sequence actions for his contribution to the overall operational and strategic objectives of VI Corps and Fifth Army's broader operational approach. During that time, Ryder moved the 34th ID through five distinct phases within the overlapping operations of Fifth Army's II and VI Corps, retrograde—consolidation and reorganization—movement—defense—offense. Ryder used each phase to accomplish a specific purpose, such as to preserve combat power after culminating, prepare for future operations, shape conditions for the breakout attack, or exploit the success of the breakout.

Ryder also carefully managed risk during the transitions between phases. Cognitively arranging activities into phases is one thing, implementing transitions between phases is another. Effective transitions "require planning and preparation well before their execution, so the force can maintain the momentum and tempo of operations."[100] This prior planning is required at every echelon, although every echelon necessarily works on different planning horizons. Implicit to all military operations is the element of risk, risk to mission and to force, but nowhere is mission and force more vulnerable than during transitions. If inadequately planned and prepared for, transitions can increase risk jeopardizing tempo and initiative, disintegrating unity of effort, and increasing exposure to enemy systems and observation.

The 34th ID's transition from shaping the VI Corps' defensive line to offensive support and then to a deliberate attack illustrate Ryder's skill in mitigating risk to force and mission through preparation and planning. Even while maintaining the defense for two and a half months, Ryder ensured that the 34th ID was prepared for the Anzio breakout. This involved a thorough understanding of both Truscott's and Clark's plans and intent, although this could be quite guarded in the case of the latter. Ryder also implemented aggressive patrolling during the so-called Anzio lull, that hardened the division's defense, maintained small unit offensive proficiency (upon which all operational and strategic success is built), and developed an accurate enemy situation. Another important way Ryder mitigated risk to his transitions was through the relationships he forged with his subordinate commanders and division, a process that started in Ireland, June 1942. Ryder, a distinguished and decorated West Point general, communicated with his officers about winning and nowhere in the record is there mention of the animosity that was often seen in the adjacent 36th ID, between MG Fred Walker and the officers of the 36th ID, Texas National Guard.

Nearly seventy-five years have passed since the 34th ID fought at the pivotal battles of Cassino and Anzio, but contemporary combat formations face the same fundamental challenges in today's complex operational environments and so these battles provide several enduring lessons. First, Ryder demonstrated that the mental and organizational flexibility to shift roles within the operational framework, in a time and resource constrained environment, is vital to maintaining operational tempo. Second, the 34th ID demonstrated that successful units must cultivate the ability to operate in complex terrain and conditions that degrade technological advantages. Technological advances in manned and unmanned aircraft, satellite communication, weaponry, and personal protective equipment offer much to solving the tactical dilemmas of movement and maneuver, fires, sustainment, and protection, but they do not eliminate these problems. Third, navigating organizations through change requires planning and preparation to ensure seamless transitions that maintain continuity of effort and momentum. Successful transitions are achieved through purposeful planning and preparation that maintains operational tempo and consolidates gains more rapidly than the enemy. Finally, these battles provide a timeless lesson about the decisive role the human dimension contributes to conflict through cognitive ability, physical stamina, and will.[101]

As the United States marks off its seventeenth year in major combat operations abroad, and volatile actors on the world scene threaten to stretch military resources at home and abroad, the relevance for the third Allied front of WWII increases. The battle record of the 34th ID during the Italian Campaign of WWII, from January to June 1944, illustrate roles that divisions commonly play, but are less frequently studied. While the decisive action in the attack is absolutely critical to achieving tactical gains, it is the ability to succeed in shaping operations, to bridge transitions without lapses in momentum, and to implement innovation across large formations that will allow that decisive blow to succeed. Consequently, MG Ryder's command of the 34th ID provide the modern operational artist an example of leadership and operational art at the division level.

Notes

1. http://apps.westpointaog.org/Memorials/Article/5351/

2. http://www.34ida.org/history//

3. Mark A. Stoler, *Allies in War: Britain and America Against the Axis Powers 1940-1945* (New York: Oxford, 2005), 120-121.

4. Alan F. Wilt, *War from the Top: German and British Military Decision Making during World War II* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990), 206. Wilt points out that Allied strength at the conclusion of Operation Husky was nearly equal between Britain and the United States, at 168,000 per nation.

5. Stoler, *Allies in War*, 128; Martin Blumenson, *The Mediterranean Theater of Operations: Salerno to Cassino* (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 1993) 69, GMDS, 2.

6. Blumenson, *The Mediterranean Theater of Operations*, 322. In the 36th ID area of operations, the Rapido River had vertical banks three to six feet high and was twenty-five to fifty feet apart with a nine to twelve-foot depth.

7. Fred Majdalany, *Cassino: A Portrait of Battle* (London: Longmans, Green and Company, 1957), 21.

8. Ernie Pyle, *Brave Men*, Introduction by G. Kurt Piehler (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2001), 251-252.

9. John S.D. Eisenhower, *They Fought at Anzio* (Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press, 2007), 53. The mouth of the Liri Valley, along the Rapido River, is five miles wide.

10. Majdalany, *Cassino*, 21.

11. Ennio Silvestri, *The Long Road to Rome* (N.p.:Il Gabbiano, 1994), 76. The Todt Organization was a German military engineering group under Adolf Hitler's Third Reich.

12. Allied Coalition Staff, *The German Operation at Anzio: A Study of the German Operations at Anzio Beachhead from 22 JAN 44 to 31 MAY 44* (German Military Documents Section, 1946), 6.

13. Majdalany, *Cassino*, 3.

14. Majdalany, *Cassino*, 53. Majdalany explains that the German defensive preparations at the Gustav Line in the Cassino area included houses that were "blown up and turned to strong-points" and "waterways were diverted to create floods."

15. Eisenhower, *They Fought at Anzio*, 66.

16. Rudolf Böhmler, *Monte Cassino: A German View* (London: Cassell and Company, 1964), 140-141, 148; Ellis, 50, 115; Homer R. Ankrum, *Dogfaces Who Smiled Through Tears* (Lake Mills, IA: Graphic Publishing, 1987), 389. On 23 January 1944, Hitler directed that the defense at Monte Cassino be raised to 'fortress strength' and must 'on no account be lost.

17. Matthew Parker, *Monte Cassino* (New York: Doubleday, 2004), 77. On 23 January 1944, Hitler directed that the defense at Monte Cassino be raised to "fortress strength" and must "on no account be lost."

18. Blumenson, *The Mediterranean Theater of Operations*, 318.

19. Ken Ford, *Cassino 1944: Breaking the Gustav Line* (Oxford: Osprey Publishing, 2004), 26-27, 34.

20. Ian Gooderson, *A Hard Way to Make War: The Allied Campaign in Italy in the Second World War* (London: Conway, 2008), 249; Blumenson, *The Mediterranean Theater of Operations*, 318, 376.

21. Parker, *Monte Cassino,* 70, 73-75; Ford, *Cassino 1944,* 32-33; Blumenson, *The Mediterranean Theater of Operations*, 314.

22. Parker, *Monte Cassino*, 85. McCreery's three divisions were to seize the coastal road near Minturno, the area around Castelforte and Monte Castielo, and the heights near Santo Ambrogio.

23. Blumenson, *The Mediterranean Theater of Operations*, 316, 318-320;Ford, *Cassino 1944,* 35-36; Parker, *Monte Cassino,* 100-101. Von Senger initially committed one regiment from the adjacent 15th Panzergrenadier Division in the Liri Valley.

24. Blumenson, *The Mediterranean Theater of Operations*, 320-321, 326-328. Blumenson provides a summary of the correspondence and discussions between Walker, Keyes, and Clark during the month before the 36th ID attack. The conditions and concerns had been tabled but little had been done to mitigate the known impediments to establishing the opening of the Liri valley, 326-328.

25. Duane Schultz, "Rage Over the Rapido," *World War II* 25, no. 5 (January/February 2011): 9, accessed 22 February 2017, http:// http://duaneschultz.com.wp-content/uploads/Rage-over-the-Rapido.pdf. As a battalion

commander in WWI, Walker's unit of 1200 troops opposed a German attempt to cross the Marne with a force of 10,000, the results of which were devastating for the Germans.

26. Ankrum, *Dogfaces Who Smiled Through Tears*, 388-389.

27. Blumenson, *The Mediterranean Theater of Operations*, 329-333. The 36th ID was denied the allocated twelve amphibious vehicles (DUKW) due to losses during VI Corps' Operation Shingle rehearsal. The division lost twenty-five percent of their boat and bridging equipment during the initial approach to the Rapido from enemy and elemental effects.

28. Peter Caddick-Adams, *Monte Cassino: Ten Armies in Hell* (New York: Oxford, 2013), 106-108. In thirty-six hours, the 36th ID suffered "1681 losses – 143 killed, 663 wounded, and 875 missing, most of whom were known to be captured," Blumenson, 346.

29. Blumenson, *The Mediterranean Theater of Operations*, 360.

30. The 45th ID was the Fifth Army Reserve for the opening offensive at the Cassino front, but were ashore at Anzio when their commitment in support of the 34th ID attack could have penetrated the Gustav Line.

31. Allied Coalition Staff, 7; Ankrum, 446. By mid-January 1944, Kesselring was aware of an imminent Allied landing due to the build-up of ships and units at Naples but there were several plausible points of entry. After the initial landings his assumptions were validated.

32. Blumenson, *The Mediterranean Theater of Operations*, 366.

33. Blumenson, *The Mediterranean Theater of Operations*, 366-367.

34. Ankrum, *Dogfaces Who Smiled Through Tears*, 390-391.

35. Ankrum, *Dogfaces Who Smiled Through Tears*, 397; Böhmler, *Monte Cassino: A German View*, 152; Majdalany, *Cassino*, 79. These three Cassino veterans' narratives are indispensable for framing an understanding of the German defense the 34th ID's attacked at Cassino.

36. Ankrum, *Dogfaces Who Smiled Through Tears*, 389.

37. John Ellis, *Cassino: The Hollow Victory* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1984), 115.

38. Ellis, *Cassino*, 116. Majdalany recorded that the German portable pillboxes used in the Cassino area had five-inch thick armor and were designed for a machine-gun crew, 89.

39. Blumenson, *The Mediterranean Theater of Operations*, 366.

40. James A. Luttrell, "The Operations of the 168th Infantry (34th ID) in the Rapido River Crossing, 28 January – 10 February, 1944." Personal Experience Paper, (Fort Benning, GA: US Army Infantry School, 1949), 11; Blumenson, 368-369. Ryder considered the barracks key terrain for Cassino attack.

41. Luttrell, "The Operations of the 168th Infantry," 11; Caddick-Adams, *Monte Cassino,* 110; Ellis, *Cassino*, 114; Majdalany, *Cassino*, 81.

42. Blumenson, *The Mediterranean Theater of Operations*, 369. The 756th Tank Battalion attached to the 34th ID for this phase brought fifty-four medium (M4 Sherman) and seventeen light (M3 Stuart) tanks.

43. Böhmler, *Monte Cassino: A German View*, 152.

44. Blumenson, *The Mediterranean Theater of Operations*, 372.

45. Blumenson, *The Mediterranean Theater of Operations*, 370.

46. Böhmler, *Monte Cassino: A German View*, 152. The 100th Battalion was a Hawaiian National Guard unit comprised of Japanese-Americans, sent to Italy because the faulty assumption of the day was that they could not be trusted to fight in the Pacific Theater. They proved their patriotism and tenacity throughout the Italian Campaign and continue to be honored alongside other Red Bulls in the "34th Infantry Division Association Newsletter" Final Roll Call section.

47. Blumenson, *The Mediterranean Theater of Operations*, 370.

48. A Regimental Combat Team (RCT) was formed by augmenting an infantry regiment with other units, such as armor, engineers, artillery, and cavalry. It was usually task organized for a limited duration to accomplish a specific mission as seen in the first battle of Cassino.

49. Luttrell, "The Operations of the 168th Infantry," 13-14.

50. 34th ID, *Lessons Learned in Combat*, Chapter III — Infantry-Tank-Tank Destroyer Team.

51. Luttrell, "The Operations of the 168th Infantry," 14. Captain Luttrell's eight-gun Cannon Company, 168th RGT fired approximately 1200 rounds in this hour of preparatory fire.

52. Luttrell, "The Operations of the 168th Infantry," 15-16; Blumenson, *The Mediterranean Theater of Operations*, 371.

53. Blumenson, *The Mediterranean Theater of Operations*, 372-373. Hill 56 and 213 were necessary for a subsequent attack on Monte Castellone and to facilitate the 133d Infantry's seizure of the Monte Villa Barracks.

54. Blumenson, *The Mediterranean Theater of Operations*, 372.

55. Blumenson, *The Mediterranean Theater of Operations*, 372.

56. Luttrell, "The Operations of the 168th Infantry," 18; Caddick-Adams, *Monte Cassino,* 113.

57. Ellis, *Cassino*, 124; Blumenson, *The Mediterranean Theater of Operations*, 377.

58. Böhmler, *Monte Cassino: A German View*, 153; Parker, 133. Parker further explains that atop Hill 593 sat a ruined fort that blocks the approach to the monastery, providing the defenders excellent observation and fields of fire in all directions.

59. Parker, *Monte Cassino*, 132-133; Gooderson, *Cassino*, 70; Ankrum, *Dogfaces Who Smiled Through Tears*, 406.

60. Ankrum, *Dogfaces Who Smiled Through Tears*, 389, 399-406. The combined arms team was essential to this portion of the battle. The tanks destroyed the pillboxes and created paths through the mined-wire obstacles, while the infantry filled in antitank ditches and destroyed antitank guns near and in the rubble of Cassino. The 133d Infantry captured over 200 prisoners from the 211th Grenadier Regiment, 71st ID during the two-mile advance from the barracks to Cassino.

61. Parker, *Monte Cassino*, 120.

62. Böhmler, *Monte Cassino: A German View*, 153-154.

63. Böhmler, *Monte Cassino: A German View*, 154-155. The Schulz Battle group was built around the 1st Parachute Regiment.

64. Böhmler, *Monte Cassino: A German View*, 155.

65. Peter R. Mansoor, *The GI Offensive in Europe: The Triumph of American Infantry Divisions, 1941-1945* (Lawrence, KS: University Press Kansas, 1999), 119.

66. Mansoor, *The GI Offensive in Europe*, 119.

67. Ernie Pyle, *Brave Men*, Introduction by G. Kurt Piehler, (Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 2001) 153-158.

68. Majdalany, *Cassino*, 87.

69. Böhmler, *Monte Cassino: A German View*, 161. In the Battles of Cassino, the Allies suffered 55,000 casualties and the Germans suffered 20,000 casualties. During the second battle alone, the Allies leveled the Monte Cassino Monastery and Cassino town under 1250 tons of bombs and 600,000 artillery rounds.

70. The Germans launched four counterattacks in February, while on the Cassino front, the 34th ID's push across Monte Cassino culminated on February 12 and the Second Battle of Cassino began on February 15 with the controversial bombing of the Monte Cassino Monastery. It culminated on February 18.

71. Ankrum, *Dogfaces Who Smiled Through Tears*, 435-436. One of the key tasks during this period of the refit phase was rectifying the loss of accountability that occurred during the three-week battle. Ryder had pushed soldiers from every occupation forward to replace his dwindling lines. Additionally, during the offensive the replacements arrived under fire to dispersed units.

72. Majdalany, *Cassino*, 95, 109.

73. Ankrum, *Dogfaces Who Smiled Through Tears*, 439-443. The 2-133d Infantry, which had served as the ceremonial unit for the Mediterranean Command in Algiers, returned to the 34th ID on 9 March 1944.

74. Ankrum, *Dogfaces Who Smiled Through Tears*, 442-443.

75. Ankrum, *Dogfaces Who Smiled Through Tears*, 443.

76. L.K. Truscott, *Command Missions: A Personal Story* (New York: E.P. Dutton and Company, 1954), 286.

77. Ernest Fisher, *The Mediterranean Theater of Operations: Cassino to the Alps* (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 1993), 110; Ankrum, 451.

78. Fisher, *The Mediterranean Theater of Operations,* 111.

79. Fisher, *The Mediterranean Theater of Operations,* 111.

80. GMDS, 91.

81. Ankrum, *Dogfaces Who Smiled Through Tears*, 451-453.

82. *34th ID Lessons Learned in Combat*, "Chapter IV – Engineer Operations," Major Carl J. Schieferstein, Executive Office, 109th Engineer Battalion, Miscellaneous, a.

83. Ankrum, *Dogfaces Who Smiled Through Tears*, 458-459.

84. *34th ID Lessons Learned in Combat*, "Chapter VII – Intelligence," 1.e. Order of Battle. The analysis of German intelligence reports indicated their reconnaissance patrolling was active and accurate as well, Allied Coalition Staff, 90-91.

85. Jon B. Mikolashek, *General Mark Clark: Commander of the Fifth Army and Liberator of Rome* (Philadelphia: Casemate Publishers, 2013), 120-121.

86. Fisher, *The Mediterranean Theater of Operations,* 27-28. For Operation Diadem, the Allied force totaled four corps, with the Polish 2 Corps and the British XIII Corps under the Eighth Army, and the FEC and the US II Corps under the Fifth Army.

87. Fisher, *The Mediterranean Theater of Operations,* 119.

88. Truscott, *Command Missions,* 372; Fisher, *The Mediterranean Theater of Operations,* 122, 142. The X-Y Line was the first phase line and was tied into ridge a quarter of a mile beyond the railroad line. The O-B Line was the second phase line located about four miles northwest of Cisterna between Velletri and Cori.

89. Fisher, *The Mediterranean Theater of Operations,* 114.

90. Ankrum, *Dogfaces Who Smiled Through Tears*, 488-489.

91. Ellis, *Cassino*, 409-410.

92. Fisher, *The Mediterranean Theater of Operations,* 118.

93. Ankrum, *Dogfaces Who Smiled Through Tears*, 490-491. Fisher described the Snakes as an innovation to clear lanes through the mine-wire obstacles of the German beachhead defenses. The explosive filled steel pipes would be towed to the belt and then assembled and pushed forward by tanks to depths of 400 feet. When detonated, the snakes could clear a lane fifteen feet wide and destroy mines to depths of five feet. Fisher, 121.

94. Fisher, *The Mediterranean Theater of Operations,* 133-125, 137-138, 141. On 23 May 1944, MG Ryder had three battalions involved in the breakout attack with the 1-135 and 2-135 Infantry in support of CCA 1st AD and a battalion from the 133d Infantry to relieve the 1st SSF's 1st Regiment along Highway 7 and the Mussolini Canal.

95. Fisher, *The Mediterranean Theater of Operations,* 152.

96. Fisher, *The Mediterranean Theater of Operations,* 152, 172.

97. Fisher, *The Mediterranean Theater of Operations,* 152.

98. Fisher, *The Mediterranean Theater of Operations,* 119,152, 173. Fisher recorded three considerations that led to Clark's decision to disregard Alexander's strategic concepts: Clark wanted to be the first to Rome and to be there before the Operation Overlord invasion relegated the Italian Campaign to a side-show; he wanted "to avoid destructive fighting within the hallowed city; and he was convinced that adhering to Alexander's strategy would deny the Fifth Army the first, and perhaps second goal."

99. Truscott, *Command Missions,* 375-376.

100. Army Doctrine Reference Publication (ADRP) 3-0, *Operations* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2016), 2-8.

101. *US Army Human Dimension Strategy* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Combined Arms Center, 2015), accessed 8 April 2017, http://usacac.army.mil/sites/default/files/publications/20150524_Human_ Dimension_ Strategy_vr_Signature_WM_1.pdf, 1.

Chapter 3
The 4th Armored Division in the Encirclement of Nancy

Dr. Christopher R. Gabel

The Lorraine campaign of 1944 was the most costly and least productive of the US Third Army's World War II campaigns. Although the protracted conflict in Lorraine was indecisive, a number of instructive division-level operations took place during the fighting. One was the encirclement of Nancy conducted by the 4th Armored Division in September 1944. In one month, the 4th concluded an exhilarating pursuit across central France, crossed a major river, performed a classic armored penetration, and consolidated its gains with a skillful active defense. During that one month, the 4th Armored Division vividly illustrated many lessons of division-level combined arms warfare that still apply today.

As it was configured in 1944, the 4th Armored Division was a relatively light, but powerful, formation. Fourteen of the US Army's sixteen armored divisions, including the 4th, each had an aggregate strength of just under 11,000 officers and enlisted men, 263 tanks, and 54 artillery pieces. The division's major fighting elements were its three tank battalions, three battalions of armored infantry, and three battalions of armored field artillery.

Each tank battalion within the armored division consisted of one company equipped with M-5 Stuart light tanks and three companies with M-4 Sherman medium tanks. Both the light and medium tanks were fully developed, proven designs with good mobility and a favorable power-to-weight ratio, and were especially prized for their mechanical reliability. However, the general-purpose 75-mm guns carried by most M-4s and the antiquated 37-mm pieces mounted on the M-5s were outclassed by the high-velocity 75-mm and 88-mm guns found on the German tanks of the day. Nonetheless, through superior teamwork and tactical mobility that allowed the Shermans to fire at the flanks and rear of the German tanks from close range, the 4th Armored Division established a favorable kill ratio over German armor.

The division's three field artillery battalions each possessed three firing batteries armed with the M-7 self-propelled 105-mm howitzer. Even though the M-7 was a hastily improvised design that carried inadequate armor, it was a highly effective weapon that combined two superb subsystems: the famous 105-mm howitzer and the rugged chassis of the versatile Sherman tank.

Three rifle companies armed with semiautomatic and automatic weapons made up each of the armored division's three infantry battalions. All the infantry rode to battle in M-3 half-tracks, but 1944 doctrine insisted that the riflemen dismount to fight. This was undoubtedly wise, for the half-track carried only minimal armor.

Other major elements of the armored division were its mechanized cavalry squadron armed with light tanks and armored cars, an engineer battalion, and the division trains. In addition, units from corps and army pools were usually attached to the armored division on a semi-permanent basis. For the 4th Armored Division, these generally included a tank destroyer battalion armed with M-18s (76-mm self-propelled guns), an antiaircraft artillery battalion, a battalion of 155-mm howitzers, three quartermaster truck companies, a quartermaster gasoline supply company, and an engineer treadway bridge company. Above and beyond these elements drawn from corps and army pools, the 4th Armored Division occasionally borrowed one or more infantry battalions from adjacent infantry divisions. This was because the three organic armored infantry battalions were often inadequate for the armored division's needs.

The commanding general of the 1944 armored division exercised command and control over the fighting battalions through three task force headquarters designated Combat Command A (CCA), Combat Command B (CCB), and Reserve Command. These commands possessed no organic fighting troops of

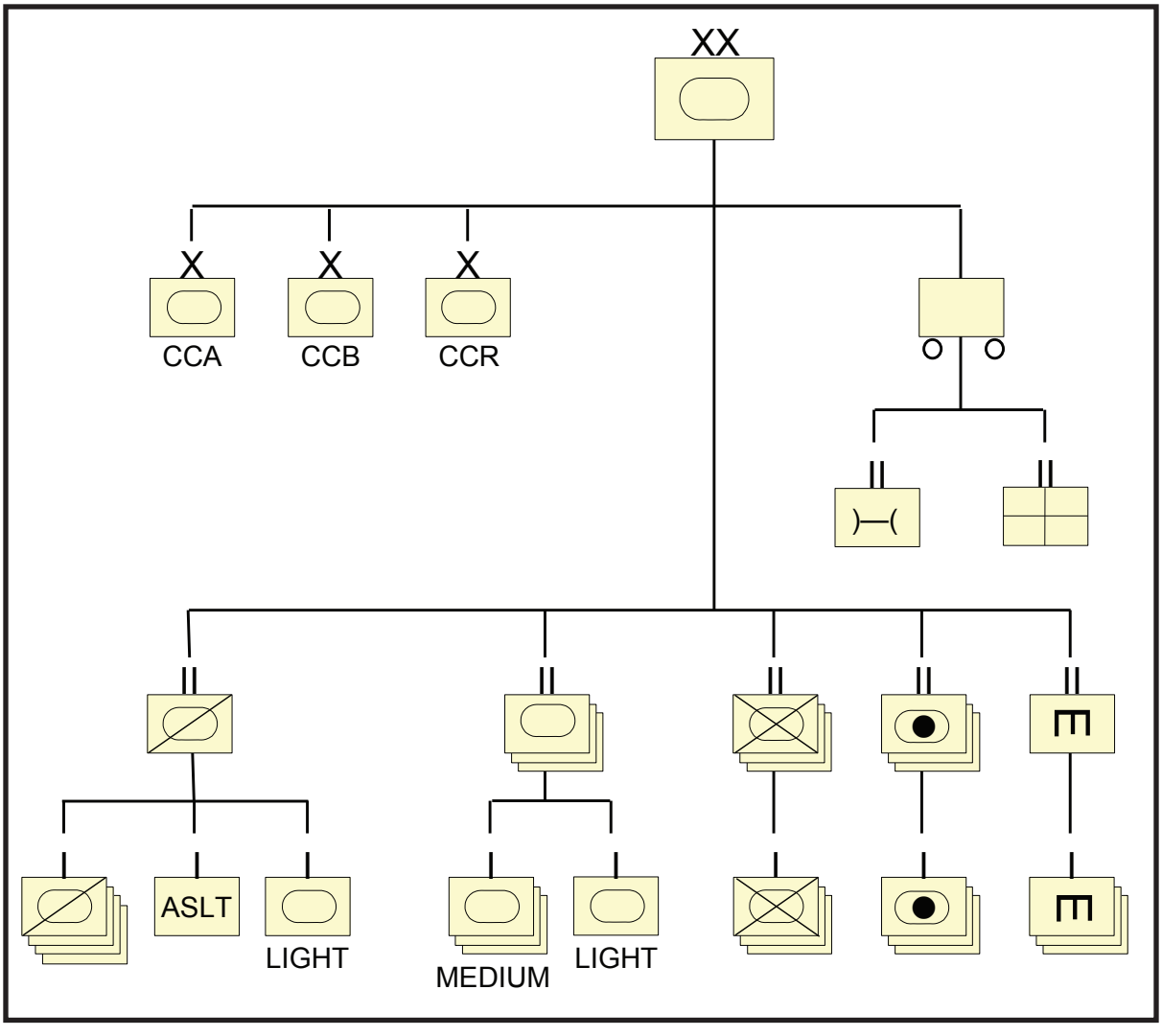

Figure 3.1. US armored division, 1944. Graphic created by CAC History for the author.

their own but were allotted the combat and service support assets required to accomplish their individual missions. The CCA and CCB headquarters each had about twelve officers and eighty enlisted men, enough to provide full staff functions for the combat command. In keeping with its intended role as a non-tactical reserve, the Reserve Command had only three officers and five enlisted men. However, in some cases, an armored division commander would upgrade his Reserve Command to a status co-equal to a combat command by assigning additional headquarters personnel to it. The 4th Armored Division, however, did not do so and, in battle, rarely employed its Reserve Command on independent missions.

Unlike some other armored divisions, the 4th never assigned elements to the combat commands on a fixed basis, preferring instead to retain a high degree of flexibility in its task organization. Typically, however, a combat command might consist of one troop from the cavalry reconnaissance squadron, a battalion of tanks, one or two armored field artillery battalions supplemented with additional 155-mm howitzers, an antiaircraft artillery battery, a tank destroyer company, an engineer company, and combat command trains. These forces would be further subdivided among two or three battalion-sized columns or task forces, each including tanks, infantry, and artillery and each controlling its own maintenance and supply services. Thus, the 4th Armored Division's technique of task organization emphasized flexibility and provided for the close integration of the arms and services at the company, troop, and battery level.

The doctrine under which the 4th Armored Division operated in 1944 cast a rather specific mission for armored forces. According to the 1944 version of FM 17-100, *Armored Command Field Manual, The Armored Division*:

> The armored division is organized primarily to perform missions that require great mobility and firepower. It is given decisive missions. It is capable of engaging in most forms of combat but its primary role is in offensive operations against hostile rear areas.[1]
>
> The most profitable role of the armored division is exploitation.[2]

To the 4th Armored Division, these doctrinal tenets were deeply engrained articles of faith. It is no exaggeration to say that the 4th had a distinct personality characterized by aggressiveness and teamwork. As a group, the division believed that the 4th's proper place was deep in the enemy rear. One tank commander, long accustomed to operating behind German lines, remarked, "They've got us surrounded again, the poor bastards!"[3] To the 4th Armored Division, the primary tank weapon was the machine gun, which became the weapon of choice when the division engaged in aggressive exploitation and pursuit.

Figure 3.2. Major General John Shirley Wood (11 January 1888 to 2 July 1966). Photo courtesy of Wikimedia Commons.

The personality of the 4th Armored Division was a true reflection of its commander's character. Major General John S. Wood took over the division in 1942 and trained it for two years before he led it into battle. This unusually long association between commander and unit fostered a high degree of rapport within the division and assured a continuity of effort from training to combat.

Wood was known to his contemporaries as "P" Wood, the "P" standing for "Professor." He was the son of an Arkansas State Supreme Court Justice and, after tutoring at his mother's knee, graduated from the University of Arkansas in three years. In his senior year he captained the school football team and stayed on after graduation as an instructor in the chemistry department and the assistant state chemist. But one of his college teammates got an appointment to West Point and persuaded Wood to join him "to play another year or so of football." There he indeed played four years of football, but he spent as much time coaching fellow students in academics, so much so that he earned the nickname "Professor."[4]

Commissioned into the Coastal Defense Artillery, Wood shifted to Ordnance in order to get deployed to France in WWI, then to Field Artillery, and finally Armor. He returned to West Point as an instructor; spent ten years in ROTC assignments; attended staff school at Langres, France, the Ecole Superieur de Guerre, and Fort Leavenworth; but he always sought out duty with troops even to the point of declining assignment as a student at the War College. Wood wrote for professional journals and consumed professional thought, contemporary and classic, which he debated with other lifetime students such as George Patton. He was self-confident, energetic, and physically imposing. But he had little tolerance for tasks he thought beneath him, and when his unit was insulted or he thought his orders foolish he would stride up and down the line of insubordination, not seeming to care where each foot fell.[5]

The distinguished British military analyst Basil H. Liddell Hart once referred to "P" Wood as "the Rommel of the American armored forces."[6] Like the legendary German field marshal, Wood's superiors had to restrain him rather than prod him into action. He preferred to bewilder his opponent through the "indirect approach" rather than to bludgeon him with brute force. Wood habitually commanded from the front, as did Rommel, utilizing a light liaison aircraft to personally channel mission-type orders from corps headquarters directly to his far-flung, fast-moving columns. Wood justified his frequent and prolonged absences from division headquarters by saying, "If you can't see it happen, it's too late to hear about it back in a rear area and meet it with proper force."[7]

Wood was an aggressive commander who always strove to knock the enemy off-balance through daring, violent action and then keep him off-balance with unrelenting pressure in unexpected areas. He did not, however, expend the lives of his men freely. Wood never forgot that his Soldiers were sons, brothers, and fathers of loved ones back home, and he weighed every tactical decision on the grounds that the lives of his Soldiers were an investment that demanded an appropriate military return.

During his long tenure as division commander, Wood was able to staff his division with many like-minded officers. Foremost among these were his two combat commanders, Colonel Bruce C. Clarke and Brigadier General Holmes E. Dager. A younger officer cast in the Wood mold was the division's premier tank battalion commander, Lieutenant Colonel Creighton W. Abrams.

Major General Wood was close in temperament and military philosophy to his army commander, Lieutenant General George S. Patton Jr. In fact, the head of the tactical air command that supported Third Army once noted that Wood frequently "out-Pattoned" Patton. However, in the chain of command between Wood and Patton stood the commander of the XII Corps, Major General Manton S. Eddy, who was a wholly different type. Eddy had earned the right to command the XII Corps with solid performances at the head of the 9th Infantry Division in North Africa, Sicily, and Normandy. By background and temperament, he was methodical and thorough rather than flashy and daring. Eddy did not mix well with Patton and Wood, nor did the officers of the 4th Armored Division hold him in high regard. Wood openly criticized Eddy's methodical style, and he believed that Eddy's overcautious methods resulted in lost opportunities that could only be redeemed later through unnecessarily hard fighting.

Wood's disagreements with Eddy eventually had serious repercussions, but the 4th Armored Division began its combat career so positively that such disagreements were easily forgotten. The division landed in France 36 days after D-day and was quickly earmarked to participate in Operation Cobra, the US First Army's attempt to break out of the Normandy beachhead. On 28 July, after a carpet bombardment and an infantry attack had created a gap in the German lines near Saint-Lo, the 4th and three other armored divisions broke through. "It was like old home week at Fort Knox," wrote the division public relations officer.[8] With the 4th Armored Division leading the newly activated Third Army into Brittany and then eastward into the heart of France, the breakout became a pursuit.

Figure 3.3. 4th Armored Division's pursuit across France, 1944. Map created by CAC History for the author.

During the ensuing drive across France, Wood pushed his division hard and never gave the Germans an opportunity to forge a new defensive line. The 4th operated in two combat commands, each of which was divided into two to four task forces. In keeping with the fluidity of the situation, Wood reconfigured the combat commands about every three days. Frequently, task forces were formed, and mission-type orders were issued over the radio. Wood dispensed with phase lines, zones of advance, and secure flanks as the 4th drove deep into France.

A German defender unfortunate enough to find himself in the path of the 4th Armored Division in August 1944 first had to deal with the fighter-bombers of the XIX Tactical Air Command (TAC), which maintained constant patrols in advance of Wood's armored columns. Army Air Force liaison officers riding in the lead tanks called out targets for the fighter-bombers and kept the ground troops informed as to what lay ahead of the column. The 4th Armored Division reciprocated for this close cooperation by making every effort to rescue downed pilots and by sharing "liberated" booty with the XIX TAC.

Behind the fighter-bombers came the division's light liaison aircraft, from which the combat commanders guided their columns around obstacles and strongpoints. Medium tanks usually led the columns, because experience had shown that the medium tanks could generally cut through any resistance encountered. Self-propelled artillery placed well forward in the column and ready to fire at the first sign of a target engaged any defenders too strongly emplaced for the medium tanks to dislodge. Engineers also accompanied the leading elements to remove obstacles. The 4th learned to travel the secondary roads, because the Germans tended to concentrate their obstacles and ambushes along the main highways.

The month-long pursuit demonstrated that the major logistical problem in a war of movement was fuel supply. Ammunition expenditures and battle casualties were relatively low, and a week's worth of

rations could be carried on the combat vehicles themselves. Supply trucks were overloaded by 50 percent or more to keep up with the demand for gasoline. Clearly, the safest place for the combat command trains to travel during the pursuit was right behind the combat elements in the "vacuum" created by the tanks, infantry, artillery, and aircraft. Wood also took medical and maintenance detachments out of the division trains and added them to the combat command trains so these services were immediately available to the leading elements.

The 4th Armored Division capped off a pursuit of some 700 miles with a crossing of the Meuse River on 31 August in typical "P" Wood fashion. Light tanks from CCA raced into the town of Commercy and seized its bridge intact before the startled defenders could detonate the charges emplaced on the span or even remove the canvas covers from the breeches of their antitank guns.

Unfortunately, the 4th Armored Division's arrival on the borders of the Lorraine province coincided with the onset of a theater-wide gasoline shortage. Dry gas tanks halted the division with the German frontier only 70 air miles away. Although disappointed at being stopped in midstride, Major General Wood had every reason to be proud of his command. For an entire month, the 4th Armored Division had waged a campaign that suited its doctrine, training, and personality to perfection. From the time of the Cobra breakout to the crossing of the Meuse, the division tanks ran over 1,000 miles on their tracks, and the overburdened supply vehicles that had kept the advance going logged 3,000 miles. During the pursuit, the 4th sent 11,000 prisoners to the rear, while losing only 1,100 total casualties itself.

Major General Wood hoped to carry the pursuit into Germany as soon as gasoline again became available. The division's cavalry squadron, running on gasoline siphoned from the rest of the division's vehicles, reported that the Lorraine gateway was still open. Only five days passed between the crossing of the Meuse and the resumption of the advance, but that was enough time for the Germans to bar the way. The Germans sent two depleted but still dangerous mechanized infantry divisions, the 3d and 15th *Panzergrenadier*, from Italy to Lorraine, where they assumed positions along the Moselle River on either side of Nancy. The 553d *Volksgrenadier* Division, reinforced by a regiment drawn from German air force personnel, secured the city itself. Moreover, the German High Command reactivated the Fifth Panzer Army's headquarters for the express purpose of attacking Third Army in its open southern flank.

On 5 September, with gasoline once more flowing into Third Army's fuel tanks, Patton ordered Eddy's XII Corps to seize Nancy with the 80th Infantry and 4th Armored Divisions in preparation for an exploitation to the Rhine River. Eddy, in turn, instructed the 4th Armored Division to hurdle the Moselle with the same type of surprise attack that had carried it across the Meuse. For once, it was "P" Wood who argued against the audacious course of action and suggested instead a more methodical operation. He recognized that the Moselle, though only 150 feet wide and 6 to 8 feet deep, was a formidable obstacle. He also understood the difference between snatching an intact bridge on the dead run and forcing a river crossing against an enemy who had had a week to take defensive measures. Wood's misgivings were borne out when the 3d *Panzergrenadier* Division handily repulsed a crossing of the Moselle mounted by the 80th Infantry Division on 5 September.

Having been repelled north of the city, Eddy decided to make the area south of Nancy the corps' main effort. He ordered the 35th Infantry Division and 4th Armored Division to envelop Nancy from the south, because German resistance would be weaker there than in the north. Wood again objected to the corps' plan. He pointed out that the Moselle River was the only natural obstacle to contend with north of Nancy, whereas in the south, the 4th Armored Division would have to cross as many as seven tributaries and canals to gain the rear of Nancy. Therefore, Wood directed his staff to prepare an alternate plan that showed the entire division crossing north of the city.

Wood's objections led Eddy to modify the corps' plan once more. The 35th Division and the bulk of the 4th Armored Division would still make the main effort south of Nancy, but the 80th Division would

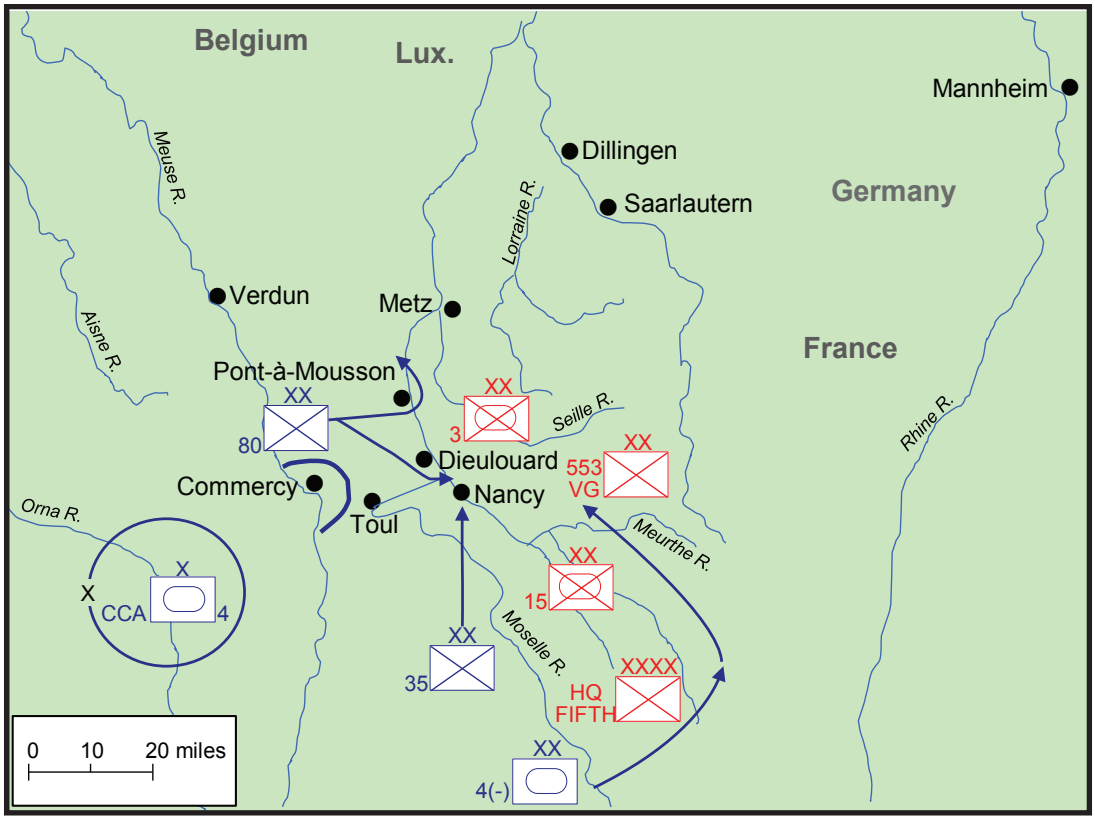

Figure 3.4. XII Corps actions around Nancy. Map created by CAC History for the author.

also attempt another crossing north of the city. CCA of the 4th Armored Division would stand by in corps reserve, ready to exploit an opportunity on either wing. This loophole eventually enabled Wood to carry out the operation north of Nancy that he preferred.

On 11 September, the XII Corps crossed the Moselle River. Against stiff opposition from the 15th *Panzergrenadier* Division, the 35th Division established an infantry bridgehead south of Nancy. CCB, leading the 4th Armored Division's main effort, chose not to wait for heavy bridges to be constructed. Instead, the lead tanks improvised a crossing of the drained canal flanking the Moselle, forded the river, and established contact with the 35th Division while engineers constructed bridges behind them.

Defending the sector were elements of the 553d *Volksgrenadier* and 15th *Panzergrenadier* Divisions. A battalion-sized battle group sent to counterattack the CCB bridgehead was trapped and wiped out. Advancing in two columns, CCB located gaps between the overextended German forces and rapidly exploited them. Poor roads, rather than German resistance, proved to be the main impediment to CCB's drive toward the rear of Nancy. Three days after crossing the Moselle, CCB crossed the Meurthe River and approached the Marne-Rhin Canal, which was held in some force. The 4th Armored Division's forward command post, the Reserve Command, and the division trains followed CCB. German resistance and the depletion of the division's bridging equipment delayed CCB's crossing of the canal for two days, but Major General Wood had no intention of losing the initiative. For all practical purposes, Wood had already shifted the division's main effort to CCA, north of Nancy.

CCA, under Colonel Clarke, consisted of D Troop of the division reconnaissance squadron, a tank battalion, an armored infantry battalion, an infantry battalion borrowed from the 80th Division, three artillery battalions, and a reinforced engineer battalion. Clarke originally planned to cross the Moselle on his own, but when the 80th Division secured a bridgehead at Dieulouard on 12 September, one day

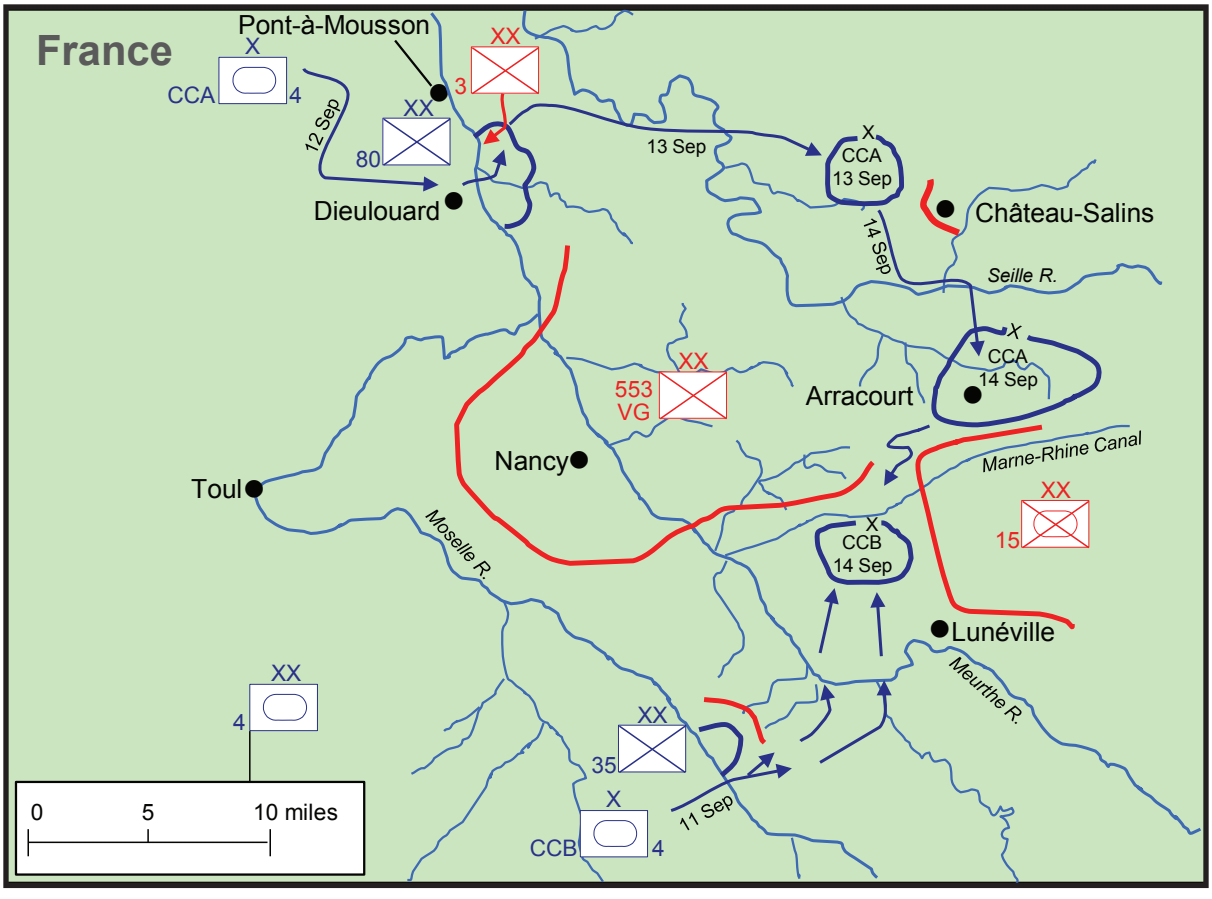

Figure 3.5. 4th Armored Division's encirclement of Nancy, 11-14 September 1944. Map created by CAC History for the author.

after CCB crossed the river farther south, Wood quickly ordered CCA to use the infantry crossing. D Troop was the first CCA unit to reach the bridges late that night, but a corps control officer would not allow the cavalry to cross until all friendly artillery could be notified that American armor was entering the bridgehead.

The 80th Division had employed a careful deception and concealment plan to mount its successful crossing of the Moselle, but the Germans were not deceived for long. At 0100 on 13 September, the 3d *Panzergrenadier* Division hit the Dieulouard bridgehead with a strong counterattack, causing the corps control officer to reconsider his decision to hold back the cavalry. When German infantry and assault guns had pressed to within rifle range of the bridges, the control officer finally sent D Troop across the Moselle. The cavalry's light tanks broke up the counterattack and drove forward until fire from the German assault guns halted them.

By daylight on 13 September, it was not at all clear that CCA should use the threatened Dieulouard bridgehead after all. The commanders of the XII Corps, 80th Division, 4th Armored Division, CCA, and 37th Tank Battalion convened near the bridges to arrive at a course of action. When the generals could not reach a decision, Colonel Clarke asked Lieutenant Colonel Abrams what he thought CCA should do. Pointing to the far shore, Abrams said, "That is the shortest way home." "Get going!" ordered Clarke.[9] Under heavy German shelling, Abrams' tanks led CCA across the Moselle at 0800 on 13 September.

CCA did not enter the Dieulouard bridgehead to defend it. Clarke's mission was to execute a deep attack, with the objective for the day being Château-Salins, some twenty miles distant. A tank-heavy task force led the way, followed by an infantry-heavy task force. A third task force, consisting of engi-

neers, the borrowed infantry battalion, and the combat command trains laden with supplies for seven days, brought up the rear. It took more than five hours for the combat elements to cross the Moselle bridges, by which time the leading tanks had shouldered aside the Germans containing the north face of the bridgehead. CCA drove north through the gap thus created and then swung east toward Château-Salins. D Troop of the cavalry squadron moved out to cover the left flank, and a company of light tanks was detached to protect the right. CCA picked up speed as the battle for the bridgehead was left behind. As the advance accelerated, Clarke exercised command and control from a liaison aircraft flying overhead. The frontage of the main column was twenty-two feet--the width of the pavement on the Château-Salins highway.

CCA met little opposition as it knifed into the German rear areas. Road blocks, tank detachments, and antiaircraft emplacements were quickly knocked out by the guns of the lead tanks or the self-propelled artillery traveling near the head of the column. At one point, Abrams' tanks literally collided with an unsuspecting German infantry force marching along the road in formation. The Shermans roared straight through the German column, blazing away with every gun as the enemy infantry scrambled for cover.

The head of the CCA column reached high ground west of Château-Salins at 1700 and established a 360-degree defensive perimeter. Combat elements closed on the bivouac throughout the night. The combat command trains, which had bivouacked separately, arrived the next morning (14 September) and replenished the fighting forces. CCA's thrust to Château-Salins represented a penetration of 20 miles and had so far yielded 354 prisoners taken and 12 German tanks, 85 vehicles, and 5 guns destroyed. CCA's losses on 13 September were 12 dead and 16 wounded.

The obvious course of action for CCA to pursue on 14 September was to capture Château-Salins, a road center of some importance. However, Château-Salins was a rather large town, and the volume of artillery fire coming from its vicinity indicated that it was held in force. More important, Major General Wood, who was in radio communication with Clarke, recognized that CCA had broken cleanly through the Germans defending the Moselle. In today's terminology, CCA had penetrated to operational depth. Wood responded accordingly by directing CCA to exploit weakness rather than attack strength. Over the radio, he ordered Colonel Clarke to bypass Château-Salins and drive south to the vicinity of Arracourt, cutting the German lines of communication to Nancy in the process. From Arracourt, CCA was to link up with CCB, which had reached the Marne-Rhin Canal that same day. In effect, CCA would be dropping its communications with Dieulouard, passing behind the enemy elements defending Nancy, and reestablishing lines of communication with the 4th Armored Division near Arracourt.

CCA began its raid on the afternoon of 14 September. Once more, Colonel Clarke boarded his liaison aircraft and directed his columns along the undefended side roads. The ground was firm, the countryside rolling and open, the roadnet good, and German opposition minimal. CCA overran rear echelon and reserve troops who believed that the Americans were still safely contained at Dieulouard. In one encounter, a CCA task force overtook and dispersed a column of the 15th *Panzergrenadier* Division that was marching to oppose CCB. The day's advance netted a further 400 prisoners and cost the Germans 26 armored vehicles, 136 other vehicles, and 10 88-mm guns. CCA sustained a total of 33 casualties and lost two medium tanks.

At 1900, CCA began drawing into a perimeter defense around Arracourt. Clarke instructed his artillery to fire all night into every crossroad and town within range, which served to harass any Germans attempting to undertake countermeasures and to confuse the enemy as to CCA's location and intentions. In addition, Clarke sent out patrols to the south as far as the Marne-Rhin Canal, where they encountered reconnaissance elements from CCB.

On the morning of 15 September, CCA fanned out to begin a four-day campaign of destruction behind German lines. Clarke sent raiding parties to the limits of artillery range and pressed his reconnaissance troop even farther to the east. Armored infantry out-posted the main roads and captured large numbers of the German troops falling back from Nancy. CCA sent a battalion-sized task force to help CCB cross the Marne-Rhin Canal on 16 September, reuniting the division. Only the Reserve Command at Luneville remained on the south bank of the canal.

CCA's raids and ambushes around Arracourt resulted in the capture of another 1,000 German troops and the destruction or capture of 8 tanks, 16 large-caliber guns, and 232 vehicles. CCA lost only three killed, fifteen wounded, and four tanks destroyed. More important, CCA's raid across the 553d *Volksgrenadier* Division's rear prompted the 553d to withdraw from Nancy, allowing the 35th Division to occupy the city on 15 September against little opposition.

To the officers of the 4th Armored Division, there was no question as to the reunited division's next move. The obvious path of action was to exploit the advantage immediately and keep the enemy on the run. The road to Germany was open. Colonel Clarke, for example, proposed an immediate advance to Sarrebourg as soon as he reached Arracourt. The Germans feared just such a move, for they had no reserves with which to block an armored advance eastward from Arracourt.

Major General Eddy, the corps commander, believed otherwise. He rejected Clarke's proposed Sarrebourg operation because Sarrebourg lay outside the corps' zone, which swung northeast, not east, from Nancy. Moreover, the XII Corps had made no provisions to support a continued armored advance. The two XII Corps infantry divisions were not available for a drive to the east, because the Germans at Nancy and Dieulouard had not collapsed and fled when the 4th Armored Division cut behind them. In fact, the 3d *Panzergrenadier* Division was reinforced in its attacks against the 80th Division in the Dieulouard bridgehead, effectively cutting the route that CCA had taken to Château-Salins. And when the 553d *Volksgrenadier* Division withdrew from Nancy, it simply fell back to the readily defended high ground northeast of the city and dug in. Finally, even Major General Wood had to admit that the volume of supplies reaching the 4th Armored Division was not sufficient to sustain a full-scale armored exploitation.

Instead of launching the 4th Armored Division on a renewal of the great pursuit, Eddy diverted this weapon of exploitation to assist the infantry in consolidating the ground around Nancy. No sooner had CCA reached Arracourt than Eddy ordered Clarke to relinquish the infantry battalion borrowed from the 80th Division, and on 17 September, Eddy directed CCB to pass behind CCA and relieve some of the pressure on the Dieulouard bridgehead. CCB encountered a fully prepared enemy near Château-Salins on ground that CCA had easily occupied four days earlier. The 35th Division, the only infantry formation that might have supported an armored exploitation, was sent instead to clear the high ground northeast of Nancy.

Major General Eddy expected that the XII Corps would be able to resume its general offensive on 18 September, with the 4th Armored Division and the 35th Division attacking in column. Bad weather forced a postponement until 19 September – five days after CCA had reached Arracourt. In fact, the attack was never launched, for the Arracourt springboard had become an endangered salient. The XII Corps and the 4th Armored Division had lost the initiative.

Major General Eddy's decision to consolidate before pressing on toward Germany may have strengthened the XII Corps' foothold across the Moselle, but it also proved to be a godsend to the Germans. As CCB had already discovered, the German First Army utilized the time to concentrate reserves around Château-Salins, thus blocking one of the principal avenues to the east. In an even more ominous development, the Fifth Panzer Army began assembling forces for a major counteroffensive against the XII Corps' right flank. When General Hasso von Manteuffel took command of the Fifth Panzer Army on 11 September, his force consisted of a headquarters and no troops, but while Eddy paused to consolidate, Manteuffel acquired two panzer corps headquarters, the badly depleted but battlewise 11th Panzer

Division, and the 111th and 113th Panzer Brigades. The panzer division boasted a wealth of experience but had virtually no tanks, whereas the panzer brigades possessed the newest tanks and fresh crews but had undergone little unit training, as evidenced by their lack of tactical skill.

General Manteuffel's orders were to roll up Third Army's right flank with a massive counterblow; however, the 4th Armored Division's sudden thrust to Arracourt forced the Germans into a series of premature, piecemeal attacks strung out over 12 days. The first of these, mounted by the 111th Panzer Brigade, fell on the 4th Armored Division's Reserve Command and the XII Corps' reconnaissance group at Luneville on 18 September. It took reinforcements from both the 4th and 6th Armored Divisions to drive the attackers off. Wood and Eddy, believing the Luneville engagement to be only a local counterattack, proceeded with their plans for the next day's corps offensive. Reports of increased German activity throughout the night of 18-19 September, however, forced them to delay their attack. In reality, the Fifth Panzer Army had simply bypassed Luneville and was moving north to strike at CCA's exposed position around Arracourt. The battle that resulted was one of the largest armored engagements ever fought on the Western Front.

CCA held Arracourt with an extended tank-infantry-engineer outpost line supported by tanks, tank destroyers, and artillery. At 0800 on 19 September, company-sized elements of the 113th Panzer Brigade penetrated the outposts on the east and south faces of CCA's salient. Two tank destroyer platoons and a medium tank company engaged the panzers in a running fight that extended into the vicinity of CCA's headquarters, where a battalion of self-propelled 105-mm howitzers took the panzers under point-blank fire. The Germans discovered that the fog, which gave them tactical surprise and protected them from US aircraft, worked to their disadvantage by negating the superior range of their tank guns. As the fighting surged back and forth through the fog, CCA's tanks and tank destroyers utilized their mobility to outmaneuver and ambush the larger panzers. By early afternoon, the German attack had stalled, and the inadequately trained panzer brigade lacked the ability to restart it. At that juncture, Colonel Clarke unleashed two medium tank companies on a sweep that took the panzers in flank and rear and drove the survivors back to their starting point. According to the Germans, the panzer assault of 19 September cost them fifty precious tanks and accomplished nothing.

From 20 to 25 September, the Fifth Panzer Army fed the 111th Panzer Brigade and the understrength 11th Panzer Division into a series of attacks against the Arracourt position. Each assault followed the pattern set on 19 September. The panzers attacked under the cover of morning fog, only to be disorganized by CCA's mobile defense and driven off by armored counterattacks in company or battalion strength. Major General Wood reinforced CCA with additional tank, infantry, and cavalry elements, and whenever the weather permitted, aircraft of the XIX TAC added to the collection of smoking panzer hulks.

On 24 September, the pattern of the Arracourt battle changed. The action shifted north to Château-Salins where the 559th *Volksgrenadier* Division of the German First Army nearly overwhelmed CCB until US fighter-bombers routed the attackers. The next day, Third Army received orders to suspend all offensive operations and to consolidate gains. In comp1iance with corps orders, the 4th Armored Division reverted to a positional defense on 26 September. CCA withdrew five miles to more defensible ground, and CCB, relieved at Château-Salins by the 35th Division, linked with CCA's right. The Fifth Panzer Army, by now down to twenty-five tanks, pressed its attacks unsuccessfully for three more days until clearing weather and increased American air activity forced the Germans to suspend their faltering counteroffensive altogether.

In the defensive actions fought around Arracourt, the 4th Armored Division claimed 281 German tanks destroyed, 3,000 Germans killed, and another 3,000 taken prisoner. The 4th sustained only 626 casualties in all, but the pressure of two continuous months in combat gradually rendered the division ineffective. Combat fatigue and noncombat casualties mounted alarmingly as

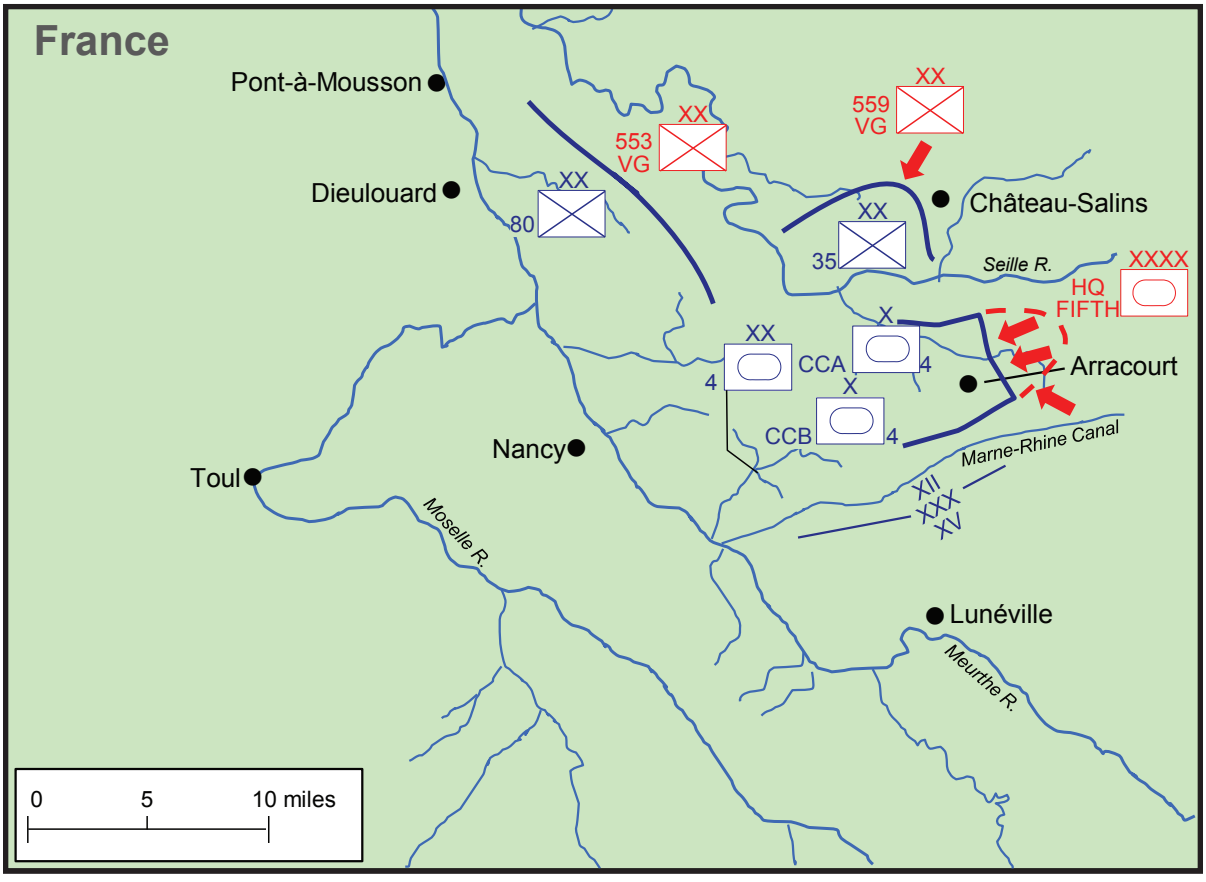

Figure 3.6. 4th Armored Division's static defense, 26-29 September 1944. Map created by CAC History for the author.

the weather deteriorated and individuals passed the limits of their endurance. Also, weapons and equipment were wearing out. Finally, on 12 October, the division was pulled out of the line for a month of rest and refitting.

When the 4th Armored Division reentered the battle in November, the Lorraine campaign had devolved into a brutal war of attrition mired down in mud and bloodshed. A brilliant episode in the annals of the 4th Armored Division had come to an end.

Reflection on the 4th Armored Division's operations around Nancy yields many valuable lessons and can be analyzed through any number of lenses. Currently, the Army speaks in terms of the tenets of Unified Land Operations, among which are flexibility, integration, lethality, adaptability, depth, and synchronization.

Flexibility was clearly a quality that both Wood and his division possessed in abundance. Wood and his subordinates were continually urging the higher commanders to exploit opportunities – they saw the possibilities, not the obstacles. An example of this was the enthusiasm with which small units passed over the Moselle and then drove deep behind German lines with a minimum of detailed supervision. Wood's ability to control the division with fragmentary orders and general guidance indicated the faith he placed in the initiative and flexibility of his subordinates.

The 4th Armored Division's integration with the XIXth Tactical Air Command is both legendary and constitutes an excellent case study in its own right. The 4th took personally the mission to rescue downed pilots, who in turn provided courageous close air support, protected open flanks, and provided detailed intelligence about the situation up ahead of the flying tank columns. The two units acted as partners in the same mission.

The lethality of the 4th Armored Division sprang from its equipment, organization, and training; but ultimately from the mind and heart of the commander and his soldiers. They destroyed enemy formations though a violence and speed of action that actually resulted in fewer casualties on both sides. Streams of POWs were sent to the rear while the spearhead crashed on.

The 4th Armored Division was adaptable as well. To Major General Wood, plans and orders were simply the foundation on which operations could be shaped while they were in progress. Witness the flexibility with which Wood shifted CCA to the Dieulouard crossing site and then converted its break· through into a deep attack to interdict German lines of communication at Arracourt. Such mental agility robbed the enemy of his options and forced the Germans into premature countermeasures.

The 4th Armored Division certainly waged war in depth. As a unit, the 4th shared the belief that its proper function was to raise havoc behind enemy lines. CCA's classic deep attack from Dieulouard to Arracourt scattered German reserves, overran depots, and severed lines of communication while incurring a minimum of friendly casualties. The machine guns on CCA's rampaging tanks did as much to pry the Germans out of Nancy as did a frontal attack mounted by an entire infantry division and supported by corps artillery.

Synchronization was also a hallmark of 4th Armored Division operations. Intensive emphasis on combined arms during training led to the closest of coordination in battle among the arms and services at the company and battalion level. This highly effective teamwork extended to the division's close relationship with the XIX Tactical Air Command. Timely, violent execution by all elements was a byword to the 4th Armored Division philosophy, as was the exploitation of the shock that such synchronization creates.

The 4th Armored Division's success can be used to illustrate the Principles of War, AirLand Battle Doctrine, or Unified Land Operations. This is not to suggest that "P" Wood simply ran the 4th according to a set of rules from any book. Rather, Wood demonstrated the validity of an idea expressed in 1898 by a renowned British historian: "The rules of war only point out the dangers which are incurred by breaking them."[10]

Certainly, it is not the intent of this study to portray the encirclement of Nancy as a flawless operation. There was, for example, a distinct absence of synchronization within the XII Corps. Eddy's failure to translate 4th Armored Division's advantage into a decisive victory indicates clearly that a deep attack conducted without follow-on forces to consolidate gains leads only to a limited victory at best. Operational maneuver is a corps and army concern, even when it is spearheaded by a single division.

The poor synchronization that plagued the XII Corps in Lorraine was actually due in part to the 4th Armored Division itself. Consider the occasions when corps and division commanders worked at cross-purposes. One such instance arose when Eddy wanted to envelop Nancy from the south, but Wood managed to have CCA conduct the northern envelopment that he had preferred all along. Another instance came when the 4th Armored Division planned an exploitation east from Arracourt, even though the corps' objectives lay to the northeast, not to the east. Finally, Wood expected Eddy's infantry divisions to support a continuation of the 4th Armored Division's advance, whereas Eddy chose instead to send armored elements back to help the infantry consolidate gains. Hindsight suggests that Wood was more often correct than Eddy in such confrontations, but a fundamental question remains unresolved: at what point should the initiative of the division commander give way to the corps commander's intent? Major General Wood's growing exasperation with Eddy, aggravated by his physical and mental fatigue, eventually led to Wood's relief from division command on 3 December.

The 4th Armored Division, however, never lost the "P" Wood flair. Throughout the rest of the war, Wood's aggressiveness, initiative, and flexibility continued to distinguish the division's operations. In its accustomed place at the head of Third Army, the 4th Armored Division went on from Lorraine to

break the siege of Bastogne, crack the Westwall, and cross the Rhine River. In March 1945, the division finally took its version of the blitzkrieg into Germany itself.

The exploits of the 4th Armored Division in World War II earned it a Presidential Unit Citation. With forgivable hyperbole, Lieutenant General Patton once remarked that the achievements of the 4th were "unequalled in the history of warfare."[11] It is perhaps ironic that the Soldiers of the 4th Armored Division never chose an official motto for their unit. As Major General John S. Wood once said of his men, "They shall be known by their deeds alone."[12]

Notes

1. US War Department, *FM 17-100, Armored Command Field Manual, The Armored Division* (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 1944), 2.

2. US War Department, *FM 17-100*, 68.

3. Kenneth Koyen, *The Fourth Armored Division from the Beach to Bavaria* (Munich, Germany: Herder-Druck, 1946), 13.

4. Hanson W. Baldwin, *Tiger Jack* [a biography of John S. Wood] (Fort Collins, CO: Old Army Press, 1979), 33-58.

5. Baldwin, *Tiger Jack*, 70-77.

6. Baldwin, *Tiger Jack*, 18.

7. Baldwin, *Tiger Jack*, 27.

8. Koyen, *Fourth Armored Division*, 15.

9. Hugh M. Cole, *The Lorraine Campaign, US Army in World War II: European Theater of Operations* (Washington, DC: Historical Division, US Army, 1950), 86.

10. George F. R. Henderson, *Stonewall Jackson and the American Civil War* (Gloucester, MA: Peter Smith, 1968), 516.

11. Baldwin, *Tiger Jack*, 132.

12. Richard W. Smith and Roy A. Pelz, *Shoulder Sleeve Insignia of the US Armed Forces, 1941-1945* (R.W. Smith, 1981), 73.

Chapter 4

Always Move Forward: The Blue Ridge Division's Crossing of the Moselle River

Major John Ordonio

It was a summer morning in 1944. As the sun rose and embraced the grassy farmland, a distant sound of rolling wheels and rumbling metal suddenly stopped as a US Army division approached a gushing river that blocked it's path. Shortly thereafter, dismounted reconnaissance forces advanced from this formation and slowly crept through the open fields searching for enemy presence near this obstacle. Overhead, friendly airplanes circled, photographing potential crossing points. The enemy defenders, hidden on the other side, protected the far bank with a combination of machine guns, tanks, and artillery. As the division mustered its troops and bridge equipment for the assault crossing, bombers emerged below the clouds and dropped their explosive payloads on enemy bunkers while the artillery struck at hidden enemy armored vehicles with fragmenting shells. As the sun began to set, the division covered its movement by firing white smoke rounds to obscure the enemy's view. While the engineers and the infantry troops hauled the inflatable boats and bridge pieces to the crossing sites, the enemy fired desperately through the thick cloud. Under cover, the infantry rowed across the river, leapt out of their assault boats, and took up hasty defensive positions on the far side. With the infantry in position, the engineers pieced together the puzzle of parts, and began emplacing the bridge across the gap. While the engineers worked, the rest of the division slowly made its way towards the embankments through a moonlit maze of roads and checkpoints. Other soldiers, tasked with controlling traffic, met the vehicles at the entrance of each bridge, inspected them, and informed the drivers to move slowly across the spans. By high noon the following day, 2,000 vehicles and 14,000 troops had crossed this barrier and continued advancing against the enemy's main force.[1]

During the Second World War, the United States Army, especially in northwestern Europe, became adept at crossing water barriers. Rivers of all sizes flow across the French, Belgian, Dutch, and German landscape. Major rivers, such as the Meuse, Seine, Loire, Moselle, and Rhine were easily defended and difficult to assault. As the US Army prepares for future conflict, current division commanders must prepare to conduct these operations in today's environment. Therefore, it is appropriate to examine these previous examples for insights into how earlier generations of division commanders overcame these obstacles. Examining the tactical actions comprising the 80th Infantry Division's crossing of the Moselle in September 1944, reveals key decisions made by the division commander, Major General Horace McBride, and exhibits how these decisions both shaped the battlefield, ensured a successful crossing operation, and prepared the division for its next challenge. This crossing allowed the XII Corps to seize key terrain and the town of Nancy, which gave Third Army control the Moselle River. A closer look at the division's actions along the river reveal how and why these key decisions were made before, during, and after the crossing of the Moselle. Before the crossing, the division staff planned when to organize and commit reconnaissance, fires, and engineers to the crossing areas. During the crossing, the division expanded its bridgehead, allowing the assaulting units to breakthrough and attack. After crossing, McBride transferred responsibilities for the crossing sites back to the corps, which allowed his division to prepare for actions after the seizure of Nancy. The 80th Infantry Division faced many challenges during the Moselle River crossings, but despite these setbacks this unit held true to its motto — "Always move forward!"

Much explains the 80th Infantry Division's success in crossing the formidable Moselle River. McBride's decisions were informed by a refined doctrine that assisted the division through the complexities of a river crossing. Although the 80th Division's first attempt to cross the Moselle failed, the doc-

trine's emphasis on reconnaissance and fires contributed to the division's preparation and planning for a successful second attempt. The division's training prior to deploying to the European theater, along with the commander's previous education and experience, greatly enhanced the division's success. Moreover, the division's receipt and integration of other supporting units into its formation provided it with much needed additional assets and increased its capabilities during the operation.

The 80th Infantry Division, known as the Blue Ridge Division, was a battle ready and hardened unit led by Major General Horace McBride. McBride was an artillery officer who had commanded the division's artillery brigade before assuming command of the division. He served as an artillery officer in World War I and II, and graduated from the Command and General Staff School in 1928. This combination of experience and education made McBride adept at division level command and enabled him to lead his unit in complex tactical tasks, such as river crossings. McBride commanded the division through its preparation during maneuver training at Camp Laguna, Arizona and through other training venues prior to its deployment to the European theater. This division, led by a trained and ready commander and staff, was ready to cross the water networks within the theater. [2]

Following the breakout from their lodgment on the Normandy beaches, the Allies moved rapidly through the interior of France. On 4 September 1944, Lieutenant General George S. Patton, the Third Army commander, ordered Major General Manton S. Eddy's XII Corps to secure a bridgehead east of the Moselle River, and then seize Nancy.[3] Eddy had three subordinate divisions: the 80th Infantry Division, the 35th Infantry Division, and the 4th Armored Division. To oppose the corps, the Germans fielded the battle-tested but depleted 3d Panzer Grenadier Division, defending near Pont-a-Mousson, the 15th Panzer Grenadier Division in the south, and the inexperienced 553d Volks Grenadier reinforced with the 92d Luftwaffe Field Regiment, defending the center areas near Dieulouard and Nancy.[4] The fast flowing Moselle River lay between the Americans and the Germans, averaging 150 feet in width and seven feet in depth.[5]

Initially, the corps commander planned for a single envelopment of Nancy. The 4th Armored Division was to attack through a bridgehead secured by the 80th Infantry Division at Pont-a-Mousson then attack Nancy from the east, while the 35th Infantry Division was to secure a bridgehead at Toul and attack the city from the west. Making its approach toward the Moselle, the divisions assumed that the German's defenses were very light, and the existing bridges were intact. The corps did not provide the 80th Division with any additional reconnaissance assets to confirm this assumption or bombers to contest any enemy fires covering the crossing sites. Assuming a nearly uncontested crossing, the 80th division decided to approach the crossing sites with its three infantry regiments abreast moving nearly simultaneously in daylight. The intent was to cross the existing bridges, defeat any elements on the far side of the river to establish the bridgehead, and allow the engineers to build the bridges to cross the 4th Armored Division's armored vehicles. The division employed a limited reconnaissance element to confirm the enemy's disposition and the bridge conditions. But by the time the division started its movement, the experienced panzer division had destroyed all the bridges and entrenched in solid defensive lines.[6] The Germans overwhelmed the Americans with heavy firepower and repulsed their advance. The 80th division tried again to cross the river later that night, but this attempt met the same fate as the first. In a third and final attempt, the panzer division again inflicted heavy casualties on the 80th Infantry Division and drove them away. After the Germans repulsed the division three times, the corps commander withdrew from Pont-a-Mousson and devised a new approach to seize Nancy. The decision to execute an in-stride crossing of the Moselle had jeopardized the XII Corps mission. [7]

Eager to get back on track, Eddy reorganized his formation to better contend with the enemy's defenses and use terrain to his advantage. His revised plan called for a double envelopment of Nancy with his three divisions crossing the Moselle on a wide front. In the northern sector, the 80th Infantry

Division was to establish a third corps bridgehead south of Pont-a-Mousson at Dieulouard while Combat Command A of the 4th Armored Division was to attack through the bridgehead towards Arracourt and eliminate the Germans escaping from Nancy. In the center, the 35th Infantry Division was to secure the first bridgehead near Nancy and keep the enemy from reinforcing the defense lines in the north and south. In the southern sector, Combat Command B of the 4th Armored Division was to emplace its bridgehead near Bayon the day after the 35th Division, then attack towards Luneville to link up with its sister unit and destroy the Germans retreating from Nancy.[8]

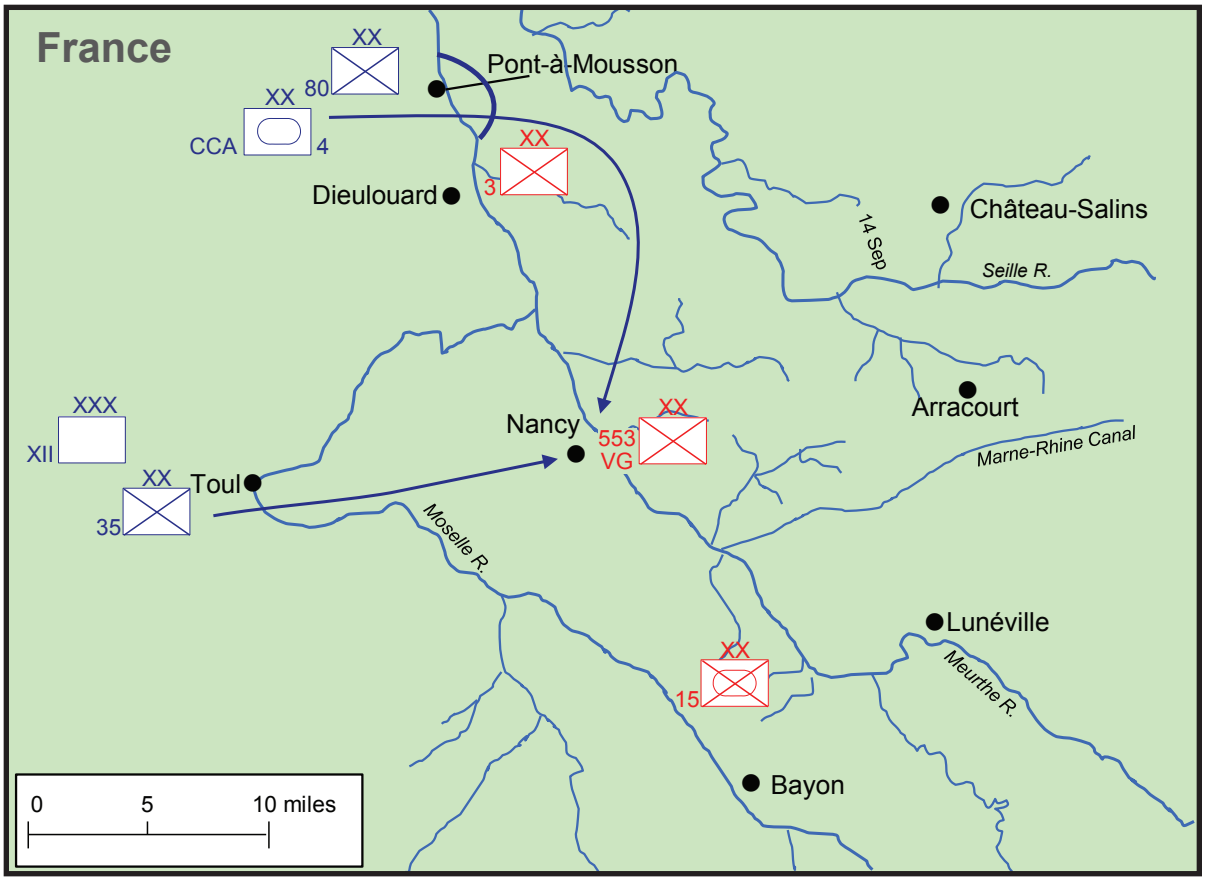

Figure 4.1. XII Corps: Original plan, single envelopment of Nancy. *Source*: Christopher R. Gabel, The Lorraine Campaign: An Overview, September-December 1944 (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Combat Studies Institute, US Army Command and General Staff College, 1985), Map 5. Map created by CAC History for the author.

Early on 12 September 1944, the reorganized 80th Infantry Division started its crossing operations under refined guidance from XII Corps. McBride made several key decisions that proved to be essential to the success of this operation. Before the crossing, the division deployed an infantry regiment to patrol along the crossing points. The Blue Ridge Division reinforced them with forward observers and priority artillery fires. The division coordinated for aerial reconnaissance to scan the far side. One other key decision absent from the previous attempts was pre-planned artillery fire. Before the crossing, the division pre-planned artillery fires using both its organic divisional assets and its reinforcing assets received from the corps and army units. This combination of active reconnaissance and carefully thought out fires allowed the creation of the much needed space and time to build a bridgehead for the crossing units. Putting one infantry regiment heavily reinforced with artillery across the river in the pre-dawn darkenss, they were able to repulse the Germans' counterattack and allow time for the engineers to

build the foot and vehicle bridges for the remainder of the division to cross and expand the bridgehead. McBride's decision to cross and expand the bridgehead allowed Combat Command A, 4th Armored Division to cross the river and continue the assault on Nancy. After the 80th Division crossed the Moselle, the division regrouped for the next operation. Following this the division coordinated with the corps to hand over responsibility for the engineers and the crossing sites which allowed the division to continue its attack towards Nancy.

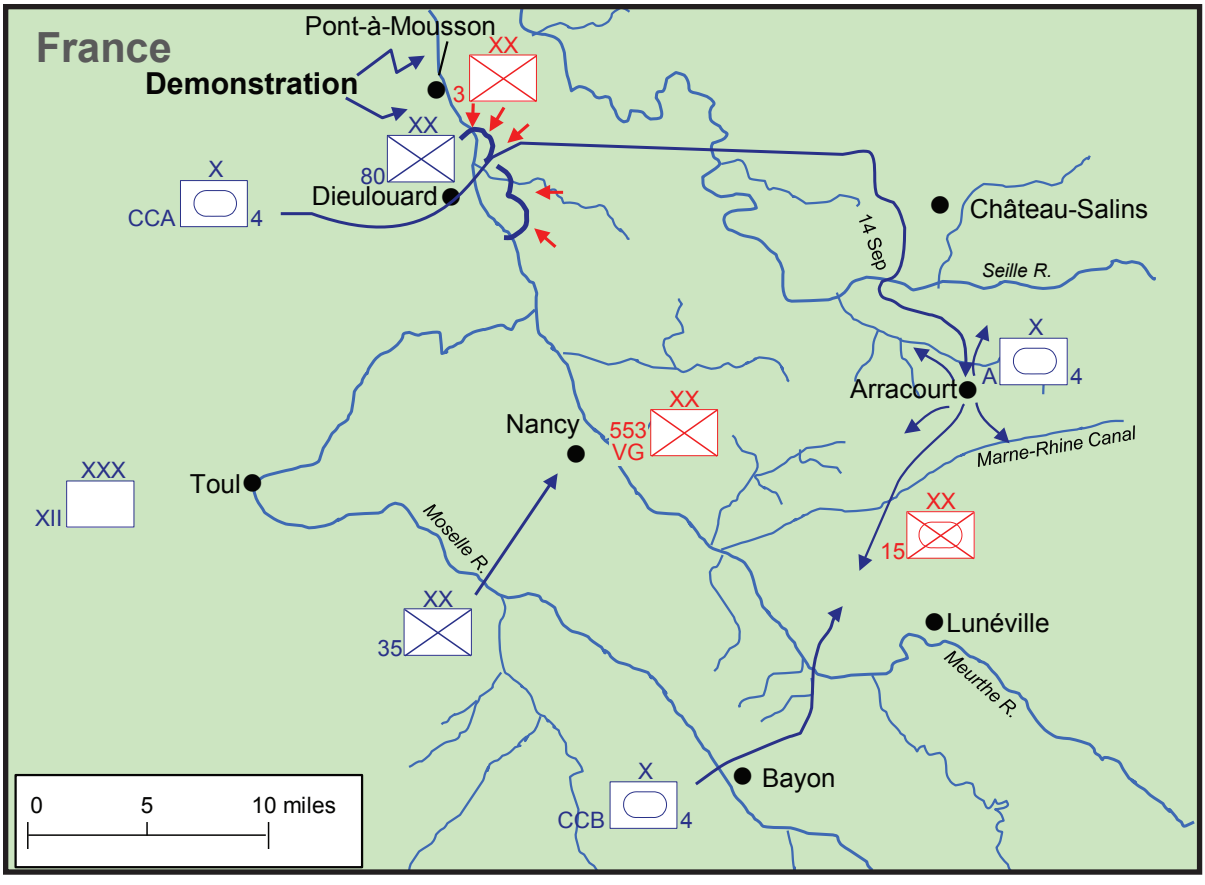

Figure 4.2. XII Corps: Revised plan, double envelopment of Nancy. *Source:* Christopher R. Gabel, *The Lorraine Campaign: An Overview, September-December 1944* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Combat Studies Institute, US Army Command and General Staff College, 1985), Map 6. Map created by CAC History for the author.

Proper and coordinated employment of Infantry, Armor, artillery, engineer, and supporting arms enabled XII Corps to successfully cross the Moselle despite the strong Germans' defenses. Across the corps, all three divisions established their respective bridgeheads. Both Combat Commands of the 4th Armored Division crossed the Moselle River and encircled Nancy, which led the Germans to surrender to the nearest American unit, the 35th Infantry Division. Later, the Third Army established its headquarters in Nancy and directed the XII Corps to assume responsibility for protecting the area. Third Army enabled the corps' successful river crossing mission by providing additional units. One of those units was the 1303d General Service Engineer Regiment. These engineers improved and protected the bridges, improved the road networks around Nancy, and provided construction support for Third Army headquarters.[9] The XII Corps and its subordinate divisions learned from their failed early failed attempts, overcame the challenges of river crossings, and quickly adapted this approach in following crossings.

Contested river crossings are difficult and complex tasks for any army unit, but river crossing operations are nothing new, nor a novel feat. Throughout history, armies have encountered the challenges of crossing rivers that blocked their advance. The complexities of such an operation, however, have proven formidable and, at times, nearly fatal. Well-known Prussian military theorist Carl von Clausewitz commented on the challenges that rivers presented to an army, noting that river obstacles were significant factors disrupting and hindering an army in the offense.[10] This remark recognized what every army would experience in a contested river crossing: high casualties, reduced momentum in the attack, and vulnerability to enemy defenses. In almost any theater an army will encounter rivers of various sizes and widths. Because of this, an army must always be prepared mentally and physically to overcome the adversities of this kind of operation.

This was especially true for Army divisions in World War II. Immediately before the US entry into the conflict, the US Army refined its doctrine on river crossing operations and developed it into a useful reference for commanders and staff to plan, prepare, and conduct this type of operation. The doctrine was tested during combined arms maneuver training before the divisions deployed and was further refined as these units adapted to conditions throughout World War II. This doctrine proved most useful at the division level. As the Army's primary fighting formation, the division was built to match the maneuverability and firepower of its German counterpart. But by itself the division did not have all the units necessary to set the conditions for a river crossing or to execute it. Planning and preparation for a river crossing began well before the division approached the river, the division and corps commanders and their staff needed to considered and coordinate many tactical actions to cross these water obstacles.

Doctrine

Upon receiving the Third Army's order to cross the Moselle, the XII Corps Engineer, Colonel C.E. Doughtery, pondered methods to accomplish this mission. As he walked around the headquarters, he pulled three important books off the shelf, which would refresh his memory on planning and executing river crossing operations: Field Manual 100-5, *Operations*, Field Manual 5-5, *Engineer Field Manual Troops and Operations*, and Field Manual 5-6*, Operations of Engineer Units.*[11] He then gathered his staff, analyzed the photographs of the crossing areas, and began to figure out the bridge requirements and engineer units needed to support the three divisions. After hours of deliberating, his staff briefed the commander on the plan and within hours of approval, they wrote an engineer paragraph for the corps order and an annex to provide direction for the subordinate engineer units.[12] While the entire corps received the mission, the three division headquarters referenced the same books and wrote an order for their subordinates.[13] Colonel Doughtery and the entire corps had access to these books to guide their planning and execution of the mission. These field manuals standardized procedures for all the units and provided a common framework to conduct operations.[14] The corps and divisions could better synchronize their efforts through this common framework of concepts. These standard procedures were an important aspect of military doctrine.

In World War II, field manuals were the primary doctrinal literature, providing units with standard and effective tactical procedures to conduct many types of operations. Therefore, commanders were more effective in performing this complex operation because doctrine evolved through the collective experiences in previous wars and matured to effective methods by 1943. Two of the most significant doctrinal publications informing commanders of key aspects of river crossings in World War II were the 1941 Field Manual 100-5, *Operations and Field Manual* 5-6*, Operations of Engineer Units.*

The 1941 Field Manual 100-5*, Operations* was unique compared to previous editions because it discussed river crossings in some detail.[15] First, it noted that the crossing started with close air support and artillery fires while engineers and the infantry assault force moved from the rear to the final assembly area.[16] Next, the engineers with the assault boats ferried the infantry unit across at the designated

crossing points. The assault force was to secure the bridgehead which had three principle objectives. The first objective was to eliminate the direct small arms fire, allowing construction of a footbridge and the ferrying of infantry vehicles.[17] The second objective was to achieve local air supremacy and eliminate ground-observed artillery fire or light artillery fire that could affect the bridge construction.[18] This allowed the division commander to order the construction of pontoon bridges. The third and final objective was to eliminate all artillery fires, allowing the rest of the units to cross.[19]

The second key manual was forged in combat. The 1943 edition of Field Manual 5-6*, Operations of Engineer Units* was a dramatic improvement in river crossing doctrine because it better described the integration of engineers with their infantry and armor counterparts, and provided essential information for staff officers and senior commanders. It did this by articulating the sequence of actions between the infantry, the engineers, and the crossing equipment.[20] The manual emphasized rehearsals combining the engineers and infantry troops with a requirement to actually load the boats to be used in the assault phase. [21] Additionally it provided the division engineer with general planning principals which enabled the engineer to inform the division commander of the support necessary for successful crossing operations. Reconnaissance, deception, and aerial bombardment were important considerations for shaping the conditions for success, while conducting the crossing at night was essential to maintain surprise and protecting the crossing points. Most valuable, yet overlooked at times, was that river crossings operations also included actions within the rear area.[22] In all, the 1943 Field Manual 5-6 detailed how engineers integrated as part of the combined arms team outlined in the 1941 Field Manual 100-5.

Despite the 80th Infantry Division's reversal on its first crossing attempt at the Moselle, its successful second attempt demonstrated the efficacy of the doctrine. Before the crossing operation started, the division ensured the attached engineers were integrated in the formation and were well rehearsed with the crossing infantry soldiers. The use of reconnaissance and aerial bombardment allowed the division to set the conditions for a successful crossing. Agressive reconnaissance along the river ensured the crossing sites were clear of dismounted forces while identifying enemy artillery positions informed the targeting for pre-planned fires. After the crossing, the division's expansion of the bridgehead to allow CCA of the 4th Armored Division to assault through the remaining German defenses to allow the XII Corps to finally seize Nancy. After the seizure of Nancy, the division commander's pre-coordinated hand over of responsibilities of the crossing site that allowed the division to transition to follow on operations.

Overall, the complimentary capstone and engineer doctrinal manuals preached that this type of operation was more than an engineer effort or an Infantry/ armor attack; it was a combined arms operation involving all branches of the service. These document provided direction for units training to conduct this complex operation and preparing for combat against the Germans.

Training

While World War II doctrine informed corps and division commanders about key aspects of river crossing operations, combined arms training actually allowed the validation of doctrine and prepared leaders and their units to apply doctrine and practice execution under tough and realistic situations. This type of training focused on larger units like divisions, corps, and armies. Training at the higher level also allowed the integration of low density specialties into the infantry, armor, aviation, artillery, and engineer units more commonly involved in training. In the lead up to WWII the United States Army conducted this type of training over large maneuver areas, so it is commonly referring to in the histories as "maneuver training." Major General Gilbert Cook, XII Corp Commander before Major General Eddy stated that the purpose of these large-scale exercises was to "teach corps and divisions to play as a team and to kill efficiently." [23] These events were where corps and divisions honed doctrine and practiced river crossings in near combat conditions.

The Louisiana Maneuvers of 1941, probably the most famous of the prewar maneuvers, physically and mentally prepared corps and divisions for the realities of dealing with water obstacles in Europe. In September 1941, Second and Third Armies fought one another over a wide area resembling, in important ways, the terrain in France and Germany. This area encompassed most of western Louisiana and parts of eastern Texas. Most importantly to the point of this study the maneuver grounds were large enough to contain long and wide streams that allowed units to practice crossing operations.[24]

During the maneuvers, commanders learned to apply critical factors that shaped the upcoming close fight. Field Manual 100-5 held that reconnaissance and close air support were important activities, which prepared units for the actual crossing. The Second Army's operations over the Red River demonstrated the usefulness of these two activities.[25] When the General Headquarters tasked the Second Army to conduct a river crossing and attack the Third Army, commanders shaped the deep area with a combination of ground and aerial reconnaissance units in conjunction with indirect fires. After successfully attacking the deep area, VII Corps prepared its subordinate units to cross and establish a bridgehead in accordance with doctrine established by FM 100-5.

An important corollary to this is that protecting your own rear area is vital. While Field Manual 5-5 stated that the army or corps controlled non-divisional engineer units, it also assigned these large organizations responsibility for maintaining the bridges and road networks in the rear area. Armies or corps controlled the engineer general service regiments, which were the type of units that had the capability to improve the lines of communications. The Second Army's maneuver training at the Red River proved that the 1941 doctrine both informed and taught large unit commanders about key factors in conducting a river crossing.

Prior to its own deployment, the 80th Infantry Division conducted maneuver training at Camp Laguna, Arizona. While not an obvious terrain analogue, the division's execution of persistent reconnaissance and planned artillery fire in its second attempt to cross the Mossell resulted from training it conducted while in hot Arizona desert. During this training, the division used air and ground reconnaissance to identify enemy positions, which informed their targeting of fires and maneuver. In these maneuvers, the division commander and his staff faced various tactical dilemmas similar to those it encountered in the European theater.

Organization and Equipment

The 80th Infantry Division could not cross the Moselle without the supporting units from the XII Corps and Third Army. Before they started operations across France, the division received various types of specialized units from its higher headquarters, including units such as an engineer group headquarters, heavy pontoon battalions, light pontoon companies, and a mixture of artillery and tank units.[26] The Blue Ridge Division, for instance, received the 557th Heavy Pontoon Battalion and additional corps artillery units. The division staff also coordinated with XII Corps for support from the XIX Tactical Air Command to provide aerial reconnaissance and bombardment against German defenses along the river. Once they secured Nancy, the corps relieved the division from securing the crossing sites and tasked other units to protect and improve the rear area. In this case, the corps tasked anti-aircraft and chemical (smoke generating) units to protect this area from enemy air attacks.[27] Another specialized unit was the general service engineer regiment, which relieved the 80th Infantry Division's organic engineer battalion from its responsibilities and freed it for other uses. The general service engineer regiment was primarily used to improve the routes, protect bridges, and conduct other construction missions. While the divisions were the primary fighting units planning and executing river crossings, they were not authorized the necessary support units to conduct this operation, and were therefore heavily reliant on the armies to provide them additional assets.[28] Thus,

during river crossings, the division commander augmented his subordinate units with additional support personnel and equipment.

The division was the basic large unit tactical organization for the United States Army. However, extra-divisional units proved essential in river crossing operations because divisions had been streamlined to match their German counterparts. A unit's close relationship with tactical air command units supplemented corps and division ground reconnaissance capability with air assets. Aerial reconnaissance provided photographs of the river, which proved beneficial in determining key terrain, launching points, and enemy locations. Air ground attack provided dominating firepower to weaken the enemy's defense of the river and create the operational space necessary to plan and prepare for river crossing operations. Air superiority provided protection from attack to both the assaulting units and the engineers preparing the bridges. The army level of command controlled the engineer bridge units that provided crossing capabilities for the corps and division, but also created a reserve capability to deal with contingencies. The army's engineer general service regiment proved valuable to the division engineers during and after the crossings. During the crossings, the division used the general service engineer regiment to add more engineer capabilities to the 80th Division's organic organization. This regiment built the heavy bridges for the vehicles while the division engineers ferried infantrymen across the river and built the foot bridges. After the crossings, the division transferred responsibilities to the general service engineer regiment, allowing the Blue Ridge Division engineers to rejoin the division, which continued its attacks toward follow on objectives. Transferring responsibility for the crossing sites was a key synchronization point that allowed the division commander to reconfigure and reorganize his unit and transition from a river crossing operation to follow on objectives.[29]

The 80th Infantry Division's crossing of the Moselle River revealed the complexities of these types of operations. Although the division's initial attempt to cross the river was poorly executed, Major General McBride and his staff exhibited resilience, adjusted their plan, gained additional assets and set the conditions for a successful second attempt to cross the Moselle. Training exercises prior to deployment taught the division team the essential command and logistics requirements for these units, and how to employ them. As the division approached the river, McBride used persistent reconnaissance through ground and air assets and used artillery to protect the crossing sites. This prevented the enemy from defeating the division at its most vulnerable point during the crossings. Subsequently, the 80th Infantry Division expanded the bridgehead, passed the 4th Armored Division through the lodgment, and maneuvered to defeat the Germans defending Nancy. The expansion of the bridgehead also created the space needed for the division to fully close up across the river and reorganize for follow-on missions. The decisions that McBride and his staff made enabled XII Corps to achieve its objectives. Moreover, these decisions were doctrinally based, informed by training and combat experience, and feasible because the division maintained organizational flexibility. In reviewing this historical example, today's commanders can learn from the key decisions made by McBride and his staff focused on setting conditions for a successful crossing and transitioning to continue on to the next mission. The actions of the 80th Division during the Moselle River crossing should remind units facing similar difficult assignments to "Always Move Forward!"

Notes

1. 80th Infantry Division, "Preparation for and crossing of the Moselle River 1-15 September 1944," http://www.80thdivision.com/WebArchives (accessed 24 February 2013). This vignette described the 80th Infantry Division's crossing of the Moselle River in September 1944.

2. Ibid, http://www.80thdivision.com/WebArchives (accessed 13 August 2017).

3. Third US Army, "After Action Report Third US Army, 1 August 1944 to 9 May 1943, Vol. 1: The Operations," Archives, Combined Arms Research Library, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, 64.

4. Robert Toguchi, "The Evolution of United States Army River Crossing Doctrine and Equipment, 1918-1945," PhD diss, Duke University, 251-252. Major General Hans Hecker commanded the 3d Panzer Grenadier Division, and his unit was in Italy before defending the Moselle River. The 92d Luftwaffe Field Regiment was a training unit that had a mixture of anti-air craft gunners, and replacements.

5. Toguchi, "The Evolution of United States Army River Crossing Doctrine and Equipment, 1918-1945," 227.

6. 80th Infantry Division, "80th Infantry Division AAR: Preparation for and crossing of the Moselle River 1-15 September 1944," http://www.80thdivision.com/WebArchives/ (accessed February 24, 2013).

7. Christopher R. Gabel, *The Lorraine Campaign, An Overview, September-December 1944* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Combat Studies Institute, US Army Command and General Staff College, 1985), 14-15.

8. Hugh Cole, *The Lorraine Campaign* (Washington D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1950), 57-116.

9. Casey Devikis, "The Eager Beaver Regiment, The Regimental History of the 1303d Engineers Regiment," Unit History, (1952), 213.

10. Devikis, "The Eager Beaver Regiment," 533. Carl von Clausewitz stated, "A river is a substantial factor, for it always weaken and dislocates the offensive."

11. XII Corps, "Staff Operational Procedures, 12 August 1944 – 8 May 1945, Engineer Section, Standing Operating Procedure," Gilbert R. Cook Papers, Box 9, Dwight D. Eisenhower Presidential Library, Abilene, Kansas, 110. The document stated that field manuals and technical manuals were required in the admin section of the engineer section. It also outlined the roles and responsibilities for the personnel that worked in the engineer section.

12. XII Corps, "Staff Operational Procedures," 113.

13. 4th Armored Division, "Combat History, 4th Armored Division 17 July 1944 – 9 May 1945." 4th Armored Division, Box 78, Dwight D. Eisenhower Presidential Library, Abilene, Kansas. The division received the order from XII Corps and ordered Combat Command B to force a crossing at Bayon and Bainville.

14. XII Corps, "Report of Operations: 31 August 1944 – 30 September 1944", Gilbert R. Cook Papers, Box 9, Dwight D. Eisenhower Presidential Library, Abilene, Kansas.

15. United States War Department, Field Manual 100-5, *Operations,* 1941, 195 and 197. Deception should be conducted to protect the main crossing points by conducting a non-decisive attack (or feint) or a showing force without attacking (or demonstration).

16. Ibid., 198. The final assembly areas must be large enough for the engineer's assault boats, footbridge, and other crossing means while maintaining concealment from air and ground observations. From this position, only the covering force and reconnaissance units crossed the river.

17. United States War Department, Field Manual 100-5, 193.

18. United States War Department, Field Manual 100-5, 194.

19. United States War Department, Field Manual 100-5, 199.

20. United States War Department, Field Manual 5-6*, Engineer Field Manual, Operations of Engineer Units,* 1943 (Washington D.C., Government Printing Office, 1943), 92.

21. United States War Department, Field Manual 5-6*,* 91.

22. United States War Department, Field Manual 5-6*, Engineer Field Manual, Operations of Engineer Units,* 1943, 89 and 117. General planning principals: 1) Economy of Force-Engineers were attached to the infantry as required during river crossing operation and the remainder remain under division control, 2) Engineer units attached to the division were under division control, 3) Consider fatigue and casualties and time to reorganize when assigning engineer units; in other words, assign one fresh engineer unit per major task 4) Unity of command must be maintained, 5) Plan for engineer to carry engineer work in rear areas during crossing operations and to assist in the advance on the far side, and 6) Plan for a reserve of men and equipment; a reserve was equal to 1/3 of the minimum requirements of the proposed plan. The manual provided planning factors on

the frontage for the infantry units. The frontage value for each size of formation provided engineers information to consider both crossing equipment and the crossing elements in the selection crossing points. In addition, to maintain the tactical unity of the division during the river crossing, the manual provided planning considerations for the engineers when associating the crossing units with the appropriate type of crossing equipment. For example, the assault boats transport rifle companies and artillery forward observer first then followed a second wave with their heavy weapons company, artillery, and battalion headquarters. The manual provided a graphic illustrating how the infantry units configured within the assault boat.

23. Major General Gilbert Cook's notes dated 1 February 1944, Gilbert R. Cook Papers, Box 6, Dwight D. Eisenhower Presidential Library, Abilene, Kansas. Major General Cook was the Commanding General for XII Corps from October 1943 to August 1944.

24. Gabel, 5. It consisted of over 10,000 acres that extended as far north as Shreveport, south Lake Charles, east to Alexandria, and west to Nacogdoches, Texas. There were three large rivers within this training area: Red River, Calcasieu River, and Sabine River.

25. United States War Department, Field Manual 100-5, *Operations*, 1941, 192-193.

26. XII Corps, "Report of Operations 31 August 44 to 30 September 44," 2.

27. Toguchi, "The Evolution of United States Army River Crossing Doctrine and Equipment, 1918-1945," 236.

28. United States War Department, Field Manual 100-5, *Operations*, 1941, 2; United States War Department, Field Manual 5-5*, Engineer Field Manual, Troops and Operations,* 1941, 248.

29. 80th Infantry Division, "Preparation for and crossing of the Moselle River 1-15 September 1944," http://www.80thdivision.com/WebArchives (accessed 17 August 2017).

Chapter 5

The Siege of Fire Support Base *Ripcord*: The Failure of a Division's Strategy July 1970

Dr. Joe R. Bailey

On 23 July 1970, helicopter pilots braved a landing on Fire Support Base (FSB) *Ripcord* amid intense mortar fire to evacuate Soldiers of the US Army's 3d Brigade, 101st Airborne Division. Subsequently, the United States Air Force destroyed the hilltop outpost so bravely defended by the "Screaming Eagles" for the past three months. With that, the last major American offensive of the Vietnam War ended. An analysis of the *Ripcord* siege and the key decisions both to establish and abandon it reveal not only how hyperawareness of the political context hampered military effectiveness in the latter days of the Vietnam War but also how military commanders failed to properly assess the situation they faced, commit the appropriate manpower to accomplish their mission, and control the key terrain. These factors combined to undermine *Ripcord*'s value to the operation and contributed to the division's failure to break North Vietnamese control of the A Shau Valley in South Vietnam's I Corps Region.

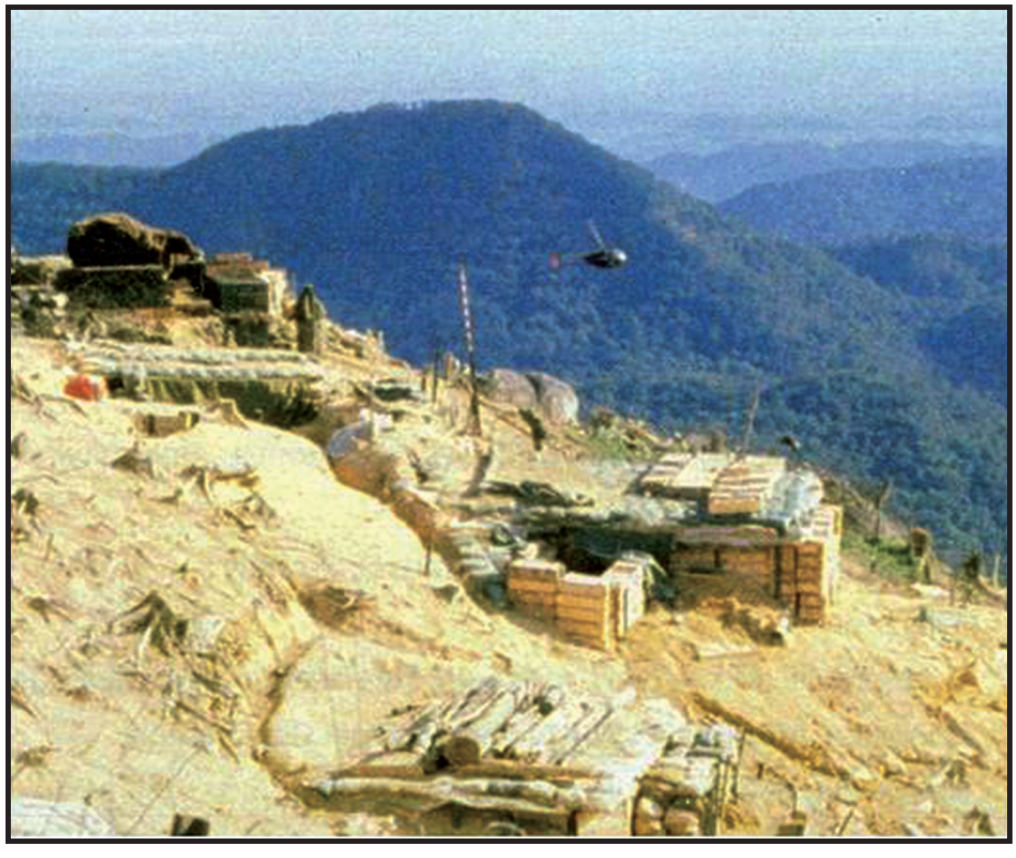

Figure 5.1 Fire Support Base Ripcord. Photo courtesy of the US Army.

The actions around *Ripcord* occurred at a pivotal period in the US military's involvement in Vietnam. Popular support for the American effort in Vietnam remained high for the first 30 month of major combat operations, but beginning with the Tet Offensive in January 1968, opposition to the war became too vocal to ignore. The number and scale of attacks against key political and military targets throughout South Vietnam, led the American public to perceive Tet as a psychological defeat. The political fall-

out from Tet ultimately resulted in President Lyndon Johnson's decision to leave office without seeking another term; his successor, Richard M. Nixon, promised to end the war "with honor." Nixon eventually settled on a policy of Vietnamization, which gradually reduced the number of US military personnel in Vietnam while helping the Republic of Vietnam Armed Forces (RVNAF) achieve the capability to defend themselves and continue prosecuting the war without US involvement.[1]

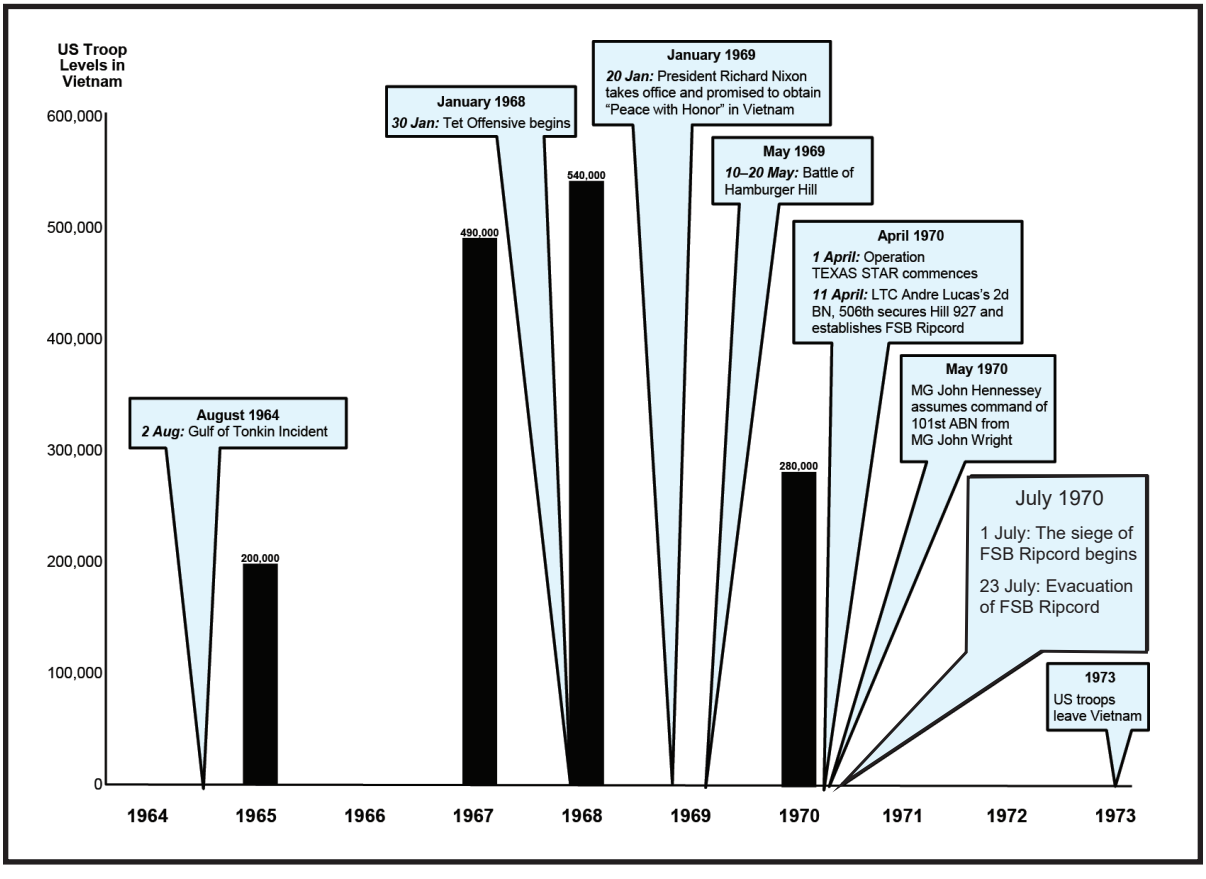

Figure 5.2 Timeline of troop levels in Vietnam and operational context of Texas Star. Graphic created by CAC History for the authors.

Operation TEXAS STAR, the parent operation for the actions occurring around *Ripcord*, commenced on 1 April 1970. The only major offensive operation planned for the summer of that year, United States Military Assistance Command Vietnam (USMACV) intended to move the 101st Airborne and the Army of the Republic of Vietnam's (ARVN) 1st Infantry Division into the A Shau Valley. Once in place, the two forces would disrupt enemy concentrations in the area, destroy supplies being stored in the region (nicknamed the "Warehouse Area"), and thus prevent the communist Peoples' Army of Vietnam (PAVN) from attacking into the densely populated coastal regions of South Vietnam such as Hue and Da Nang. *Ripcord* sat in the middle of the critical mountain region between the A Shau Valley and the coastal plains of South Vietnam. The base would not only support search and destroy missions into the valley, but would also offer artillery support. In order for the (PAVN) to achieve its goal of attacking the coastal region and to disrupt pacification programs, *Ripcord* would have to be neutralized.

Soldiers of the 101st were hardly strangers to the A Shau Valley. Previous operations had focused on interdicting the flow of PAVN and main-force VC units and their supplies coming through the valley. One such operation, APACHE SNOW, occurred in response to North Vietnam's attempt to replicate their success during the Tet Offensive. In May-June 1969, the 3d Brigade, 101st Airborne Division, the 3d

Squadron of the 5th Cavalry, the 9th Marines, and two ARVN battalions engaged communist forces in the valley, to deny its use by the communists as a sanctuary and transit route. The culminating event of the operation occurred with the multiple assaults of Dong Ap Bia Mountain (Hill 937) by 3d Brigade. The unit finally succeeded in capturing the position but it took heavy casualties in the process, only to abandon the hill several days later. News of this battle, dubbed "Hamburger Hill" by participants and the media, provoked sharp criticism and intense condemnation by the American public. The furor resulted in a significant change in US strategy in prosecuting the war in Vietnam. USMACV would no longer apply maximum pressure to the enemy; orders were issued to reduce the number of American casualties. The American military conducted no more operations in the A Shau Valley for more than a year.

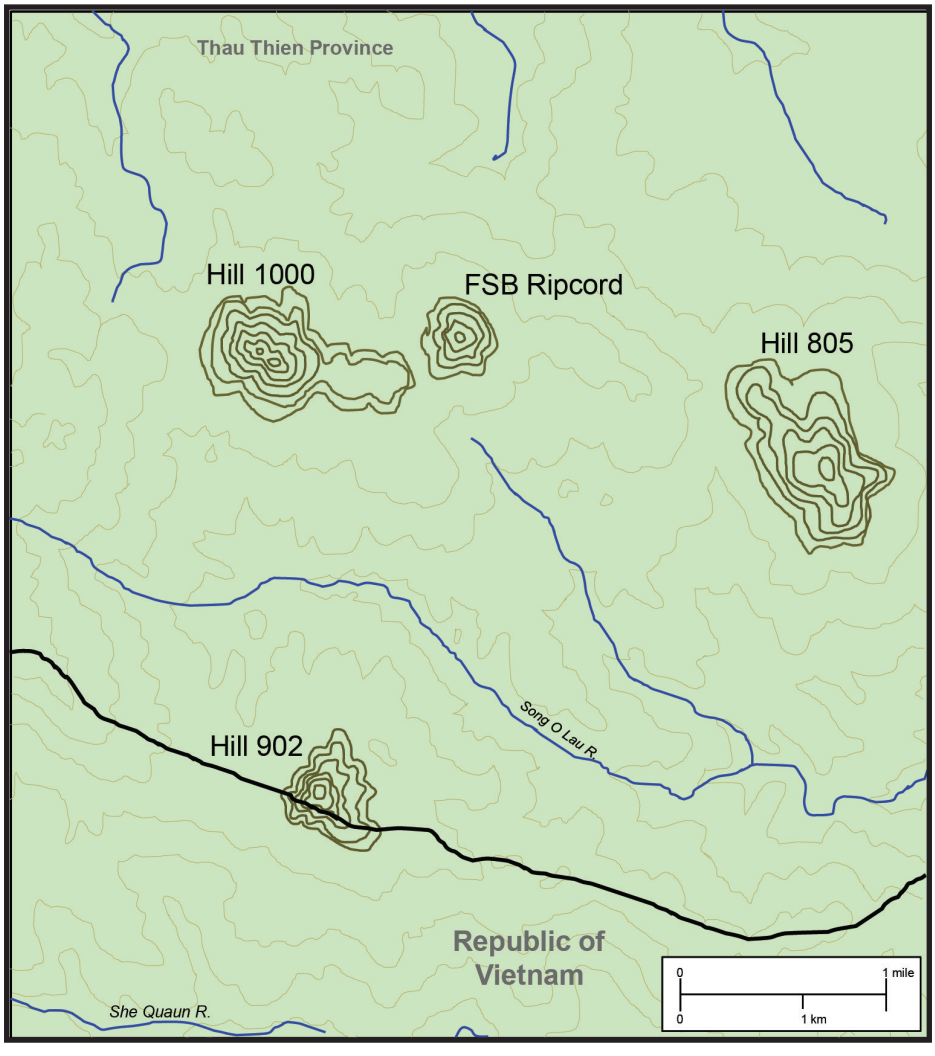

Figure 5.3 FSB *Ripcord* and the surrounding key terrain. Graphic created by CAC History for the authors.

During the American absence from the A Shau, the PAVN 324B Division moved into the area in force. Communist units in the "Warehouse Area" initially included the 803d and 29th Infantry Regiments, each supported with a machine gun company and an artillery battalion. Additionally, the 7th Sapper Battalion operated in the area. The 324B Division was also supported occasionally by the 304th Division, which provided security and logistical support to the 324B. Senior US officers recognized that to set the conditions for successful interdiction of the flow of Soldiers and supplies moving through

the A Shau Valley and to spoil an NVA attack on the coastal areas, the 101st Airborne needed a fire support base east of the valley.[2]

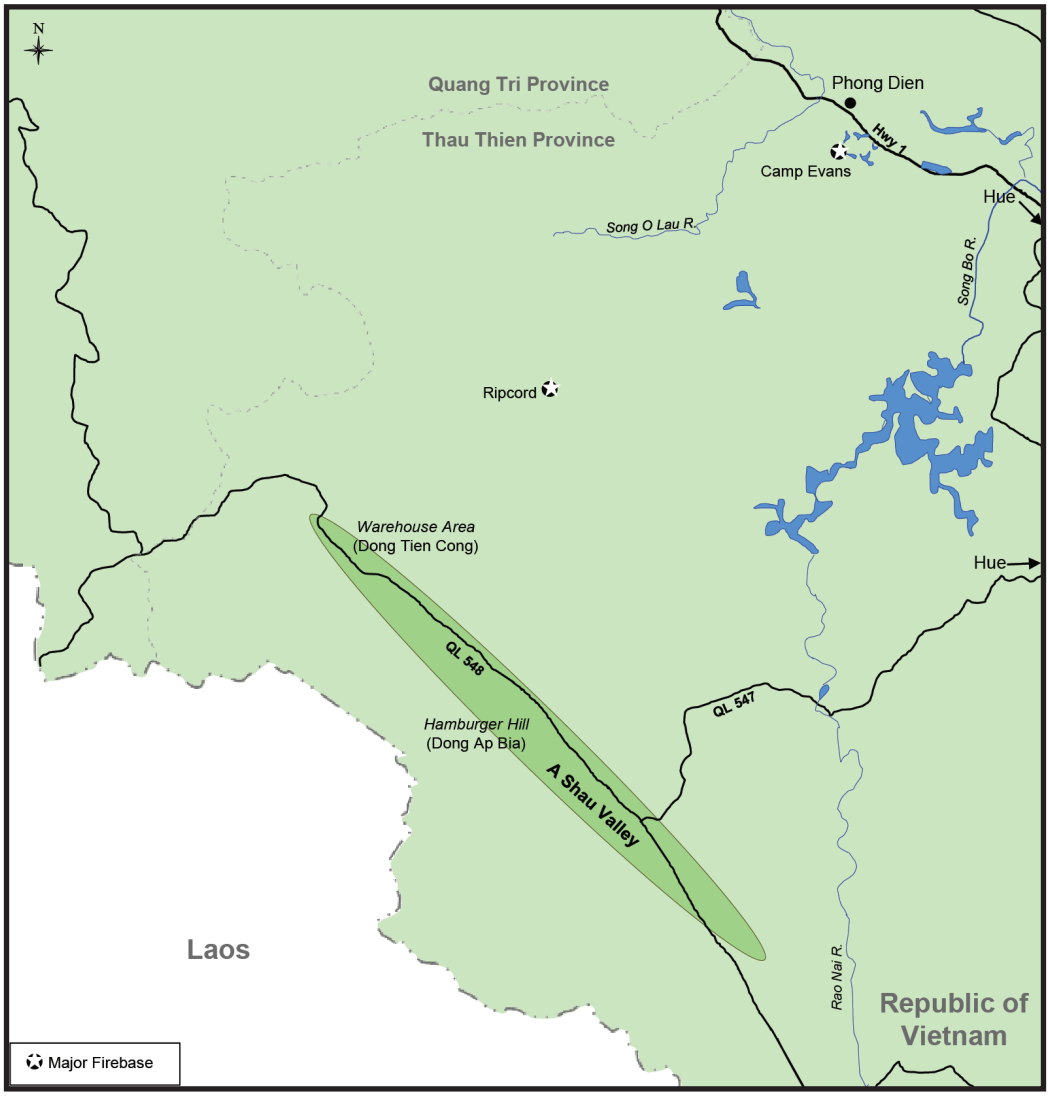

Figure 5.4 The TEXAS STAR area of operations. Graphic created by CAC History for the authors.

The 101st, however, never intended to establish a fire support base on Hill 927 (subsequently known as *Ripcord*). The original plan called for Lieutenant Colonel Andre Lucas's 2d BN, 506th to assault Hill 902 (two kilometers south of Hill 927) on 12 March 1970, and establish a firebase there in preparation for the commencement of Operation TEXAS STAR. 3d Brigade commander, Colonel William J. Bradley chose to land on Hill 902 believing that Hill 927, dominated by Hill 1000 a kilometer to the west, could not be held. Bradley also anticipated that the enemy would fight with ferocity in this area and asked the division for reinforcements. If that was not possible, then Bradley did not feel the operation a worthwhile endeavor. The Assistant Division Commander, Brigadier General John Hennessey, however, refused to commit additional manpower to the operation and insisted that it go forward. After a short artillery preparation and strikes by cobra gunships, the troop-carrying helicopters attempted to land, but the hill's vegetation prevented them from doing so. Moreover, this was not determined beforehand as Colonel Bradley had refused to allow aerial reconnaissance before the operation to prevent tipping his hand to the PAVN.[3]

After consultation with Bradley, Lucas decided to land Alpha Company, 2-506th on Hill 927 instead. Events soon proved Colonel Bradley's apprehensions were well founded. After three days of intense mortar and RPG fire from Hill 1000 and other surrounding areas, which forced a UH-1 helicopter to crash land atop the hill, the company evacuated so that B-52s could bombard Hill 927. Smarting from this setback, Major General John Wright, commanding the 101st Airborne Division, ordered another assault to seize Hill 927. Lucas gave this mission to Bravo Company.[4]

Landing on Hill 927 on 1 April 1970, Bravo Company encountered a situation to that which the men of Alpha Company had endured almost three weeks before. Preregistered mortars fired on the company from every conceivable direction. Later, Lucas ordered Alpha and Delta companies into nearby positions to support Bravo Company. Casualties continued to mount, adding to the unit's inability to secure the hilltop. Moreover, confusion reigned as officers from battalion, brigade, and division continuously bombarded Bravo's commander on the radio, ordering him to engage PAVN mortar positions and asking for situation reports. Frustrated, the company commander finally told one of the many officers of the division staff, who kept breaking in on his radio net, "Which one do you want me to get? I've got'em at three hundred and sixty degrees."[5] Horrible weather made the situation worse. A heavy fog prevented Bravo Company from calling in air support and the wounded could not be evacuated. Lucas finally succeeded in extricating his badly-mauled Bravo Company from the hill on 3 April.[6]

BG Hennessey determined that a third assault to take Hill 927 was necessary. Again, bad weather resulting from the monsoons postponed any move toward a third assault but planning continued in the meantime. Hennessey received a briefing at the 3d Brigade headquarters at Camp Evans regarding the unit's subsequent plan of action. Bradley advocated that a return to Hill 927 should be undertaken with overwhelming force or should not be attempted at all. Hennessey, already slated for promotion and to replace Wright as the commanding general of the 101st the following month, promised to commit the division's reserve infantry battalion if necessary. Bradley's brigade staff briefed Hennessey on a plan to hold existing firebases, take advantage of American air mobility, and quickly engage the PAVN in the foothills. Their least preferred course of action was to return to Hill 927. The assistant division commander, however, remained dedicated to taking the position. Hennessey told the assembled officers, "Well, you're going back to *Ripcord*."[7]

On 8 April, the weather had cleared and the third assault for Hill 927 began. Shortly after landing, Lucas's 2-506th encountered several bunker complexes. Enemy activity on the hill slackened over the next few days until they gained the top of the hill on 11 April, 1970. Work began to rebuild and strengthen the position built by the 1st Cavalry Division in 1968 – then abandoned and destroyed later in the year. 3d Brigade flew six 105 mm howitzers and a battery of six 155 howitzers into *Ripcord*.

After Lucas' battalion successfully seized Hill 927 and established FSB *Ripcord*, the area remained relatively quiet despite the battalion's active patrolling of key terrain around the firebase. Intelligence collection did not reveal that during this period the PAVN were preparing to retake the hill. More units moved into the area, established firing positions to encircle *Ripcord*, expanded trails, constructed bunker complexes, and stockpiled supplies. American attention was further diverted in May 1970, when US and ARVN forces invaded Cambodia. PAVN activity around *Ripcord* was almost totally unnoticed until July of 1970.

Determined to drive the Americans from *Ripcord*, the PAVN launched a coordinated offensive and repeatedly subjected the base to mortar, recoilless rifle, and RPG attacks.[8] On 1 July 1970, the NVA sprung their offensive and commenced an intense and sustained shelling of *Ripcord*. The shelling continued throughout the siege, which lasted until 23 July. The PAVN not only engaged *Ripcord* but also American positions on other key terrain in the area. In the early morning hours of 2 July, PAVN sapper teams attacked C/2/506 in its night defensive position on Hill 902, approximately 2 km south of *Rip-*

cord. Penetrating the lax security of the position, the PAVN used RPGs, satchel charges, and grenades inside the perimeter, killing the company commander and six others. Later that morning, the company was extracted and Hill 902 was abandoned.

Hill 1000, 1 km west of *Ripcord*, posed a substantial problem to the firebase. Mortar crews dug in on the hill lobbed rounds into the perimeter at *Ripcord*. Indirect fire from *Ripcord*, in addition to tactical air strikes, did little to reduce the threat. PAVN positions on Hill 1000 were dug in, well-concealed, and supported by an interconnected bunker complex. Seeing the ineffectiveness of indirect fires, Lieutenant Colonel Lucas decided to assault the position. On 6 July, a reconnaissance team from E/2-506, the battalion's support company, moved up the hill and engaged the PAVN mortar positions. Coming under intense fire and taking casualties, the recon team was unable to carry the position and Lucas ordered a platoon of D/2-506 to support them. The following day, Delta Company unsuccessfully attacked Hill 1000 from the east but met with the same result.

On 8 July 1970, Lucas ordered another assault on Hill 1000. This time he committed two understrength companies to the effort, directing an attack from the north and the east. C/2-506 made it to the top of the position but Delta Company was unable to do the same. After both companies withdrew, Lucas ordered Charlie Company to attack again. Charlie Company's commander, however, refused, telling Lucas that he was understrength and his remaining men exhausted. The fight for Hill 1000, however, was not over. On 12 July, Colonel Benjamin Harrison, who replaced Colonel Bradley as commander of 3d Brigade on 23 June 1970, received operational control of the division's reserve battalion and committed it to the effort to secure Hill 1000. 3d Brigade inserted Lieutenant Colonel Otis W. Livingston's 2-501 into the area west of Hill 1000, using his companies to converge on the hill from various angles. Running into heavy automatic weapons fire, RPGs, and bunker complexes, Livingston's battalion, too, failed to secure Hill 1000. Brigadier General Sidney Berry, the new Assistant Division Commander (Operations) who had assumed temporary command of the division after Major General Hennessey departed on leave, decided there would be no more assaults against Hill 1000 and 2-501 was withdrawn from the area.[9]

Hill 805, another key piece of terrain, stood 2,000 meters southeast of *Ripcord*. On 12 July, D/2-501 along with A/2-506th established positions on the hill top, from which PAVN mortars had fired onto *Ripcord* since the beginning of the siege. Over the next few days, Delta Company withstood numerous PAVN probes and all-out attacks against the position. The fighting was close with the PAVN laying down a heavy small arms fire and throwing satchel charges into Delta Company's position. The PAVN fought with ferocity to take Hill 805 and no reinforcements were provided for the beleaguered company on the hilltop. After surviving numerous assaults, D/2-501 was ordered off Hill 805 on 17 July 1970 and the position was abandoned.[10]

As the key terrain surrounding *Ripcord* fell to the enemy, pressure on this key firebase intensified. On 18 July, a heavy PAVN machine gun engaged a CH-47 Chinook helicopter delivering a load of ammunition to the firebase. Set on fire, the helicopter crashed into the storage area for the 105mm ammunition. The resulting detonations wreaked havoc across *Ripcord*, destroying the six guns of the 105mm howitzer battery and filling the air around the position with tear gas and white phosphorous.[11] Moreover, the enemy had introduced 120mm mortars in the area, exhibiting their resolve to eliminate the base. The situation at *Ripcord* was dire and would soon deteriorate further. Captain Chuck Hawkins' A/2-506 found a PAVN telephone wire on 21 July. Hawkins' men tapped into the line west of Hill 805 and discovered that four PAVN regiments surrounded *Ripcord*. Colonel Harrison directed the 3d Brigade staff to develop a plan to destroy these regiments. The chosen course of action would require six additional battalions, a commitment unavailable to the 101st.[12]

Harrison's plan, however, came to nothing. With the destruction of the 105mm howitzer battery on *Ripcord*, Brigadier General Berry decided to abandon *Ripcord* on 22 July. In what he called the toughest

decision of his military career, Berry ordered the evacuation of *Ripcord* the following day. The evacuation began at dawn on 23 July 1970. Lieutenant Colonel Lucas inserted D/2-506 to break through and reinforce Captain Hawkins' company, which was isolated by a PAVN battalion approximately two km east of the firebase. Meanwhile, Chinooks began removing equipment, including the remaining battery of 155mm howitzers. The helicopters performed this feat in the midst of a hailstorm of incoming machine gun and mortar fire. This fire brought down two Chinooks during the evacuation, which crashed into the destroyed battery of 105mm howitzers, necessitating their destruction with thermite grenades instead of their extraction.[13]

Controlling the evacuation and coordinating fires from above, Lieutenant Colonel Lucas landed inside the firebase when his command and control helicopter lost radio contact with *Ripcord*. While other Soldiers took cover where they could, Lucas stood upright as rounds impacted inside the perimeter, attempting to bring order to chaos while encouraging his Soldiers. After a few minutes, an incoming 120mm mortar round landed at his feet, mortally wounding him and killing two other soldiers.[14] The brigade operations officer, Major James King flew into the firebase at the direction of Colonel Harrison and assumed command at *Ripcord*. He coordinated airstrikes against the PAVN moving on *Ripcord*, concluded the extraction of Soldiers from *Ripcord*, and then supervised the rescue of the remnants of Alpha and Delta Companies. After the evacuation and extraction were complete, the Forward Air Controller, USAF Major "Skip" Little directed tactical airstrikes against *Ripcord* to ensure its destruction.[15]

The Screaming Eagles did not commence TEXAS STAR without substantial advantages. Among them, the 101st Airborne Division enjoyed air mobility across the area of operations. During periods of good weather, the unit could also rely on USAF delivered close air support and US Army helicopter gunship support. Moreover, artillery assigned to *Ripcord* could fire in defense of the firebase and in support of soldiers operating against PAVN units in the surrounding area. Excellent leadership within 3d Brigade also enhanced the unit's effectiveness.

On the other hand, several factors limited TEXAS STAR's chances of achieving success. As a result of Vietnamization, both Marine divisions previously engaged in operations withdrew, or were preparing to withdraw, from Vietnam in 1969-1970 while other Army units redeployed elsewhere. This left a much larger area of South Vietnam's I Corps region for the 101st Airborne Division to cover. According to Harrison, the divisions area of operations tripled during this period and "the 3d Brigade of the 101st Airborne Division in 1970 had a large piece of the Vietnam War." He also remarked, "The 3d Brigade Area of Operations was about 1300 square kilometers or 800 square miles. Interestingly, this approximated the size of the AO for the entire 1st Cavalry Division when America launched its first ground force offensive in the Ia Drang Valley in October-November 1965."[16] Put simply, in 1970 the 101st Airborne Division was spread much too thin to effectively commit necessary forces to a single area.

Another limitation on the 101st Airborne Division during TEXAS STAR involved the policy of keeping casualties to an absolute minimum. According to historian Keith William Nolan, "The political fallout from such heavy casualties [as experienced at Hamburger Hill] would reshape the conduct of the entire ground war in Vietnam and profoundly influence the way in which the 101st Airborne Division responded to the action at *Ripcord*."[17] In fact, the domestic political reactions to Hamburger Hill largely changed the culture from MACV all the way down to the 101st. In order to maintain some semblance of public support for the war, commanders insisted casualties be kept low and were unwilling to engage in operations that would produce large numbers of casualties.

Doing whatever necessary to reduce casualties became the unwritten rule in the 101st Airborne Division following Hamburger Hill. Officers throughout the division understood this and in April 1969, MACV commander, GEN Creighton Abrams told his commanders to continue pressuring the enemy but to avoid unnecessary casualties. Moreover, XXIV Corps commander, Lieutenant General Melvin

Zais, reminded his commanders to "recognize the political climate" in the United States, and to "recognize the difficulties under which the administration is operating insofar as public support is concerned, and to recognize the impact of heavy casualties." Zais also warned his officers that excessive casualties, even incurred during a victory, could cause more harm than good.[18] Over one year later, this mindset among the senior leadership of the 101st profoundly influenced the course of events at *Ripcord*.

Staff officers found themselves explaining individual casualties. Lieutenant Colonel Charles Dyke served two tours with the 101st in Vietnam. During his second tour, he was first the division G1, then the division G3. He later recalled, "Both of the division [Assistant Division Commanders] ADCs and myself [sic]…were always on the phone with our parent command, XXIV Corps, and sometimes even with USARV down in Long Binh, explaining in detail why a particular company in a particular battalion had lost two or three people the night before. We were under great pressure to hold the casualties down. That was well understood in the division."[19] In fact, during the siege of *Ripcord*, 3d Brigade commander, Colonel Ben Harrison, received a query direct from USMACV's commanding general, Creighton Abrams, asking why he was taking such significant casualties. Moreover, as the *Ripcord* siege unfolded, the 101st imposed a media blackout of the operation, prohibiting press and Army public affairs personnel from traveling to *Ripcord*. According to Vietnam War historian Thomas Yarborough, this fit within the division's general policy to shy away from substantial press coverage of its operations.[20]

3d Brigade was also limited by intelligence that failed to establish accurate appraisals of the enemy's strength. Between April and July, 1970, an additional ten PAVN battalions moved into the Warehouse Area.[21] Colonel Harrison later recalled that the PAVN had anticipated a future American operation. Forecasting Operation Lam Son 719, which commenced in February 1971, the NVA began reinforcing their units operating in the Warehouse Area. As a result of this development, more enemy soldiers, air defense weapons, and mortars appeared surrounding *Ripcord*. American intelligence also failed to realize that a sea change in North Vietnamese strategy had occurred. Attempting to disrupt Vietnamization and gain a quick victory, the PAVN increased their conventional activity, sought to destroy pacification programs, and defeat American operations in the mountainous regions east of the A Shau Valley. Much of their effort was geared toward denying American units air mobility by shooting down helicopters.[22]

Restrictive weather further constrained operations around *Ripcord*. The A Shau Valley sat between two mountain ranges, frequently leaving a dense fog in the lowlands. *Ripcord* was also susceptible to high winds that complicated air operations, including resupply and casualty evacuation from *Ripcord*. According to Harrison, winds gusting between 40 and 75 knots "were routine" and such winds could easily limit the effectiveness of indirect fires. Finally, the rain hampered offensive operations. In fact, the monsoons had forced the postponement of engagements on more than one occasion.[23]

Another limiting factor in Operation TEXAS STAR was the American failure to secure and hold key terrain around *Ripcord*. Although Soldiers of the 3d Brigade fought hard to secure and defend this key terrain including Hills 1000, 902, and 805, their efforts were wasted. Reluctant to go "all in" and absorb the casualties required to gain local tactical supremacy on the ground, the 101st simply refused to commit the manpower needed to effectively take and hold all the ground from which *Ripcord* was easily observed and engaged. Moreover, much ground that was occupied was abandoned at some point during the siege of the firebase. Thus, the PAVN who had fought hard to either gain or keep possession of these objectives, were free to occupy the key terrain. Such a condition made *Ripcord* untenable.

MAJ Herbert E. Koenigsbauer, operations officer for 2-506, aptly expressed the failure of the 101st to fully commit the required manpower to maintain *Ripcord*'s viability as a fire support base. He later recalled, "Lucas and I made repeated requests that division commit additional forces to the action but higher command was not prepared to follow through and do what was required to win the battle, and I

must admit to a certain sense of disillusionment that after all the sacrifices that had been made to take and hold *Ripcord*, we just turned around and gave it back to the North Vietnamese."[24]

Just as the reluctance to commit additional forces to the battle for *Ripcord* limited the operation, so too did the micromanagement of resources that supported the firebase. Captain Fred Spaulding of the 3d Brigade staff recalled that Brigadier General Berry was unhappy with the amount of resources expended to hold *Ripcord*. According to Nolan, Berry said "There had already been more casualties than the political situation could bear…more helicopters shot down and more mortar and artillery ammunition expended than could be justified, given the fiscal crunch under which the army was forced to operate as it withdrew from Vietnam."[25] Spaulding also recalled that USARV had restricted the daily expenditure rate of 105mm artillery ammunition and that another officer expressed concern that the fighting around *Ripcord* risked running through their allotment too quickly. Similar concerns existed with ammunition for 81mm mortars. Significantly, however, Berry criticized his commanders during the *Ripcord* siege for not properly coordinating fires, as made clear in letters written to his wife during the siege. For his part, Berry denied that any restrictions existed on the amount of ammunition expended.[26]

But Nolan also quotes Major Koenigsbauer, who said there were limitations and remarked, "The cut-back made it clear to me that while the PAVN were committed to taking *Ripcord*, we were not committed to defending it. Brigade was being held back by division, which was being held back by the next higher level of command." He also argued, "If higher command was not prepared to make available the ammunition necessary for the indirect-fire battle, they were certainly not prepared to commit additional ground units to fight the enemy around *Ripcord*. No one above brigade was prepared to take the enemy on in a major battle." Not only had the political situation worked against a strong resolve to hold *Ripcord*, but commanders at division and USMACV paid more attention to the political situation, and the things which would keep it under control, than they did their primary mission of fighting and destroying the enemy.[27]

In the wake of *Ripcord*'s evacuation and abandonment, the 101st tried to snatch victory from the jaws of defeat and the division presented an inaccurate and largely one-sided account of what had happened during the siege. Brigadier General Berry, in the days following the *Ripcord* exodus, spoke frequently to the veterans of the siege, telling them that the battle was tremendously successful for the 101st. Among other things, Berry told the veterans that their fight at *Ripcord* had forced the PAVN to commit large numbers of Soldiers to reducing it, the concentration of which made the enemy vulnerable. Many of the *Ripcord* veterans Berry addressed, however, were not impressed with his speeches and believed that echelons above brigade had not properly supported them.[28]

Even the division's after action report, dated on the same day as *Ripcord*'s abandonment, painted the evacuation in a relatively positive light. Abandoning *Ripcord*, according to the report, presented the 101st with a unique opportunity to engage caches and logistical facilities in the areas of FSBs Airborne and Bradley. Closing FSB *Ripcord* freed up the Soldiers necessary to conduct operations in this area. Most importantly, however, the report argued that the *Ripcord* operations had caused heavy PAVN casualties, and in the attempt to mass against *Ripcord*, the enemy presented numerous targets for the 101st Airborne to attack in a single area. The report did, however, contain more than a grain of truth. It noted, "Additional factors of critical importance in the decision to close FSB *RIPCORD* were the domestic and foreign political implications of another US firebase undergoing a KHE SANH or DIEN BIEN PHU siege." The division exhibited an awareness that "adverse publicity" regarding operations around *Ripcord* could potentially have "jeopardized the program of Vietmization [sic]."[29]

The 3d Brigade, 101st Airborne Division sustained 74 dead and 400 wounded during the siege of *Ripcord*. While senior officers were not willing to fully commit themselves to victory, the enemy on the other hand, was prepared to do whatever was necessary to achieve their primary goal of taking *Rip-*

cord. The 101st only reported 125 PAVN KIA, but Brigadier General Berry's pep-talks to the grizzled *Ripcord* veterans tried to persuade his men that it had probably reached in excess of 500. To be sure, the Americans on and around *Ripcord* made the PAVN pay a steep price to control key terrain and force US abandonment of *Ripcord*. Colonel Harrison who met with his North Vietnamese counterpart many years later wrote that the North Vietnamese officer told him that the siege rendered 9 of the PAVN 324B Division's 10 battalions combat ineffective. Harrison estimated their losses at no less than 2,500.[30]

Although the Soldiers fighting on *Ripcord* and the surrounding hills fought tenaciously, commanders at echelons above brigade refused to engage with the same aggressiveness once the siege began. While it is true that the 101st inflicted a substantial number of PAVN casualties, they failed in their primary mission of interdicting the flow of supplies in the A Shau Valley, destroying the warehouse area, thus denying the enemy's ability to reach the coastal regions. Before the siege, the division's senior officers insisted that establishing *Ripcord* was essential to the success of Operation TEXAS STAR and refused to consider other options. In the final analysis, however, these officers proved unwilling to take necessary measures to make possession of *Ripcord* effective once the PAVN showed its teeth. With General Berry and the 101st unwilling to commit wholly to the fight to secure *Ripcord*, the remote outpost became untenable. Given the military situation, evacuating *Ripcord* was the correct decision, but why was such an offensive commenced in the first place? To be sure the anti-war movement helped shape public policy that constrained operations in Vietnam, and at *Ripcord* specifically. More to the point, however, military commanders at these echelons were hyper-aware of the political context in which their operation took place, which led them to self-limit their options. Instead of wholeheartedly carrying out their mission, these commanders refused to commit the required manpower needed to secure the key terrain surrounding *Ripcord*.

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Chapter 6
Operation JOINT ENDEAVOR: The US Army in Bosnia

R. Cody Phillips

The fall of the Berlin Wall and the sudden disintegration of the Communist Bloc engendered dramatic shifts in US foreign policy and defensive planning in Western Europe. Eastern European nations broke free of Soviet dominance and embraced both democratic reforms and a yearning to establish closer ties with the West. The national euphoria that came with this sudden independence spilled over into some ethnic groups that had been arbitrarily bound together in seemingly artificial nation states following World War I and implementation of the Treaty of Versailles. Following a deliberate and peaceful process, Czechoslovakia dissolved by the end of 1992 into two smaller nations: Slovakia and the Czech Republic. Unfortunately, the attempt of ethnic groups living in Yugoslavia to separate from their parent country was neither amicable nor easy.

Figure 6.1 Yugoslavia, March 1991. Map created by CAC History for the authors.

Testifying before the House Foreign Affairs Committee, the US Secretary of State called the situation in Bosnia-Herzegovina "the problem from hell."[1] By 1992, four of the six republics that comprised Yugoslavia had separated from the larger nation to form their own independent states. Slovenia, the first to go, and the Former Republic of Macedonia encountered some resistance. Croatia tried leaving peacefully, but ethnic Serbs in the country opposed separation which triggered a sudden civil war between Croatians and ethnic Serbians. Fearing isolation in a Serb-dominated Yugoslavia, Bosnia-Herzegovina held a national referendum to consider its independence in March. An overwhelming majority of Bosnians approved separation. When a "peace and unity" demonstration in the Bosnian capital of Sarajevo was fired on by Serbian nationalists in April, the civil war in Bosnia began in earnest.

Over the next three and one-half years, between 100,000 and 250,000 Bosnians were killed; 80 percent of them were non-combatants. An unknown number were wounded, 12,000 women were raped, a half-million civilians became homeless, and at least twice as many became refugees as a result of the ethnic cleansing that swept the land.[2] Equipped with military materiel provided by the Yugoslavian army, Bosnian Serbs seized the initiative and at one time dominated more than half of Bosnia. Bosnian Croats rose up as well and took advantage of the chaotic situation to seize small portions of Bosnia that were inhabited by large numbers of ethnic Croatians.

The confused conflict exacerbated the traditional perspective of a pacific multi-cultural community of blended ethnicities. On the eve of the war, ethnic Croats could be found in almost 70 percent of Bosnia, while Bosnian Muslims (Bosniaks) and Bosnian Serbs were intermingled over about 95 percent of the country. More than a quarter of the married couples living in urban areas were from mixed ethnic backgrounds. Muslims comprised a rising plurality of 44 percent in the country, with ethnic Serbs and Croats representing 31 percent and 17 percent respectively of the total population. Smaller numbers of ethnic Albanians and Hungarians also were found in Bosnia.[3]

Soon after the civil war began, Bosnian Serb forces seized more than two-thirds of the land area and virtually surrounded Sarajevo. Their quick success encouraged them to establish their own "country," carved from Bosnia-Herzegovina: the *Republika Srpska* [Serb Republic]. Only Yugoslavia gave it diplomatic recognition. The United Nations already had established a presence in neighboring Croatia so the UN Security Council enlarged its mandate to include Bosnia. A large peacekeeping contingent, the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR), moved into Bosnia, but fewer than 10,000 peacekeepers were spread over two countries comprising about 108,000 square kilometers, roughly the size of the state of Tennessee. Lightly armed with no clear mission and multiple foes, UNPROFOR was virtually powerless to make any impact on the conflict.

Retaining the initiative and armed with weaponry from the Yugoslavian army, the Bosnian Serbs terrorized the civilian population and even bullied isolated elements of the UNPROFOR. The UN peacekeepers could not stop the violence. Often out-gunned and always out-numbered their compromised position reduced the UNPROFOR to pawns in a chaotic environment. As the violence escalated and reports of genocide became known throughout the world the European Community, soon to become the European Union, tried to assume control over the deteriorating situation.

This effort also failed to arrest the conflict. Hoping that the UN peacekeepers could at least protect humanitarian relief and isolated safe areas for Bosniak civilians, the European Community threatened a more robust response to Bosnian Serb aggression. It had virtually no effect on anyone. Without sufficient manpower on the ground, it seemed certain that the violence would continue unabated. Initial estimates from the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) suggested that as many as 460,000 military personnel, almost half of them Americans, would be necessary to stop the civil strife in Bosnia and reverse the Bosnian Serb territorial gains. No one in NATO was prepared to make that kind of investment, especially in such a confused and violent environment.

US policy settled on a middle course which limited American involvement and possible American casualties: selective and strictly controlled NATO air strikes and aggressive diplomacy with Yugoslavia to restrain Bosnian Serbs. Diplomatic efforts quickly bogged down and merely demonstrated the intransigence among Serbs in Bosnia and Yugoslavia, who were not eager to end a conflict that they were winning. The air strikes were equally ineffective, especially when Bosnian Serbs used UNPROFOR personnel and Bosniaks as "human shields" to deter attacks on military targets. The situation became critical in the summer of 1995 when 8,000 Bosniak men and boys were massacred at Srebrenica (a UN safe area) and later a random Bosnian Serb artillery round landed in a market in Sarajevo causing 122 civilian casualties.

By now, the court of world opinion had shifted against Yugoslavia and the Bosnian Serbs. A rebuilt Croatian military went on the offensive, and Bosnian Muslims and Croatian Bosnians formed a loose alliance for their own counter-offensive against the Serbs. The combined efforts of all three entities (NATO air strikes, Bosnian Croats, and Bosnian Muslims) were able to push Bosnian Serbs back, limiting the Serbs to slightly less than half of all of Bosnia-Herzegovina. Concurrently NATO launched Operation Deliberate Force, a three-week sustained series of air strikes and artillery bombardments that significantly damaged Serbian military capabilities. Remaining Bosnian Serb artillery near Sarajevo was removed and the Serbs agreed to a temporary cessation of hostilities and to meet with all belligerents at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base near Dayton, Ohio, to negotiate a permanent ceasefire in Bosnia.

On 21 November 1995 more than 43 months after the Bosnian civil war began, representatives from the former warring factions agreed to a formal ceasefire. The Dayton Peace Accords were formalized in the General Framework Agreement for Peace in Paris the following month. The Dayton Accords specified that US military personnel would be included in an international Implementation Force (IFOR) which would be responsible for various provisions of the Accords and, most importantly, enforcement of the ceasefire.[4]

Even before Deliberate Force began, US Army personnel in Europe had started studying the deteriorating situation in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Soon after civil war broke out in Croatia and Bosnia in 1992 Army planners studied the German invasion of the area early in World War II to gain an orientation to the terrain and possible operational and logistical difficulties that might be encountered if the United States was committed to help stabilize the region. Conceptual plans for logistical support also were developed at this time. The initial concern, however, focused on a possible rescue of UN personnel and international relief workers who might be trapped in the chaotic conflict.[5] But any kind of planning, let alone specific preparations, was hampered by the rapidly changing situation, a paucity of accurate data, and an unknown mission. As conditions in Bosnia grew worse one thing seemed certain: the Army would be involved in some manner at some unknown time.[6] As one division staff officer recalled, "This thing just didn't sneak up on us; we saw it coming a long way out."[7] Eventually, the Army settled on OPLAN (Operational Plan) 40104 which called for ground forces to evacuate UNPROFOR personnel "under duress."[8]

As the draft plan gelled intense training began with a series of mission rehearsal exercises (MRE). The first two major exercises were Mountain Shield I and II which included personnel from US European Command (EUCOM), US Army Europe (USAREUR), and US Air Force Europe. The MRE called for the lead Army unit to be the 1st Armored Division.

Nonetheless, throughout the summer and continuing into the early autumn, virtually all the planning was based on assumptions and calculations – glorified guesswork. The flow of information and guidance from the National Command Authority was restricted by politics and diplomacy. Various domestic issues – principally a looming government shutdown over funding for the federal government,

and coordinating a unified diplomacy among the European Union, United States, Russia, Yugoslavia, and the many combatants in Bosnia-Herzegovina – created an impenetrable fog for Army planners. In this kind of murk, planning embraced multiple threat levels, missions, and logistical requirements. In the absence of complete data and explicit direction from above anything seemed possible. Thus, all planning was subject to sudden changes, often based upon small snippets of new data or the vaguest suggestions that constituted guidance. Operations personnel expected that some kind of restrictions in personnel or time frame would be placed on whatever force went into Bosnia, but with so many unknown factors all planning proceeded without addressing possible force ceilings. This would become a complication when the peace enforcement operation was assigned and firm detailed planning began.

With the successful conclusion of Deliberate Force OPLAN 40104 was scrapped and operational planning quickly shifted to a peace enforcement operation. More than 10,000 personnel from US V Corps and the 1st Armored Division participated in MRE Mountain Eagle 95. This multifaceted exercise included a variety of scenarios that challenged personnel and leaders in different peace enforcement tasks and negotiation skills. For instance, in one situational exercise, Soldiers were confronted by an angry mob demanding money for safe passage through their village, while in another case an agitated crowd demanded help in seizing an accused war criminal.[9] Other training ranged from mine awareness to checkpoint operations to force protection measures. Every reasonable exigency was considered. After six months in Bosnia one company commander credited the intensive training to his

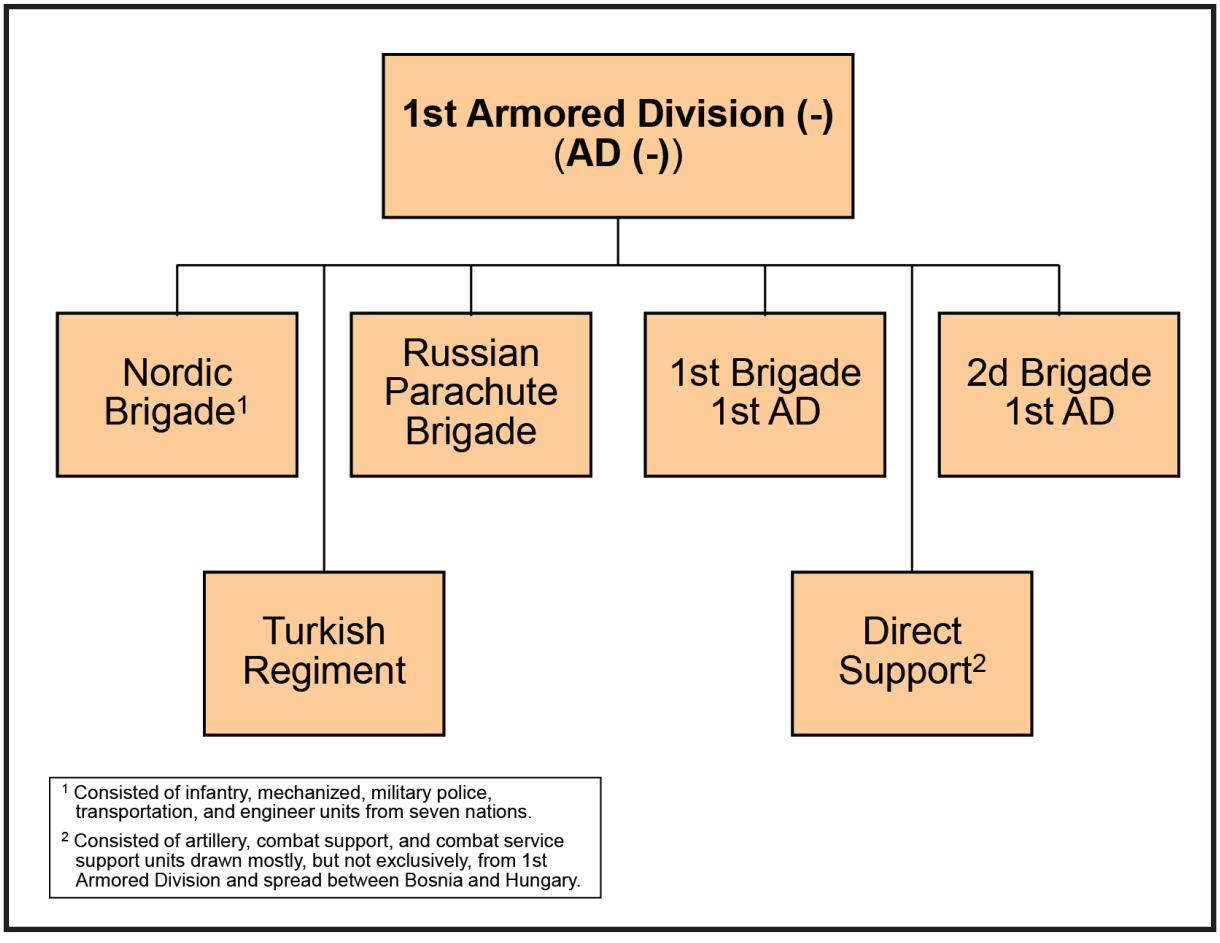

Figure 6.2 Task Force Eagle Organization Chart. Figure created by CAC History for the authors.

unit's operational effectiveness; it was "right on the money," and "really paid us big dividends."[10] Later, a battalion commander insisted that his troops often said, "This is just like 'Mountain Eagle'."[11]

The early planning positioned operations personnel in USAREUR and V Corps far ahead of policy makers and higher headquarters, but it still did not allow for sufficient time to be adequately prepared when the scope of the operation and mission became clear in November 1995. The Dayton Peace Accords set the clock ticking for actual deployment. IFOR was expected to be in-country and operational within 30 days of relieving UNPROFOR, which was supposed to be five days after the deployment of US forces began. Operational and logistical preparations kicked into high gear by mid-November.

Two brigades from the 1st Armored Division, plus support units, a Turkish regiment, a Russian parachute brigade, and various units from eight other nations, comprised Task Force Eagle, the American contingent of IFOR. In view of the intense hostilities among all of the warring factions in Bosnia, USAREUR resolved to enter the country with a tank-heavy force. Waving "the flag and hope everybody would leave us alone" was not an option; planners believed that a contingent of M1 Abrams tanks sent a "signal to the factions that they shouldn't screw with us."[12] With the force package quickly coming together, initial troop training completed or underway, and a clearly defined mission, attention turned to specific issues surrounding deployment and logistical support.

There were two primary options for getting from Germany to Bosnia: overland or by sea. Shipping materiel and personnel by sea was rejected early in the planning process. The port facilities in Croatia were limited, with a restricted road network through that country into Bosnia. Also, other IFOR nations, principally France and the United Kingdom, already had planned to use the sea route.[13] Although some materiel was shipped through the Croatian ports, most of the US resources and Task Force Eagle were deployed overland. This required an intermediate staging base where support facilities and supplies could be stockpiled outside the area of hostilities. Three options were considered: Croatia, Yugoslavia (Serbia), and Hungary. Croatia was not a viable option because its infrastructure already was strained by NATO forces in the country and damage done from its own recent civil war. Serbia had solid strategic possibilities but it too was rejected. If the peace enforcement operation failed, an intermediate staging base in Serbia would engender a significant risk to the American facility. Hungary, though further away than the other two countries, became the designated location for the intermediate staging base.

Task Force Eagle officially began its deployment on 2 December 1995. Almost within minutes complications began to surface. A French railway strike, begun on 24 November, affected several European railways denying timely access to rail cars that could carry heavy equipment items. (The strike officially ended on 15 December.) The added rail traffic from US forces passing through Germany, Austria, and Hungary added to already congested rail traffic disrupting civilian and commercial trains which caused intermittent traffic jams and further slowed the arrival of materiel at the intermediate staging base in Hungary and Bosnia. The approaching holiday season and inclement weather in southern Germany and the Balkans slowed road traffic as well. Some transportation units were understrength, and there was a paucity of experienced and licensed heavy equipment drivers and fully operational vehicles. Some of these drivers drove materiel from Germany to the intermediate staging base and then were flown back to Germany, where they had a mandatory rest in accordance with prescribed safety regulations before making another one-way trip to Hungary. Older model trucks in storage were tried but not enough were mission-ready. Others that were used arrived in Hungary needing critical repairs or maintenance and there were too few technicians and insufficient spare parts. These broken-down vehicles were sent by rail back to Germany months later.[14] In some situations Air Force and Army aircraft were used to transport personnel and equipment to ensure the timely delivery of requisite resources to accomplish the mission. The increased number of air delivered materiel was not in the original planning.[15] Unfortunately, there were occasional units transported in one set of vehicles that were separated

from their equipment that was being shipped a different way so that troops arrived ahead of their equipment, or *vice versa*.

With so many moving parts it is not surprising that some things went wrong. Logistics planning was improvised because there were so many operational unknowns. A shifting ceiling cap on personnel to deploy affected both the number of support personnel and their equipment. No one wanted to take too much, but with no reference points and frequently changing operational plans, it was difficult to determine how much was enough. Anxious to enforce the peace, once Task Force Eagle arrived in Bosnia commanders pushed ground units forward and trimmed logistical support, keeping supply and maintenance equipment and personnel further back in the queue. For instance, logisticians planned to use a medium truck company but operational planners, trying to meet the personnel cap, mandated palletized loads and a smaller light truck company to deploy to Bosnia. The short-term objective was met but the long-term consequences severely strained the ability to support troops in the field and sustain the mission.[16] Contractors helped offset some support requirements without affecting personnel ceilings in the deployment, but this required additional funding, which was slow in coming, especially in view of congressional budget constraints.

Figure 6.3 Supporting Operation Joint Endeavor, a 1st Armored Division Abrams tank moves into Bosnia-Herzegovina. Photo courtesy of the US Army.

The logistical complexities were overwhelming. Moving troops and equipment was only the beginning. Task Force Eagle consumed about 200,000 gallons of fuel each day, in addition to 200,000 gallons of potable water. Almost 72,000 meals were served daily, and planning called for maintaining enough food, fuel, and water for three days.[17] Shortages of some supplies and equipment, such as cold weather gear, appeared and it became necessary to draw on Army War Reserve Stocks to sustain Task Force Eagle in the field.[18]

Reserve Component units eventually joined Task Force Eagle but there were complications here as well. The civil affairs, public affairs, psychological operations units, and individual Reservists had not participated in any of the mission readiness exercises. Few of them arrived with more than their basic issue of supplies and equipment. All of them required at least a general orientation to their attached organization and Multinational Division (North) (MND (N)) before becoming fully operational. When reservists arrived in Germany they often found themselves stuck with the assigned unit's rear detachment waiting for transportation to get them into Bosnia.

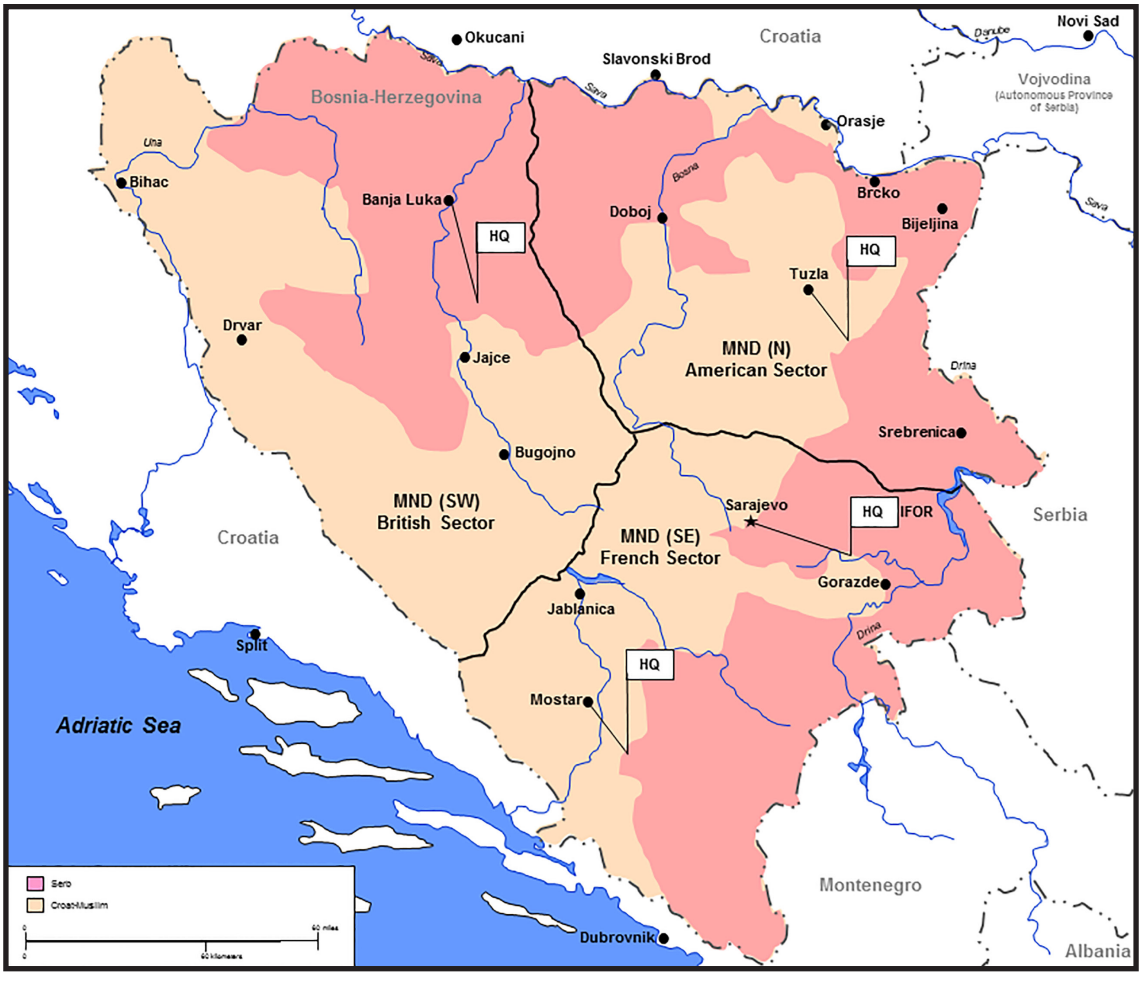

Figure 6.4 Multinational Division Sectors, December 1995. Map created by CAC History for the authors.

Soldiers adapted to their circumstances as best they could. Troop commanders who were separated from their units used personal cell phones to maintain contact. Transportation companies used credit cards to pay for fuel and lodging for the three-day 1,000-mile trip from Germany to Bosnia. In subsequent interviews and after action reports, senior commanders tended to put a positive spin on the entire deployment, while junior officers and noncommissioned officers had an entirely different appraisal. One battalion staff officer perhaps fairly summarized the deployment best of all, "from the macro perspective it was flawless; from the micro we shortchanged Soldiers needlessly."[19]

Clearly there were holes in some of the initial planning which reflected both the absence of reliable data early in the development of a coherent campaign plan and then the sudden rush to execute the plan. The opportunity (and initiative) to develop conceptual plans certainly facilitated preparations for the

actual mission. But before November the Army did not have an explicit mission, a known force structure for the operation, or sufficient information to develop its logistical requirements. In less than 30 days it had to bring all these divergent tasks together and execute a functional campaign plan. Looking back on the variety of *ad hoc* solutions individual Soldiers employed, one brigade commander concluded that the sheer determination and creativity of the American Soldier was a significant factor in completing the deployment on time.[20]

Figure 6.5 Typical US Army Checkpoint in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Photo courtesy of the US Army.

Perhaps the most publicly recognized deployment difficulty occurred early in Operation JOINT ENDEAVOR when the Army tried to bridge the Sava River. It was the longest waterway in the old Yugoslavia and most of the river served as the international border between Croatia and Bosnia. No bridges across the river survived the civil war, so Army engineers intended to build a pontoon bridge. Almost record-breaking floods raised the river fifteen feet in the late evening, flooding the American camp and destroying part of the incomplete pontoon bridge. There was considerable confusion (and wet clothes and damaged equipment) the next morning, but no casualties. Crossing the river was suspended while additional materiel from Germany was shipped to the site. In the meantime, commanders of the lead units that were to cross the Sava engaged a civilian ferry to take them into Bosnia for a reconnaissance. Later that day they were stranded in Bosnia for extra hours because the ferry had mechanical problems and it took some time to move some of the pontoon boats from the damaged bridge across the river to remove the commanders.[21] On 31 December 1995 the bridge was completed and the first American M1A2 Abrams tanks rolled across the Sava River into Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Sensitive to the qualified congressional support and the vicissitudes of public opinion senior military and political leaders carefully crafted the IFOR mission and rules of engagement to avoid slipping into "mission creep" which had afflicted other US military operations, most recently in Somalia and Southeast Asia. The IFOR was charged with the task of enforcing the ceasefire and controlling all air

space over Bosnia. The former warring factions were separated by clearly defined "zones of separation," and all of their military movements were restricted to specific routes. The IFOR also created Joint Military Commissions to encourage cooperation among the former warring factions and, ideally, ease some of the ethnic tensions in the area. Most of the UN forces were evacuated. Those that remained merely changed uniform patches and headgear to become part of the IFOR.

Bosnia-Herzegovina was divided into three sections for the 57,000 uniformed military personnel comprising the IFOR. Multinational Division (Southeast) was managed by the French, Multinational Division (Southwest) (MND (SW)) was under British command, and MND (N) was occupied by US forces. Slightly less than 20,000 US military personnel were deployed as part of the IFOR. Lieutenant General John Abrams, commander of US V Corps and deputy commander of US Army Europe, had overall command of Operation JOINT ENDEAVOR. Major General William Nash, commander of 1st Armored Division, was commander of Task Force Eagle, the American and allied contingent that occupied MND (N).

As Task Force Eagle moved into MND (N), Soldiers encountered a ravaged landscape and broken population. Burned out buildings and the remains of others that had been bombed dotted villages and fields. Barbed wire entanglements surrounded concrete bunkers and trenches. Fields were denuded of vegetation, and roads were barely passable. One brigade commander opined that the potholes were larger than the roads. Mines and booby-traps seemed to be everywhere. Some of the population received the Americans with sullen silence; others seemed indifferent. Some were overjoyed and offered small tokens of gratitude, usually food and drinks, which Soldiers often declined for security reasons.

Most of the cantonment sites for Task Force Eagle had been occupied by UNPROFOR so it required no significant investment of resources and time to occupy and secure these sites. Yet Task Force Eagle was much larger than the UNPROFOR contingent, so contractors immediately began doubling the number of cantonment sites in MND (N). Establishing checkpoints at road intersections and bridges and aggressive patrolling was done quickly to ensure that the former warring factions stayed in their respective zones of separation. In fact, within only a few weeks, violent episodes became relatively rare to the point where an unanticipated situation developed: staying alert. Soldiers had so effectively tamped down visible hostile incidents and eased ethnic tensions that checkpoints and patrols became a common place. Dealing with the tedium of a repetitive routine was almost as challenging as the periodic random acts of violence or challenges to the IFOR authority.

Nevertheless, there were tense moments and violent episodes, especially in the first quarter of 1996. Occasionally crowds of Bosniaks or Bosnian Serbs would try intimidating an isolated patrol or threaten to riot over a perceived problem or injustice. An empty bottle or rock sometimes was hurled at a passing American vehicle or patrol. Sometimes shots would be fired across the zone of separation or at an IFOR checkpoint or patrol. No Americans were wounded by gunfire or seriously injured by hurled objects but the infrequent episodes did underscore the necessity to stay alert.

Here was evidence of the value of the training and planning that was invested in preparing for Operation JOINT ENDEAVOR. Each confrontation with an angry Bosniak or an armed Bosnian Serb had the potential to escalate into an international incident. Thus almost every crisis had strategic, operational, and tactical implications. In a world dominated by instant communications, any error of judgment or unresolved violence threatened the peace enforcement operation. And responsibility for dealing with such unpredictable episodes rested squarely on the lieutenant or sergeant who was at an isolated checkpoint or leading his patrol through a remote village near the border of a zone of separation.

The caliber of training also proved itself in preparing US military personnel to deal with the number of mines and booby-traps that saturated Bosnia. One estimate suggested that there were more than 750,000 mines buried in 30,000 sites around the country.[22] In MND (N) alone 4,000 minefields were

identified with a conservative caveat that there were probably an equal number of minefields still unidentified in the American sector.[23] Although there were some American casualties (often a result of an unguarded or thoughtless mistake) they were few, especially in view of the volume of explosive devices that were placed around the country. One IFOR estimate suggested that it would require another 20 years before all mines had been removed at which one Army engineer sneered, "that's if they don't go out and emplace anymore."[24]

The ethnic animosity in Bosnia-Herzegovina was far more serious than the pervasive presence of mines and booby-traps or the random acts of violence directed at each other or the IFOR personnel. The ethnic groups, principally the Bosnian Serbs and Bosniaks, harbored intense hatred and suspicion for their former antagonists which IFOR personnel could not resolve. IFOR enforced the peace but a long-term solution was years away. The fires had been tamped down but the embers still glowed beneath the surface. Peace in Bosnia was maintained, as one brigade commander ruefully observed, "partly because the sides want peace, but also by cajoling, coaching, and outright compelling peace."[25]

In MND (N) US Army personnel tried to alleviate some of the suffering among the civilian population and encourage reconciliation among the former warring factions through humanitarian assistance and internal improvements. But this was done subject to the availability of resources and opportunities, and always with the thought uppermost that the primary mission was peace enforcement, not nation building. There was a tendency, particularly among non-government organizations (NGO) and civilians, to view the seemingly endless resources and abilities of the Army as the providential means of fixing communities. Thus while the Army could (and often did) repair schoolhouses and build bridges or provide clean water or routine medical care, it could not consistently engage in such activities without interfering with its peace enforcement mission. In spite of this reality many NGO representatives and community leaders continued to expect more from the Army than was available in time and material support.

Eventually, the quick and decisive implementation of the Dayton Peace Accords faded into memory. Peace in Bosnia emboldened some Bosniaks and Bosnian Serbs to assert rights or privileges they had not known since 1992. This usually was demonstrated by displaced persons, frequently moving in small groups, who naively sought to physically reoccupy lost communities or homes. Once they were discovered, Army personnel moved into the contested areas and separated the ethnic groups. These innocent attempts to regain what was lost from the civil war continued for years. Sadly, others who seemed to relish maintaining ethnic strife tried to capitalize on these episodes. To frustrate the Army and maintain tension, unemployed civilians sometimes were recruited (and paid a small stipend) as "rent-a-mobs" simply to cause trouble.

In time, however, overt acts of violence and public disturbances faded away. Officially the United States was to be in Bosnia for only a year, but few people believed that American involvement would be that short. The 1st Armored Division was redeployed back to Germany in early autumn 1996 and elements of the 1st Infantry Division (Mechanized) moved into Bosnia as a "covering force." After the November 1996 elections in the United States, the President announced that US forces would remain in Bosnia for another 18 months. Subsequent extensions kept the United States in Bosnia through 2004.

The US presence in Bosnia-Herzegovina gradually declined over the years from a peak strength of 18,500 Soldiers in 1996 to a few hundred by 2004. The scope of operations and the size of the organizations reflected the declining numbers of military personnel as well. Over the next eight years elements of the 2d Armored Cavalry Regiment, 1st Cavalry Division, 10th Mountain Division, 3d Infantry Division, and 25th Infantry Division served in that Balkans country along with National Guard units from Texas, Virginia, Pennsylvania, Kansas, and Indiana. Task Force Eagle officially terminated its operations on 24 November 2004 and all security responsibilities throughout Bosnia shifted to the European Union.

More than 20 years after the civil war in Bosnia began there is a nominal peace. The ethnic tensions remain and there are few leaders who appear willing to change what has become the new *status quo*. While ethnic animosity still lingers throughout the country, political corruption and organized crime have come to dominate the divided state which essentially remains "unified" only because of an international military force that is keeping the country together. Very few displaced persons have been able to return to their former homes.[26]

Politically the country is structured as two administrative entities; the Bosnian Serb *Republika Srpska* and the Bosniak Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, each with its own parliament and various ministries. There are three presidents (one Bosnian Croat, one Bosnian Serb, and one Bosnian Muslim). The three major ethnicities maintain their own militia forces. The two Bosnian entities are sub-divided into ten cantons, each with its own president, legislative assembly, and government ministries. A United Nations High Representative, with support from a 55-member Peace Implementation Council (PIC), retains oversight for the beleaguered country. A modest attempt to reform the Bosnian political structure failed in 2006 with most of the opposition coming from Bosnian Croats and Bosnian Serbs.[27]

Operation Joint Endeavor and its successor operations, Joint Guard and Joint Forge, were not typical military campaigns. Non-lethal peace enforcement was the standard operating procedure. Diplomacy and politics (both domestic and international) dominated the planning and execution of the operation as well as its mission and scope of operations. Completely different criteria determined its success, and the absence of conflict was the indication of mission accomplishment. Bosnian casualties dropped to single digits every month once the IFOR arrived in-country compared to the thousands that were killed and wounded daily prior to the November 1995 ceasefire. Significantly, for the nine years that US military personnel were stationed in this war-torn country, not one American Soldier was killed by hostile fire.

This was not an easy mission for the United States or its allies. The intensity of the conflict and its close proximity to Western Europe virtually guaranteed that the US Army would be involved in some manner and at some time. In the absence of any clear guidance from above, the likely participants at the corps and division levels were left to their own devices to initiate preliminary planning. By 1995, planning focused on what seemed the most obvious scenario: rescue the beleaguered UNPROFOR. An armor-heavy strike force could launch an incursion into the Balkans, temporarily secure an area, evacuate the UN personnel, and leave. The operational forces and logistical demands were concentrated on a specific task of short duration: in, out, done.

The October ceasefire started to bring the task into focus. This would be a peace enforcement operation, not to last for more than a year. Nothing would be completely clear until the peace accords were resolved, but then there would be very little time to prepare. Lieutenant General Abrams wrote: "We expected lead time to establish the deployment and employment architecture for the operation. Asked for 14 days to set up the ISB [intermediate staging base] and National Support Element; got 0."[28] Thus the force structure remained relatively constant: an armor-heavy force. It certainly had its desired effect of impressing the former warring factions with the seriousness of American resolve to enforce the peace. Its long-term benefit, however, was arguable. An M1A2 Abrams tank was impressive, but most patrols were conducted without tanks, and several checkpoints were manned without the armored behemoths. Quick reaction forces sent to reinforce an isolated patrol or deal with a looming crisis in a village or near the zone of separation arrived in helicopters or high-mobility multipurpose wheeled vehicles (HMMWVs).

Perhaps the most trying challenges in the pre-deployment preparations were the frequent emendations from the National Command Authority. Personnel authorizations were modified, funding was delayed, negotiations with other nations were in process, and all this engendered a ripple effect that trickled down to individual battalions and companies.

Getting to Bosnia was another big obstacle. Most of the preliminary planning was based upon assumptions, and the tendency in the assumptions was to underestimate almost everything. If time to prepare was a problem, so was timing. The actual deployment could not have happened under more difficult circumstances. The French rail strike, holiday season, marginal road network, and inclement weather all combined to frustrate movement of personnel and material. Adding to these deployment difficulties were the French and British forces moving concurrently into their own multinational divisions of Bosnia, plus 8,000 personnel from other nations that were deploying to the American MND (N) as part of Task Force Eagle.[29]

In looking at the operational, and especially the logistical, difficulties that were attendant to the planning and deployment of forces in Operation Joint Endeavor, there is a tendency to be less than charitable in evaluating its various shortcomings. One sardonic appraisal from a former operations officer in Task Force Eagle has been repeated at least once: "I have seen numerous articles and speeches in which people have lauded the deployment to Bosnia as a great success. I would categorize it as more of a triumph of the human spirit over an insane system, narrowly averting catastrophe."[30] A more optimistic evaluation came from Major General Nash, the first commander of Task Force Eagle: "Sure there is room for improvement but we have the basic framework on how to do this. It is a matter of more detailed planning, rehearsals, and some resourcing, both in terms of people and of dollars."[31] Both affirmations have validity, but must be kept in context. In spite of this zig-zag course and a suddenly compressed time schedule, the mission was accomplished. In the first 75 days of Operation JOINT ENDEAVOR, more than 24,000 soldiers, 12,000 pieces of equipment, and 200,000 short tons of supplies were shipped to Hungary or Bosnia.[32]

Although the planning was important to the successful execution of this mission, the Soldier was critical. Sometimes it may have been merely "the triumph of the human spirit" over seemingly insurmountable difficulties, but it also reflected an intrinsic characteristic of the American Soldier and rock-solid training. Using whatever resources were available and their imaginations, Soldiers found ways to solve problems and accomplish the mission. Commanders and staff officers often commented on the resourcefulness and diligence of their assigned personnel. There were numerous examples of individual small unit leaders who would be challenged by an unexpected situation: a noncommissioned officer who would not be bullied by a truckload of armed Bosnian Serbs, or a lieutenant who took the initiative to calm a hostile crowd before it became violent.[33] No other military force in Bosnia-Herzegovina entrusted its junior officers and noncommissioned officers with as much responsibility as the United States Army did for its officers and sergeants. (One returning veteran often shared his amusing story of meeting with a Russian colonel, who was annoyed that he had to interact with an American *captain* who exercised the same measure of authority as the colonel.) Soldiers, originally trained to fight and win, now were expected to calm belligerents and maintain peace. Success was measured by the absence of violence, or minimal violence when it flared up.

With the advantage of hindsight, some things could have been done better. Logistics planning was incomplete. The deployment too was flawed; the timing of the deployment, weather, labor disputes, civilian traffic, mechanical breakdowns, funding restrictions, and personnel ceilings all conspired to frustrate the early phases of Operation JOINT ENDEAVOR. And yet, the deployment still succeeded. The basic deployment plan worked in large measure because the Soldiers working the plan refused to fail.

Nonetheless, in spite of the best training and meticulous planning, there are limitations to what Soldiers can achieve in a peace enforcement operation. Random civic actions projects, humanitarian assistance, even outright charity can help rebuild communities and facilitate the Army's efforts to preserve the peace, but these activities do not resolve the root issues that ultimately led to the conflict. Ethnic tensions colored a variety of political, economic, and social issues affecting Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Ultimately these issues demanded long-term solutions that went beyond the one-year or nine-year peace enforcement operation. That the Army was able to enforce this peace, and with extraordinarily few casualties for its own personnel and the civilian population, stands as a testimony to the success of the campaign plan in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Notes

1. Quoted in Iva H. Daalder, *Getting to Dayton: The Making of America's Bosnia Policy* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2000), 36.

2. Precise statistics will never be known. The numbers bracketed herein are from various reporting agencies that used estimates and differing criteria to reach their conclusions. Two points, however, seem certain. First, the human tragedy from this conflict affected more than half the Bosnian population and a proportional magnitude that rivaled what Europe experienced during World War II. And second, there are much larger numbers cited by others. See for instance: Richard Holbrooke, *To End a War* (New York: Random House, 1998), xv; Stephen J. Blank, *Yugoslavia's Wars: The Problem From Hell* (Carlisle Barracks, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, US Army War College, 1995), 124; Edith M. Lederer, "Prosecutor Expects Karadzic Arrest Soon," *The Washington Times*, 30 June 2004, accessed 2 May 2017, http://washingtontimes.com.

3. A fuller, albeit still brief, summary of the history of Bosnia-Herzegovina and the events leading to the dissolution of Yugoslavia can be found in R. Cody Phillips, *Bosnia-Herzegovinia: The US Army's Role in Peace Enforcement Operations, 1995-2004* (Washington, DC: Center of Military History, 2004).

4. The naming for this peace enforcement organization has its own history. Originally, the military organization was called the Peace Implementation Force (PIF), but the acronym sounded too soft. The US State Department proposed the Bosnia Settlement Force, but no one in the Pentagon liked the idea of its personnel serving in the BS Force. Another proposal was the NATO Implementation Force (NIFOR), but it was difficult for some internationals to pronounce and it excluded non-NATO participants. By October 1995, NATO defense ministers settled on the simple and inclusive Implementation Force (IFOR). See Daalder, *Getting to Dayton*, 141.

5. Harold E. Raugh, *Operation JOINT ENDEAVOR: V Corps in Bosnia-Herzegovina, 1995-1996, An Oral History* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Combat Studies Institute Press, 2010), 5-6. Colonel Gregory Fontenot, interview by Major Dewey Lutzow, 17 May 1996, draft transcript, 52; on file at Oral History Branch, Center of Military History (CMH), file JEIT-049-031. USAREUR Joint Endeavor After Action Report, vol. I, xii, 27. Captain Michael Kasales, interview by Major Dewey Lutzow, 26 May 1996, draft transcript, 20; on file at Oral History Branch, CMH, file JEIT-049-028.

6. It seems that this was merely expected among Army personnel in Europe and even some Reserve Components in CONUS, who monitored developments in the Balkans and drafted conceptual plans for possible involvement, albeit in an undefined humanitarian or relief mission. See for instance: SFC Dennis L. Droge, interview by 1LT William B. Pitts, 17 June 1996, draft transcript, 3; on file at Oral History Branch, CMH, file JEIT-FWD-054. Colonel Bruce W. Castka, interview by Lieutenant Colonel Walter E. Kretchik, 12 June 1996, draft transcript, 5; on file at Oral History Branch, CMH, file JEIT-FWD-051. Michael A. Warren, *The United States Army Reserve in Operation Joint Endeavor: Mobilization and Deployment, Army Staff Perspective*, vol. I (Fort McPherson, GA: Office of the Command Historian, 1996), 23.

7. Lieutenant Colonel William W. Curl, interview by Major Nels Dolan, 25 June 1996, draft transcript, 10; on file at Oral History Branch, CMH, file JEIT-102-030.

8. Lieutenant Colonel Albert Bryant, interview by Dr. Janet McDonnell, 25 March 1996, transcript; cited in Raugh, 161.

9. Major Ronald Miller, interview by Major Richard Thurston, 3 May 1996, transcript; cited in Raugh, 262-63.

10. Captain James L. Love, interview by Major Dewey Lutzow, 22 May 1996, draft transcript, 47; on file at Oral History Branch, CMH, file JEIT-049-021.

11. Lieutenant Colonel James R. Mulvenna, interview by Major James Davis, 17 November 1998, draft transcript, 4; on file at Oral History Branch, CMH, file JGIT-51-004.

12. Major Kenneth O. McCreedy, interview by Major Richard Thurston, 12 April 1996, transcript; cited in Raugh, 152.

13. Lieutenant Colonel Peter Schifferle, interview with Major Richard Thurston, 16 February 1996, transcript; cited in Raugh, 185.

14. James P. Herson, Jr., "Getting There Was the Battle: Part II," *Army Sustainment* Vol. 49, Issue 2 (March-April 2014): 55-56, 58.

15. Bryant interview, 166.

16. Lieutenant Colonel Steven P. Goligowski, interview by Major Richard Thurston, 6 March 1996, transcript; cited in Raugh, 234-35. See also Herson, 57.

17. Bryant interview, 165.

18. Lieutenant Colonel James Terrell, interview with Major Richard Thurston, 30 April 1996, transcript; cited in Raugh, 213-14.

19. Major Mark A. Loring, 23d Engineer Battalion, memorandum, n.d., subject: "Bosnian One Hundred (Plus) Day After Action Review (AAR)," 2; in Headquarters, "Task Force Eagle, 20 Dec 95 – 10 November 96, After Action Report," [1997], on file at Center of Military History, CMH Reference Library Files, "JOINT ENDEAVOR, AAR." Hereafter cited as Task Force Eagle AAR.

20. Fontenot interview, 1.

21. There was a small contingent of US Army personnel already in-country prior to the official crossing on 31 December, which is why the first American casualty in Operation Joint Endeavor happened on 30 December. A military policeman, marking routes for the main force to follow to their assigned areas, ran over an anti-tank mine and was seriously wounded.

22. Craig R. Nation, *War in the Balkans, 1991-2002* (Carlisle, PA: US Army War College, 2003), 368. Most minefields were poorly marked or not mapped at all. During the three-year civil war, lines shifted between the warring factions, and new minefields were created – sometimes overlapping existing minefields. These figures do not count booby-traps, which were placed in a variety of locations, i.e. cars, damaged buildings, public streets.

23. Task Force Eagle AAR, 567.

24. Captain Erik L. Stor, interview by Major Dewey Lutzow, 18 May 1996, draft transcript, 44; on file at Oral History Branch, CMH, JEIT-049-034. More than two decades after the civil war ended, tourists were counseled: "Landmines and unexploded ordnance still affect 2.4% of [Bosnia-Herzegovina's] area…. In affected areas stick to asphalt/concrete surfaces or well-worn paths. Avoid exploring war-wrecked buildings." Mark Elliot, *et al*., *Eastern Europe*, 13th ed. (Beijing, China: Lonely Planet Publications, 2015), 83.

25. Colonel Greg Fontenot, letter to Brigadier General John W. Mountcastle, 11 March 1996; "Cody Phillips' Files, 1982-2007," Box 11, Center of Military History, Fort McNair, DC.

26. Steven Woehrel, "Bosnia: Current Issues and US Policy," Congressional Research Service, 12 April 2010, 2, 6. Nidzara Ahmetasevic, "Bosnia's Unending War," *The New Yorker*, 4 November 2015; accessed 11 October 2016, http://www.newyorker.com/news/news-desk/bosnias-unending-war.

27. Woehrel, 2-3. See also Misha Glenny, *The Balkans: Nationalism, War and the Great Powers, 1804-1999* (New York: Viking Penguin, 2000), 652.

28. Lieutenant General John N. Abrams, memorandum for Commander in Chief, United States Army Europe, subject: "Operation Joint Endeavor Lessons Learned," dated 2 May 1996; cited in Raugh, Appendix B.

29. Major General William L. Nash, interview by Dr. Charles E. Kirkpatrick, 16 May 1997, transcript; cited in Raugh, 75.

30. Raugh, *Operation JOINT ENDEAVOR*, 10.

31. Nash interview transcript; cited in Raugh, *Operation JOINT ENDEAVOR*, 73.

32. Herson, "Getting There Was the Battle," 59.

33. See for instance Phillips, 22, 40-41. Lieutenant Colonel Robert W. Milford, interview by Dr. Charles E. Kirkpatrick, 5 February 1996, transcript; cited in Raugh, *Operation JOINT ENDEAVOR*, 97. Nash interview transcript; cited in Raugh, *Operation JOINT ENDEAVOR*, 76.

Chapter 7
Operation Anaconda

Lieutenant General (Ret) Buster Hagenbeck

Within weeks after the 9/11 attacks on the United States, Special Operations forces were deployed to Afghanistan to fight foreign Al Qaeda forces that had been training under the protection of the Taliban government. By mid-October the first conventional forces, 1-87 Infantry Battalion, 10th Mountain Division were deployed, soon followed by the 10th Mountain Division headquarters and later, 3d Brigade, 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault).

Additional forces from virtually every service began to arrive every day. But their deployments were often based purely on availability of troops and transport. Overall centralized command of these theater forces did not exist, nor did any written strategic or operational plans. Commanders in theater generally cooperated, understanding intuitively that the mission was to defeat the Taliban and Al Qaeda. This was generally accomplished by early December 2001 and a new government under President Hamid Karzai was established in the capital Kabul.

The rapid defeat of the Taliban had come as a welcome surprise to forces in Afghanistan. The fighting conditions had been horrendous. The country is one of the most primitive in the world. If you flipped over your dinner plate, it would generally replicate the topography of this mountainous land locked country that is about the size of Texas. The eastern boundary bordering Pakistan is separated

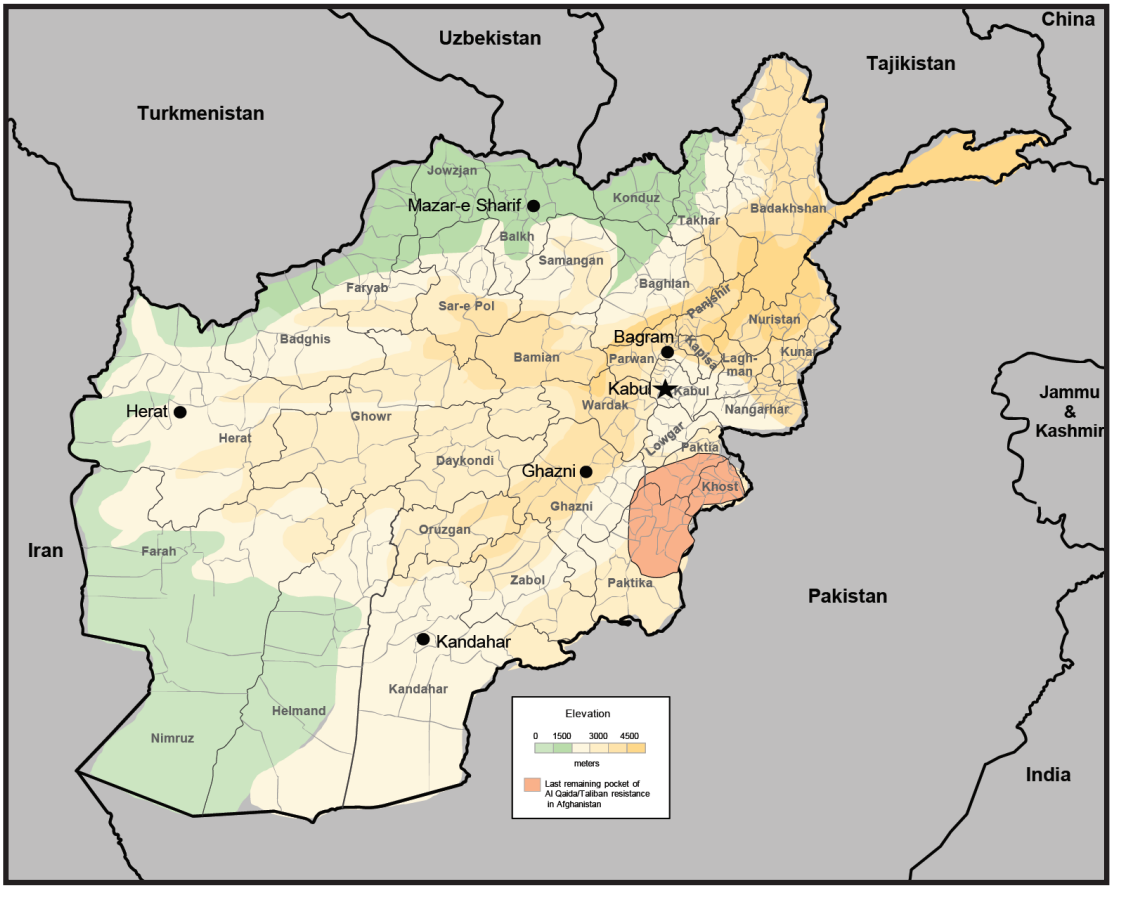

Figure 7.1 Purpose of the operation: Destroy Al Qaeda. Afghanistan. Map created by CAC History for the authors.

by the Hindu Kush Mountains. This mountain range peaks at 24,580 feet in the northeast and runs southwest through the Safed Koh range that includes Tora Bora and dominates the border area near Kabul. Within a day's ride from Kabul it is possible to find a place where snow never falls. But within two hours one can go where the snow never melts. The Shah-i-Khot Valley is nestled in this area at an altitude of over 10,000 feet just east of the town of Gardez (see map).

This treacherous terrain is routinely impacted by harsh and unpredictable weather; snow, ice and windstorms. The towns and villages in the area, indeed throughout the country, are not connected by existing or reliable land lines of communication; nor was there a functioning national communications system, much less a cell phone network.

Another reality was that there was no centralized national government that oversaw the 34 provinces. Instead, governance rested largely with the provincial governors (warlords) and their local fighters. Historically these forces trafficked in drugs (opium) and guns. And they were ferocious fighters, as the Russians could attest, as could the British who had lost three wars with them dating back to the 1800s. So it was that we were allied with these forces, their culture, their poverty and the geography in which they existed.

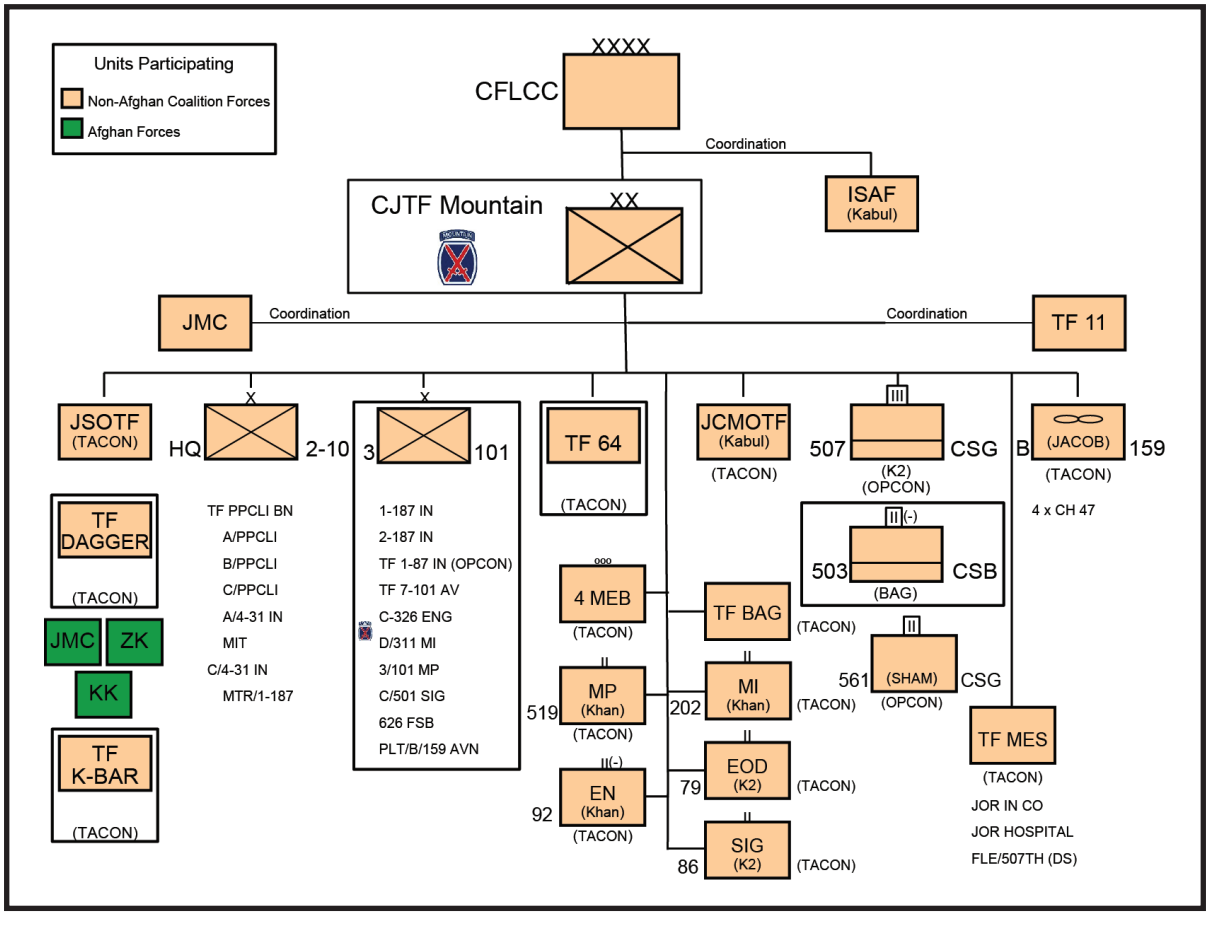

Figure 7.2 Coalition Joint Task Force organization. Figure created by CAC History for the authors.

By January 2002, violence throughout Afghanistan had virtually disappeared and many units were anticipating redeployment to the US. With unity of command still not established each unit worked with their higher headquarters to determine their next mission. 10th Mountain Division was told to plan for a late spring return to Fort Drum. It was clear that thoughts in US Central Command

(CENTCOM) were turning to a future invasion of Iraq. The US footprint in Afghanistan would be reduced and it would become a secondary theater of war focused on stability operations. And then things changed significantly.

The first indication that there were enemy forces in Shah-i-Khot Valley was on 23 January 2002 when SF operators conducted two direct action operations near Gardez just west of the valley. It resulted in 14 enemy killed, one wounded and two captured. Over the next week we learned that there were probably 150 enemy in the valley. The valley consisted of three villages devoid of women, children and animals, and occupied only by men. This was the same valley which the Soviet Army had unsuccessfully tried to capture on two different occasions in the 1980s. The terrain is extraordinarily harsh. It is approximately two miles above sea level and replete with steep ridges. The weather is just as bad; snow virtually every night with temperatures around zero and often rising to 60 degrees in the daytime – perfect for turning snow into mud. Not ideal fighting conditions for conventional forces.

On 1 February, I was approached by Colonel Mulholland, Commander 5th Special Forces Group. He described an enemy build up in Shah-i-Khot Valley. Also, he stated that signal intelligence indicated that there might be High Value Targets (HVT) in the area, perhaps Osama Bin Laden, if he had not already escaped into Pakistan. Verbal orders from Central Command had directed Mulholland to eliminate the threat. His assessment of the enemy, terrain, and available forces led him to conclude that he needed more assets. He asked if he could recommend to General Franks, CENTCOM Commander, that conventional forces be included and that I command the mission.

I agreed on the condition that our forces be reorganized into a Coalition Joint Task Force (see Figure 7.1). I sought unity of command to follow doctrine and to leverage all the forces available both foreign and special operations. I later learned that General Jack Keane, Vice Chief of Staff of the Army, discussed this with General Franks on several occasions. General Franks agreed generally to the reorganization, but kept the Special Operators separate under their own chain of command. But they were to have a liaison officer in my Tactical Operations Center throughout the fight. So the decision to attack was made, now a plan needed to be developed.

On 14 February the newly formed Coalition Joint Task Force Mountain (CJTF-Mtn) received a draft Operations Order (OPORD) from higher headquarters. (It would be the only written order provided throughout the operation.) The mission was straightforward: to conduct an offensive operation to kill or capture all Taliban and Al Qaeda fighters in the Shah-i-Khot Valley located in southeastern Afghanistan along the Pakistan border. The task organization was commanded by CJTF-Mtn and included approximately 1400 ground forces from the U. S. and 10 coalition countries including Afghanistan; seemingly more than enough combat power to defeat 150 enemy fighters.

The order was complex but doable. Until now virtually all of the units worked independently, reporting back to a headquarters in the Persian Gulf or even to Tampa, headquarters for CENTCOM and Special Operations Command (SOCOM). D-Day was 28 February. That left two weeks for this new combat organization to build the team, to develop a simple but focused battle plan, and to rehearse and gain confidence and trust in each other.

The basic scheme of maneuver developed by CJTF-Mtn generally mirrored the approach that had been successful for coalition forces in the fall of 2001. Special Forces (SF) would embed with Afghan ground troops, gain positional advantage and cause the enemy to surrender or fight. In previous fights the enemy usually had chosen to surrender, but when they chose to fight or escape they were destroyed by air and ground power.

In the upcoming operation Afghan forces and their SF cohorts would be trucked to the western edge of Shah-i-Khot Valley. Simultaneously, a US Infantry Brigade would be air assaulted from Bagram Air-

field located 150 miles to the north into the eastern edge of the Hindu Kush mountains to block major escape routes leading into Pakistan. The enemy would then be forced to surrender or fight, with only a slim chance of escaping.

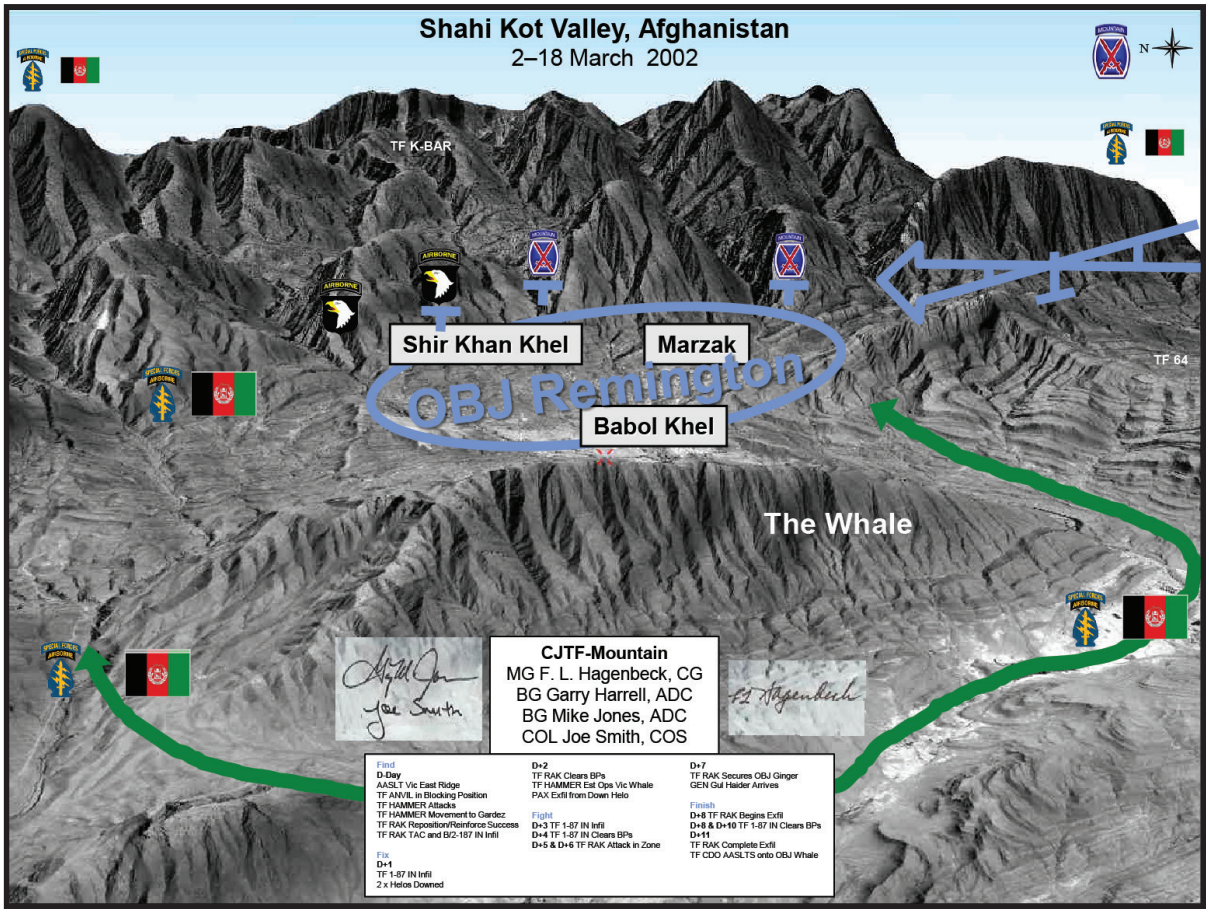

Figure 7.3 OP Anaconda plan, Shahi Khot Valley, Afghanistan. Graphic courtesy of US Army.

But underlying this entire mission was the question of unity of command. The CENTCOM Commander, General Tommy Franks, had blessed the CJTF-Mtn Command and Control (C2) arrangements. But that was on paper, what was the reality? Although 10th Mountain Division was the senior headquarters, half of the division had earlier been deployed to the Balkans on a peacekeeping operation. I was without both of my one-star deputy commanding generals (DCG). I asked and General Franks approved two one-stars in theater to fill those positions. One was Brigadier General Gary Harrell of *Blackhawk Down* fame. He was commanding TF Bowie in northern Afghanistan. He and I had been captains together in sister battalions in the 82d Airborne Division. And the second one was Brigadier General Mike Jones, a former LSU football player. He was in country working covertly with our intelligence agencies. Both of these men were brilliant and cool-headed; they would prove to be invaluable.

The brigade commander from the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) was Colonel Frank Wiercenski. Fortunately, we too had worked together in earlier assignments. We had served together in DC and at Ft. Campbell when I had been the deputy commanding general of the 101st. We knew each other well. I did not know Colonel John Mulholland, Commander 5th Special Forces (Task Force Dagger) before the fall of 2001 but clearly he was the consummate professional. I attended his daily

staff updates since my arrival in-country and I picked his brain about virtually everything he had encountered in Afghanistan. He held nothing back.

The 10 coalition commanders were all anxious to be a part of the upcoming operation. The sizes of their units ranged from 30 soldiers to the largest formation of 200 soldiers from the Special Air Services (SAS), Australia. I met all of them every day in the two weeks leading up to the operation. One morning at a breakfast with the Aussies, I made it a point to tell them that I had served in Australia in the 1980s. I was an Exchange Officer to the Royal Australian Infantry Centre. It is located 200km north of Sydney on the edge of the Outback. When I told them where I served, almost in unison, they said, "Sir, we're so sorry!" And then we all laughed.

As good as the commanders were, I knew it was my staff that would have to maintain situational awareness on all of the various subordinate units, as well as keep higher headquarters informed as events unfolded. My chief of staff, Colonel Joe Smith, was a perfect fit. An aviator, he had been with Special Operations forces at Ft. Campbell and understood them well. Lieutenant Colonel Walt Piatt, an Infantryman, was Colonel Smith's deputy and with his cohort in operations, Lieutenant Colonel Mike Lundy, an aviator, made a perfect team that kept the Division G3, Lieutenant Colonel Dave Gray, informed and able to keep his pulse on the entire organization.

A key component in building this combat team that consisted of commanders with wide ranging and often different backgrounds and experiences was to wargame the pending mission. This was done daily on a large terrain model that had been built in one of the bombed out hangars that remained from the Soviet occupation. This wargaming caused the scheme of maneuver to evolve as key limiting factors and major subordinate's assets were identified.

The general concept of operations was straightforward. Infiltrate Special Operators into the valley 48 hours before D-Day; prior to H-Hour, execute air strikes against any and all confirmed or suspected enemy positions; at H-Hour launch the main attack against Objective Remington consisting of Afghan ground forces with embedded Special Forces soldiers while simultaneously conducting an air assault of conventional forces into blocking positions in the Hindu Kush; after securing the southernmost Landing Zone, forces would move south to conduct an attack to secure the decisive piece of terrain, Takur Ghar (Objective Ginger).

The difficult terrain and harsh weather were expected to impact aviation support. The pilots of the UH-60 Blackhawk helicopters had virtually no combat experience, nor did the pilots of the AH-64 Apache helicopters. Within the two dozen caves identified in the Objective area, it was anticipated that there were shoulder-fired ground-to-air STINGER missiles that had proven so effective against Soviet airpower. And, finally, fixed-wing pilots that would provide close air support had little combat experience in this difficult terrain, unlike the open terrain of Kuwait over which several had fought during Desert Shield/Desert Storm. The combination of these factors caused commanders to agree that the initial air assault should be conducted at dawn or dusk to mitigate risks.

A salient feature that unfolded during this wargaming was an understanding of how each commander thought. It had become abundantly clear that once forces were on the ground in Shah-i-Khot valley, the fight would be decentralized. How each commander envisioned their role and the roles of their peers on their right and left was critical. Although there was general agreement that the operation would be completed within 3-5 days, everyone acknowledged that we would not "fight the plan;" things would go wrong that would require agility and adaptability by leaders in accomplishing the mission.

During the two week period leading up to D-Day, a constant flow of dignitaries visited our headquarters in Bagram. They included three separate Congressional Delegate (CODEL) visits: the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (CJCS), General Myers; Lieutenant General Mikolashek, my in-theater

boss who was headquartered in Kuwait; and Lieutenant General McNeill, my boss back in the US. There were numerous other visitors. It took time and energy to escort them, but they were all overwhelmingly supportive of our efforts. O n one CODEL visit we flew by helicopter from Bagram to Kabul to meet with President Karzai. The return trip was made by car because bad weather precluded flying. I rode with Senators Inouye (D-Hawaii) and Stevens (R-Alaska) who were best of friends. I was asked about the pending operation and sketched it out on the back of an envelope. They said that General Schwarzkopf had done the same thing before the attack into Kuwait in 1991. They thanked me and wished us luck.

Throughout this time period I emphasized to all the key leaders that these visitors and others in Washington and Tampa were going to want to help, understandably. When you're the only show in town everyone wants a ticket. But it was each of us that, as commanders, would be held responsible and accountable for the outcome of the mission.

On 26 February (D-2) the Staff Weather Officer (SWO) highlighted potential storms that might arrive in our theater by D-Day yet he forecasted that they would probably not affect our operations. Later that morning, per General Franks' directive, I flew to Kabul to inform the Afghanistan government of our pending attack into the Shah-i-Khot Valley. President Karzai was not yet back from a trip to India, so I met with the Minister of Defense, Fahim Khan. He was very supportive and was pleased to know that Afghanistan forces led by his friend, Zia, would be the main effort in the attack. In Pakistan the CENTCOM liaison officer, Colonel Marty Stanton, was also informing their government of the upcoming fight.

That evening heavy fog and snow rolled into Bagram and the SWO recommended that the operation be postponed for at least 48 hours. After meeting with Brigadier General Harrell, Brigadier General Jones and my Chief of Staff, Colonel Smith, it became obvious that we could not risk conducting an air assault operation in bad weather with inexperienced pilots and without more fidelity on the enemy dispositions. If the fog remained in place for any lengthy period of time, our national intelligence assets (satellites, U2 aerial platforms and Predator drones) would be less than effective and could negatively impact our initial combat operations. I called General Franks, explained the situation, and requested a 48 hour delay. He approved and D-Day was reset for 2 March. The bad news was that Afghan and Pakistan officials were very much aware of our combat plans. And there are no secrets in those countries. It was a near certainty that the Al Qaeda enemy would know we would soon launch an attack against them and they would be prepared.

The next step was to inform all of the commanders and key staff of the decision and to consider any adjustments to the plan. A decision to infiltrate Special operators by ground that evening into the objective area was made. A re-synching of fires with all air assets was made, as was the timing for the ground movement of Task Force (TF) Dagger (Zia's and SF forces). And, finally, at Colonel Wiercenski's recommendation, an air assault rehearsal was conducted on the original D-Day. The flight path was to the north of Bagram, away from Shah-i-Khot, and into terrain covered by favorable weather conditions. Besides allowing our troops to make last minute adjustments to their plans, we knew the air assault would be reported to Al Qaeda and it might cause them some confusion and uncertainty.

On 1 March the weather began to clear and it looked promising for D-Day. Just before midnight we received a call from special operators overlooking the objective area. They reported that there were probably closer to 400, not 150, Al Qaeda fighters in the area. And there were a number of enemy fighters with heavy machine guns in the vicinity of our air assault landing zones. After analyzing the situation with my deputies, the decision was made to execute the mission at dawn as scheduled. And to prevent tipping our hand, the special operators were told not to kill the machine gunners before they could hear or see our helicopters approaching the valley.

D-Day began as planned with the launching of the air assault and the movement of TF Dagger to the objective area. And then the plan completely unraveled. As Zia's forces were approaching the valley, an Air Force AC-130 gunship, without coordinating with troops on the ground, mistook friendly forces for the enemy and opened fire. A number of Zia's and SF Soldiers were killed or wounded. And worse yet, Zia and his forces withdrew from the battlefield not to return for more than four days.

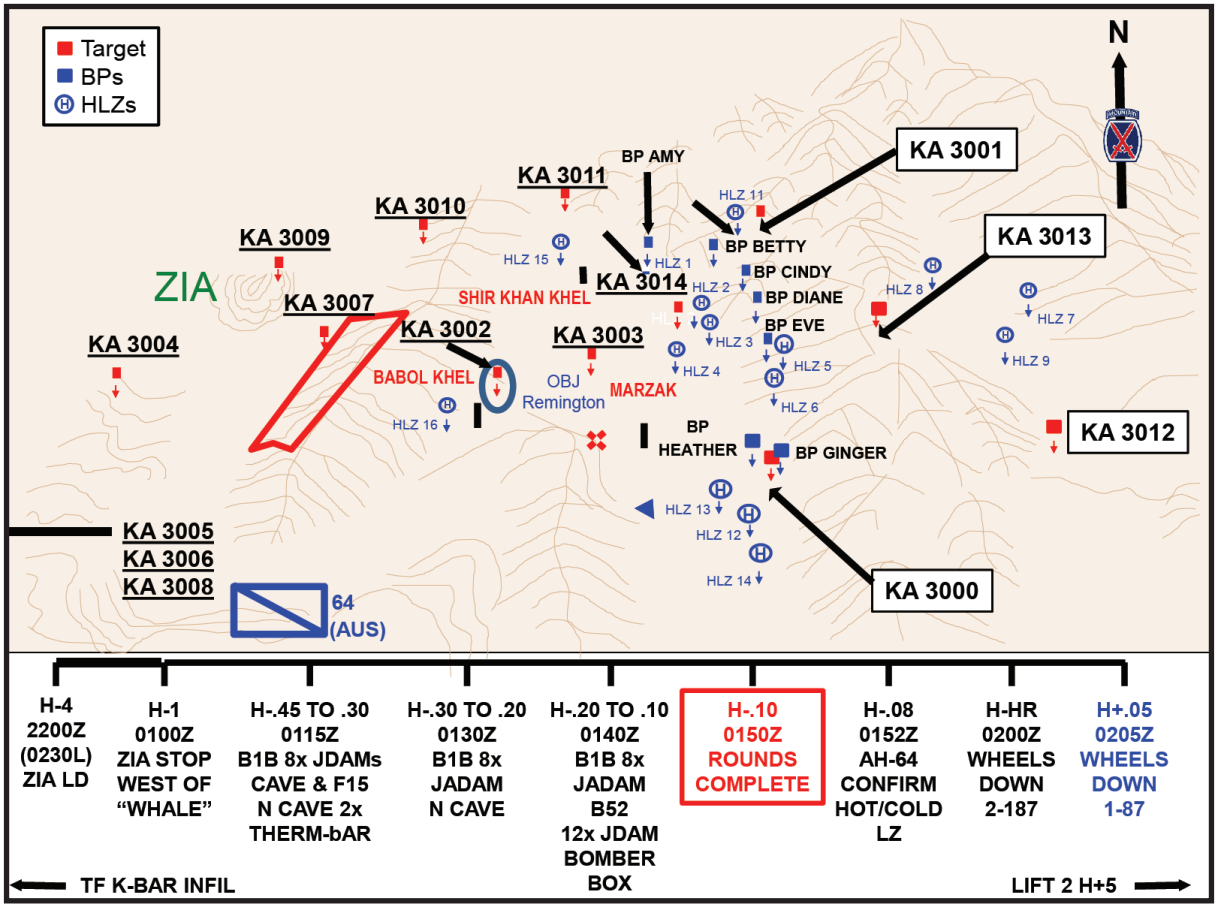

Figure 7.4 CJTF Mountain D-Day synchronization of fires - AASLT. Graphic created by CAC History for the authors.

Moments later, the air assault insertions began along the seven-kilometer segment of the Hindu Kush Mountains to block the escape routes into Pakistan. The northern landing zones (LZ) where we expected the largest number of enemy were secured within an hour or two by Lieutenant Colonel Preseler's 2-187 Infantry Battalion, 101st Airborne Division (AA). Simultaneously, in the southernmost LZ where enemy resistance was expected to be light, Lieutenant Colonel Lacamera's 1-87 Infantry Battalion, 10th Mountain Division ran into a buzzsaw.

Lacamera's force suffered over two dozen casualties within the first 90 minutes on terrain that was barely defensible. Enemy held the high ground and were supported by mortars. Thankfully we had seven AH-64 Apaches. These attack birds spent much of the day shooting at the enemy and when not killing them, at least keeping them off Lacamera's back. Air Force and Navy close air support joined the fight and by midafternoon were making a big difference.

It was then I learned that a UH-60V medevac helicopter had been launched to evacuate nine critically wounded Soldiers. I canceled the flight and called Lieutenant Colonel Lacamera and told him of my decision. I was convinced that the medevac could not survive in the daylight hours. He agreed and

we made a quick decision that we would extract his entire element from that LZ at dusk. He assured me that they could hold out until then.

And to the south and in close proximity to Lacamera's forces were Colonel Wiercenski and his nine-man tactical operations party. Expecting light resistance in the south, they had deplaned their command and control helicopter to get a sense of the terrain. The helicopter left without them after coming under heavy mortar and rocket propelled grenade (RPG) fire. A quick call confirmed that an aerial extraction would begin at dusk for them, along with Lacamera's force.

It was then I realized that I was too focused on the planned extraction. I needed to step back and look at the bigger picture. Harrell, Jones, Smith and I concluded that we needed to reinforce success. Five LZs had been secured quickly, Soldiers had moved to their blocking positions along the escape routes, and they were calling in close air support to great effect. Initial estimates were that at least 100, perhaps closer to 200, enemy had been killed or wounded. The second lift of the air assault was approved.

The extractions were successful, not without drama, but everyone made it out safely, including the wounded. I received a call from Lieutenant General Mikolashek questioning my decision to extract anyone from the fight. Apparently he was responding to questions raised by General Franks. While I was awaiting the return of Wiercenski and Lacamera for a de-brief I sent Brigadier General Harrell to the CENTCOM video teleconference (VTC). Gary said Lieutenant General Mikolashek was masterful in describing the first day's operations to include the extractions and General Franks appeared very satisfied.

In the early hours of 3 March (D+1) I was de-briefed separately by Colonel Wiercenski and Lieutenant Colonel Lacamera in my office. They painted a picture very similar to what we in the Operations Center at Bagram had envisioned. Of course, we weren't being shot at. Besides the enemy, the conditions on the ground were abysmal. The snow had turned to mud, the ridges were much steeper than overhead photos seemed to show, and the projected 20 caves along the Hindu Kush would prove to be closer to 100, with the enemy darting from cave to cave. Their descriptions of the fight and the conditions convinced me that I made the right call for the extraction.

Most of the second day was spent repositioning forces (to include re-inserting Lieutenant Colonel Lacamera and his soldiers) and close fighting with the enemy. The ground commanders expressed their frustrations throughout the day about apparent delays in their requests for close air support. With only mortars for indirect fire, air power was indispensible in killing and keeping the enemy off balance. And Lacamera's 1-87 Infantry battalion would certainly need it as they began their movement further to the south to secure the decisive piece of terrain, Takur Ghar (Objective Ginger). It dominated Shah-i-Khot and would have to be secured by ground troops after heavy bombing. Its crest was small, but if the enemy positioned just a few fighters on it, all our forces could be endangered.

Early aerial reconnaissance had revealed no enemy positioned on Objective Ginger, but snow and fog had shrouded the crest for the four days leading up to D-Day. An assumption was then made that it was very probable there were enemy forces present on it by D-Day or shortly thereafter. Consequently, ground troops would be needed to secure this objective. The task fell to Lieutenant Colonel Lacamera's troops in Phase II. An aerial bombardment would be followed by a ground attack. But the plan fell apart before it could be executed, a victim of a lack of unity of command.

Colonel Smith awakened me shortly before 0200 hours (local) on D+2 (4 March). He informed me that a Special Operations MH-47 helicopter had been shot down while approaching Takur Ghar's crest. Joint Special Operators (JSOC) did not fall directly under the command and control of CJTF-Mtn but rather was a "coordinating" element. This relationship had been a point of friction leading up to D-Day. Special Operations forces seldom, if ever, fall under the command of conventional forces and this was no exception.

The consensus reached was that the JSOC operator in the tactical operations center (TOC) would keep CJTF-Mountain informed of its detailed troop dispositions and ensure deconfliction of all fires. The JSOC operator had informed CJTF-Mtn that a team was being repositioned onto higher ground north of TF 2-187 Infantry, but no mention was made about an insertion into Objective Ginger in the south. This was clearly an oversight caused by the fog of war.

The initial report was that while trying to land on Objective Ginger, the MH-47 took three RPG rounds through the fuselage. The tailgate was down and while taking fire and trying to lift off, and Navy SEAL Roberts was knocked out of the helicopter and was inadvertently left behind. The MH-47 flew 7 kilometers north before it was forced to land. Soldiers from the 101st secured the crash site and the second MH-47 that was initially in the north flew down and successfully extracted all its elements. It was not until the helicopter landed at Gardez that confirmation was made that Roberts was missing in action (MIA).

A rescue mission was launched by JSOC and supported by fires through CJTF-Mtn. Over the next 18 hours a ferocious fight was waged by JSOC and TF Red (Rangers) led by Captain Nate Self. His helicopter was shot down landing on the crest; he was wounded, as were several of his men, to include several that were KIA. But he led them in virtually an all day fight to recover Roberts who at some point had been KIA by his Chechen captors. At 2030 hours (local) all friendly forces were extracted. Every Chechen Al Qaeda fighter involved in the fight had been killed.

The rescue mission was extraordinary in its simplicity and unity of effort. Everyone was unquestionably on the same team; unity of command in reality if not on paper. Brigadier General Harrell and Brigadier General Jones oversaw every aspect of the battlefield. They were calm, cool, thoughtful, and insightful. Early on I made calls to the Air Force, Brigadier General Corley, and to J2, CENTCOM Brigadier General Kimmons. They were very responsive. We received continuous intelligence updates from all available national assets throughout the mission. And virtually every type of aircraft, fixed wing and rotary, from every service, provided critical support at some point in the operation.

Throughout the operation I was receiving continuous calls from a vast array of senior civilians and military officials offering me their "best advice." It ran the gamut from "do something – the US can't afford to lose this fight" to "withdraw now before you suffer more shootdowns and casualties." By midday I told my staff I would not take any more calls that day. Every caller wanted to help, but each one had their own view, as well meaning as it may have been. I gathered Harrell and Jones and stepped out of the operations tent into the light snow to review our options. It was clear that Operation Anaconda was not going to be over in three to five days as earlier assumed.

We had learned that morning from signal intelligence provided by higher headquarters that, contrary to the Al Qaeda's reactions to their fight in the fall of 2001, they were not trying to escape or surrender. They had been reinforcing their fighters in Shah-i-Khot valley for the last three days. They were coming in bunches of two or three at a time, often unnoticed and seldom targeted. Their leaders had been calling fighters outside the immediate area to come join in the fight. This was a jihad and they reminded them of their two great victories in the same valley against the Soviets in the 1980's. By now there were in excess of 1,000 Al Qaeda fighters in the valley. Another of our planning assumptions upended.

The biggest decision of the operation now loomed. Should we continue as planned, withdraw, or reinforce? Yes, we were constrained by the weather, terrain, distance, available lift and attack helicopters and a larger enemy formation than expected. But withdrawing was not a viable option; we had every intention of winning. And now that we had unity of command in more than name only, we could adapt and adjust to maximize our combat power.

The decision was reached to reinforce beginning that afternoon. Continuous air power in the area of operations mitigated a daylight air insertion. But what we also wanted to do was to get Zia's Afghan soldiers back into the fight. We wanted them as trigger-pullers, but also we understood their value as allies. Brigadier General Jones, who had spent months in Kabul, flew down to gain the support of Fahim Khan the Minister of Defense. Khan immediately volunteered soldiers and 15 tanks that were in Gardez just a short distance from the valley. With them in the fight we needed reinforcements in the south to act as an anvil if Al Qaeda fighters decided to escape by avoiding our blocking forces in the Hindu Kush Mountains. We reconfirmed that 1-87 Infantry needed to continue its movement to secure Objective Ginger. Orders were issued and execution began that afternoon, simultaneously with the extraction of special operations forces from Objective Ginger.

Operations continued on D+3 (5 March) and we received our first reports of Al Qaeda elements trying to escape to the south. Our anvil (blocking position) was the Australian SAS who reported killing 50-75 enemy; probably more were killed by airpower before they ever came into range of our ground troops. Signal intelligence reported that voice intercepts over the last 24 hours indicated a demoralized enemy who referenced US reinforcements, the "bad situation," numbers of dead and wounded, and an inability to coordinate further movement. The enemy leadership also indicated at least 80 casualties among top tier Al Qaeda forces who functioned as team leaders, shock troops, and controllers. The tide had turned.

Operations continued as planned and clearing operations began after a two to three day period of heavy snow, rain, and fog that limited visibility and air strikes. On D+15, Operation Anaconda was officially concluded. Estimates were that 500-700 foreign Al Qaeda had been killed. Not a single enemy surrendered. The two dozen captured enemy had sustained severe wounds or concussions that precluded them from continuing to fight. The initial estimate of about 20 caves was widely wrong; there were in excess of 100. The enemy not only fought from them, but they had stored large caches of weapons, ammunition, and even computers and documents that later provided a treasure trove of intelligence.

Operation Anaconda did not begin as expected. The planning assumptions were generally wrong, higher headquarters provided no formal written orders, the intelligence estimates were inaccurate, the weather and terrain more difficult than expected. The enemy, from two dozen countries, fought to the death with surrender not ever a consideration. But the biggest obstacle proved to be the absence of unity of command. Violating doctrine is a risky undertaking and this was no exception.

Chapter 8

The Operations Targeting and Effects Synchronization Process in Northern Iraq: A Case Study for a Division-Level Approach to Staff Organization, Leadership and Decision-Making

Lieutenant General Robert L. Caslen, Jr., Colonel Gregory L. Boylan, and Colonel (Ret) Thomas P. Guthrie

The secret of all victory lies in the organization of the non-obvious.

–Marcus Aurelius, 121-180 BC

In the early 4th century BCE, more than five centuries before the great philosopher-emperor Marcus Aurelius made the observation quoted above, Gallic tribes sacked Rome. Faced with the first real threat to its existence, the young Roman state recognized the need to rethink how it organized for combat. Of the various changes adopted, the most important and extreme transformation was the abandonment of the Greek-style phalanx. This military organizational structure had been long-established as the most effective way to achieve success against opponents with a similar operational paradigm. However, the Romans understood that – unlike Greece – Italy and Gaul were not governed by city states, whose armies met on large plains deemed suitable by both sides to settle disputes. Rather, they were a collection of hill tribes adept at using the complex terrain to their advantage. Accordingly, the Romans acknowledged the need for something more flexible than the unwieldy, slow-moving phalanx to achieve their operational goals. Faced with a newly complex operating environment, the Romans took the transformative step of adopting the more flexible infantry formations of their most tenacious enemy, the Samnites.[1]

In January 2008, in the wake of its final after action review from its 2006-2007 deployment to Northern Iraq, the US Army 25th Infantry Division Headquarters found itself in a situation similar to that faced by the Romans more than 2,000 years earlier as it planned for its return to Northern Iraq in late 2008. Should it consider revising longstanding organizational thinking to adapt its structure to the new demands it would face in Northern Iraq later that year? The division's new operational milieu presented an increasingly complex operating environment, an adaptive asymmetric threat, and a traditional staff organization ill-suited to deal adequately and effectively with either. The division recognized a vital requirement to rethink how to organize its staff to best meet the commander's vision and intent (as embodied in its campaign plan). The commander and staff recognized that this reorganization should fulfill three critical roles. The first of these roles would be to enhance the commander's decision making cycle. The commander also desired to create a logical nesting of staff processes with the Joint architecture used by higher headquarters in Iraq, including Multi-National Force Iraq (MNF-I), Multi-National Corps, Iraq (MNC-I), and Multi-National Security Transition Command Iraq (MNSTC-I). The final role this architecture needed to fulfill was to better enable subordinate commands to prosecute their counterinsurgency actions across Northern Iraq most effectively.

To support the needs of the command, the staff applied a deliberate problem-solving process rooted in "value-focused" thinking. That is, we first delineated what was important to achieve operational success (what we valued), and then built the organization around it. The result was a staff organization employing an operations, targeting, and effects synchronization (OTES) process specifically structured to achieve the commander's goals. This process evolved in the context of Joint doctrine, as we projected the best likelihood for achieving the "enduring effects" envisioned in our campaign plan.

This chapter presents an adaptable approach to staff organization, leading, and decision-making at the division level in such environments. It illustrates *a way*, but certainly not the *only* way. The purpose

is to stimulate critical thought among commanders and staffs in considering how to organize staff resources, both physically and procedurally, to achieve success in dynamic and complex environments. The remainder of this chapter covers the *impetus* for the change and the *methodology* applied, the *results* of the process, the *implementation* of the desired course of action, and an *assessment* of how it performed in a combat environment.

Background & Methodology

Impetus for Aligning the Staff

In January 2008, following its redeployment from a 15-month tour as the headquarters for Multi-National Division-Northern (MND-N) in Northern Iraq, Task Force Lightning convened once more to conduct its After Action Review (AAR). Among numerous valuable lessons learned that spanned the levels of war and echelons of command, the commanders and staff determined that the Prussian general staff structure was inadequate to address the complexities of the operational environment in Iraq. Several factors drove this determination.

There was exponential growth in available information, which stemmed from technological advancements in information/intelligence collection capabilities, as well as a continually growing awareness that resulted from simply having significantly more forces on the ground with the 2007 surge. What challenged the traditional staff structure was the combination of the growing volume of information with the considerable breadth of it ranging from typical warfighting data to governance, economic, and culture-related topics.

As a result of this influx of information, staff responsibility lines had become less clear as problem complexity grew. At the time, Field Manual 3-0 (Operations) provided the basis for staff functions in Army doctrine. It is noteworthy that FM 3-0 characterized staff functions in a very traditional warfighting context, and so did little to address the broader civil, governmental, cultural, and cross-functional considerations delineated in then-newly-minted counterinsurgency doctrine (FM 3-24) and which are now replete in both contemporary Army and joint doctrine. Consequently, there was a limited inherent ability to synchronize efforts in those areas across time and space. Moreover, the asymmetric nature of the environment did not fit with the traditional architecture, requiring the staff to simultaneously and continuously develop multiple operational planning teams with cross-functional expertise from across the staff. This resulted in a "pick-up team" mentality that impeded the staff's ability to focus on persistent problems and concerns.

Lastly, the lack of a dedicated core staff element to focus on the future operations horizon created a gap that forced the G-5 Plans to focus on near- to mid-term operations (3-30 day horizon) at the expense of maintaining a broader campaign-level focus across the division's battlespace or area of operations. This resulted in a persistent inability to assess and modify the campaign plan continuously and limited the commander's operational decision space.

Compounding these observations was the stark realization that, although the headquarters would return to Northern Iraq in less than 11 months, the dynamic nature of the operational and information environments would mandate a fresh look at what to achieve and how to organize to achieve it. Specifically, the staff anticipated that the mission would involve an exceptionally complex environment with innumerable second/third order effects. This would be amplified by US desires to begin the gradual reduction in forces while simultaneously shifting primary responsibility for Iraq's future to the Iraqi's themselves, which had been dubbed at the time as "Iraqis out front."

The transition to "Iraqis out front" would be a priority at the MNF-I and MNC-I levels. At the height of the Iraq surge, U.S/Coalition units were the primary (in some cases only) means for conducting security operations, with Iraqi Security Force (ISF) units assisting in a largely secondary role. As

the end of the surge approached in the summer of 2008, the prevailing wisdom was to transition the operational lead from coalition units to ISF while maintaining a robust train-advise-assist role. This would force the Iraqi government and military units to assume more direct ownership for achieving security goals, enabling them to be more visible to and to build confidence among the Iraqi population. This would be a significant change from the division HQ's previous deployment.

There would be an increasing focus on non-traditional (and non-lethal) problems in governance, infrastructure, and economic development as the US increasingly sought to reduce its operational presence and responsibilities. This translated to a growing emphasis to ensure that Iraqi capabilities in these areas achieved a level which would enable them to assume the lead. A significant part of this evolving problem set involved the constant potential for disastrous consequences stemming from the somewhat overlooked, and often misunderstood tensions between Kurds and Arabs in Northern Iraq.

These additional problem sets, all being addressed in the midst of executing combat operations, would add increased availability of and speed of information, which would require a staff organization and processes that were structured to collect it, analyze it, and then use it to formulate and disseminate operational plans and guidance relatively quickly. Equally important, the environment would require agile mission command – significant trust at and between all levels within the chain of command, decentralized command and control (C2), and empowerment downward to subordinate commands to assume risk and to exercise initiative.

Framing the Problem

According to ADRP 3-0 (Unified Land Operations) and Joint Publication 5-0 (Joint Operation Planning), staffs perform myriad functions that help commanders exercise command and control.[2] These functions include development of options through information collection and analysis that enable the commander to inform the population, influence key actors or centers of gravity, seize opportunities, and maintain the initiative. Another staff function is working together to develop and integrate environmental inputs to the common operating picture, which includes understanding various considerations such as indigenous populations and needs, cultural elements, governance, economics, nongovernmental organizations, and history, among others. Additionally, staffs need to maintain running estimates and make recommendations while preparing plans and orders and also determining the proper allocation of tasks and resources. As a key component, this includes provisions for how to integrate interagency and multi-national partners, as well as appropriate intergovernmental and nongovernmental organizations (IGOs and NGOs, respectively) in the planning process. Finally, this doctrine prescribes the monitoring, controlling, and assessing operations, including the coordination and synchronization of subordinate unit operations, while concurrently integrating and synchronizing them with indigenous forces, agencies, and/or institutions.

In short, the staff exists to provide accurate, timely information that most efficiently and effectively enables the commander's decision-making process. Considered in this context, the results of the Task Force AAR in January 2008 yielded a simple problem statement:

> Determine the division staff organization and associated processes that would allow the staff to prosecute the campaign plan most effectively by enhancing the Commanding General's decision making process and enabling the divisions major subordinate commands' (MSCs) abilities to achieve the commander's intent.

Recognizing the need to determine a suitable staff organization, we first sought to define, as fully as possible at the time, what the division wanted/needed to achieve in Northern Iraq. This required that we educate ourselves on the environment we would operate in, determine what we needed to do to achieve success, and then develop an approach to achieve it. Critical in all of this was structuring

the staff and processes to most effectively enable the MSCs, which consisted of four Brigade Combat Teams (BCTs), each of which had operational responsibility for one of the four provinces comprising Northern Iraq (Ninewa, Salah-a-din, Kirkuk, and Diyala), and an assortment of other separate brigades and battalions that contributed to division and brigade-level operations.

Our efforts began with the development of a preliminary campaign framework that outlined four lines of effort, the short- to mid-term objectives within each, and then the longer-term enduring effects (or conditions) we wanted to achieve (see Figure 8.1). In short, this framework formed the core of what we "valued" and what would define success for the division in Northern Iraq. Equally important, it would also allow us to set advantageous conditions for the division headquarters that would succeed us.

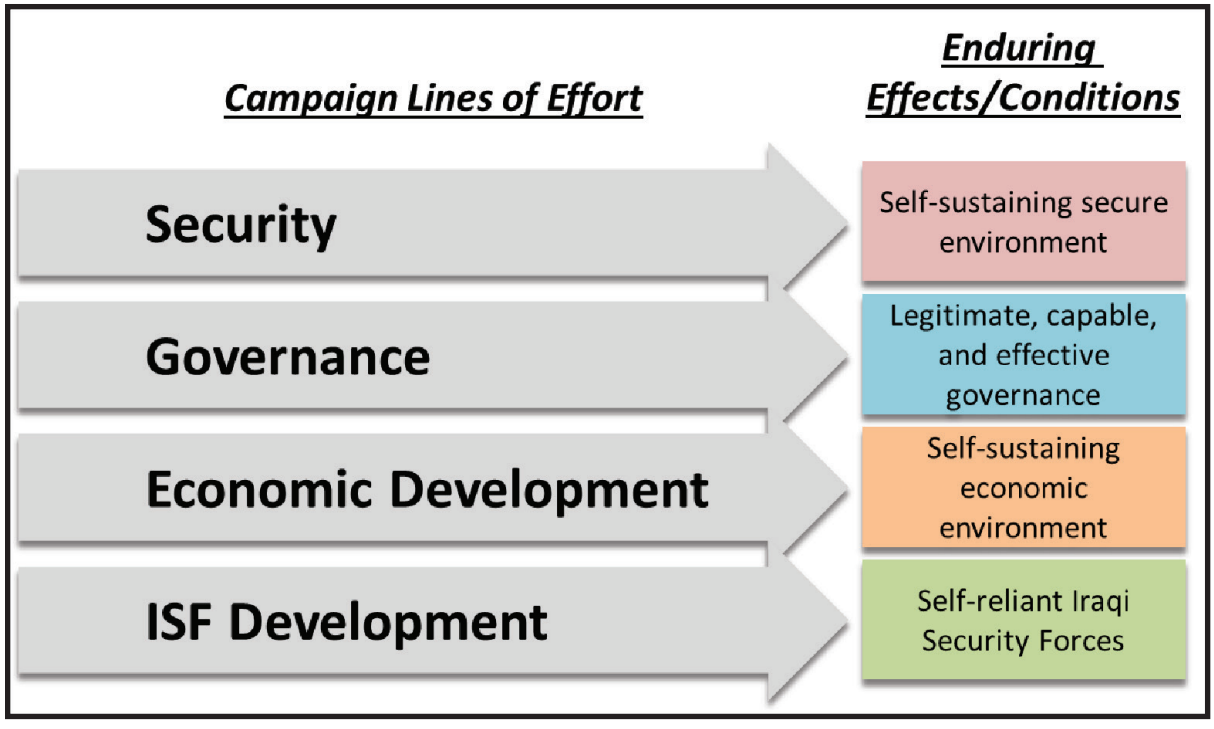

Figure 8.1 Unclassified portrayal of 25th Infantry Division campaign plan framework. Graphic created by CAC History for the authors.

We considered three courses of action (COA) for organizing the division staff for combat. The first was essentially the "do nothing" option by which we would organize and operate the staff as prescribed by doctrine. In the second COA, we would organize the staff into two temporary cells focused on lethal and non-lethal effects, respectively. The former would address kinetic security operations in particular, whereas the latter would focus on the non-kinetic aspects of engagement and stability operations. These teams would not be permanent staff fixtures but instead would meet as required to develop and synchronize operations and targeting through the 28-day targeting process.

The third COA called for a values-based approach whereby we would organize the staff into four work groups, each focused on one of the four enduring effects from the campaign plan framework. In short, we would organize our staff resources around what the division valued and wanted to achieve to be successful. These groups would be a cross-section of the staff (personnel drawn from staff sections depending on the expertise required) and then operate as permanent elements in the headquarters. A "fusion cell" would synchronize the efforts of all four groups through a 28-day operations, targeting, and effects synchronization process.

The values-based concept is an important distinction from the other two COAs and worth expounding on. It derives from the "value-focused thinking" approach developed and advocated by Ralph Keeney, who noted that "value-focused thinking is designed to focus the decision maker on the essential activities that must occur prior to solving a decision problem."[4] The other two COAs, by comparison, tended to be more alternatives-based. For example, aligning the staff along lethal and non-lethal effects essentially focuses the staff on two alternatives: the application of lethal force and non-lethal force, respectively. Once that decision is made, only then are objectives considered and criteria delineated to evaluate them. As Keeney notes, however, this is backwards, as "alternatives are relevant only because they are means to achieve values."[5]

The Resulting Staff Alignment

In February 2008, the Division Commander directed the implementation of COA 3 for the division's impending deployment. Accordingly, we formed four work groups and aligned against each of the campaign plan's four lines of effort and their associated enduring effects. The resulting groups consisted of: the Security Work Group, the Governance Work Group, the Economic Development Work Group, and the ISF Development Work Group. By this course of action, we would effectively flatten the staff architecture and streamline the flow of information across knowledge networks. This would redefine how the staff would facilitate the analytical rigor that feeds the operations/targeting/effects synchronization and assessment process.

This yielded two key changes for the division. The first was the creation of a robust future operations nucleus to drive the bulk of staff operations and bridge the efforts of the Current Operations and Future

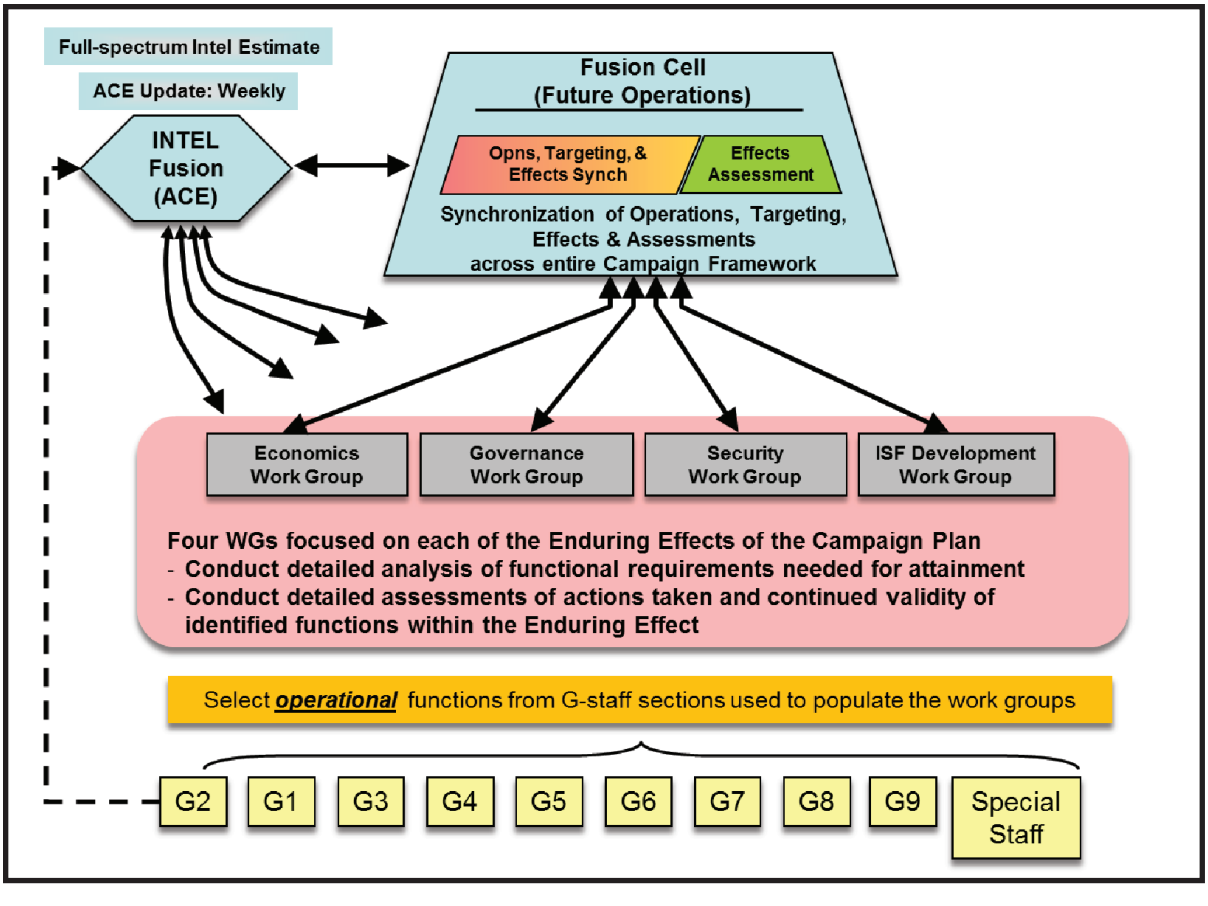

Figure 8.2 The resulting staff organization. Graphic created by CAC History for the authors.

Plans sections. The second was making the four work groups *permanent* staff elements rather than *ad hoc* teams, which meant they would focus daily on achieving campaign plan objectives consistent with their particular enduring effect and synchronizing those efforts across the division's operational framework. Each work group conducted a detailed analysis of functions and requirements necessary to achieving the desired lethal and non-lethal (i.e., targets, maneuver, resources, non-standard lines of influence, engagements, etc.) effects. The work groups also conducted detailed assessments of actions taken and results/effects achieved, as well as the continued efficacy of the identified functions within the enduring effect.

As reflected in Figure 8.2, the staff remained the primary force pool we would draw from for expertise in particular areas. In the simplest terms, we realigned the operational functions of the G-staff sections, which would now integrate these staff sections into the future operations horizon.

The G-2, while a contributor to any Work Group efforts, primarily oversaw intelligence collection and fusion through the Division Analysis and Collection Element (ACE). The ACE provided a "full-spectrum" common intelligence and information picture to the work groups while simultaneously responding to group-specific requirements for analysis, assessments, and collection. The detailed analysis performed by each of the four work groups would get forwarded to the Fusion Cell for synchronization across the breadth of the campaign plan, and then presented to the Commander for approval and codification into an executable order. This was a particularly important component of the organizational construct, which an ensuing section in the chapter shall address. It suffices to say at this point that the Fusion Cell provided a critical means by which we would fuse disparate, though not mutually exclusive, planning efforts across time and space to ensure all were integrated, synchronized, nested, and mutually supporting.

To man the groups, the division Chief of Staff chaired a series of meetings with the staff primaries, facilitated by the G-3. The purpose of these meetings was to identify the types of skill sets each work group would require and then begin to build the groups while being careful not to deplete the G-staff sections to such a degree that they could not perform their doctrinal mission. In short, identify the right people with the right experiences and put them in the right job while defining the degree of risk we could reasonably accept in performing traditional G-staff missions.

We determined that each work group and the Fusion Cell would be led by a Lieutenant Colonel, all of whom would report directly to the Division Effects Coordinator (ECOORD) who was a Colonel. Furthermore, we outlined preferred skills and/or experience for each as dictated by the enduring effect they would focus on. As the Security Work Group Lead, we wanted a Special Forces officer with a solid Foreign Internal Defense (FID) background. This would yield a good blend of security operations experience and working with local security forces. For the Governance Work Group, we determined that the Division G-9 would fill this role, as the group would focus on various civil considerations such as institutional capacity, essential services, and rule of law. To lead the Economics Work Group, we preferred an officer with a background in economics, financial enterprises, and perhaps acquisition and infrastructure development. Finally, for the ISF Development Work Group we preferred an officer with prior Transition Team experience (brigade or division level) or other experience in training host-nation military personnel, particularly in Arab nations.[6]

Beyond the work group leads, we delineated group composition along two lines: core and contributing members. Core members consisted of staff expertise that the work group would require on a daily basis (i.e., given the ISF's considerable logistical problems at the time of our deployment, we determined the ISF Work Group would require a full-time logistician from the G-4). Contributing members denoted either staff expertise that a work group would require routinely or that they came from a small staff section that could not support core membership (i.e., the Division Staff Judge Advocate

or Information Operations sections). The latter point is important, as the contributions of these staff sections were critical, making them a limited resource in high demand and thereby requiring further synchronization to ensure work groups receive the requisite inputs. Figure 8.3 delineates the results of the manning analysis for the Fusion Cell and work groups.

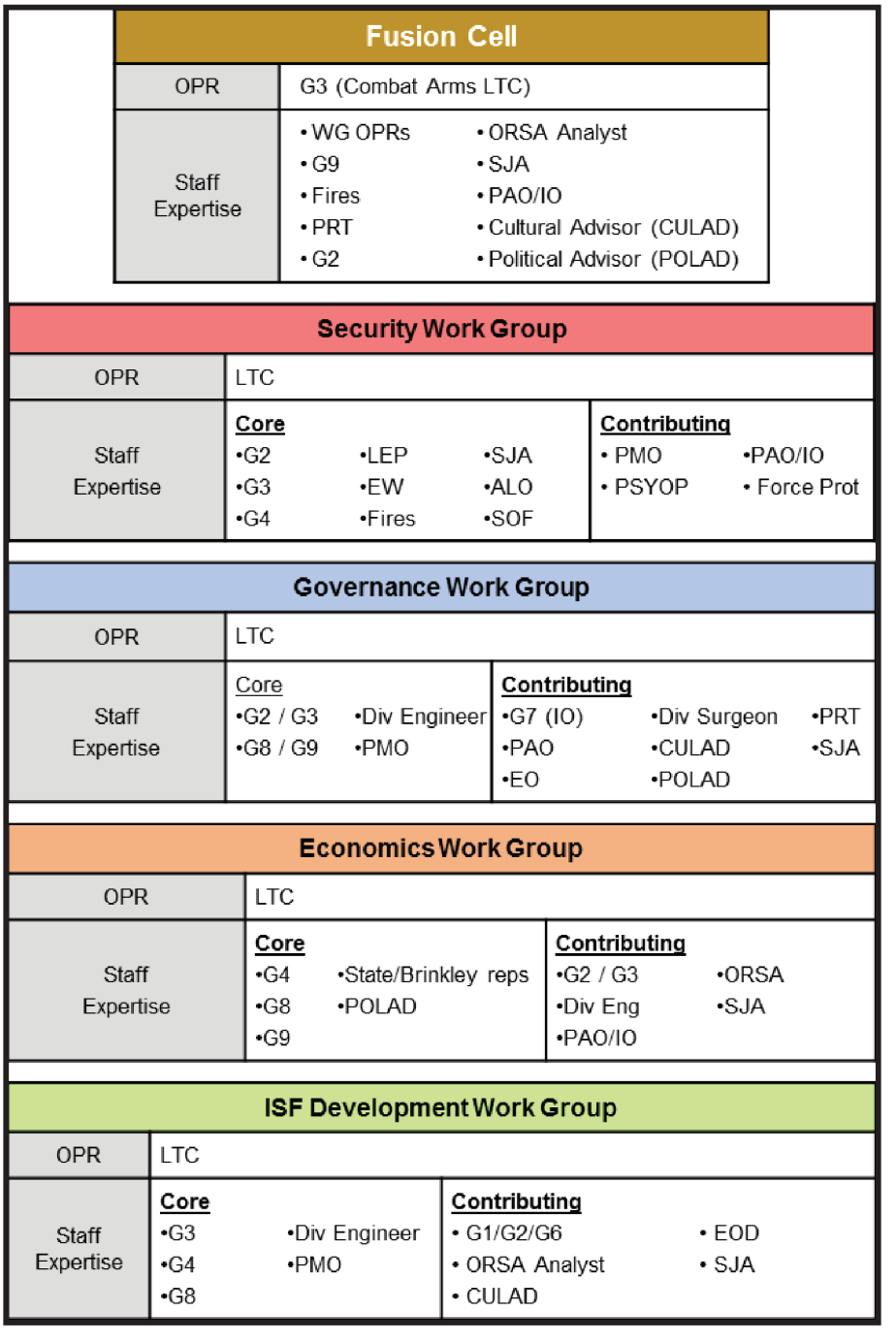

Figure 8.3 Work Group manning concept. Graphic created by CAC History for the authors.

Whether selecting core or contributing members, we sought to man the groups with the right personnel with the right skills and experience. This required that we develop a deeper understanding

of what other experiences and/or professional background personnel on the division staff had. For example, we identified a senior 1st Lieutenant who, although a Signal Officer by trade, had spent several years before the Army performing substantial technical services work for AT&T, which made him a prime candidate to work certain essential services problems in the Governance Work Group. Additionally, we drafted statements of work to obtain contracted expertise in the form of bicultural and bilingual advisors. In particular, we sought persons with Iraqi background – Arab and Kurdish – that possessed unique expertise in the four broad areas on which we intended to focus (e.g., practical experience in the Iraqi security forces, infrastructure development and/or management, rule of law, etc.). Equally important, however, was the cultural perspective they brought that informed staff analysis and planning efforts. Where possible, we intended to integrate these assets directly into daily staff operations within the headquarters, which required proper vetting and clearances given the classified environment therein.

The Operations, Targeting, and Effects Synchronization (OTES) Process

We originally built the OTES Process around a 28-day cycle that aligned with our division targeting process. The basic premise of the process focused on synchronizing the weekly efforts/inputs of the four work across the four week period to ensure a cohesive output in week four in the form of a fragmentary order (FRAGO) to major subordinate commands (MSCs). Equally important, we developed the process to help streamline and synchronize the division battle rhythm, to create more staff involvement by tying the *entire* staff to the future operations horizon, and to dissolve traditional stovepipes that impeded communication vertically and laterally.

Since each group would have their own Targeting Officer (we assigned a Chief Warrant Officer-1 or Chief Warrant Officer-2 from the doctrinal Fires Cell to each work group), they would develop their targeting and operations together. Targeting efforts would get synched each week in our Division

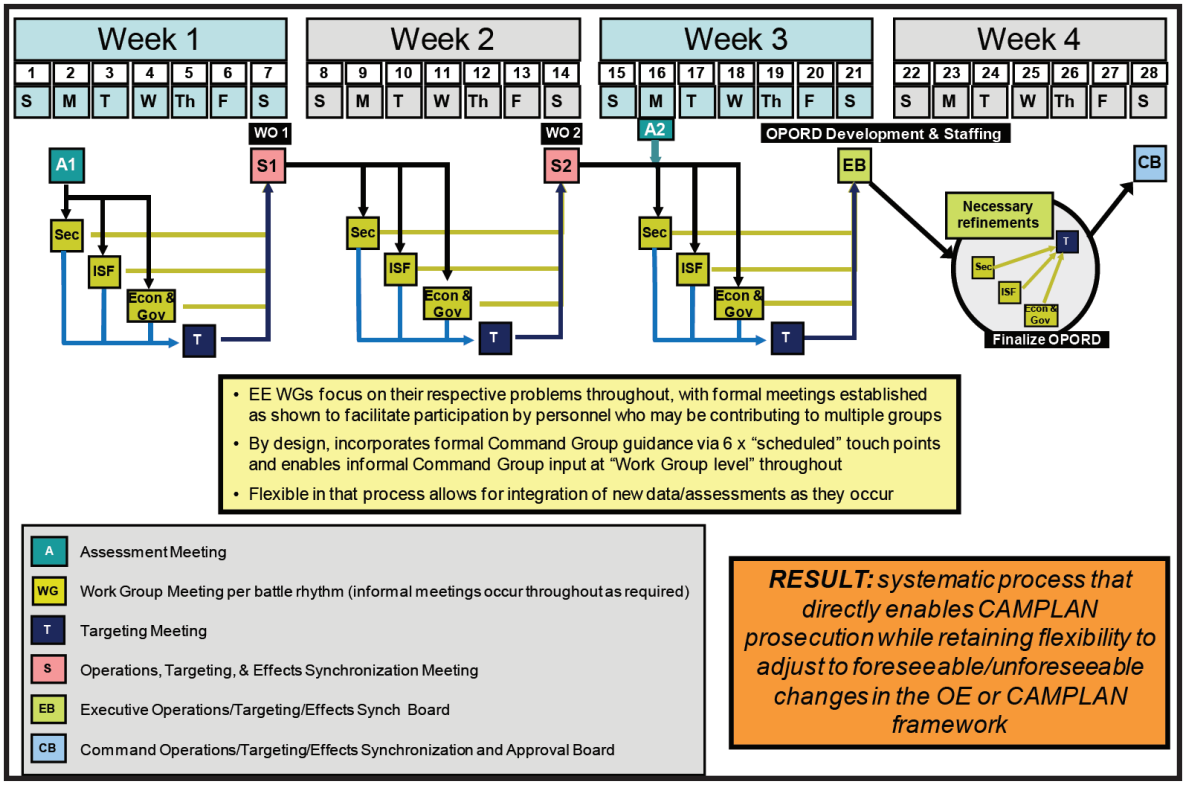

Figure 8.4 The OTES Process, as originally designed around the 28-day cycle. Graphic created by CAC History for the authors.

Targeting Meeting (which included MSCs), followed by an overarching meeting the next day focused on synchronizing operations, targeting, and effects across all four lines of effort. Figure 4 depicts the OTES process as originally designed.

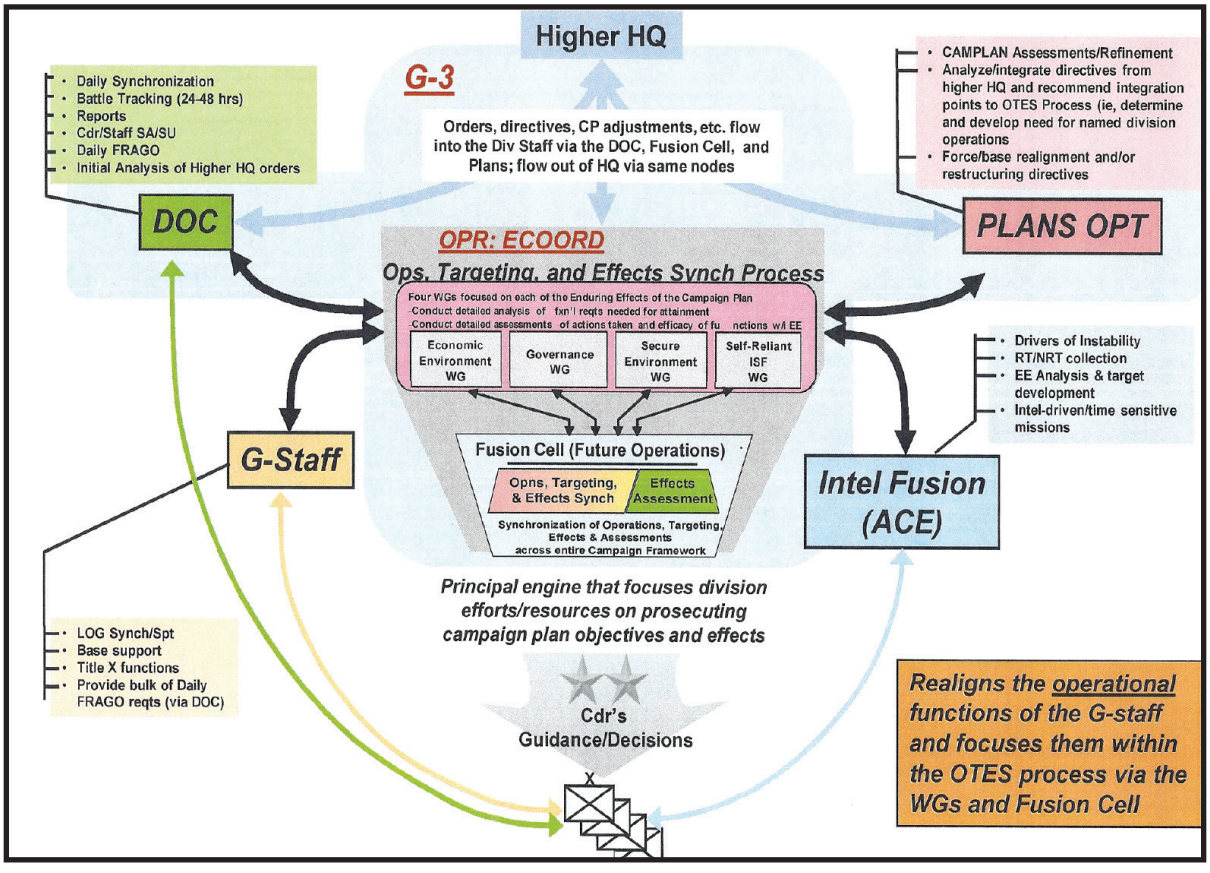

Figure 8.5 Staff interoperability concept. Graphic created by CAC History for the authors.

In the case of assessments, as data would come into the Fusion Cell from disparate sources (MSCs, Intel Fusion Center, Higher HQ), the Effects Assessment Cell would sort the data based on the enduring effects and sends it to the four work groups, wherein they are analyzed in detail to develop assessments from two perspectives: 1) to ascertain the effects achieved as the results of actions taken and 2) to assess the efficacy of the functional requirements and sub-objectives initially identified for each respective group. There would, of course, be data shared by all, as much of it would apply to multiple work groups. This assessment process, nested within the overarching targeting process, would ultimately drive the campaign assessment process which, in turn, would drive the need for campaign refinements.

Staff Interoperability and the Synchronizing Role of Fusion

As previously mentioned, one of the objectives for our staff organization was to create a future operations nucleus where none existed previously. This would allow the division staff to truly operate across all three time horizons by plugging their operational components into each. Figure 8.5 depicts how the work groups and the Fusion Cell, with OTES as the driver, would interoperate with the broader Division staff.

In short, the figure shows the three time horizons and the associated proponents: Current Operations, managed by the Division Operations Center (DOC), focused on the 0-72 hour timeframe; Future

Plans, managed by the G-5 and the Plans OPT, focused on 120 days and beyond; and now our Future Operations core focused on the 72 hour-120 day period in between, with the Fusion Cell and four work groups as the nucleus managed by the Division Effects Coordinator (ECOORD). The Division G-3 oversaw the synchronization of operational efforts across all three horizons, while the Chief of Staff retained oversight for broader staff synchronization in support of the Commander and the Command.

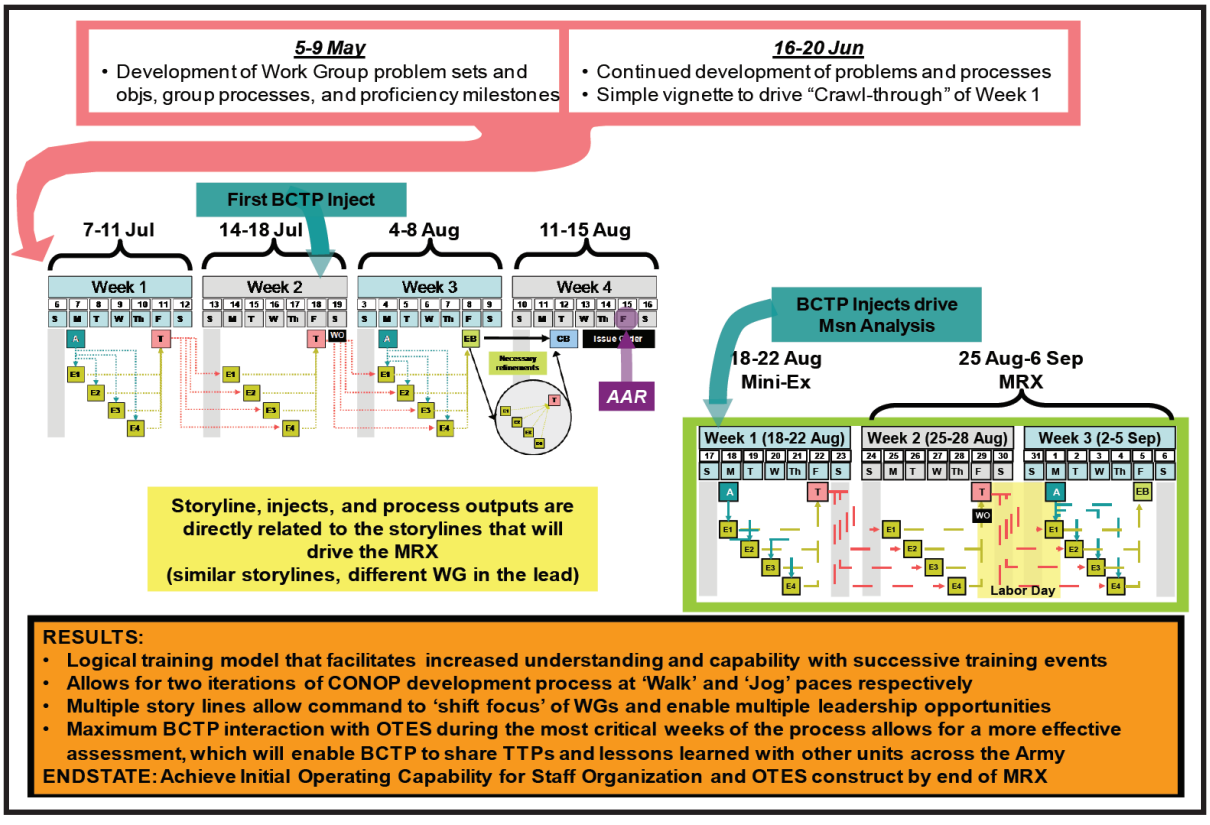

Figure 8.6 Staff Training Plan. Graphic created by CAC History for the authors.

Implementation: How the System Actually Worked

Preparation for Deployment

Similar to any plan or Standing Operating Procedure, we recognized that the effectiveness of our staff organization and OTES Process would depend on the extent to which the staff understood and exercised them. This applied also to the brigades that would comprise our Task Force (both those we would inherit upon arrival in theater and those who would transition in at some point in our 12-month deployment), as well as the division headquarters we would replace in Iraq to minimize seams and to mitigate friction points that accompany any transition.

Staff Proficiency: Pre-deployment preparations involved a comprehensive training plan spanning four and a half months. Figure 8.6 portrays the training concept, which followed a "crawl" (events outlined in red), "walk" (outlined in yellow), and "run" (outlined in green) methodology. This approach allowed the work groups and staff to ease into the OTES process by first developing each of the four focus areas, then to increase the tempo by focusing on specific problem sets that would cut across all four. This allowed the groups to refine internal analysis processes and to incorporate the Fusion Cell to exercise basic synchronization processes between them. The division's Mission Readiness Exercise

(MRX) helped to pull the entire process and organization together, enabling us to identify and refine gaps, inefficiencies, and areas requiring further attention in both.

For the division-level MRX, we purposely avoided the typical construct applied in division-level pre-deployment exercises. These approaches focused primarily on current operations (any ongoing operations within the 0-72 hour window) and therefore largely only exercised the Division Operations Center. Although current operations comprises a critically important feature for *informing* division operations, the "future operations" (3-30 day horizon) forms the nucleus and allows the division to exercise its role at the operational level of war. In performing this role most effectively, the division staff must focus on shaping future events in the near- to mid-terms and then to enabling subordinate headquarters to execute at their level. Accordingly, we focused our MRX on the future operations horizon, which allowed us to exercise and refine OTES systems, processes, and products.

Our approach to our MRX yielded a number of key enhancements as we prepared to deploy, of which two are particularly noteworthy. Foremost, the replication of simultaneous operations across all three time horizons allowed us to identify, further define, and assign future operations "areas of responsibility" within the work groups and the Fusion Cell. For example, the management and stabilization of Arab-Kurd relations became a Fusion Cell focus area, as it cut across all four work groups. Similarly, the planning and synchronization of division efforts to withdraw from Iraqi cities, towns, and villages in May/June of 2009 would fall to the Fusion Cell later in our deployment. The result was a clearer delineation of responsibilities within the OTES process while simultaneously allowing the G-5 Plans section to remain truly "future focused," reinforcing the original intent stemming from the Task Force AAR.

Second, we implemented a bi-weekly "Fusion Update" to the Commander, which would alternate with the traditional Plans Update, changing the latter from a weekly occurrence to bi-weekly, as well. This enabled us to inject a detailed future operations dialogue into the Commander's battle rhythm, allowing him a small forum in which to think about the problem, exchange his vision and concepts on the topic with the staff proponent, and then to provide detailed guidance to achieve his vision.

Indoctrinating MSCs and informing the Division HQ we would replace: We used several opportunities to inform both the MSCs that would comprise Task Force Lightning and the 1st Armored Division (AD) HQ we would replace. These included our Battle Command Seminar, which involved the Commanders and CSMs from all of the MSCs that would deploy under the MND-N banner; two Pre-deployment Site Surveys (PDSS) with 1st AD; and our mission readiness exercise. The intent of these events was two-fold: 1) help the MSCs understand how we would operate as a staff and how/where they would plug in, and then 2) inform 1st Armored Division of how we would operate so that we could develop a transition plan that would allow us to assume the reins with minimal impact to ongoing operations, as well as the MSCs we would assume command and control of who were executing them. It is important to recall that, under the force generation model the Army used at the time to generate force rotations into theater, division headquarters and MSCs did not typically transition in or out at the same times.

The Synchronizing Role of the Fusion Cell

The Fusion Cell used OTES as the principal engine to focus and synchronize division efforts and resources in prosecuting campaign plan objectives and effects. Doing so required Fusion Cell participation in and, to a degree, oversight of work group planning efforts. Such participation manifested itself in a number of ways. First, the development and dissemination of weekly "OTES Guidance" drove the focus and synchronization of planning efforts for any given week. Second, participation in work group planning teams and meetings served to bring a broader perspective to the analysis that helped to identify and mitigate friction points and common areas that groups could mutually reinforce. Third,

Fusion-led OPTs for broader efforts such as stabilizing Arab-Kurd relations facilitated more effective synchronization of contributions from the work groups and other staff elements that might be directly involved. All of this culminated each week in a Synchronization Meeting with the staff, chaired by the Commander. The choice of the word "meeting" versus "brief" is important; the venue was intended as a working environment for the staff to exchange ideas with the Commander to shape future events in the four principal lines of effort, to solicit the Commander's guidance on operational concepts in development, and to gain his approval for plans ready for codification and execution by MSCs.

Refinement and Adaptation

As is often the case in warfare, the realities on the ground often waylay even the best laid plans. Our staff organization and OTES process were no different. However, we anticipated this and had a plan to adapt as necessary. We established three requirements to drive a continual re-evaluation of our staff alignment and the supporting processes incorporated within OTES. First, the organization and processes needed to be adaptable to the environment. This meant being able to adjust our processes to more fully and effectively address the MND-N environment, in terms of the pace of operations (OPTEMPO), the timing and types of problem sets, and the interactions with and requirements of subordinate and higher headquarters. Second, they needed to adapt to the Commander in order to more effectively support the Commander's "fighting horizon" and the information cycle he required to impart guidance and shape his decisions and actions. Finally, they need to be capable of adapting to the Command. This included adjusting processes to account for decentralized division C2 nodes and the integration of MSCs with disparate operational support requirements.

The third requirement in particular highlighted the need for considerable flexibility in our organizational structure and processes. In regards to decentralized command and control, each of our two Deputy Commanding Generals (DCG) principally operated from one of three Tactical Command Posts (TACs). For example, the DCG-Support operated from TAC North in Mosul (because of his extensive experience in that city/province as a Brigade Commander) where the bulk of heavy fighting was occurring at the time. Conversely, the DCG-Operations, who had significant prior experience dealing with Arab-Kurd tensions, split his time between TAC South in Baquba and TAC East in Kirkuk, both areas in which Arab-Kurd tensions were particularly volatile. Given the geographical and cultural breadth of Northern Iraq (roughly the size of the state of Pennsylvania), these TACs had considerably different intelligence and information requirements that the division staff had to address. This, coupled with the uniquely different personalities of the DCGs themselves, induced changes to the battle rhythm and the manner in which the OTES process functioned to accommodate their needs.

Similarly, each of the division's four subordinate Brigade Combat Teams (BCT) and their associated Provincial Reconstruction Teams (PRT) bore responsibility for one of the four provinces in Northern Iraq, each of which in turn encompassed disparate operational and cultural challenges. As such, the division's staff organization and processes had to be flexible enough to enable their participation in the staff process and to accommodate the unique requirements for each based on the problem sets within their respective provinces.

Over the course of the deployment, our re-evaluation process in the context of these three requirements led to three key modifications that ultimately enhanced staff effectiveness, enhanced the Commander's ability to make decisions, and better-enabled MSCs.

Modification 1: We modified our 28-day cycle to a one-week cycle based on the simultaneity of efforts. While the 28-day cycle worked, it applied to *each* problem, which meant that we had a number of such cycles occurring simultaneously and at different stages therein. This dictated a need for more frequent touch-points with the Commander to obtain guidance on the various problem sets we faced

in the future operations horizon. Consequently, within several weeks of assumption of operational authorities and responsibilities from 1st AD, we modified the OTES process by instituting a weekly synchronization meeting with the Commander and all staff principals at the end of each week, as shown in Figure 8.7.

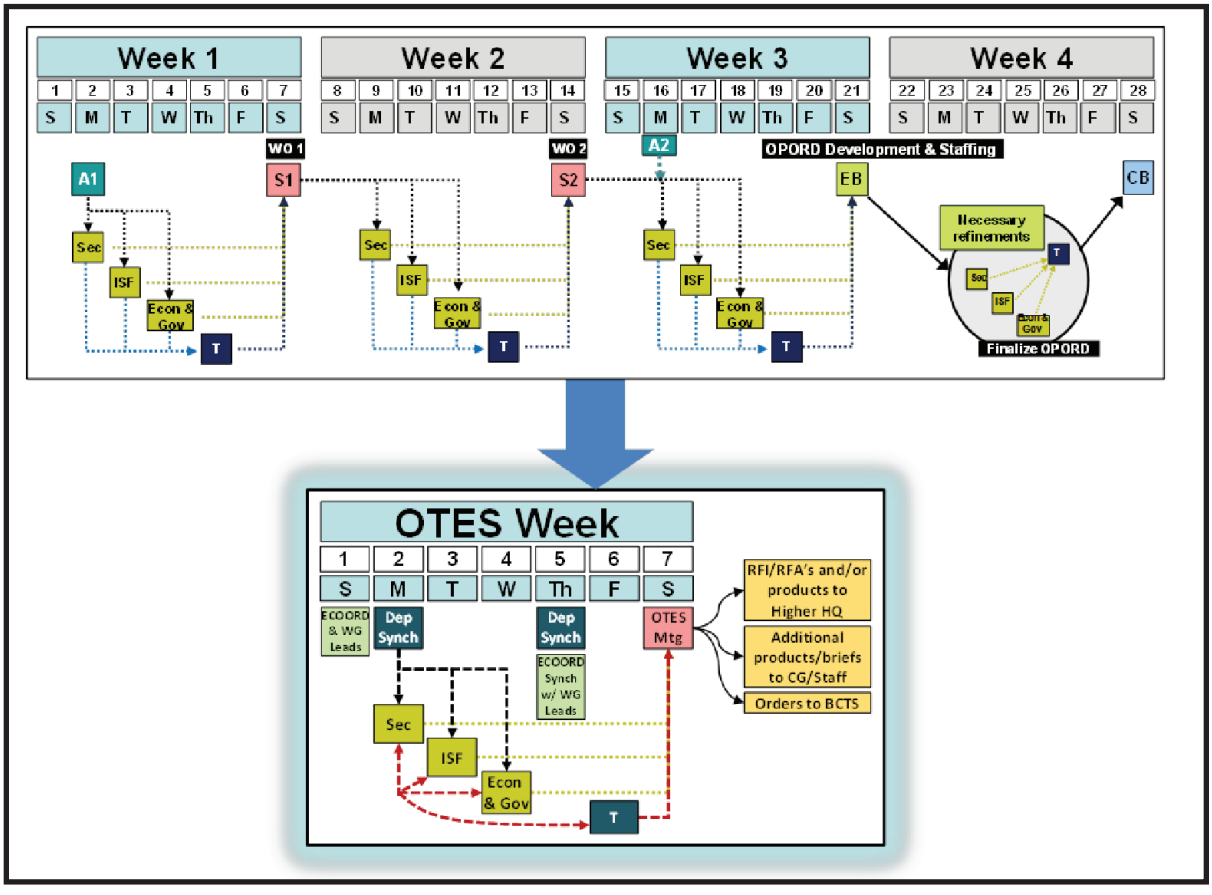

Figure 8.7 Modification of our original 28-day process to a one-week cycle that culminated in a weekly Synch Meeting with the Commander and staff. Graphic created by CAC History for the authors.

This weekly meeting became *the* battle rhythm event for the Commander and staff, as it was the only forum in which the Commander and his entire staff could come together to discuss operations, share concepts, generate guidance, and finalize operations by obtaining the Commander's approval. This also gave the Commander the much-needed opportunity to share his personal observations gleaned through his daily battlefield circulation trips throughout Northern Iraq. These were perspectives borne through personal daily interaction with subordinate commanders from the brigade to platoon level; engagements with key local leaders (political, military, and cultural); and discussions with senior commanders at MNC-I and MNF-I; and generally perspectives the staff did not have the opportunity to glean first-hand very often.

Modification 2: We decreased the number of meetings and consolidated some forums in order to afford the MSCs (primarily the BCTs) more time and to maximize the benefits of and outputs from the meetings we retained. A prime example of this was the decision to combine the Economics and Governance Work Group sessions into one. As it stood, the problems addressed by each group were so innately interwoven with the other's that combining the work group meetings facilitated a greater degree of synthesis and synchronization at the outset.

While the modifications largely stemmed from the unique styles and needs of the Division Commander and Deputy Commanders, they remain important for a broader audience nonetheless. The criticality of the modifications, from our perspective, lay in the need to achieve three key effects: 1) flattening of the knowledge network to facilitate information sharing, transfer, and availability; 2) enabling BCT efforts and abilities to execute; and 3) facilitating a more effective integration of the Deputy Commanders and the distributed TACs in the planning process, which would better support the Commander's decision process. Such requirements and effects transcend particular persons or positions and must be considered for any staff organizational construct and the battle rhythm by which it operates to serve the Commander and the Command.

Modification 3: Nine months into the deployment (June-July 2009) we combined the Security and ISF Development Work Groups into a single entity focused on ISF development and operations. The Security Agreement (SA) implemented between the US and Iraq in January 2009 had a significant impact on our counterinsurgency operations and, in general, led to this particular adjustment. Prior to the SA, US-led forces unilaterally developed and executed nearly all operations based on effects *we* wanted to achieve. Beginning in January 2009, the SA required bi-lateral operations that integrated ISF units for the purpose of transitioning security responsibilities to the ISF and building the Iraqi population's confidence in its nation's ability to stand on its own. Notwithstanding, our ISF efforts remained largely focused on developing ISF capacity and capability, and despite the desire to place the ISF in a leading operational role they lacked the capability to do so. On 30 June 2009, however, the SA mandated the withdrawal of all coalition forces from principal population centers. Entry was permitted only if accompanying ISF units in a supporting role. This fundamentally shifted our supported/supporting relationship with the ISF and led us to combine these two work groups into one focused on ISF-led security operations. Analysis would now focus primarily on the ISF's ability to execute operations, identifying the capability gaps that would require division support, and then, as we provided that support, continue to work on developing the inherent capabilities within the ISF to close those gaps.

Overall Assessment

Ultimately, the staff alignment worked very well on a number of levels. Foremost, it allowed for continuous prosecution of our campaign plan objectives, facilitated the synchronization of staff planning efforts across the campaign plan framework, and informed the Commander's decision process, ultimately enabling him to make timely and effective decisions that achieved effects commensurate with his desired end state. Equally important, it allowed the headquarters to more effectively and efficiently enable the MSCs by continuously focusing staff planning efforts on division lines of effort, which drove the allocation of division resources and priorities. Additionally, we realized the following key enhancements to the division's ability to operate, command, and control as a result of our staff organization and the OTES Process.

The most important enhancement tailored the organization to prosecute our campaign plan and continuously focused the staff on what the commander deemed most important to operations success. The division also created a robust future operations nucleus that allowed us to more effectively manage a very dynamic operational environment and enabled the division headquarters to stay out in front of the BCTs, thereby shaping the environment for them to operate. This also allowed the Plans section to maintain a longer-term focus on campaign plan refinement and logical branches and sequels therein. The power of permanent work groups versus temporary *ad hoc* groups focused on campaign objectives and planning priorities (continuous monitoring, assessing, and controlling versus one day per week as one of perhaps several "additional duties" for the individual contributing staff members) cannot be overstated. This provided subordinate headquarters continuously functioning staff entities to tap into for information, assistance, and guidance. It also facilitated a much simpler interface with our high-

er headquarters at the Corps level (MNC-I), which also operated under joint organizational doctrine. Thus, the overarching effect of our permanent work groups was to streamline the knowledge networks up, down, and laterally.

These enhancements also created multiple, routine touch points between the Commander and the staff. As previously mentioned, this became particularly important as a means for the Commander to impart the first-hand perspective he obtained through his daily visits and engagements throughout the battlespace. The process also enabled predictability, synchronization, and staff awareness. Moreover, it drove stability in the division headquarters battle rhythm and the outpost command control nodes. Finally, we avoided overwhelming staff sections by consolidating the operational components of each section. This mitigation allowed the G-staff sections to focus on their doctrinal Title X functions (e.g., G-1: casualty reports and notification, awards, evaluations, etc.) while plugging them into the future operations horizon, which helped to inform those day-to-day operations.

Despite the overall success of our staff organization and supporting processes, there were a number of things we could have done better and from which future headquarters can learn and adapt.

Our indoctrination effort with MSCs and newly arriving staff: We spent a considerable amount of time briefing persons and agencies outside the staff and task force on how OTES worked, while spending comparatively little time on those who would implement it. The unintended consequences of this misplaced effort were two-fold. First, we encountered pushback from staff primaries who misunderstood the intent and concept of operation and perceived it as a threat to their authority and staff functionality. Second, the fewer briefings to implementers led to a lack of detailed understanding among the staff, particularly staff members assigned to the work groups and the fusion cell. This slowed process development prior to our deployment.

Work groups as *the* operational planning teams. Upon arriving in theater, we reverted to standing up numerous operational planning teams to address problems, as we had done in the previous deployment. We formed these operational planning teams by pulling apart the work groups to fill them, which was precisely the situation we had designed our staff organization to prevent. Recognizing that our work groups were the planning teams was important. They were cross-functionally manned to tackle multiple problem sets within their lines of effort. The only addition required was work group-to-work group coordination and communication to ensure synthesis across lines of effort.

Integration of the "Iraqi perspective." We needed to think about the Iraqi perspective earlier in our pre-deployment preparations and in the deployment itself. Although we worked very hard to educate ourselves on the environment and to develop appropriate and meaningful objectives, our work and, by default, our product was coalition- or US forces-centric. Along the way, we learned the importance of integrating our efforts and objectives with those of the Iraqis, provincial reconstruction teams, and others. We did this integration aggressively through key leader engagements, integrated command and control structures, and a division level unified common plan that linked efforts more tightly to Iraqi objectives. Ultimately, regardless of the extent of our efforts or our best intentions to develop measurable and achievable objectives for success, our focus and results would be neither complete nor correct without the infusion of Iraqi objectives to guide them. This relationship would be true in any counter-insurgency environment, particularly in the transition phase of operations.

The "de-flattening" effect of internal work group hierarchies. Our work group "leads" became work group leaders, thereby complicating the dynamic by which we intended to operate, i.e., as a flat, matrix-style organization. Simply stated, the creation (and title) of work group leaders induced corresponding work group structures (i.e., a lead's work group became his "mini staff") that put pressure on the system to "de-flatten." The effect was a system of work group hierarchies that ran counter to the principle of flatness we wanted to achieve. In reality, we intended the work group leads to be analysis directors.

Conclusion

In the final analysis, just as Roman military reforms increased their ability to adapt to new enemies and an evolving environment, operational foresight and willingness to adapt can help propel US forces to military successes. Applied prudently, structural reorganization can enhance our own modern-day efforts to adapt to an evolving environment and to achieve our operational and strategic goals.

The staff organization and the OTES process we adopted and executed significantly enhanced our ability to operate as a division headquarters in Northern Iraq. It is a tested alternative that can and should benefit other headquarters wrestling with a similar conundrum. For us, it facilitated staff communication and awareness; more effectively focused and synchronized staff and BCT efforts toward achieving campaign plan objectives and effects; enabled the commander to make timely, informed, and effective decisions; and facilitated more effective interface with our higher headquarters. The combined effect of these enhancements led to MSCs that were better enabled to execute operations and achieve the division commander's intent.

Nevertheless, despite the successes we enjoyed, the solution we employed only reflects *one way* among myriad possibilities. Whichever solution a commander and staff elect to pursue, we believe that there are five keys to success. First, there must be a concerted effort to develop a firm understanding of the deployment environment, both at the division level and below. This will help to inform staff architecture options relative to the likely problem sets they will have to address. Second is the development of an operational framework or campaign plan that lays out what the staff organization must do and achieve for the division to be successful. Third, then, is the formulation of a staff organization that enables the staff to most effectively support the commander in the prosecution of that plan. Fourth is the development of a training plan for acclimating the staff to the resulting organizational structure and facilitates refinement of supporting systems and processes. Finally, the fifth key is the development of processes that facilitate a continual and objective assessment of the environment as it evolves, identification of changes in the environment that will induce modifications to organizational constructs and processes, and then modifications to desired enduring effects. For example, as the deployment unfolded and the operational environment changed, we learned that we had to adapt our objectives to support our Iraqi partners' objectives.

Thereafter, it is a matter of having viable systems in place to facilitate review, refinement, and adaptation. These types of systems address those changes in the environment and how the commander "fights" once on the ground, enabling units to reframe desired end states and then modify their staff organization and processes accordingly to achieve success.

Notes

1. Livy, *The Early History of Rome: Books 1-V of the History of Rome from Its Foundation*, translated by Aubrey de Selincourt (New York: Penguin Classics, 1988) 386-402. The Gallic occupation of Rome created shockwaves of self-examination in the Latin Confederation, of which Rome was the senior member.

2. Headquarters, Department of the Army. ADRP 3-0: *Operations* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 11 November 2016), Chapter 3 – The Army's Operational Concept describes the array of complementary functions performed by commanders and staffs.

3. The Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Operation Planning, *Joint Publication 5-0* (Washington, DC: US Joint Chiefs of Staff, 11 August 2011), II-1.

4. R. L. Keeney, "Creativity in Decision Making with Value-Focused Thinking," *Sloan Management Review* (1994), 33.

5. Kenney, "Creativity in Decision Making with Value-Focused Thinking," 33.

6. The point here is prior experience in the prevalent culture of the area of operations. While any experience is generally better than none, we specifically sought experience rooted in the environment we would operate within.

Book II

The Corps

XXX

Chapter 9
The History of the Corps in the US Army

Colonel Steve Delvaux

Here is the general principle of war — a corps of 25,000 to 30,000 men can be left on its own. Well handled, it can fight or alternatively avoid action, and maneuver according to circumstances without any harm coming to it, because an opponent cannot force it to accept engagement but if it chooses to do so it can fight alone for a long time.[1]

– Napoleon Bonaparte, 1769-1821

The corps echelon of command has been a fixture as a standing formation in the United States Army since the Korean War. Prior to that, it had served its purpose well as the Army's highest "tactical unit of execution" in every major war it has fought in from the American Civil War forward. The storied performance of its units and the commanders who led them occupy a special place in the annals of the American Army's history. While its organization and functions have changed markedly over the years, it remains today a critical command and control formation in the Army's force structure. As such its evolution, from inception to present day, and its potential role in any future engagement America finds herself embroiled in, is worthy of study and review.

The corps had its origin as an army formation in Napoleon's *grande armée* in the early 1800s. Its entry onto the world stage made an immediate impression. Descending on Europe like a lightning bolt from a clear blue sky, the French Emperor's corps moved swiftly, his citizen armies striking the aging and decrepit royal armies of the early 19th century's *ancien régimes* with a ferocity not witnessed in Europe since the barbarian hordes of an earlier age had plunged the continent into over a millennia of darkness. The armies of Revolutionary France, designed for speed and destructiveness, heralded a new age of warfare the remnants of which are still with us today.

The corps was the engine that sped Napoleon's deadly formations forward. The fundamental concepts underlying the corps' organization and doctrinal employment had been outlined several decades before Napoleon's rise to power by Jacques Antoine Hippolyte, the Comte de Guibert, and Pierre-Joseph Bourcet. Guibert's *Essai général de Tactique* (General Test of Tactics) prophesied the superiority of mass citizen armies over the small professional armies of Europe's rulers and called for subdividing armies into self-contained divisions.[2] Bourcet's primary contribution, contained in his *Principes de la guerre des montagnes* (Principles of Mountain War) tract, was speed and concentration. By moving divided and fighting united, which Guibert's principle of self-sufficient, combined arms, "mini-armies" made possible, a commander could gain the decided advantage of speed without sacrificing mass and risking the possibility of being defeated piecemeal.

Never had an idea, a man, and a moment converged as perfectly as they did in the decade following the onset of the French Revolution. With the *levée en masse* (mass uprising) providing the large conscript army Guibert had called for, and the Revolution allowing opportunities for men of talent with the skills necessary to put into practice the quick-striking, mobile warfare envisioned by Bourcet, it remained only for a leader to emerge who could put the ideas of the French military theorists together with the moment the wars of the French Revolution provided.

Enter Napoleon.

Enacting the ideas espoused by Guibert and Bourcet, Napoleon quickly rose to everlasting fame as his armies thrashed about Europe. Powered by the corps, the French Army chased down and obliterated the enemy armies sent forward to oppose them. Gone were the days of plodding, lumbering armies

weighed down by immense baggage trains that tied them to prescribed routes of advance, waging limited wars and incapable of achieving decisive victories. In their place emerged the corps which unleashed a daring style of warfare that produced some of the most celebrated military campaigns of the 19th and 20th centuries.

At its heart, as conceived, organized, and employed by Napoleon, the corps was a simple headquarters structure that facilitated command and control. Key combat arms multipliers – cavalry and artillery – were concentrated at the corps and army level, available to reinforce the main effort, exploit success, and support beleaguered forces in danger of being overrun.[3] Critical to the corps' success were its mobility, its intelligence gathering and denial capabilities, and its intrepid leaders who were willing to move rapidly when the moment demanded it and able to discern when that moment was at hand. Concentrating overwhelming combat power at the decisive point was the elemental ingredient to Napoleon's greatest battlefield victories.

In time the fervor of the French citizen-army's revolutionary zeal waned, the leaders with the skills necessary to command corps were attritted, and the might of the armies and the will of the coalitions aligned against him stiffened, negating the advantages inherent to the corps' success and bringing about Napoleon's eventual demise. But the corps as a fundamental army organization and the doctrinal precepts underlying the offensive warfare Napoleon had used to such astounding success remained, capturing the imagination of military leaders in the decades immediately following his defeat and ever since.

While it would take over 45 years for the United States Army to adopt the French Emperor's organizational and doctrinal principles, the Napoleonic legend was alive and well in America in the years leading up to its first employment of the corps. West Point tactics instructor Henry Halleck's interpretation of Swiss Baron Antoine Jomini's *Summary of the Art of War*, which sought to distil the secrets of Napoleon's success, was deeply engrained in the tactics instruction many of the later American Civil War generals received at West Point. The famous remark that "Many a Civil War general went into battle with a sword in one hand and Jomini's *Summary of the Art of War* in the other," is illustrative of the influence Napoleon's style of warfare had on the American army in the years leading up to the Civil War.[4]

The United States Army's first attempt to use the corps system, however, fell far short of the success Napoleon had in employing it. The struggles the Union and Confederate armies experienced organizing and waging operations with corps-size formations in the American Civil War were understandable given the lack of experience American officers had commanding large units prior to the war. Wary of large standing armies and having no real need for them in the early decades of the Republic's existence, it was not until the American Civil War that the United States formed its first corps. Even then the Union Army at least did so only begrudgingly, at the insistence of its Commander-in-Chief President Abraham Lincoln. Although he lacked formal military education and training, Lincoln sensed in early 1862 that his burgeoning army was becoming too unwieldy for any single commander to effectively command and control it during the type of fast-moving campaign he so desperately desired his commanders to carry out.[5] He subsequently issued General Order #2 on March 8, 1862, organizing the twelve divisions of the Army of the Potomac into four corps of three divisions each.[6]

Like its *grande armée* predecessor, the Union corps was designed for mobile, offensive warfare. Army commanders were given the prerogative to task organize the corps as they deemed necessary to achieve the desired effects of a campaign. Unlike the French Army of Napoleon, however, both the Union and Confederate armies lacked military leaders and staffs with the expertise necessary to organize and employ corps-size formations in a way that would best maximize their combat effectiveness. Although well-versed in Napoleonic warfare and the military theory underlying its success, American commanders limited experience in commanding and controlling large units and their seeming inability to grasp the key principles of the corps system led to many missteps in the early years of its employment.

Chief among the deficiencies were the organization, distribution, and use of artillery and cavalry assets among the corps. Initially, both the Union and Confederate armies failed to task organize their artillery and cavalry effectively. In Napoleonic warfare the cavalry performed key intelligence roles; screening the advancing army to prevent enemy knowledge of its disposition and march objectives while simultaneously gathering intelligence of the enemy's position and objectives. This information was critical in allowing the Army commander to adjust his formations and ensure the correct alignment of his forces. Once engaged, the cavalry functioned as a combat arm of decision, exploiting battlefield and operational successes or reinforcing endangered units and rapidly moving to shore up gaps that invariably opened up in an army on the move. The artillery, meanwhile, was a crucial combat arm that corps commanders used to support advancing infantry or help defenders repel enemy assaults. The key to enabling artillery to dominate the battlefield as the "king of battle" was to mass its effects. Initial attempts to adopt the corps system in both the Union and Confederate armies failed to incorporate either of these two elements in their doctrinal or organizational design.

The final key element of effectively employing a corps during a campaign was the presence of a skilled and mature corps staff. To exercise the wide span of control required by the corps system commanders required a professional staff which was lacking in the American army of the 1860s. Just as America lacked military officers skilled in commanding large units, so too did it lack trained officers skilled in producing the orders required to successfully plan and maneuver large units over vast distances.[7]

Proving that experience is indeed the best teacher, America grew such leaders as the Civil War raged on. These leaders began to display more skill in employing corps in accordance with the doctrinal principles governing its organization. In his analysis of the United States Army's first experiment with the corps system historian, Robert M. Epstein concluded that after an initial period of "fumbling and experimentation . . . the evolution of the corps in the American Civil War was characterized by a slow but steady improvement in the combat organization of large units and a corresponding improved battlefield performance."[8]

Epstein attributed the American army's problems in employing the corps system effectively from the start to be primarily due to the limited imagination of the officer corps which had difficulties unshackling itself from its pre-war experiences. Somewhat damningly and of importance to contemporary Army leaders, Epstein noted that:

> In spite of having a general knowledge of the Napoleonic system of war and operational art and in spite of understanding the role the *corps d'armée* had in Napoleonic warfare, many Civil War generals did not understand how to organize a corps to provide maximum combat capability on the battlefield. What seemed to dominate the thinking of most American officers was their actual experience within the American military system, in which they dealt with small units. This was most pronounced in the employment of the artillery and cavalry arms. There was no tradition in the American army of using large cavalry units for reconnaissance, shock, exploitation, and pursuit, nor had anyone dealt with the artillery concentrations characterized by the Napoleonic experience. The result was that for the first half of the war the artillery and cavalry arms were decentralized and used merely for infantry support, to the detriment of the branch and its general service. No one had any idea what five to ten thousand concentrated horsemen could do, and no one understood the immediate effect wrought by placing forty to fifty guns *en masse* against a single point of an enemy line. . . In the final analysis it was the difficulty in converting a frontier constabulary into a major land army that caused the inefficiencies and problems inherent in the corps structures during the first half of the Civil War. Improvements had to be learned the hard way, by experience.[9]

Unfortunately, the mistakes experienced in forming and using corps in the American Army would repeat themselves during subsequent wars. Reverting to a frontier constabulary force after the Civil War, the army focused primarily on reconstruction and patrolling the expanding American frontier. These experiences left the American Army little more prepared to organize and fight in corps-sized formations upon the outbreak of the Spanish-American War in 1898 than it had been on the eve of the American Civil War.

Given its lack of pre-war preparation the American Army was thankfully not dependent on the corps for success in the Spanish-American War. While corps were formed and used in the two main areas of land engagements, Cuba and the Philippines, neither theater consisted of fast-moving campaigns for which the corps was essential. Operations in the Philippines quickly devolved into an insurgency and the Cuban Campaign was over after a very brief campaign that lasted less than a month and involved only limited corps-level maneuver.[10]

The Spanish-American War did, though, highlight once again the importance of having mobilization plans and well-trained staffs capable of organizing, supporting, and assisting commanders in the command and control of large units. The massive mobilization problems experienced in readying the army for deployment to Cuba, the Philippines, and elsewhere were largely a result of the lack of plans and staffs to oversee the preparations. While the Army once again reverted to a small frontier constabulary force after the Spanish-American War, its introduction into world politics provided it with ample justification to address its need for larger formations capable of fielding a large-scale mobilization as well as trained officers with the skills needed to command and staff corps-sized formations.

The Root Reforms that helped the Army address the planning and mobilization problems it experienced in the Spanish-American War gave birth to the General Staff which took on doctrinal and organizational reforms as one of its first initiatives.[11] The third version of the resulting Field Service Regulations it produced, the *Field Service Regulations* of 1914 *(FSR 1914)* was notable for establishing divisions as the "basis of organization" for the American Army for the first time in its peacetime history. Emphasizing that "mobile armies" were designed for offensive operations and required the "maximum degree of mobility," each division was to be "a self-contained unit made up of all necessary arms and services, and complete in itself with every requirement for independent action incident to its ordinary operations." Notably, *FSR 1914* did not mention the corps at all, skipping that echelon of command and instead calling for divisions to be grouped together into Field Armies when the Army required larger organizations.[12]

It did not take the Army long to recognize the need for corps-level headquarters following America's entry into World War I in April 1917. After conducting an extensive study of the Allied armies, General of the Army John J. Pershing concluded the corps would be a necessary intermediate headquarters to help command and control the million-plus man American Expeditionary Force (AEF) he felt was needed to win the war in Europe.[13]

Ultimately, the AEF was to consist of two Field Armies, seven corps, and 32 divisions.[14] While American corps were not employed in offensive operations until the final months of the war, the few campaigns it did participate in gave some evidence that the Army was still ill-prepared to employ corps-sized formations. The most significant corps-level offensive operation the AEF participated in – the Meuse-Argonne Offensive – began in late September 1918, just six weeks before the Armistice that ended hostilities in World War I. During that operation, the American First Army, commanding the I, III, IV, and V Corps, managed some impressive initial gains before being brought to a grinding virtual halt by German reinforcements a short three days after the offense's launch. America's first foray with corps-level offensive maneuver in World War I revealed several deficiencies. A critical post-war analysis of the I Corps' actions during the initial phase of this operation highlighted the American army's inexperience with corps-level operations and open warfare. "Orders were involved not simple," the report

pointed out. The analysis further noted that the corps had been improperly employed as its forces had been "equally distributed along the army fronts" rather than weighting a main effort, in clear violation of "the principle of mass and economy of force."[15]

The critique delved deeper into the First Army's planning and organizational failures, observing that "adequate provision [had not been] made to take advantage of the comparatively easy rupture and over-running of the enemy defensive zone that occurred during the first two days of the advance, as available reserves were not passed on to the corps for employment in decisive maneuver." The failure to pass reserves forward to exploit successes revealed the AEF's fixation on mass over maneuver and its limited experience in employing corps-sized formations in offensive operations. The analysis revealed that the reserves that had been allocated to corps and division had been done so "not for the purpose of maneuver, but for the out-right relief of exhausted divisions on the very ground on which their last efforts had failed."[16]

The focus on replacements and reinforcing units, regardless of success or failure, had been baked into the AEF's structure. American "square" divisions consisting of four regiments had been super-sized to contain double the number of soldiers of their French and British counterparts. The size of corps was similarly increased with each corps containing four divisions. American corps and divisions had been designed and sized to contend with the heavy casualty rates of World War I. Mass, not maneuver, was given primacy in AEF organizational planning in the belief that the increased formation size was what was needed to maintain momentum during an attack and overcome the stalemate of the trenches. First Army had been built to overwhelm the enemy, not outmaneuver him. When the chance to do the latter presented itself in the initial days of the Meuse-Argonne Offensive, the AEF was not prepared to take advantage of it. German reinforcements rushed to the First Army's sector soon made its ability to out-mass the enemy unattainable as well.[17]

The plans First Army issued for this campaign had further inhibited maneuver and handcuffed commanders by defining limited objectives and prescribing corps and division boundaries with narrow zones of advance. Its orders unnecessarily focused "the attention of inexperienced commanders on the hill or other terrain feature immediately ahead; [and] cause[d] them to look at their own front yard and . . . overlook or disregard the enemy's backyard." The resulting effect on offensive maneuver, as described in the CGSC critique, was predictable:

> The attention thus directed to the first, and in this case, the halt objective, so cramped imagination and so limited initiative that, try as they might, the army objective could never be seen. The corps commander might clearly see the objective, both in space and in time, but the division and brigade commanders, enmeshed in "maneuver lines" and other complications, with efforts dependent and interdependent within and without boundaries, and influenced by the purely local terrain, could, and necessarily would, and from the very nature of the operation ordered, be satisfied with mediocre gains at the onset. And such proved to be the case.[18]

Ultimately the emphasis on mass and firepower, together with restrictive maneuver plans and the cumbersome structure of the American divisions, prevented the corps from ever being able to operate in the mobile, fast-striking method for which it had been created. Offensive maneuver as conceived by Napoleon and for which the corps had been designed, depended on the correct application of its organizational and doctrinal principles and intrepid, experienced commanders who were unafraid of taking risks. Such commanders were lacking in the AEF in 1918 as the I Corps commander, General Hunter Liggett himself later acknowledged. "A legitimate fear of isolation and flanking fire lay back of the order [for the Meuse-Argonne offensive]," he confessed in his *Memoirs*. In hind-sight, he noted with regret, "that is a hazard we should have taken."[19] The negative impact of American military leaders lack

of pre-war experience in commanding and maneuvering corps-level sized units had once again been "learned the hard way, by experience."

Such retrospective reflections of missed offensive opportunities appeared to be widespread throughout the army and proved crucial to shaping the American army's doctrinal and organizational development during the interwar years. The AEF's inability to exploit the capabilities of the corps and achieve offensive maneuver in World War I occupied a great deal of army leaders' thoughts after the war. The insightful CGSS critique of corps operations illustrated that the bloody lessons learned were being studied and gave promise that they would be heeded in preparing for future wars.

The publication of *A Manual for Commanders of Large Units (Provisional)* in 1930 was further evidence of this effort. Later superseded and formally published in 1942 as Field Manual (FM) 100-15 *Larger Units*, this manual, together with the 1939 publication of FM 100-5, *Operations*, helped synthesize the US Army's interwar assessments of what was needed to overcome the stalemate of the trenches. Both manuals emphasized the offensive the purpose of which they stated was, above all else, to destroy the enemy army. "Decisive results can be obtained only by offensive action," the new manuals heralded, and "the ultimate objective of all military operations is the destruction of the enemy's armed forces by battle . . ."[20] The primary agent of the enemy's destruction was to be the corps, which the manuals declared to be the "principal tactical headquarters of execution" for offensive maneuver.

While working toward these doctrinal and organizational conclusions, the Army simultaneously set out to address the equally compelling deficiency it had discovered in World War I: the lack of training, education, and experience of its officer corps in the command and employment of large units. The passage of the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) of 1920 helped the Army considerably in addressing the experience portion of this shortcoming by increasing the size of the army substantially from its historic peacetime norms. Shortly after it was signed into law the War Department established nine territorial "corps area commands" for the "administration, training, and tactical control" of the expanded army.[21] These commands provided important command and staff training opportunities during the interwar years by which the officers who would later man the Army's World War II tactical corps would gain invaluable experience.

The doctrinal focus on offensive operations in the interwar years and the presence of larger units in which future corps commanders and staff officers could hone their skills in commanding corps-sized formations were pivotal to the US Army's success in World War II. Historian Robert H. Berlin's composite biography of the 34 men who commanded American army corps in World War II provides a good illustration of the role these larger units played in helping prepare Army officers to command and lead corps in combat. Building on the experiences they had gained in the AEF during World War I, Berlin notes that, in the interwar years, 22 of the 34 corps commanders "gained extensive command experience" and that all of them would ultimately command divisions prior to assuming corps command. Equally important to their professional development was their experience on staffs as every one of the 34 also served in staff assignments ranging from regimental staff to the General Staff during this time.[22]

The education the officer corps' received during the interwar years on corps-level operations was equally important to their preparation for corps command. CGSS added a second year to its program in 1930 to increase officer's understanding of its revamped, offensive-minded doctrine and to improve their ability to command and control large units. The second year coincided with the publication of the "Manual for Commanders of Large Units" and the course of instruction was largely based on the principles outlined in that manual. While only eight of the 34 future corps commanders attended the two-year course 33 attended CGSS in one form or another with 13 of the 33 graduating near the top of their class as honor or distinguished graduates. Additionally, 25 of the 34 "spent over ten years in the classroom either as a student or instructor" during the interwar years and, somewhat incredibly, every

one of the 34 corps commanders served as an instructor "somewhere in the Army educational system" during this time.[23]

The end result of these changes in the Army's doctrine, organization, and professional development programs was that, for the first time in its history of employing corps-sized formations in combat, the United States Army entered World War II with a bench of officers who possessed the requisite training, education, and experience needed to successfully conduct corps-level offensive operations. The ensuing success of the United States Army in World War II was not an accident, nor was it come by cheaply. While the war was not without its operational failures, the skill demonstrated by the American officers commanding and staffing the Army's corps was readily on display throughout most of the major campaigns and operations, particularly those carried out in the European Theater of Operations, which was most conducive to Army and corps-level offensive operations.[24]

America's rush to demobilize following World War II threatened to expunge the hard-earned skills in leading corps-sized formations it had achieved prior to and during the war. As a "tactical unit of execution," the Army saw no need for the existence of corps in the peacetime army and subsequently began a rapid inactivation of the twenty-four corps it had formed in World War II soon after the end of active campaigning. The Army quickly reversed itself and began to reactivate several corps following the outbreak of hostilities in Korea in 1950. Thankfully, there was still an abundance of talented officers available with the skills and talents needed to man the hastily reactivated corps.

Fresh from its successful performance in World War II, the corps once again served as an essential command and control echelon during the first year of the Korean War in 1950-51. After piece-mealing units into Korea to stem the initial North Korean onslaught, the activation of three corps headquarters in September 1950 proved crucial to organizing and rallying the beleaguered American units defending the Pusan Perimeter.[25] Although hastily assembled, the three corps – the I, IX, and X – were indispensable in the fluid operations that followed the Eighth Army's breakout from the Pusan Perimeter. They expertly maneuvered their subordinate units and performed critical command and control functions during the fast-paced operations that included the Inchon landing, the drive to the Yalu River, and the retreat back to the 38th Parallel. While all three corps headquarters remained in Korea throughout the war until the Armistice in 1954, after the stabilization of lines around the 38th Parallel in the summer of 1951, their relative importance diminished as there was no longer an opportunity for the type of quick-moving, offensive maneuver for which corps headquarters had proven to be an absolute necessity.

As its corps in Korea settled into the slugfest that ensued along the 38th Parallel, the Army began to enact changes to its force structure which would greatly influence the future organization and functions of its corps. The sudden outbreak of war in Korea had demonstrated America's need to maintain military forces in an ever-ready status to defend its strategic interests and fulfill its treaty obligations. The United States could no longer assume that it would have the luxury of time to mobilize and organize its forces as it had for previous wars. Its entry into the North Atlantic Treaty Organization in 1949 required the Army to be ready at a moment's notice to counter Soviet aggression in Europe. To do this, the Army recognized it would need active and ready formations at all echelons of command that were forward-deployed in the theater in which they would be called on to fight. Subsequently, a year after activating the I, IX, and X Corps to carry out combat operations in Korea, the Army activated the V and VII Corps, stationing them in Europe as an immediate deterrent to the Soviet Union and as a tangible demonstration of its resolve to defend its NATO allies.

While there were only limited opportunities for the United States Army to use corps in the offensive manner for which they had been designed in the three decades following the Korean War, their existence did provide the Army with continued opportunities to develop the leaders needed to command and control corps-sized formations in war. Their peacetime presence (for the first time in the Army's

history), combined with the Army's primarily defensive posture in Asia and Europe during this time, slowly began to alter and influence the corps' structure and functions. While the changes would not fully manifest themselves until the early 1990s, they were already evident in the Army during the Vietnam War some fifteen years after Korea. Lieutenant General Michael Davison highlighted the changing role of the corps during Vietnam in his later reflections on his experiences there as the II Field Forces Commander in 1970-71. Field Forces commands served as the corps-level headquarters element in Vietnam and were assigned both territorial and advisory duties and responsibilities in addition to the corps' traditional role as a "tactical unit of execution." Having previously served on corps staffs in both World War II and in Germany in the 1960s, Lieutenant General Davison noted that the primary differences between the corps functions in World War II and Vietnam were "the role of the commander and the focus of the staff." He observed that:

> In the corps headquarters, during a symmetrical conflict, the commander and staff focused on the tactical actions of subordinate units. The corps commander led his units in a direct leadership role. In Vietnam, according to Davison, the corps commander managed the battle, allocating resources indirectly to enable subordinate commanders to accomplish the mission, as well as focusing corps reconnaissance and collection assets to drive targeting and future operations.[26]

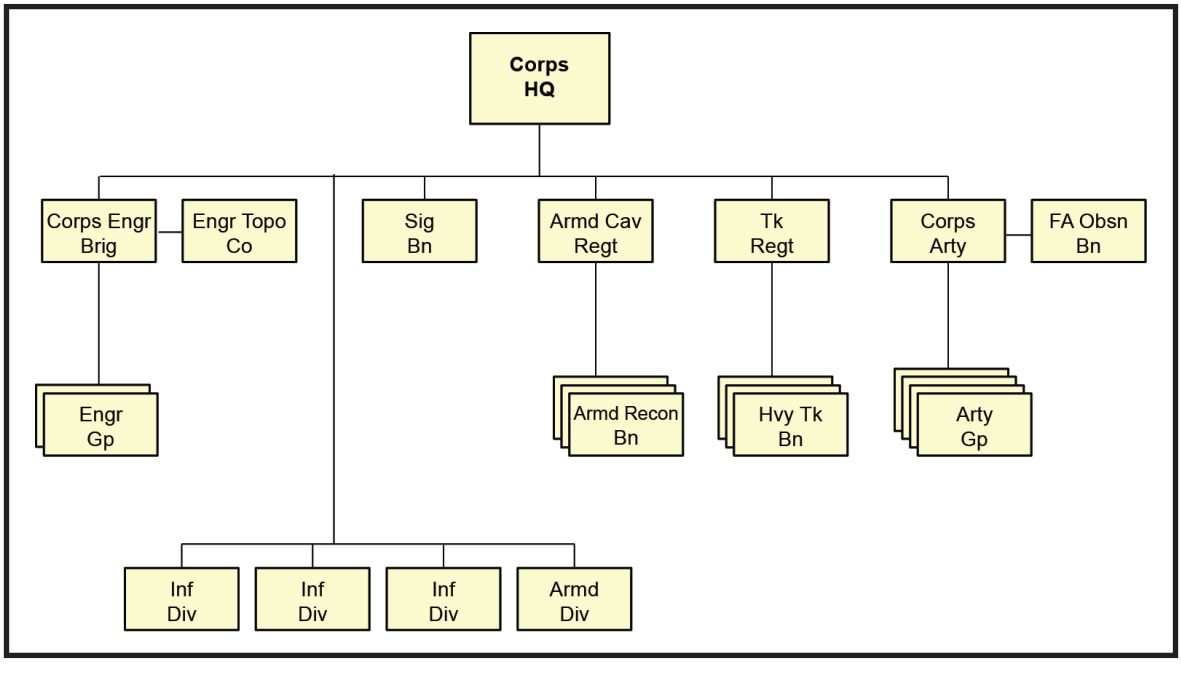

Figure 9.1 Corps organization from FM 100-15, 1950. Graphic created by CAC History for the authors.

The corps' new role as "battlefield manager" and "resource allocator" flowed naturally from the introduction of the concept of an "Independent Corps" in the 1963 version of FM 100-15. Previous versions of FM 100-15 had foreseen the possibility of a corps "operating alone" but none had gone to the extent the 1963 edition did in specifying how such a corps would operate and be organized. Acknowledging that "Its employment in a role independent of the support normally provided by field army requires changes in the composition and functions usually associated with the corps," FM 100-15 called for the assignment of a support brigade from the Field Army Support Command (FASCOM) to an independent corps to perform the combat service support duties that its parent Field Army headquarters normally carried out.[27] While the traditional corps maintained its role as a "tactical unit of execution,"

the increasing employment of corps in independent roles in the decades to follow, separate from Field Armies and responsible for their own administrative and logistical support, soon came to dominate the corps' structure and its chief functions.

The 1968 version of FM 100-15 continued the expansion of the corps' role as a combat support (CS) and combat service support (CSS) provider. This version of the manual added "separate corps" to the Army's lexicon and stipulated that an "Independent or Separate Corps" was to operate similar to a Theater Army "in that it normally has area responsibilities encompassing theater base functions." A Corps Support Command (COSCOM) was added to the Independent or Separate Corps' structure to handle the vastly expanded combat service support functions that such a corps would be required to perform. [28]

These structural changes to the corps reflected the changing strategic environment of the Cold War. Although Army doctrine continued to refer to the corps as a "tactical unit of execution" until the 1989 version of FM 100-15, the peacetime presence of corps formations in the Army argued for a peacetime role for the corps. With the war plans for three of the Army's five standing corps focused on defeating a Soviet attack in Europe, the command and control structure for those three corps heavily influenced the corps' overall doctrinal development during the Cold War Era. War plans for the III, V, and VII Corps placed them under multi-national commands which required them to possess organic intelligence and support capabilities. As it had in its original inception form continued to follow function in the design and organization of the corps headquarters. Originally envisioned as an intermediate tactical headquarters to help command and control an Army on the move, the corps slowly evolved during the Cold War into yet another administrative and logistical layer of support as it sought to carry out its new peacetime role and prepare for its envisioned wartime mission.[29]

The Cold War evolution of the United States Army corps reached its apex in the 1989 version of FM 100-15 which, as its new title indicated, now focused exclusively on "Corps Operations." In this manual, the Army acknowledged for the first time that the corps was "no longer simply a tactical headquarters." "The modern day corps is unlike the corps of the past," the manual stridently proclaimed. As formulated under the new doctrine, the corps was now to be "responsible for providing administrative and logistic support for its subordinate units" in addition to performing its traditional role as a tactical-level headquarters.[30]

While it had added to its roles the Army's doctrine writers did not completely lose sight of the corps' primary original purpose. Hearkening back to its initial construct, the United States Army designated the corps as the "the central point on the air-land battlefield." Integrating the air dimension into the portfolio of domains it was to control the corps was given responsibility for synchronizing all elements of "combat power . . . to achieve tactical and operational advantage over the enemy."[31]

The new doctrine governing the corps' primary roles and functions received its field test in the 100-hour Gulf War in 1991. Organized into two corps and eight divisions, the massive, multi-national, combined arms army carried out a lightning campaign to destroy the opposing Iraqi Army. The two Allied corps' movements resembled the finest carried out by Napoleon's *grande armée* as they simultaneously moved over 255,000 Soldiers and 64,000 vehicles laterally as much as 300 miles into attack positions during the two weeks leading up to the ground war.[32] Even more impressive was the rapidity of the corps' movements during the ensuing combat operations. As the final report to Congress noted, "In 100 hours of combat, XVIII Airborne Corps maneuvered its lead elements approximately 260 miles [while the] Armor-heavy VII Corps maneuvered over 150 miles as it enveloped Iraqi forces."[33]

The decisive victory in Desert Storm and the coinciding demise of the Soviet Union which led to the informal end to the long and bitter Cold War brought American military theorists to an important reflection point in their consideration of the future of the corps echelon of command. Eager to reap

the "peace dividend" the promised "New World Order" (NWO) was thought sure to afford America, the nation's political leaders began dismantling the Cold War army while the Army's doctrine writers sought to discern the implications the NWO would have on military doctrine and the Army's structure.

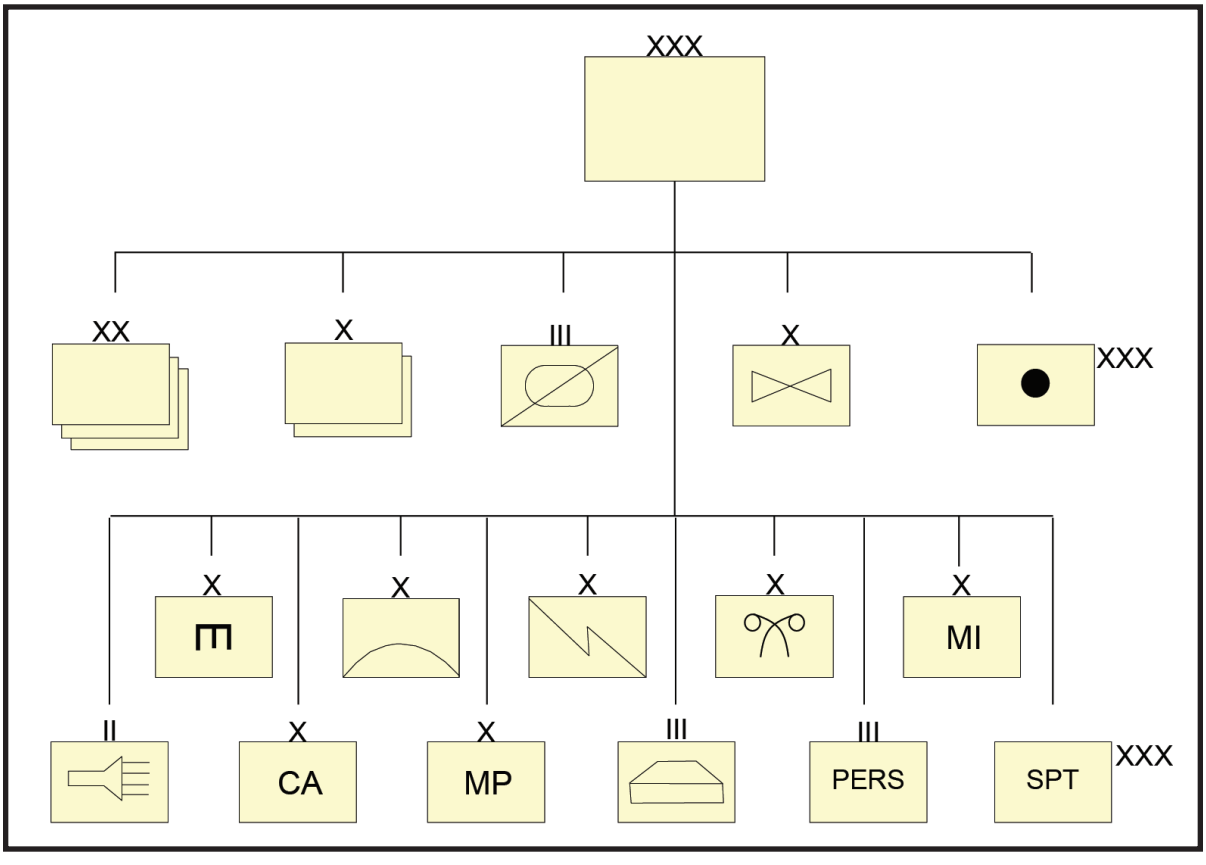

Figure 9.2 Typical corps organization from FM 100-15, 1989. Graphic created by CAC History for the authors.

By 1996, the Army had reached several conclusions regarding the impact the changing geopolitical situation would have for the corps. It captured the key characteristics that it believed future corps operations would have in the opening pages of the 1996 update to FM 100-15:

> Operations will be joint and, often multinational in nature. They will reflect a need for tailored forces employed in force-projection operations, likely in response to short-notice crisis situations. They will be conducted across the full range of military operations from war to operations other than war (OOTW).[34]

While declaring the corps would have to be ready for "the full range of military operations," after reviewing the engagements the United States had been involved in since the early 1980s, it was clear the Army believed that large-scale, conventional campaigns like it had just conducted in the Gulf War would be increasingly unlikely. Instead, "Operations Other Than War" (OOTW), such as those the Army found itself immersed in in Bosnia, Somalia, and Haiti in the early 1990s, were considered to be the more likely type of military operations the Army would be called on to perform in the future.

The corps' role in OOTW thus received a great deal of attention in the 1996 update to FM 100-15. Unlike previous editions, the 1996 version of FM 100-15 purported to be not only "a guide for employing US Army corps in war" but also for "operations other than war (OOTW)." FM 100-15 declared that the corps was "well-suited to conduct OOTW because its headquarters is capable of the complex

management of OOTW." The corps' control of "a wide variety of combat and CSS units" and its COSCOM's possession of "many of the CSS assets that are essential during OOTW" further enhanced the corps' suitability for OOTW missions in the Army's estimation.[35] The manual's authors also believed that the "corps' capability to address a variety of threats (rioters, light infantry, and forces of nature)" were further justifications for the corps being "an ideal choice for use in OOTW."[36]

The corps' employment in contingency operations as a Joint Task Force (JTF) headquarters also received increased emphasis in the new FM 100-15. This role had been building in the Army's doctrine for several decades. Mentioned only briefly in the 1950 version of FM 100-15, by 1968 JTFs were warranting a section of their own in FM100-15 which described the JTF as a "short duration task force composed of elements of two or more Services."[37] By 1989, no doubt influenced by the planning and execution problems experienced during Operation URGENT FURY in Grenada in 1983, and the subsequent passage of the Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986 – which mandated increasing cooperation and "jointness" between the services – FM100-15 for the first time acknowledged that a corps headquarters could, with "supporting air and maritime forces," be employed as a JTF headquarters in contingency operations.[38] The XVIII Airborne Corps' success while serving in just such a role during Operation JUST CAUSE in Panama in 1989 lent further credence to the corps' suitability for this role.[39] FM100-15, *Corps Operations,* 1996 codified this role for the corps, expanding and more fully describing the functions and organization of corps headquarters when serving as a JTF headquarters.[40]

Serving as a JTF headquarters marked a natural evolution for the corps. Just as Napoleon had combined the disparate land elements of combat power into a single entity that could fight independently, warfare had since assumed a multi-dimensional aspect that had to be accounted for in the Army's ever-changing doctrine and organization. Army corps had already incorporated the air component in the AirLand Battle Doctrine it had formulated in the 1980s and it now recognized the importance of having a more unified command structure to control all elements of combat power, including both air and maritime forces, during military operations. Bringing all the forces participating in an operation under a single, unified headquarters helped to ensure their effective, synchronized employment, just as Napoleon's combined arms formations had done for the French Army almost two centuries earlier.

As the corps settled into its yet-again revised roles the Army continued to explore the implications the end of the Cold War and the technological advances of the late-20th century held for the future of its doctrine and force structure. Having already concluded that it would most likely be employed in smaller-scale, contingency operations, the Army recognized the incompatibility of its current structure with the key characteristics FM 100-15 had declared would govern future operations. The main dilemma for the Army was how to resolve its need to be an expeditionary force with the fact that it was now a much smaller and primarily state-side based force with limited strategic mobility. The Army realized that it "would require lighter combat forces, but [it] could not afford to achieve that end at the cost of diminished combat power, so the new units would have to possess at least as much combat power as current heavy forces."[41] The Army subsequently embarked on a major transformation effort that would eventually result in significant changes to the corps' organization and doctrinal role.[42]

The Army's transformation centered around creating a modular, self-contained, brigade-based force under which Brigade Combat Teams (BCTs) were to become the Army's primary "Unit of Action" (UA). This change essentially shifted the tactical echelon down a level and had a ripple effect on the role and function of the Echelons-Above-Brigade (EAB). BCTs were now to function as the self-contained, combined arms force that divisions had performed as since the Napoleonic Era. Divisions in turn were to take on the same flexible construct of the corps. As a "Unit of Employment," (UE) divisions were no longer to be fixed formations and were instead to assume the corps' previous role as

the Army's "primary tactical headquarters for operations." At the outer edge of the ripple, the corps, meanwhile, was redesignated an operational level headquarters which was to function as "the principal integrator of landpower into campaigns."[43]

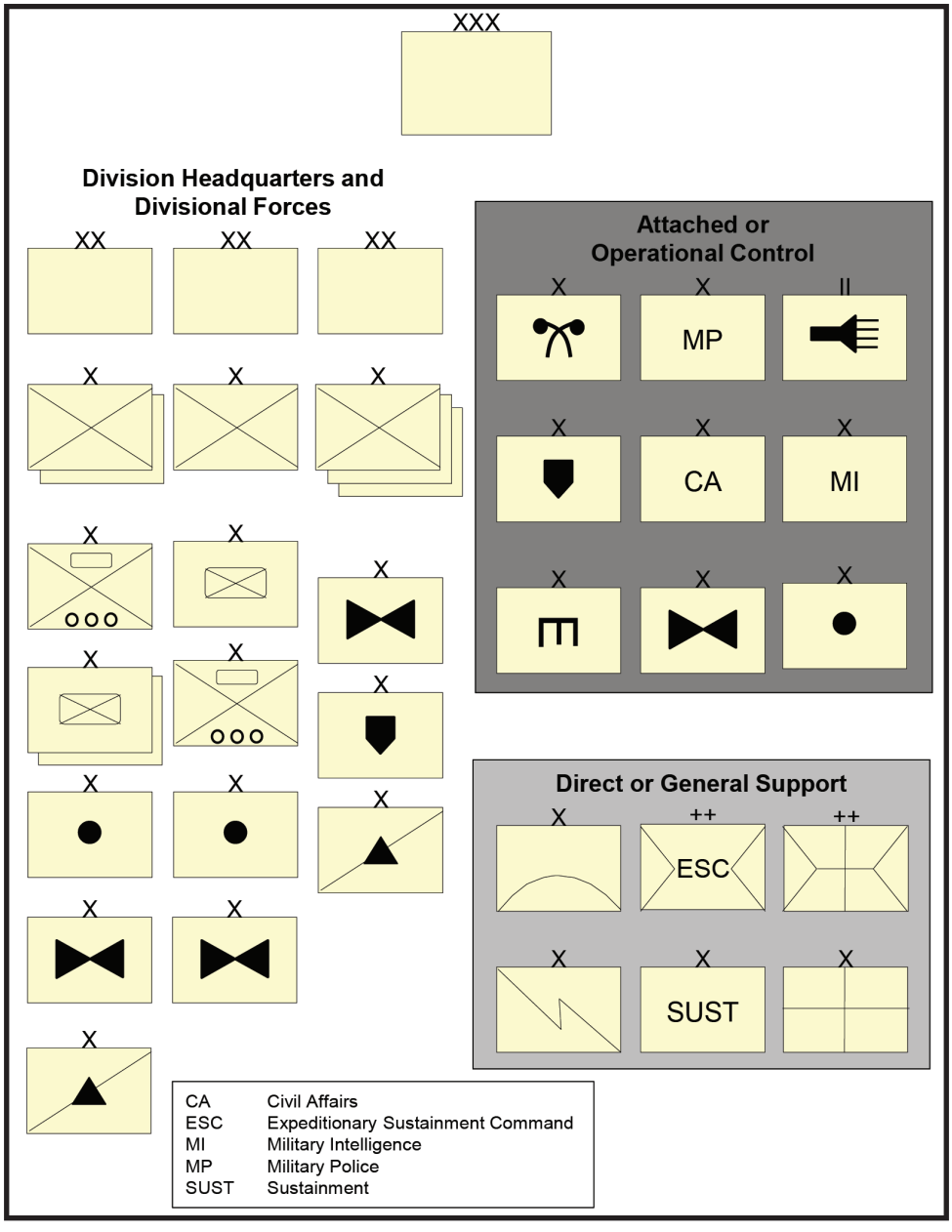

Figure 9.3 Example of HQ and units task organized under the corps. Graphic created by CAC History for the authors.

Of equal import for the corps' structure and functional roles were the changes necessitated by the Army's new concept of support and the subsequent transformation of its logistical units. As it had its maneuver units and headquarters, the Army modularized its sustainment units, dissolving the Corps Support Commands in the process. In its place, the Army established Theater Support Commands (TSCs) which were given responsibility for providing support "at every echelon of command" from brigade to theater army. The new modularized sustainment forces were placed under the operational

control of the TSCs, allowing the implementation of a "centralized control with decentralized execution" concept of support.[44]

The Army began the transformation and modularization of its forces at the same time that it was decisively engaged in sustained combat operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. The corps' role in those two theaters further informed and influenced the changes the Army was making to the corps' doctrinal role during this time. After serving in its traditional role as an intermediate tactical headquarters during the initial invasion of Iraq and the subsequent defeat of the Iraqi Army in 2003, V Corps had transitioned into a Combined Joint Task Force (CJTF) headquarters with "operational control of all forces within Iraq, including Multi-National Forces from the United Kingdom (UK), Spain, Australia, and other countries."[45] The Army's corps would continue in this role, serving as the Multi-National Corps-Iraq (MNC-I) headquarters in Iraq, for the duration of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

In both Iraq and Afghanistan (where the Army's corps repeated their role as a multinational headquarters during the surge from 2009-14 as the International Security Assistance Force Joint Command – IJC), the corps were responsible for the full spectrum of operations, offense, defense, stability, and civil support.[46] These roles were incorporated into the 2010 update to FM 100-15 (now relabeled FM 3-92) which noted that the Army's new operational concept, full spectrum operations, required its forces to "combine offensive, defensive, and stability or civil support operations simultaneously as part of an interdependent joint force to seize, retain, and exploit the initiative . . . to achieve decisive results."[47]

The 2010 version of FM 3-92 marked a significant shift in the corps' doctrinal role. Incorporating the structural changes made under transformation, this seminal field manual recognized that "The redesigned corps headquarters represent[ed] one of the biggest changes in Army organizations since World War II." Having shed its administrative and logistical roles, the corps was now free to refocus on its traditional warfighting command and control functions, albeit in a greatly expanded capacity. This change was duly noted in FM 3-92 which observed that the corps headquarters had been "designed to – in priority – command and control Army forces, command and control land components, and command and control joint forces for contingencies" and directed that the corps' primary mission was to "command and control land forces in full spectrum operations."[48]

The changes included in FM 3-92 were more fully established four short years later when the Army published FM 3-94, *Theater Army, Corps, and Division Operations* in 2014. FM 3-94 was notable for once again combining all three of the Echelons-Above-Brigade (EAB) in a single doctrinal manual. This nod to how FM 100-15 had been written prior to 1989 allowed the Army to highlight the overarching construct of its force structure in a single manual, effectively illustrating the complimentary nature of all three echelons.[49]

FM 3-94 in many ways served as a culminating document codifying the numerous structural and doctrinal changes that had occurred to the corps since the end of the Cold War in 1991. Noting that the corps headquarters had "performed roles ranging from tactical command of maneuvering divisions to operational command of multinational forces charged with rebuilding a nation" during the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan, FM 3-94 stressed the importance of the corps' versatility. As "the Army's most versatile headquarters," FM 3-94 insisted that the corps "must be as adept at planning a rapid noncombatant evacuation operation as supporting a multiyear major combat operation."[50]

FM 3-94 also incorporated changes resulting from the Army's adoption of "Unified Land Operations" (ULO) as its new operating concept in 2011. FM 3-94 considered ULO to be a natural outgrowth and continuation of the Army's ever-evolving doctrinal operating concept, declaring that:

> *Unified Land Operations* is a natural intellectual outgrowth of past capstone doctrine. AirLand battle recognized the three-dimensional nature of modern warfare, while full

> spectrum operations recognized the need to conduct a fluid mix of offensive, defensive, and stability operations simultaneously. This publication builds on both these ideas, adding that success requires fully integrating Army operations with the efforts of joint, interagency, and multinational partners.[51]

The addition of interagency and multinational roles for the corps was yet another extension of the seemingly ever-growing functions for which corps had become responsible for since the end of the Cold War. As it had before in adding the air and other joint dimensions to its portfolio, its added interagency and multinational responsibilities reflected both its most recent operational experiences and the changing nature of military operations in the early 21st century.[52]

In many ways, these changes marked a graduation of sorts for the corps. Having originated as a tactical formation concerned almost exclusively with the battlefield, the corps' newly added responsibilities for "shap[ing] [the] operational environment and set[ting] the conditions for tactical actions by the division and lower echelons" while serving as the critical "link between the operational and tactical levels of war" elevated the corps into a role in which it would have to contend with all the actors that comprised the "Clausewitzian Trinity" of war.[53] Having witnessed the entirety of Napoleon's rise and fall, one of the Prussian military theorist Carl von Clausewitz's most astute observations "on war" had been that "War [was] merely the continuation of politics by other means."[54] As a "continuation of politics," Clausewitz theorized that warfare played out among the "remarkable trinity" of the people, the army, and the government."[55] The latest changes to the US Army's doctrine now make the corps in essence responsible for helping to ensure that the diplomatic (multinational) and governmental (interagency) components of warfare are working ***in conjunction with*** the military/tactical arm of warfare. FM 3-94 in effect operationalized in greater depth the truisms found in Clausewitz's *On War*, designating the corps as the echelon responsible for overseeing the *simultaneous* application of all four types of military operations – offensive, defensive, stability, and defense support of civil authorities – to achieve its operational objectives *vis-à-vis* the battlefield.

The Army's ever-changing doctrine and experiences with the corps during the 150-plus years of its existence in the American army is emblematic of the United States' Army's constant effort to evolve and keep pace with the continuously changing face of battle. As warfare has changed over the years so has the corps. The United States' emergence as a world power after World War II necessitated that it maintain a globally responsive Army. The unforeseen outbreak of hostilities in Korea in 1950 accentuated that fact and demonstrated the Army's need to be ready to deploy and fight at a moment's notice in order to defend and preserve America's strategic interest. This required that it maintain all the echelons of command necessary to successfully wage war, including those tactical units such as the corps that it had previously only organized during wartime to oversee the conduct of combat operations.

The subsequent presence of corps formations in the American army during peacetime had unforeseen consequences to the corps' structure and role. As it accumulated administrative and logistical functions and established habitual relations with the units assigned to carry out its war plans, the corps lost some of its versatility and ability to perform its primary tactical role of commanding and controlling combined arms divisions during offensive operations.

Transformation reversed many of these changes and allowed the corps to return to its warfighting roots, albeit with a greatly expanded portfolio of responsibilities. The Army's transition to an expeditionary, modularized, regionally-aligned force further elevated the corps' role in the Army's force structure and overall defense strategy. The subsequent extension of the corps' war-fighting functions with the addition of its joint, interagency, multinational, and full-spectrum responsibilities from its traditional tactical role into the operational realm, is yet further proof of the corps' tremendous agility and versatility and its ability to deftly adapt its doctrine and structure so as to be ever-ready to ably respond to global contingencies as they arise.

Throughout all of these changes, the corps remains, in its simplest form, a warfighting headquarters that is designed to fight. To "*fight or alternatively avoid action, and maneuver according to circumstances . . . [to] fight alone for a long time*" should it choose to do so.[56]

As the corps continues to do so, reacting to changing technology, changing strategic interests, and the resulting changes in Army doctrine (folding Multi-Domain Battle and further expanding operations into space and cyberspace no doubt in the near future), Army leaders will be wise to heed the lessons of history regarding the primary purpose of the corps headquarters and to continue to organize, employ, man, and equip it in accord with those lessons it has so often "learned the hard way, by experience."

Notes

1. Napoleon to Eugène Beauharnais, June 7, 1809, *Correspondance de Napoléon Iier*, Vol. XIX, No. 15310.

2. See David G. Chandler, *Campaigns of Napoleon* (New York: Macmillan, 1966), 150-154; and, Major James Wasson, "The Development of The *Corps D'Armée* And Its Impact on Napoleonic Warfare," accessed 11 March 2017, at http://www.napoleon-series.org/military/organization/c_armycorps.html for good summaries of the contributions of Guibert and Bourcet to military theory and the development of the corps as an army echelon of command.

3. John R. Elting, *Swords Around a Throne* (New York: De Capo Press, 1997), 58. Elting describes Napoleon's typical corps as simply an "infantry/artillery force with just enough light cavalry for scouting and security missions. . . . Its total strength was 28,874 infantry and 1,426 cavalry, plus its artillerymen." Elting also notes that a typical corps would have "several companies of engineers and *pontoniers*" and that supply trains and ambulance companies were added to its organization later in Napoleon's reign.

4. David Donald, *Why the North Won the Civil War* (New York: Collier Books, 1960), 43. The remark is attributed to Marine Corps General J. D. Hittle. Baron Antoine Jomini, together with the Prussian Carl Clausewitz, were perhaps the two most famous theorists who sought to capture and record the secrets to Napoleon's military success. A translation of Jomini's *Summary* was part of the curriculum at West Point from which the overwhelming bulk of the generals commanding the Union and Confederate armies in the American Civil War had graduated.

5. Robert M. Epstein, "The Creation and Evolution of the Army Corps in the American Civil War," *The Journal of Military History,* Vol. 55, No. 1 (January 1991): 28. Citing *The Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln*, Epstein contended that, in spite of his lack of formal military training, education, and experience, "Lincoln himself exhibited a remarkable understanding of military operations, organizations, and terminology. The American president had read several works on strategy and filled in gaps in his military education by 'conferences with eminent officers.'" See John G. Nocolay and John Hay, eds., *The Complete Works of Abraham Lincoln*, vol. 2 (New York: The Century Company), 86-87

6. *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies* (Washington, DC: GPO, 1880-1901), Ser. I, 5:18. (Hereafter cited as *OR*.) For an excellent review of the behind-the-scenes politics involved in creating the corps within the Union Army, see Epstein, "The Creation and Evolution of the Army Corps in the American Civil War," *JMH*, 29-34.

7. Epstein, "The Creation and Evolution of the Army Corps in the American Civil War," *JMH,* 46. Somewhat ironically, it was the lack of experience in commanding large units which General George B. McClellan later cited as his reason for resisting Lincoln's calls to form corps. In the Official Record, McClelland stated that: "I was always in favor of the organization into army corps as an abstract principle, I did not desire to form them until the army had been for some little time in the field, in order to enable the general officers first to acquire the requisite experience as divi- sion commander on active service and that I might be able to decide from actual trial who were best fitted to exercise these important commands." See *OR*, Ser. I, 5:13.

8. Epstein, "The Creation and Evolution of the Army Corps in the American Civil War," *JMH,* 44.

9. Epstein, "The Creation and Evolution of the Army Corps in the American Civil War," *JMH*, 44-46.

10. Richard W. Stewart, ed., *American Military History*, vol. 1 (Washington, DC: US Army Center of Military History, 2005), 349-380.

11. Most of the planning, mobilization, and staffing problems experienced in the build-up to and execution of the Spanish-American War were dealt with in the Root Reforms of the early 20th century. See Terrence J. Gough, "The Root Reforms and Command," accessed 4 March 2017, http://www.history.army.mil/documents/1901/Root-Cmd.htm.

12. US Army, *Field Service Regulations 1914* (Washington, DC: War Department: Office of the Chief of Staff, 1914), 9-10. John Wilson argues that the Army was designed to carry out its primary mission along the Mexican border. See John B. Wilson, *Maneuver and Firepower: The Evolution of Divisions and Separate Brigades* (Washington, DC: US Army Center of Military History, 1998), 24. See also, Vaughn D. Strong, Jr., "US Army Corps Development in World War I," School of Advanced Military Studies Monograph, (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Command and General Staff College, AY 2010), 15.

13. John J. Pershing, "General Organization Report," in *United States Army in the World War 1917- 1919: Organization of the Allied Expeditionary Forces*, ed. (Washington, DC: Historical Division, Department of the Army, 1948), 91.

14. US Army, *United States Army in the World War, 1917-1919: Organization of the American Expeditionary Forces, Volume 1*. (Washington, DC: US Army Center of Military History, 1988), 142-43. Third Army was formed on 7 November 1918 and two additional corps were formed after the armistice. Divisional numbers do not include the 6 Depot Divisions that were formed or the 6 "skeletonized" divisions that were formed whose Soldiers were sent out as replacements.

15. W.L. Clemenson, "A Critical Analysis of the Operations of the I Corps in the First-Phase of the Meuse-Argonne Offensive," Student Paper (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Command and General Staff School, 1935), 57. The analysis was penned by Captain Clemenson while he was a student at the Command and General Staff School (CGSS) in 1935.

16. Clemenson, "A Critical Analysis of the Operations of the I Corps," 59.

17. General John J. Pershing, "Report on Organization," *General Organization Project*, 10 July 1917 in *United States Army in the World War, 1917-1919: Organization of the American Expeditionary Forces,* vol. 1 (Washington, DC: US Army Center of Military History, 1988), 94. In this report, which was signed by General Hugh Drum, Pershing states that four divisions are necessary so that a corps could align its divisions not only side-by-side, but also in-depth in two lines. Reliefs and reinforcement of the lead units were the primary cited reasons for this arrangement.

18. Clemenson "A Critical Analysis of the Operations of the I Corps," 59.

19. General Hunter Liggett, *A.E.F., Ten Years Ago in France* (New York: Dodd, Mead, and Company, 1928), as quoted in Clemenson "A Critical Analysis of the Operations of the I Corps," 60.

20. Lieutenant Colonel Joseph E. DeFrancisco, "Origins of the Corps and Operational Art," Student Paper (Carlisle Barracks, PA: Army War College, 1986), 19 and 29. The *Field Service Regulations, 1923* had established the corps as an essential military formation for the first time in the United States Army's history. While *FSR 1923* still recognized the division as the "elementary organic unit of the combined arms," its inclusion of the corps as a formation to be "organized primarily for tactical purposes," proved crucial to the American army's performance in World War II. See US Army, *Field Service Regulations 1923* (Washington: War Department, 1924), 1.

21. US Army, *United States Army in the World War, 1917-1919: Organization of the American Expeditionary Forces,* vol. 1 (Washington, DC: US Army Center of Military History, 1988), 3. While the peacetime size of the Army ranged from only 135,000 to 185,000 men between 1926 and 1938, this was still far larger than the normal peacetime size and allowed officers to gain experience in commanding and serving as staff officers in larger formations than had previously been the US Army's experience. The nine corps area commands were established by the US Army Chief of Staff by General Order 50, War Department on August 20, 1920, two months after NDAA 1920 had been signed into law.

22. Robert H. Berlin, *US Army World War II Corps Commanders: A Composite Biography*, (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Combat Studies Institute, 1989), 7 and 12-15. Of the 34 men who served as corps commanders in World War II, Berlin records that 23 had served in the AEF in World War I with 16 of them serving in direct combat leadership roles and the other seven serving in staff positions.

23. Berlin, *US Army World War II Corps Commanders*, 9-15. 29 of the future corps commanders also graduated from the Army War College.

24. DeFrancisco, "Origins of the Corps and Operational Art," 21. With the notable exceptions of the Philippines and Okinawa in which he used Army-level formations and Papua where he used a corps formation, DeFrancisco notes that General Douglas MacArthur used primarily regimental and division-sized formations in executing his "island-hopping" strategy in the Pacific Theater of Operations. In dramatic contrast to the number of post-war analyses of the performance of corps staffs and commanders during World War I which contained numerous critiques, the main deficiency noted by the General Board convened after World War II to review corps-level operations concerned the manning of the corps headquarters. Although its report acknowledged that corps "often operated for periods of long duration and, of necessity, on a 24-hour basis," the Board concluded that this could be solved with a "more efficient use of personnel" such as the establishment of a centralized "war room" rather than adding a significant number of personnel to the corps headquarters. See Colonel Michael

S. Davison, *Report on the Reorganization of the Corps Headquarters* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Command and General Staff School, 1946), Tab A.

25. Roy E. Appleman, *South to the Naktong, North to the Yalu* (Washington, DC: US Arny Center of Military History, 1992), 381. Ironically, the Eighth Army had deactivated its two corps headquarters in Japan in April 1950 due to the lack of training space for larger units there. See Roy K. Flint, "Task Force Smith and the 24th Division: Delay and Withdrawal, 5-19 July 1950," in *America's First Battles*, *1776-1965*, ed. Charles E. Heller and William A. Stofft (Lawrence, Kansas: University Press of Kansas, 1986), 273. MacArthur ordered I and IX Corps to be formed on 19 August 1950. I Corps had been activated at Fort Bragg on 2 August and became operational in Korea on 12 September. IX Corps, formed primarily from personnel transferred from Fifth Army, was activated at Fort Sheridan, IL on 10 August and became operational in Korea on 23 September. X Corps was activated on 26 August and was formed in an *ad hoc* manner from General Headquarters Reserve personnel in Japan.

26. Douglas F. Baker, Jr., "Corps Level Operational Art in Vietnam: A Study of II Field Force Commanders During Major Named Operations," School of Advanced Military Studies Monograph (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Command and General Staff College, AY 2013-01), 54-55. Davison commanded II Field Forces during the Cambodian Campaign which made him perfectly suited to observe on the contrast between the conduct of corps offensive operations in World War II and Vietnam.

27. US Army, *Larger Units: Theater Army - Corps*, FM 100-15 (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1963), 38-39.

28. US Army, *Field Service Regulations: Larger Units*, FM 100-15 (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1968), 7-30. This manual also acknowledged that a "corps headquarters staff, when operating independently or separately, may require expansion in areas concerned with service support." The 1973 version of FM 100-15 clarified the difference between an independent and separate corps, stating that "An independent corps conducts operations removed from the field army while a separate corps operates adjacent to, but apart from, the field army." (8-28)

29. Robert D. Worley, *Whither Corps* (Carlisle Barracks, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, 2001), 4-5. Worley contends, rightfully so no doubt, that "The missions of these three corps [III, V, and VII] dominated Army thinking" during the Cold War. See Worley, 9.

30. US Army, *Corps Operations*, FM 100-15 (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1989), 1-1.

31. US Army, *Corps Operations*, FM 100-15 (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1989), 1-1. FM 100-15 *Corps Operations* reflected the doctrinal renaissance that took place in the United States Army following its withdrawal from Vietnam in 1973. Beginning with the "Active Defense" version of 1976 and culminating with the 1982 and 1986 "AirLand Battle" versions of FM 100-5, *Operations*, the United States Army reasserted the primacy of the offense and maneuver in its doctrine.

32. Robert Scales, Jr., *Certain Victory: United States Army in the Gulf War* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1993), 145-46. This movement was even more impressive in that it entailed the crossing of the two corps as they moved into their attack positions.

33. Department of Defense, *Conduct of the Persian Gulf War: Final Report to Congress* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1992), 416. Somewhat ominously, the Final Report to Congress on the conduct of Desert Storm also revealed the inadequacy of the corps' support structure. The report noted that: "Logistics units were hard-pressed to keep up with the rapid pace of maneuver units. Both logistics structure and doctrine were found wanting in the high tempo offensive operation. HET and off-road truck mobility were limited, and MSRs into Iraq few and constricted. Had the operation lasted longer, maneuver forces would have outrun their fuel and other support." See also David M. Toczek, "Keeping the Corps: The Continued Relevance of the Corps Echelon of Command," School of Advanced Military Studies Monograph (Fort Leavenworth**,** KS: Command and General Staff College, AY 03-04), 46-47.

34. US Army, FM 100-15, *Corps Operations* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1996), 1-1.

35. US Army, FM 100-15, *Corps Operations*, 9-16.

36. US Army, FM 100-15, *Corps Operations,* 9-2.

37. US Army, FM 100-15, *Field Service Regulations: Larger Units* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1968), 3-8.

38. US Army, FM 100-15, *Corps Operations*, 1-1 to 1-3. In fact, this FM contended that, "By their very nature, corps will always fight as part of a joint force . . ." URGENT FURY was beset by a number of planning, communication, and execution problems that were exacerbated by the lack of joint coordination. The official joint history of this operation concluded that: "Proper command and control of a joint task force with land, sea, and air components requires a truly joint headquarters." See Ronald H. Cole, *OPERATION URGENT FURY: The Planning and Execution of Joint Operations in Grenada, 12 October - 2 November 1983* (Washington, DC: Joint History Office, 1997), 66-67.

39. During that brief conflict, the XVIII Airborne Corps successfully addressed many of the deficiencies identified in Grenada, skillfully commanding and controlling a contingency operation that involved the deployment of over 20,000 Soldiers, Marines, and Airmen over thousands of miles into a contested battlespace. See Ronald H. Cole, *OPERATION JUST CAUSE: The Planning and Execution of Joint Operations in Panama, February 1988 – January 1990* (Washington, DC: Joint History Office, 1995).

40. US Army, FM 100-15, *Corps Operations* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1996), 1-3 to 1-4. FM 100-15 contended that: "Today's corps will most likely find itself conducting force-projection operations as part of a tailored joint force."

41. William H. Donnelly, *Transforming an Army at War: Designing the Modular Force, 1991–2005* (Washington, DC: US Army Center of Military History, 2007), 6-7. This point was highlighted in the 2014 update to FM 100-15 which noted that: "The highly integrated organization of the Army's divisions in the late 1990s made it difficult to deploy divisional units apart from their divisional base and keep the rest of the division ready for other missions. The Army needed to reorganize around smaller, more versatile formations able to deploy more promptly and sustain the fight indefinitely, while meeting global commitments outside the conflict region." See US Army, *Theater Army, Corps, and Division Operations*, FM 3-94 (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2014), 1-1.

42. See Donnelly, *Transforming an Army at War,* 5-17, for a comprehensive review of the successive transformation efforts the Army undertook from 1991-2003. See Robert Worley's previously cited *Whither Corps*, as a good example of the introspection that occurred during the late 1990s and early 2000s regarding the future construct and role of the corps in the transforming Army. See also Douglas Macgregor, *Breaking the Phalanx: A New Design for Landpower in the 21st Century* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 1997) for an argument supporting the corps' role as a JTF headquarters; Dave Toczek's "Keeping the Corps: The Continued Relevance of the Corps Echelon of Command" for an argument regarding the corps' continued relevance; and Huba Wass de Czege and Richard Sinnreich, "Conceptual Foundations of a Transformed US Army," *The Land Warfare Papers*, Number 40 (Arlington, VA: The Institute of Land Warfare, 2002), for the alternate view arguing for the elimination of the corps echelon of command completely.

43. US Army, FM 3-94, *Theater Army, Corps, and Division Operations* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2014), 1-2 and 1-6. Task Force Modularity's first attempts to develop a "Unit of Employment" (UE) to command and control the new modular brigades looked to "replac[e] the three echelons above brigade – division, corps, and army – with two modular organizations. Under the plan the task force developed, the tactical responsibilities of the corps were to be combined with the division headquarters' functions to form a "primary tactical echelon" dubbed UEx. The rest of the corps' responsibilities were to be combined with those of an Army's to form an operational level unit of employment referred to as UEy. Regional Combatant Commands and Army Service Component Commands argued against the redesign of the echelons-above-brigade, contending that "the span of control in some operations was so broad and complex that only a headquarters trained to handle situations of the sort could master them." Their arguments eventually held sway and in April 2005, the Army Chief of Staff directed that all three echelons – army, corps, and division – be retained in the modularized force with only limited changes. See Donnelly, *Transforming an Army at War*, 63 and 73-74.

44. US Army, FM 3-92, *Corps Operations* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2010), A-1 to A-4. The stated goals of the Army's sustainment transformation was to reduce redundancies, streamline support, and make the sustainment infrastructure "more responsive to the needs of an expeditionary and joint capable forces."

45. US Army, *Deployed Analyst History Report-Volume I: Analytic Support To Combat Operations In Iraq*, *2002-2011* (Fort Belvoir, VA: The Center for Army Analysis, 2012), 19-20.

46. Corps headquarters were not used during the initial combat operations in Afghanistan (CJTF-Mountain served as CFLCC Forward HQs for CENTCOM to oversee operations from OCT 01 to May 02) and were used only briefly in Afghanistan during the first eight years of Operation Enduring Freedom from May 2002 to July 2003 (XVIII Airborne Corps briefly served as CJTF-180 in 2003-04). Four corps HQs served during the surge from NOV 2009 to December 2014 as ISAF Joint Command (IJC) controlling NATOs five regional HQs "overseeing all day-to-day military operations in Afghanistan [maintaining a] firm grasp of all tactical ground operations planned and executed in theater [and serving as] the link between the tactical operations on the ground and General Stanley McChrystal's four-star ISAF command." IJC was also responsible for partnering with the Afghan National Security Forces and conducting stability operations and Security Force Assistance. See Sergeant Fabian Ortega, "V Corps Framework for New Command, NATO Mission in Afghanistan," (IJC Public Affairs Office: 24 DEC 09), accessed 14 March 2017, http://www.eur.army.mil/news/2009/2009-12-24-1_VCorps_framework.pdf.

47. US Army, FM 3-92, *Corps Operations* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2010), 1-1. The Army had officially adopted "full spectrum operations" (FSO) as its operational concept with the publication of FM 3-0, *Operations*, in 2008. FSO had arguably though been the "de facto operational concept for the Army" since 2001. See Major Cornelius Granai, "'A Complex and Volatile Environment': The Doctrinal Evolution from Full Spectrum Operations to Unified Land Operations," School of Advanced Military Studies Monograph (Fort Leavenworth, Kansas: Command and General Staff College, 2015-01), 3.

48. US Army, FM 3-92 *Corps Operations* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2010), vii.

49. The Army subsequently published ATP 3-92, *Corps Operations*, in 2016 to further expand on corps-level operations exclusively. See US Army, ATP 3-92, *Corps Operations* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2016).

49. US Army, FM 3-94, *Theater Army, Corps, and Division Operations* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2014), 1-4 and 1-6.

50. US Army, ADP 3-0, *Operations* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2011), Forward. Importantly, both FM 3-94 *Theater Army, Corps, and Division Operations*, and the subsequently published ATP 3-92, *Corps Operations*, which expanded on corps functions, emphasize throughout the need for corps to receive joint and multinational augmentation to serve as a Joint or Multinational Headquarters while simultaneously recognizing the need to closely coordinate with interagency and nongovernmental organizations to effective accomplish its operational objectives.

51. Unlike its role as a JTF HQs which had slowly wound its way into Army doctrine, the addition of multinational and interagency responsibilities to the corps *repertoire* occurred much more suddenly. The word "multinational" made its first appearance in FM 100-15 in the 1989 manual which stated that "the nature of current world politics and US treaty commitments will mean that the corps will fight ***as part of*** multinational, combined forces in any ***mid-to high-intensity theater***." (My emphasis added.) Although it had served in that capacity before in World War II, Korea, et al, (as had Napoleon's corps in the early 1800s) it was not until the 2010 edition of FM 3-92 that the corps' role as a multinational headquarters was specified. Similarly, interagency was unmentioned until the 1996 version of FM 100-15 when it burst onto the scene 28 times. Interagency coordination has continued to factor prominently in subsequent editions of that manual and is included 44 times in ATP 3-92.

52. US Army, FM 3-94, *Theater Army, Corps, and Division Operations* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2014), 1-6.

53. US Army, FM 3-94, *Theater Army, Corps, and Division Operations* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2014), 5-1.

54. Carl von Clausewitz, *On War* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1976), Book I, Ch. 1, 87.

55. Clausewitz, *On War*, 89.

56. It is important to note that, of the four major roles envisioned for the corps in the Army's current doctrine – JTF HQs, ARFOR, Joint or Multinational Land Component Command, and tactical headquarters (its original role) three of them are concerned primarily with major operations and campaigns. See FM 3-94, 1-7 and ATP 3-92, 1-1

Chapter 10
Major General Lloyd R. Fredendall and II Corps at the Battle of Kasserine Pass

Dr. Chris M. Rein

The Battle of Kasserine Pass has become legendary in American military circles, especially among proponents of peacetime preparedness in the post-World War II Army. In its first test against the Germans, the Army suffered a significant setback, suffering hundreds of casualties and losing thousands of men captured in a German counterattack engineered by the vaunted Desert Fox himself, Erwin Rommel. The episode serves both progressive narratives, of an Army that picked itself up off the mat and went on to vanquish its opponent, as well as advocates of greater peacetime preparedness and training, to avoid repeats in future wars, where the first battle might be the only battle.[1] It also serves to reinforce a service emphasis on leadership, as one man, Major General Lloyd Fredendall, has suffered the lion's share of the blame for the reverses, fitting neatly within a service narrative that prizes heroic combat leadership as an arbiter of battle. Emphasizing American failure at Kasserine also helps the star of Fredendall's replacement, General George Patton, to shine brighter by comparison, and Patton's principal biographer, Martin Blumenson, has become Kasserine's preeminent chronicler. But Kasserine defies easy explanation. Extenuating factors impacted II Corps' performance in the battle, and the corps' performance during the battle deserves detailed analysis to examine how organizations function in successful operations and how leaders handle the many challenges organizations face, not least among them personnel management, when things don't go according to plan.

Background-II Corps

The US Army's II Corps has a long history, dating back to the First World War when the corps was part of the British Third Army in the "Hundred Days" offensive that culminated in the breach of the German Hindenburg Line. This service provided the symbology for the corps badge; an American eagle and a British lion flanking a roman numeral "II." (see Figure 10.1). But in the Second World War, the strength of this bond between Allies would be sorely tested, as Fredendall suffered a humiliating relief that, after the war, he blamed on the commander of the British First Army, General Kenneth Anderson. According to Fredendall, Anderson had micromanaged his corps and repeatedly divided it into so many

Figure 10.1 II Corps insignia. Graphic created by CAC History for the author.

parts and dispersed it so widely that it was incapable of action, especially when facing the strong German counterattack at Kasserine.[2] After the war, even the British official history agreed, admitting that Fredendall's "freedom to act was in many ways restricted by 1st Army."[3]

Indeed, if there is anything to be learned about corps command and leadership from II Corps, it is in managing relationships with senior and subordinate commanders. In addition to the tension between the corps and army commanders serious rifts also developed between division and corps commanders, most notably between Major General Orlando Ward, who commanded the 1st Armored Division. The dispute was mostly over the way Fredendall, at Anderson's direction, had dispersed and detached Ward's command, leaving him little more to command than a division headquarters with support units. This breakdown, exacerbated by supposedly neutral observers sent by the theater commander General Dwight D. Eisenhower, who were themselves ambitious and anxious for a combat command, led to an almost complete breakdown within the corps and the eventual relief of both Fredendall and Ward.

After serving as a National Guard headquarters during the interwar years the War Department reactivated II Corps at Fort Jay in New York's harbor in August, 1940 to command the divisions being mobilized to raise the Army's level of preparedness in light of the conflict then raging in Europe. The corps participated in the Carolina maneuvers in the fall of 1941, "during which the Corps, by now under command of Lloyd R. Fredendall, gained a reputation for able staff planning."[4] In the Carolina maneuvers, Fredendall faced an almost identical scenario as the one the Allies would later see in Tunisia: a large, infantry-heavy army advancing against a smaller but more heavily mechanized and therefore more agile foe, with his opposition then provided by the same 1st Armored Division later assigned to his command. By virtue of its proximity to ports of embarkation, planners selected II Corps, now under the command of Major General Mark W. Clark to be the first corps headquarters shipped overseas to command the American divisions slated for the buildup in the United Kingdom, in preparation for the eventual cross-channel attack onto the European continent. Fredendall, though disappointed not to be going overseas, took command of a newly-formed Corps, XI Corps, in Chicago. Realizing how disappointed Fredendall would be, the Chief of Staff, GEN George Marshall, wrote him, explaining that II Corps was destined for a special project which Clark had been instrumental in planning.[5] But, after Clark ascended to become Eisenhower's deputy commander, Marshall objected to his projected replacement with Russell Hartle, who would command the invasion forces destined for Oran. Marshall offered Ike the services of "practically anyone you name." from among the corps commanders currently in the states, including future army commanders William Simpson, Courtney Hodges, John Lucas and Fredendall. From that list, Eisenhower selected Fredendall. Some historians have suggested that Marshall and Lesley McNair, then commanding the Army Ground Forces, pushed Fredendall on Eisenhower. But Fredendall's reputation, largely gained in training the 4th Infantry (Motorized) Division and in corps command in the Carolina maneuvers, likely tipped the scales.[6]

Operation TORCH

When the President and British Prime Minister Winston Churchill approved the TORCH landings in North Africa for November 1942, II Corps, as the only corps headquarters then in the UK, became the planning organization for one of the three landings, designated the Center Task Force and destined for Oran. General George Patton's Western Task Force would sail directly from the states for Morocco, while a British headquarters led the Eastern Task Force at Algiers. II Corps underwent a series of levies on its personnel, with staff officers siphoned off to man Eisenhower's Allied Force headquarters, including the commander, General Clark, who moved up to become Eisenhower's deputy. As one historian of early mobilization efforts put it, "Expansion on such a scale entailed the cannibalization of the field-ready armies, corps, and divisions so laboriously built up in the course of the 1941 training and maneuvers program."[7]

As a result, the corps staff had to be rebuilt under the new commander, Lloyd Fredendall, who reported less than a month before the landings. Most of the replacements were new and all were inexperienced. The Corps Chief of Staff, Colonel John Dabney, was a 1926 graduate of the University of Kentucky ROTC program and the G-3, Colonel Bob Hewitt, a 1932 graduate of West Point. The G-2, "Monk" Dickson had spent most of the interwar period as a reservist and Fredendall's aide, Captain James Webb had been a civilian the summer before. The staff became known as "Fredendall's kindergarten" and the corps commander himself remarked, "By God, I am going to war surrounded by children!"[8] Taking over an advanced planning effort, Fredendall successfully directed the corps headquarters in the landings, functioning as an embarked Task Force headquarters aboard the command ship *HMS Largs*.

Center Task Force's objective was the city of Oran itself, which held the Vichy French garrison, and two airfields, La Senia and Tafaroui, just behind the city, scheduled for assault by an airborne battalion (2-509, 82nd Airborne Division) flying directly from the UK under Colonel Edson Raff. The airborne landings largely miscarried, due to the troop carrier aircraft being scattered en route and confusion over whether a "peace plan" (no French resistance, air-landed on the airfield) or "war plan" (active resistance, combat drop over the airfield) was in force. The amphibious landings, a classic double envelopment, featured landings by a portion of Combat Command Bravo (CCB) of 1st Armored Division and 1st Infantry Division's 26th Regimental Combat Team (RCT) at Cape Figalo and Les Andalouses, respectively, west of Oran, and the 16th and 18th RCTs of 1 ID, backed by the remainder of CCB at Arzew, east of Oran. After establishing themselves ashore, both elements marched inland and assaulted the city from the rear. Despite some early setbacks, the landings achieved their objectives by the third day, enabling Fredendall and his staff to land and enter the city, with Fredendall himself riding in one of the first tanks. For the next two months, II Corps would command a rear area, feeding corps units into the fighting further east in Tunisia and administering the Allied-controlled territory on behalf of the French.

Initially, American forces, especially those under Patton in Morocco, were to watch Spanish Morocco and prepare to respond to any attempts by its ostensibly neutral but in reality pro-Fascist leader to close the Straits of Gibraltar, potentially crippling the Allied logistic situation. But by early January, as more American units became drawn into the fighting further east in Tunisia, Eisenhower elected to send a corps headquarters forward to direct the growing number of American units assigned there. In his memoirs, he suggested that Patton would have been his first choice but, because most of the units had initially belonged to II Corps and because Fredendall's staff was then over a thousand miles closer to the front than Patton's, II Corps won the job. Patton was then busy training US units and planning for what would become the HUSKY landings in Sicily, undertaken less than two months after the end of combat operations in Tunisia but was apparently bitter at being passed over for the combat command.[9]

Tunisia

Fredendall established his corps headquarters in a narrow canyon near the Algeria-Tunisia border, in what became known as "Speedy Valley," after the corps' radio call sign. Allegedly to protect against frequent air attacks, Fredendall ordered two companies of engineers to blast tunnels deep into the canyon walls, which later led to charges that Fredendall lacked courage. Fredendall's aide, Captain James Webb, offers a different interpretation, suggesting that Fredendall ordered the tunneling primarily to keep idle engineers busy, but that the new quarters would provide additional protection against the elements. The corps staff suffered terribly in poorly heated tents while blasting was underway, with several, including Webb, contracting serious and debilitating illnesses during the coldest months of the year. American forces were then operating at the end of a logistical shoestring, and quartermasters had shipped few winter supplies to what they assumed was a warm desert in Africa to counter the chilly

days and snowy nights high in the Atlas Mountains. Fredendall began rotating staff members through an advanced headquarters further south in Gafsa, in a broad valley reaching to the edge of the Sahara, in part to give his staff an opportunity to "thaw out" from the chill encountered in "Speedy Valley."

The corps' mission was to protect the right flank of the First Army's line, facing the German and Italian forces defending Tunisia. At the same time as the TORCH landings, General Bernard Montgomery's British Eighth Army had defeated Erwin Rommel's vaunted Afrika Korps at the Battle of El Alamein, beginning a three month-long pursuit that culminated in the capture of Tripoli in January. II Corps was to link up with Eighth Army when they arrived on the Libya-Tunisia frontier and provide flank protection, but Fredendall hoped for a more active role, planning a series of probes in preparation for what he hoped would be a larger scale offensive that would drive through to the coast, preventing Rommel from uniting with the Axis forces further north in Tunisia. Eisenhower presented the plan, named SATIN, at the Casablanca conference in January, but the Combined Chiefs of Staff felt it was too ambitious and that the corps lacked the strength to hold what would be an exposed salient jutting into Axis lines.

As a result, the corps assumed a defensive mission with units widely scattered across a broad front. The Germans, demonstrating the advantages of an active defense, counterattacked at the weakest sector of the Allied lines, where a poorly-equipped French corps linked together the main British forces in the north with II Corps in the south. As a result of advances at both Faid and Fondouk Pass in late January, Anderson detached elements of II Corps, including Combat Command B of 1st Armored to support the French and placed a second unit, CCR, in Army reserve to clear up any penetrations. By early February II Corps controlled only two battalions of the 168th RCT (brigade) of the 34th Infantry Division as Anderson placed the other two RCTs, and the division headquarters, in the French sector, as well as one combat command (CCA) of 1st Armored, and a static French Division. All along the Allied line, Anderson had mixed units by type and nationality, complicating logistics and preventing the concentration of either a powerful striking force or, as Eisenhower particularly desired, a mobile reserve.

Ward, in particular, resented having two-thirds of his division taken from him and having the defensive positions for the remainder dictated to him by corps headquarters. In a similar manner, Anderson had directed that two battalions of the 168th RCT, of Major General Charles Ryder's 34th ID, be posted on isolated hills in the rear of Faid Pass, where they would be able to defend against weak German patrols, but could also be cut off and surrounded in the event of a strong thrust through the pass.[10] Both Ward and Ryder later blamed Fredendall for the dismemberment of their divisions, as the order came down bearing his name. At the very least, they felt, he was guilty of insufficiently protesting the action to the British army commander and, if necessary, the American theater commander. But for Fredendall, the first choice risked precipitating another British-American row, which Eisenhower had already counseled him about once, and the latter choice required jumping the chain of command, which was also unlikely to bring about harmonious relations between the British army and American corps commanders.

The Battle of Kasserine Pass

Unfortunately for the men of the 34th, Rommel's plans confirmed their worst fears, as an armored thrust broke through the pass on the morning of 14 February, surrounding the isolated positions that were too far apart for mutual support and brushing aside the armored units intended to link them together. Fredendall immediately ordered a counterattack to clear up the situation but, with only a tank battalion under his direct control, Ward could do little against elements of two battle-experienced German armored divisions that outnumbered him two-to-one in tanks. Fredendall also asked for the release of Brigadier General Paul Robinette's experienced CCB from First Army but received only one battalion of tanks from Anderson, who remained convinced that the German attack through Faid was only a diversion and that the main attack would come further north in the French or British sectors.

But Fredendall's staff had correctly divined Rommel's intentions, combining aerial reconnaissance with radio intercepts to place the bulk of the German armor opposite II Corps. Unfortunately, the II Corps G-2, Colonel Benjamin "Monk" Dickson, who went on to have a distinguished career in Northwest Europe, was unable to convince Anderson during a lengthy meeting at II Corps headquarters on 13 February.[11] Dickson's forceful arguments apparently had no effect on Anderson, who emerged from their meeting saying, "Well, young man, at least I can't shake you," but later told Fredendall, "You have an alarmist and a pessimist for a G-2."[12] Anderson and Eisenhower both tended to rely excessively on ULTRA intercepts, which had revealed an earlier plan for an attack in the north but had been superseded by events.[13] After Kasserine, Eisenhower asked for a replacement for his British intelligence chief, Mockler-Ferryman, belatedly realizing that he should have placed greater trust in estimates from Fredendall's capable staff.

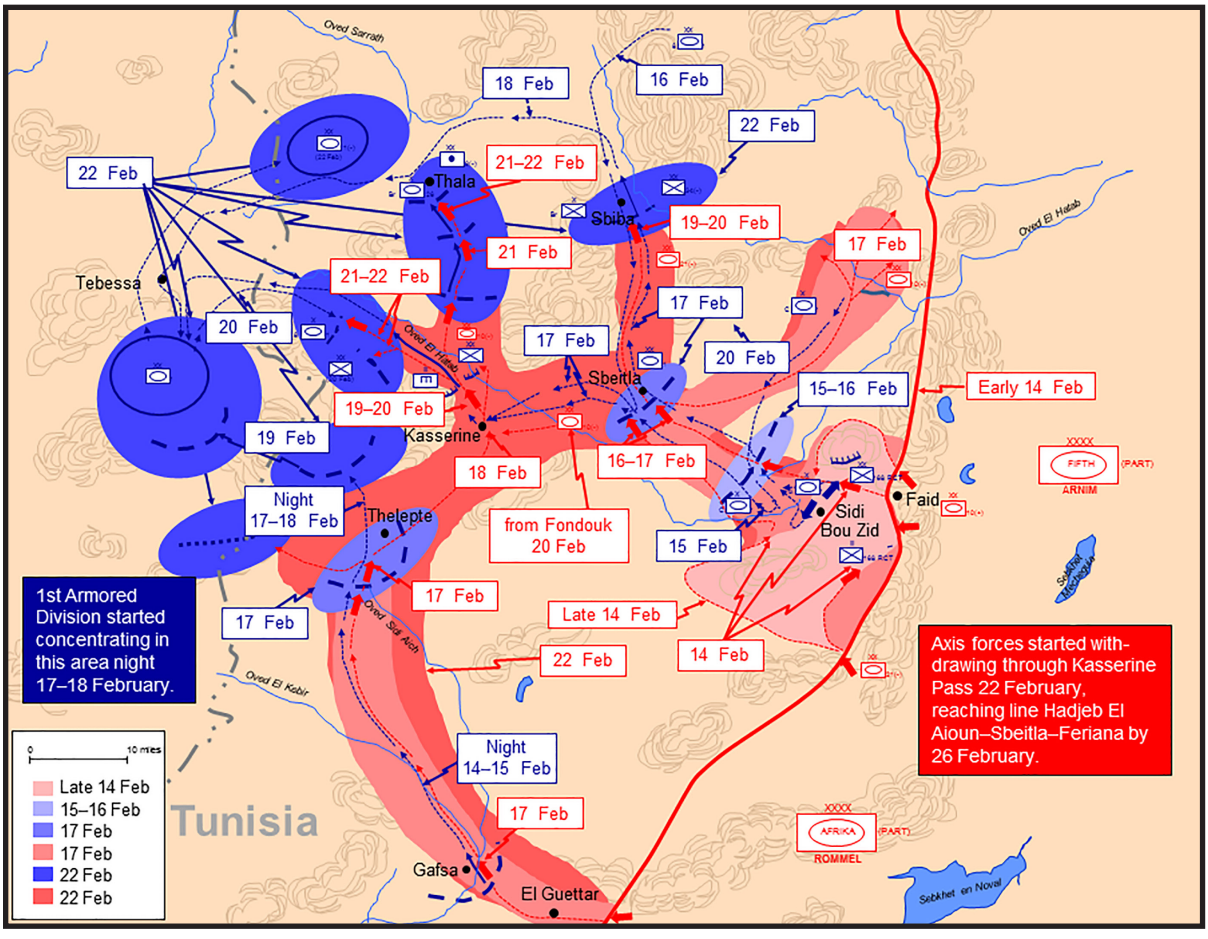

Figure 10.2 Map of the II Corps Front. Map created by CAC History for the authors.

Having apprised the army commander of his estimate of the situation Fredendall had no choice but to continue to defend his exposed position with the limited troops available. Rather than brood in his headquarters throughout the battle, as far too many historians of Kasserine have implied, Fredendall made several trips to the front. His first visit was on the night of February 14 to Gafsa in the south, the site of the Afrika Korps' main attack and the defensive line in front of vital airfields at Thelepte. The loss of Gafsa would open a shortcut to the Allied supply dumps at Tebessa through Bou Chebka, then held only by a static French division and a few American rangers. While the penetrations at Faid

and Kasserine would attract the most attention, due to the heavy American losses there, the back door to Tebessa remained a critical vulnerability in the Allied defenses, and Fredendall wisely gambled on leaving it only lightly defended in order to funnel reinforcements into the battles further east, largely as a result of his personal reconnaissance in that sector. After the loss of Gafsa and Thelepte, Fredendall actually shifted his headquarters *forward*, from Speedy Valley to an old school at Le Kouif, which was then more centrally located to the fighting along the contracting front. This relocation facilitated another visit to the threatened front behind Kasserine, where Fredendall personally placed Robinette's CCB in the positions from which it finally halted the German drive.[14]

After meeting with Anderson and Eisenhower at II Corps headquarters on the evening of 13 February, Fredendall left for Gafsa arriving around 1 AM on the morning of 14 December. Rommel's twin thrust was set to jump off in just a few hours both through the more distant Faid Pass, blocked by elements of 34th Infantry Division and 1st Armored Division sufficient to delay the Axis in that sector, and on Gafsa, the more critical area. As reports came in, including one confirming the German order of battle opposing him, Fredendall ordered the remainder of CCA, which had been blocking the road at Gafsa, to rejoin its parent command further north. Without sufficient forces, Gafsa and the vital airfields at Thelepte would have to be abandoned, initiating a long overdue contraction of II Corps' overextended front.

Upon arriving back at Speedy Valley and hearing of 1st AD's repulse at Faid, Fredendall lobbied Anderson unsuccessfully for the return of CCB to 1st Armored Division so that Ward could make a stronger counterattack the next day and relieve the now isolated battalions of 34th Infantry Division on the hills. Anderson refused, but did release one tank battalion, which would be only enough to replace Ward's losses thus far and was unlikely to retrieve the situation. In fact, the piece-mealing of units was a significant factor in the management of the entire Kasserine battle and one of the principal lessons learned. As the pre-eminent historian of Kasserine Martin Blumenson pointed out, in subsequent battles, "commanders decided to employ units as units instead of parceling them out in small segments," and future corps commanders, including Patton and Bradley, with the theater commander's support, established that "the policy of II Corps was to keep the division concentrated."[15]

But Fredendall was unable to benefit from these lessons, and had to fight the corps as it was. Fredendall's aide, Capt. James Webb later related, "There was no sleep in Speedy Valley that night. Staff officers were going and coming in jeeps, checking personally on troop movements and visiting the command posts of the troops in position."[16] With two, widely-dispersed threatened sectors, Fredendall remained in his central position to direct the withdrawal in the south, which Anderson had ordered to take place over two nights but which Fredendall wisely amended to just one, given the speed of advance of Rommel's forces, and the need to counter the attacks to the east. Webb continued, "Their chiefs, under the CG's direction, were planning a counterattack for the relief of the surrounded battalions. It was a forlorn hope, but along with the battalion of tanks from CCB had come an Army directive to restore the situation, so Corps was going to make the attempt."[17]

Unfortunately, the second attack by 1st Armored Division was equally disastrous resulting in the wrecking of the division and the loss of Sbeitla, the main town between Faid and Kasserine Passes, opening the road both west to Tebessa and north to Sbiba, the right flank of the French sector, then held by elements of 1st Infantry Division and new British reinforcements belatedly rushed south. As the Army's official history noted, "With the loss of Sbei'tla, the II Corps had experienced the consequences of an overextended defense and a successful concentration of enemy force."[18] II Corps began hastily organizing a defense of Kasserine Pass but had only the shattered remnants of 1st AD, plus one battalion of 1st Infantry Division and a regiment of engineers. Fredendall rushed this stopgap force into the breach. Anderson also swung into action, pushing reinforcements to both Sbiba and Thala in the north. Fredendall's request for reinforcements also shook loose the divisional artillery of 9th ID, then far to the rear in Algeria, which would have a decisive impact on the defense of Thala. But at Kasserine

there were simply too few Americans to hold the pass. The engineers and 1st Infantry Division troops, named Stark Force, successfully delayed Rommel for two days at the pass inflicting casualties and slowing his timetable. Though Rommel would eventually push through the pass on the morning of 20 February, almost a full week had elapsed since the beginning of the offensive. II Corps had covered the vital approaches into the Army's rear and bought time for reinforcements to reach the threatened area.

Halting the Breakthrough

During the week, II Corps shifted forward to an abandoned school near Le Kouif, behind Kasserine Pass and with good communications to blocking positions on the diverging roads behind the pass. According to the Army's official history, by 19 February, "General Fredendall's corps was split into three forces along the Western Dorsal with a fourth in a supporting position on the south flank and a fifth being brought into position during the following night."[19] As the Germans broke through, II Corps organized another defensive line at Djebel Hamra, with the remnants of the force from the pass stiffened by Robinette's CCB. British forces backed by American artillery met the brunt of the thrust at Thala and, despite heavy losses and being pushed back almost to the town itself, held the line there. Rommel was beginning to reach his culminating point and lacked the combat power to continue the offensive. In addition, Montgomery's lead elements were closing up to Rommel's blocking position in southern Tunisia, requiring the return of his mobile elements there. Believing he had achieved his objective of a spoiling attack that bought space and time to his rear, but frustrated that he was unable to inflict a larger defeat on the Allies, Rommel pulled back through the pass. II Corps had rolled with the punch, suffering heavy casualties in the opening phases due to the piecemeal commitment of its assigned units and the overwhelming force committed on its extended front. But they had also prevented a larger disaster, protecting the more important airfields and supply base at Tebessa and preventing Rommel from rolling up the Allied lines to the north. Most of the lost territory had been recovered by the end of the month, and the Allied strategic situation was none the worse for wear.

Aftermath

Unfortunately for Fredendall, his corps had lost substantial numbers of men and material and temporarily given up important jumping-off positions. Before the battle was over the Allied command began searching for accountability. Anderson, the army commander, had left the corps in an exposed position and ignored accurate intelligence that might have allowed it to pull back to more defensible positions with fewer losses. But Eisenhower was straining to establish positive relations between the coalition partners, and an American theater commander sacking a British army commander was unlikely to further those goals. Eisenhower did bring, in a pre-arranged move, Field Marshal Harold Alexander from Egypt to serve essentially as a modern Combined Forces Land Component Commander (CFLCC), officially in command of 18th Army Group, containing Anderson's 1st Army and Montgomery's 8th Army. This removed the campaign from Anderson's direct control and, though he was allowed to see out the battle in Tunisia, he never again received an important field command.

Within II Corps, Fredendall's poor working relationships with his subordinates would also have consequences. Orlando "Pinky" Ward, commanding 1st AD, had watched the Germans destroy his division piecemeal. Replacement M-4 Sherman tanks arrived daily, but the trained and experienced crews were gone. The losses undoubtedly had an effect on the commander, and Fredendall considered relieving him. Cabling Eisenhower on the evening of 19 February, he wrote, "Ward appears tired out and worried and has informed me that to bring new tanks in would be the same as turning them over to the Germans."[20] While Ward's assessment may have been accurate, especially if Corps and Army continued to commit his division piecemeal, his defeatism did not sit well with Fredendall. The message continued, "Under these circumstances do not think he should continue in command although he has done the best he could. Need someone with two fists immediately. Suggest Truscott."[21] Lucien Truscott, who had commanded one of the task forces under Patton in Morocco, was then serving as commander

of Ike's forward command post at Constantine and would be made supernumerary by Alexander's appointment. He was fully informed of the course of the battle and seemed available.

But Eisenhower had other ideas. Ernest Harmon, who graduated two years behind Ike at West Point, currently commanded 2nd AD, still in Morocco, and was widely recognized as an expert on armored warfare. Ike summoned him and, according to Harmon, told him to report to II Corps headquarters where, based on his assessment of the situation, he was to relieve either Ward or Fredendall, to which Harmon responded, "Well, make up your mind, Ike. I can't do both!"[22] Despite chiding his subordinates for "spending too much time in their headquarters and not having sufficient situational awareness of what was transpiring at the front," Eisenhower, in this case, was apparently guilty of the same offense. Though reluctant to interfere in his British Army commander's force dispositions (he did later tell George Marshall, the Army Chief of Staff in Washington that they "were not completely in accord with my instructions,") he was about to send a replacement officer to relive either a division or corps commander, only he was unsure which![23] Harmon arrived after Fredendall had already made the dispositions that would halt the offensive, but the corps commander did hand him control of one of the two widely-dispersed blocking forces the corps controlled, freeing Fredendall to monitor events on the opposite flank. Harmon, for his part eventually recommended Fredendall's relief but, when Ike offered Harmon the job, he demurred, realizing it would be unethical to take the job of a man whose relief he had just recommended. Things still worked out for Ernie Harmon, though, as Fredendall's relief, Lieutenant General George Patton, was currently Harmon's commander in Morocco, and when Patton finally decided to relieve Ward a month later, Harmon received command of the only armored division then in action against the Germans. While Eisenhower needed advice from his peers and schoolmates, he failed to take into account their ambition and the small number of "combat commands" (the title of Harmon's memoir!) available to the large number of senior officers then in North Africa.

As if one potential replacement hanging around headquarters was not enough, during the pursuit phase of the battle, Ike also sent Omar Bradley to visit II Corps. Bradley had flown directly from northwest Florida, where his 28th Infantry Division had been undergoing amphibious training on the Gulf's chilly shores at Camp Gordon Johnston, with only a brief stopover in Washington, DC to get the Chief of Staff's appraisal of the situation. Bradley's assessment of Fredendall's leadership has done as much to damn him as anyone's – his 1983 autobiography *A General's Life,* published posthumously by Clay Blair, reprinted Lucien Truscott's description of Fredendall as:

> Small in stature, loud and rough in speech, he was outspoken in his opinions and critical of superiors and subordinates alike. He was inclined to jump at conclusions which were not always well founded. He rarely left his command post for personal reconnaissances and visits yet he was impatient with the recommendations of subordinates more familiar with the terrain and other conditions than he was. General Fredendall had no confidence in the French, no liking for the British in general and General Anderson in particular, and little more for some of his own subordinate commanders.[24]

Bradley added to Truscott's assessment, "His 'command post' was an embarrassment to every American soldier: a deep underground shelter dug or blasted by two hundred engineers in an almost inaccessible canyon far to the rear, near Tebessa. It gave the impression that, for all his bombast and bravado, Fredendall was lacking in personal courage."[25]

Truscott's assessment, due to his success during the war and long influence after, has been repeated almost verbatim by successive historians of Kasserine. Yet each of these charges, when viewed from Fredendall's perspective, has a logical explanation. Commanders frequently have to make decisions based on incomplete information. Given the dispersed nature of his units, he could not always wait for perfect information before acting. In the balance, his management of the battle was sound, as he

correctly redeployed units to keep Rommel away from his biggest prize. His scattered front limited personal reconnaissances, as the abysmal road network and unreliable transportation, coupled with a strained communications network over unreliable radios, meant that trips to the extreme ends of his lines could put him out of touch with other parts of the battle for hours. Yet he did make two personal reconnaissances of the front during the most critical phases of the battle, once at the opening to Gafsa and again at the conclusion to Djebel Hamra and Thala. He was correct to place no confidence in the demoralized and underequipped French, and Anderson's mismanagement, both in refusing to permit a tactical withdrawal and in withholding the units he need to defend the overstretched frontage, was a contributing factor in the battle. Fredendall's row with Ward has acquired legendary status, but Patton himself fired Ward a month later, suggesting that the disagreements between the two during the battle were not entirely Fredendall's fault. And, once his lines shifted, Fredendall abandoned his "underground bunker," (in reality, his staff had remained housed in exposed tents while the work was underway) just a few days into the battle and advanced his command post *forward* to a more central location.

So, why would Bradley feel it necessary to engage in character assassination decades after the battle? Further evidence comes from Bradley's own memoir, where he reports that:

> From Constantine, Bedell Smith, my aides and I jeeped to Fredendall's new II Corps headquarters at Djebel Kouif, about fifteen miles north of Tebessa. It was freezing cold in Tunisia, (the original justification for the underground headquarters) but Fredendall's reception was colder than the weather. He lived in a comfortable home and, by military custom, should have invited me to share it. Instead, I was banished to a shabby windowless "hotel" with no amenities, quarters unsuitable even for a second lieutenant."[26]

Bradley would have been wise to consider the "quarters" most second lieutenants then involved in the battle were inhabiting – a shallow, mud-filled hole, if they had time to scrape one out. Fredendall probably would not want a "spy," which Bradley freely admitted he was, snooping around his headquarters and especially not sharing his quarters, denying him any sort of privacy. Before even leaving for Tunisia, Bradley was aware that "my mission did not endear me to the Commander of II Corps," as he would be "regarded as an odious spy for Ike, carrying tales outside the chain of command. Any suggested corrections from a rank newcomer from an exalted rear-echelon headquarters would be bitterly resented and probably ignored or laughed at behind my back."[27]

While in Tunisia, Bradley also visited 1st Armored, commanded by "Orlando Ward, my friend from West Point and my former boss on Marshall's secretariat," and shared notes with "my War College classmate" Ernie Harmon, and "an old friend, Terry de la Mesa Allen (Class of 1911)," whom Bradley also found it necessary to later relieve months later in Sicily, while still commanding 1st ID. On 5 March, when Eisenhower came to visit II Corps to relieve Fredendall, Bradley was absent, visiting Manton Eddy's 9th Infantry Division and alleged that Fredendall, "discourteously had not informed me" of Ike's visit. As a result, "after my useless two-hour jeep ride, I arrived back at II Corps frozen to the marrow."[28] Whether Fredendall's slight was real or perceived, it did not further endear him to Bradley. In a private conversation with Eisenhower, during which Bradley recommended Fredendall's relief, Bradley learned that he was to become II Corps' deputy commander, under Patton, but would move up to corps command after a short time to free up Patton to resume his planning for Sicily. In essence, Bradley had just done what Harmon refused to do – recommend the relief of an officer so that he could move up one place in the line for that job.

Fredendall's Relief

After ultimately deciding not to relieve Ward, Fredendall found his head next on the chopping block. Immediately after the battle, Eisenhower wired Fredendall, "This afternoon I sent you a telegram

expressing my complete confidence in your leadership. I meant every word of it but we must not blind ourselves to the serious defects that exist in our training, and perhaps in certain instances, in our organization," though Ike did admit that "I realize that no American division has yet had an opportunity to fight as a complete unit." A week later, Ike reiterated, "There is no question at all in my mind of you having proved your right to command a separate and fairly large American force on the battlefield."[29] This could have just been an example of Eisenhower trying to remain positive and offer encouragement to a subordinate, but it masked a movement underfoot to engineer Fredendall's relief. Reports began trickling in, primarily from "ministers without portfolios," including Truscott and Harmon, of affairs at II Corps HQ. Truscott, for his part, reported discord between Fredendall and Anderson, and between Fredendall and Ward, saying "Between General Fredendall and General Ward there developed an antipathy most unusual in my experience. General Ward came to believe that General Fredendall knew nothing about the employment of armor and was motivated by personal animus in disregarding the division commander and his recommendations. General Fredendall, on the other hand, thought General Ward was incompetent and personally disloyal to him."[30] In the end, the inability to manage this personality conflict would cost both men their jobs.

On 4 March, Truscott spent the day with Eisenhower and his Chief of Staff, Walter Bedell "Beatle" Smith, discussing II Corps and the upcoming campaign. Truscott later recalled that, "Asked for an

Figure 10.3 Fredendall during the Kasserine battle. Photo courtesy of the US Army.

opinion, I replied that General Fredendall had lost the confidence of his subordinates and that I did not believe the Corps would ever fight well under his command. I also believed that General Fredendall disliked and distrusted the British and would never get on well under British command. I recommended that General Eisenhower assign General Patton to the command."[31] That day, Ike wired Marshall, "In the past two days I have developed grave doubts about Fredendall in his future role…Fredendall is a good fighter, energetic and self-confident and I have encouraged him to the limit by the fullest expressions of confidence in his work. His difficulty is in handling personnel in which field he is in constant trouble."[32] Upon hearing further doubts from both Alexander and Harmon, Eisenhower decided to make the change, not due to Fredendall's performance in the last battle, but more from the way the battle had fractured relationships up and down the chain of command, destroying trust within the corps and threatening its utility in the important battles to come. The next day, Patton relieved Fredendall in command of II Corps and the following month, when Patton took charge of Seventh Army for the invasion of Sicily, Patton rewarded Truscott by assigning him command of 3rd ID, scheduled to lead that assault.

Patton marked his assumption of command with a series of orders that the troops described as "chickenshit" – wearing ties with combat uniforms and $25 fines for not wearing a helmet – a direct shot at Fredendall who had been photographed during the battle wearing a knit "jeep cap" at his frosty headquarters. Patton also cleaned house on the II Corps Staff. Hugh Gaffey, who would later command 4th Armored Division under Patton in the Bulge battle, replaced John Dabney as Chief of Staff while Kent Lambert temporarily took the G-3 job from Bob Hewitt. Hewitt got his old job back a month later when Lambert took command of CCA in 2nd AD. "Monk" Dickson, saved by his astute judgment in forecasting the Axis attack, kept his G-2 post after several weeks of close supervision.

Not all of the changes were positive, though. After a period of good cooperation between II Corps and XII Air Support Command, which processed timely aerial reconnaissance requests for Dickson, enabling more accurate intelligence assessments, the air-ground relationship deteriorated under Patton's leadership. According to Dickson, under Fredendall, the XII Air Support Command commander, "General Paul L. Williams and his staff lived with us and the most cordial relations had been maintained," but under Patton, the relationship deteriorated to the point that the two headquarters separated, which ran counter to the best practices at the time. Dickson reported, "it was more difficult for me to request our aerial photography and reconnaissance by telephone rather than to run next door with an overlay of the situation map. G-3, too, was getting even less results with his air support requests."[33] The relationship deteriorated to the point that Patton and Arthur Coningham, commanding the Northwest African Tactical Air Force, eventually had an ugly exchange in their public situation reports, where Patton claimed he hadn't received any air support and Coningham replied by suggesting that II Corps was not "battleworthy," resulting in embarrassment to both commands and frustrating Eisenhower's efforts at seamless Allied cooperation.

II Corps and the Victory in Tunisia

But the biggest changes came in the way the corps was organized and fought. Gone were the days of piecemeal deployments all along the front. With the threat of Spanish intervention now firmly in the rearview mirror, units held in Morocco and Algeria now became available. 9th ID's three infantry regiments followed its divisional artillery into the line, as did the remainder of 34th ID, which now had the unenviable task of rebuilding its only combat-experienced RCT, reduced in the battle to a single battalion, while "blooding" the other two regiments, a liability that would show in the coming campaign. The Corps finally assembled as full divisions both the 1st Infantry Division and the 1st AD, the units credited with successfully repelling Rommel's final assault, now rebuilt with new equipment and intensive training of raw replacements by the experienced men. With three full infantry divisions and one armored, II Corps was now stronger than most US corps would be for the duration of the war.

In addition to its full complement, the corps also received a reduced frontage with secure flanks and an attacking mission – driving forward toward the sea to threaten the Afrika Korps' vulnerable supply lines in their rear at the same time Montgomery's Eighth Army opened a patented, set-piece attack on their front. Despite a poor showing by 34th Infantry Division at El Guettar, the corps performed well in March, rehabilitating itself sufficiently to free Patton to return to Seventh Army and resume the planning for Operation HUSKY, the invasion of Sicily, which allowed his deputy corps commander, Omar Bradley, to take his turn at the wheel.

The attack in southern Tunisia saw II Corps "pinched out" of the Allied line. In order to be in on the final kill, Bradley successfully lobbied for a change of front, shifting the corps north to the extreme left of the Allied line. This would put the corps up against difficult terrain and formidable defenses guarding the port of Bizerte, Tunisia's second city after Tunis, but with a secure left flank on the Mediterranean. The corps again had four full divisions and Bradley, an infantry specialist, charged his three infantry divisions with opening the Axis defenses so that he could commit his armor in a breakthrough. Initially, German defenders stymied all three infantry divisions, resulting in Bradley calling a conference of his division commanders. Here, according to the corps G-2, "Monk" Dickson, Bradley's deft touch in managing his subordinates was on full display:

> Bradley opened the conclave with a statement that we were behind schedule, losing our drive and sitting down. He asked what the division commanders proposed to do about it. He called on Generals Harmon (1st AD), Allen (1st ID), Ryder (34th ID) and Eddy (9th ID) in turn to state their plans. The natural rivalry between units took hold and each speaker tried to be bolder and more aggressive than his predecessor. Bradley dismissed them saying, "Gentlemen, I expect each of you to do exactly what you have said here."[34]

Within two weeks, American forces had broken through and captured Bizerte, surprising the British who took the main prize of Tunis. Over 200,000 Axis prisoners went into massive Allied POW cages, depriving the enemy of needed manpower and inflicting a serious psychological blow to the Axis cause. Two months later, II Corps, still under Bradley's command, fought its way across Sicily, eventually jumping to the Italian mainland and closing the war at the foot of the Alps in the Po Valley.

Marshall recalled Fredendall home to command Second Army, a stateside training establishment that would benefit from the general's reputation as a skilled trainer and the combat experience acquired in North Africa. But Fredendall would never again hold a combat command. In the interest of promoting positive Allied relations and winning the war, he held his tongue until after his retirement in 1946. But two years later, unhappy with how he had become associated with the debacle at Kasserine, he wrote an article for the *Chicago Tribune* hoping to clear his name by pinning most of the blame on Anderson. He wrote:

> General Anderson scattered my command from hell to breakfast over my 150-mile front. By direct orders he placed every one of my units, even down to the battalions and companies. He never permitted me to collect my armor into a powerful mobile striking force."[35]

The newspaper wrote Eisenhower asking him for his thoughts but Ike, aware of the futility of refighting old battles, declined to comment. The episode perhaps speaks to Fredendall's character and his noted inability to establish positive working relationships. Despite retiring as a Lieutenant General and having contributed to the ultimate Allied victory by training numerous combat divisions rotated through Second Army, he insisted upon clearing his name and fighting the "mem-wars." Ward and Allen, his principal subordinates, recovered from their reliefs to command high-number units late in the war, Ward with 20th Armored Division and Allen with the "Timberwolves" of the 104th ID. Truscott and Harmon went on to successful corps command, while Patton, Bradley and Clark all led armies in combat.

Analysis

Of the four men who commanded II Corps in the less-than-one-year's time between July 1942, when serious planning for Operation TORCH began, and May 1943, when the Axis surrender formally concluded the North African campaign, Lloyd Fredendall actually led the corps for the longest. He had assumed command just over a month before the TORCH landings in October 1942 and relinquished command to Patton after the Kasserine battle in March, 1943 before heading home to command Second Army. While Mark Clark, George Patton and Omar Bradley were all forceful personalities who enjoyed significant battlefield success throughout the war Fredendall, despite effectively directing the landings at Oran, became tied to the failures at Kasserine and his career, and the corps, suffered accordingly.

But, could one man alone be responsible for the failures of an organization that performed well in the early stages of, as well as after, his tenure in command? Certainly the US Army, with its institutional focus on leadership as the arbiter of success and failure in battle, was inclined to think so. Certain internal institutional biases might have been at play as well; Eisenhower, Bradley, Clark and Patton all graduated from West Point; Fredendall had failed out after his freshman year due to academic issues yet he was later admitted to Massachusetts Institute of Technology, although he never graduated. Pinning Kasserine solely on Fredendall, while highlighting the critical importance of combat leadership, also made it easy to gloss over other service failings, such as inadequate doctrine, inferior equipment and insufficient training. Organizationally, purging Fredendall and some of his staff also made it much easier to rehabilitate the vitally important corps, then the only one currently in action against the European Axis. While Fredendall's shortcomings as a commander, from poor working relationships with superiors and subordinates to charges of a lack of personal courage are apparently well-documented, might there have been other factors that contributed to II Corps losses at Kasserine? Certainly Fredendall's sentence, being "kicked upstairs" and given a third star, suggests that Eisenhower and Marshall thought so, especially when compared with their ruthless cashiering of failed division and corps commanders later in the war. It is worth examining exactly how II Corps functioned in their first test against the Germans, as the conditions they experienced, in a novel theater with limited intelligence and a lack of experienced troops, are certain to be duplicated for future corps commanders and staff officers as they face an uncertain foe in an unknown place.

II Corps' performance at Kasserine in February 1943 contrasts sharply with the TORCH landings the previous November, also under Fredendall's command, even if they were against a static and much less-capable French foe, and the final campaigns in Tunisia, including both Patton's drive on Sfax in the south in March 1943 and Bradley's push to Bizerte in the north in April and May. These three periods offer a constructive lens for assessing corps performance in combat: the months planning and successful amphibious assault against a defended shore, one of the most difficult exercises in land warfare, the defensive position in what was supposed to be a quiet and certainly the secondary area of the front, and an aggressive drive against a weakened but still dangerous opponent resulting in the enemy's capitulation. Why was II Corps successful in the bookend operations, but arguably a failure (though, it must be noted, Rommel's effort to seriously disrupt or delay the endgame in Tunisia did not succeed) in the middle one? Four factors stand out.

First, at both Oran and in the latter stages of the Tunisian campaign, II Corps had an aggressive, offensive mission, attacking enemy positions which afforded it the element of surprise in choosing where and how to fight. At Kasserine, II Corps ceded the initiative to one of the better tactical commanders of World War II, Erwin Rommel, who successfully rolled up the dispersed and isolated positions II Corps had been charged with defending, but lacked adequate troops to do so successfully.[36] According to one historian this proved a serious handicap. "For Americans who had been imbued with an aggressive and offensive notion during training, the defensive Battle of Kasserine Pass imposed a role for which they

were psychologically ill equipped."[37] Second, the enemy troops facing the Oran landings and the final battles in Tunisia were not the same as those faced at Kasserine in February. Weak Vichy French garrison troops did not conduct a proactive defense and likely saw their opponents as potential liberators. Likewise, the German garrison in April and May had begun to suffer from serious logistic shortages, brought about by a sustained naval and air campaign against vulnerable lines of communication across the Mediterranean. In contrast, the Afrika Korps that hit II Corps at Kasserine had been rebuilt behind the Mareth Line after a disastrous retreat across Libya, and reinforced by additional units and equipment, including the new Tiger tank, rushed across the straits to Tunisia after TORCH. These German forces were probably near their peak in terms of strength, morale, and effectiveness.

Third, geography favored II Corps in its first and third operations., The objectives were proximate and the battlespace easily contained with few opportunities for enemy flanking attacks, while at Kasserine the chessboard sprawled across hundreds of miles isolated by steep mountain ranges and connected by often impassible roads during the worst of the North African rainy season, making it difficult to shift meager forces to the many threatened points. Finally, II Corps controlled nearly full divisions with clear unity of command in the Oran and Bizerte operations, operating with one infantry and most of an armored division (1st Infantry Division and 1st Armored Division) at Oran and with three full infantry and one armored divisions (1st, 9th, & 34th Infantry Divisions and 1st Armored Division) in March and April. In contrast, in February, Fredendall only commanded portions of the 1st (two regiments) and 34th (barely one regiment) Infantry and 1st Armored (two combat commands) Divisions, as his army commander, British General Kenneth Anderson, detached significant elements of all three divisions to support French units occupying the seam between the American and British corps on the line in Tunisia. One American officer argued, "the generals of three nations had borrowed, divided, and commanded one another's troops until the troops were never quite certain who was commanding them."[38] Historian Orr Kelly agreed, noting, that much of the blame lay with "Anderson, who, in the opinion of many American officers, had botched things by micromanaging Fredendall and his American corps."[39] Fredendall, not wishing to cede the initiative to the Germans, had squandered some of his strength in aggressive but counterproductive attacks, further weakening and dispersing his force.[40] While, in no way excusing II Corps' many failings in the Kasserine battle, these four factors: mission, enemy, terrain and troops, as well as the corps commander's and staff's collective inability to effectively address them up the chain, must be considered in any appraisal of American combat effectiveness in the first battles of World War II.

Conclusion

Given the weight of evidence marshalled against him by both his peers and posterity, it would seem that Fredendall's leadership deficiencies were a key component of II Corps' performance at Kasserine Pass. Assigning primary importance to leadership masks other deficiencies, in corps dispositions, equipment and training that Fredendall could do little to remedy in the short time before the battle. Ultimately, all he could do was to respond to the situation as best he could. As the battle's preeminent historian observed, "the underlying cause of the American failure was discrepancy in numbers between the Allies and the Axis."[41] Rick Atkinson, author of a more recent prize-winning study of the Army in North Africa, wrote, "For years, Fredendall would be castigated for the poor American showing; like several of his subordinate commanders, he was overmatched."[42] While the military response, given the resources available to him, was likely more than adequate, the way he managed the personal relationships, both with subordinates who had been left out to dry and superiors who were largely responsible for it, proved to be Fredendall's, and II Corps' undoing. In the end, he was unable to control much of what was happening around. The only thing he could control was how he reacted to it, and how he let that affect those who worked around him. And in that, history has found him wanting.

At the same time, an examination of II Corps in the Tunisian battle reveals a larger degree of patronage and nepotism than is generally acknowledged in the senior ranks of the World War II officer corps. In an organization that was supposed to be a pure meritocracy, it is surprising how often connections, mentor-subordinate relationships, and "old school" ties played a role in hiring and firing decisions. While these relationships might be fairly easy to manage at lower levels, at echelons above brigade, officers have acquired both a wide reputation, as well as substantial networks both within and across branches, and hiring and firing decisions are likely to affect those well beyond the individual involved. As a result, well-placed mentors or subordinates can have an undue influence on personnel decisions, and this pernicious influence should be guarded against. While officers always have, and always will favor proven "known quantities" over the unknown in personnel decisions, the appearance of favoritism or fraternization can quickly erode trust within any organization, crippling its ability to accomplish the mission. While Eisenhower never reflected on it publically, personnel management was likely the most valuable lesson he learned in the North African campaign.

Notes

1. Indeed, this is the justification behind Heller and Stofft's *America's First Battles*, which includes a chapter on Kasserine by Martin Blumenson, one of the pre-eminent historians of the Army in World War II.

2. John H. Thompson, "Kasserine Fiasco Laid to British," *Chicago Sunday Tribune* (15 February 1948), 2.

3. Playfair, I.S.O., and C.J.C. Molony, *The Mediterranean and Middle East*, Vol. IV, *The Destruction of the Axis Forces in Africa. History of the Second World War.* (London: Her Majesty's Stationary Office, 1966), 298.

4. *II Corps: A Brief History*, (n.l.: Editoriale Domus, 1946), 7.

5. George Catlett Marshall, *The Marshall Papers*, Vol. 3, 7 December 1941- 31 May 1943 ((Baltimore, MD: John Hopkins University Press, 1981), 264.

6. Marshall, *The Marshall Papers*, 367.

7. Christopher Richard Gabel, *The US Army GHQ Maneuvers of 1941* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1992), 186.

8. Benjamin A. Dickson, "G-2 Journal, Algiers to the Elbe," Unpublished Manuscript, Army Heritage and Education Center, Carlisle Barracks, PA, 37.

9. Harry C. Butcher, *My Three Years with Eisenhower,* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1946), 274.

10. Thompson, "Kasserine Fiasco Laid to British." The story reports, "Two untried battalions of the 34th Infantry Division (former National Guard Division of Iowa, Minnesota and Wisconsin men), and an artillery battalion were on isolated mountain peaks on the plain in front of Faid pass. This was Anderson's direct orders."

11. Dickson would also correctly predict the German counterattack at El Guettar on 22 March, giving Patton ample time to react. George F. Howe, *Northwest Africa: Seizing the Initiative in the West*, *The US Army in World War II,* Washington, DC: Center of Military History, 1991), 53.

12. Rick Atkinson, *An Army at Dawn: The War in North Africa, 1942-1943* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, LLC, 2002), 332.

13. Atkinson, *An Army at* Dawn, 336.

14. James R. Webb, "Diary Covering the Activities of General Fredendall and Supporting Players, December '42-March '43," 6, *James R. Webb Papers*, Eisenhower Presidential Library, Abilene, KS.

15. Blumenson in Heller and Stofft, *America's First Battles, 1775-1965* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 1986), 262; Howe, *Northwest Africa*, 627

16. Webb, "Diary Covering the Activities of General Fredendall."

17. Webb, "Diary Covering the Activities of General Fredendall."

18. Howe, *Northwest Africa*, 435.

19. Howe, *Northwest Africa*, 443.

20. Alfred D. Chandler, ed. *The Papers of Dwight David Eisenhower, The War Years,* Vol. II, (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins Press, 1970), 966.

21. Chandler, *The Papers of Dwight David Eisenhower*, 966.

22. E.N. Harmon, *Combat Commander: Autobiography of a Soldier* (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1970); Atkinson, *An Army at Dawn*, 388.

23. Chandler, *The Papers of Dwight David Eisenhower*, 970.

24. Lucien Truscott, *Command Missions,* (New York: E.P. Dutton, 1954), 144-145.

25. Bradley, *A General's Life,* 128.

26. Bradley, *A General's Life*, 135.

27. Omar N. Bradley, *A Soldier's Story* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1941), 32; Omar N. Bradley, *A General's Life: An Autobiography* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1983), 133.

28. Bradley, *A General's Life,*135-137.

29. Chandler, *The Papers of Dwight David Eisenhower*, 1002-1003.

30. Truscott, *Command Missions*, 145.

31. Truscott, *Command Missions*, 173.

32. Chandler, *The Papers of Dwight David Eisenhower*, 1007.

33. Dickson, "G-2 Journal, Algiers to the Elbe," 54.

34. Dickson, "G-2 Journal, Algiers to the Elbe," 63.

35. Thompson, "Kasserine Fiasco Laid to British," 2.

36. See Blumenson in Heller and Stofft, *America's First Battles*, 247.

37. Blumenson, “Kasserine Pass,” In Heller and Stofft, *America’s First Battles*, 264.

38. Atkinson, *An Army at* Dawn, 324.

39. Orr Kelly, *Meeting the Fox: The Allied Invasion of Africa from Operation Torch to Kasserine Pass to Victory in Tunisia* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 2002), 254

40. See Blumenson in Heller and Stofft, *America’s First Battles*, 244-246.

41. Blumenson in Heller and Stofft, *America’s First Battles*, 264.

42. Atkinson, *An Army at Dawn*, 390.

Chapter 11

Operation JUNCTION CITY – Finding, Fixing, and Finishing an Elusive Enemy in a Counterinsurgency Environment, Vietnam, 1967

Dr. James Willbanks

Operation JUNCTION CITY was a massive two and one-half month sweep of War Zone C aimed at opening the area for continued clearing operations which would permanently eliminate a major enemy sanctuary area. The operation was designed to find the enemy, fix him in place, and finish him so that pacification efforts could go forth in the area. JUNCTION CITY was an excellent example of force generation and the use of shaping operations to influence the battlefield. However, it also demonstrated the difficulties in conducting counterinsurgency operations against an enemy that included both guerrillas and main force units who both enjoyed ready access to cross-border sanctuaries. In the end, the operation achieved some significant results in terms of enemy killed and equipment and supplies captured or destroyed. General Bernard W. Rogers, the 1st Infantry Division's assistant division commander, claimed that JUNCTION CITY was a "turning point" in the war, but the operation, despite its success at the tactical level, was more closely akin to a stairstep in what General Dave Palmer characterized as "an escalating military stalemate."[1] In the end, the enemy proved difficult to find, fix, and finish.

The operation, which began on 22 February 1967, was designed to root out the Central Office for South Vietnam (COSVN) Headquarters and cripple the 9th Viet Cong Division. Under the control of II Field Forces, Vietnam (IIFFV), about 35,000 men were deployed in the field during various stages of the operation. When it was launched, it was the largest operation of the war to that point in time.

US ground combat forces were first committed in Vietnam in March 1965 when the 9th Marines landed at Da Nang. The Marines were followed by the 173d Airborne Brigade, the 1st Infantry Division, the 101st Airborne Division, and the 1st Cavalry Division. By the end of 1965, there were more than 184,000 US ground troops in Vietnam.

The year 1966 was a period of accelerated build-up and marked the beginning of major offensive operations by US and South Vietnamese forces. By 1967, the focus of US combat operations was to find and destroy VC (Viet Cong, the communist forces in South Vietnam, mostly guerrillas but with some regular units) and PAVN (People's Army of Vietnam, the regular North Vietnamese Army) forces in the field in a war of attrition. General William C. Westmoreland, Commander, US Military Assistance Command, Vietnam (MACV) was hindered by policy constraints which denied him the authority to strike enemy sanctuaries in Cambodia, Laos, and North Vietnam. He was limited to waging a strategic defensive within friendly borders. To prevail in such a contest, Westmoreland determined that he could win only if he made the war so costly that Hanoi called its troops home and abandoned its attempt to reunify Vietnam under communist control.[2] Accordingly, while the Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN, the South Vietnamese government forces) was concerned with protecting and pacifying population centers, US and allied units sought to engage communist elements in the less settled areas near the western borders with Cambodia and Laos and in other insurgent strongholds throughout the South.[3] These operations generally took the form of search and destroy attacks conducted away from large populated areas and in localities where the enemy was strong. They entailed violent assault by infantry and armor forces, capitalized on allied airmobility, and, with the use of heavy supporting fires, sought to find, fix, and destroy the enemy and his base areas.[4]

As the number of Army combat forces in Vietnam grew larger, General Westmoreland established two corps-level commands under MACV.[5] I Field Force, Vietnam (IFFV) was responsible for II Corps Tactical Zone (the Central Highlands) and II Field Force, Vietnam (IIFFV) was responsible for III

Corps Tactical Zone (the area bounded by the Central Highlands on the north and the Mekong Delta on the south). Reporting directly to the MACV commander, the field force commanders were the senior Army tactical commanders in their respective areas of responsibility.

Figure 11.1 II Field Force, Vietnam Area of Operations. Map created by CAC History for the authors.

Lieutenant General Jonathan O. Seaman assumed command of II Field Force Vietnam in March 1966. Seaman was a 1934 graduate of the United States Military Academy at West Point and served in World War II in both European and Pacific theaters. Headquartered at Long Binh, II Field Force Vietnam was activated on 15 March 1966, becoming the largest corps-level command in Vietnam and one of the largest in Army history. As the commander of IIFV, General Seaman was responsible for US forces within III Corps Tactical Zone, an area of operations that included the eleven provinces surrounding Saigon. Seaman's area of responsibility contained major VC base areas northeast and northwest of Saigon, including War Zones C and D, the Iron Triangle, and the Boi Loi Woods. In addition, he was also responsible for defending the main enemy avenues of approach from Cambodia that directly threatened Saigon, the capital city of the Republic of Vietnam. General Seaman was very familiar with

the area, because before he assumed command of IIFV, he commanded the 1st Infantry Division, which had operated in III Corps Tactical Zone since its arrival in Vietnam in July 1965.

By this point in the war, US and South Vietnamese forces were dealing with a hybrid threat. They had to contend with the externally supported insurgency, but they also had to deal with main force VC and North Vietnamese units in a more conventional context. Based on MACV priorities, General Seaman focused his efforts on the latter, while leaving the insurgency and pacification effort in his area of operation to the ARVN and South Vietnamese militia forces, who were better equipped to deal with spreading Saigon's influence among their own people.

Seaman was most concerned with the threat that the main force VC and North Vietnamese units, operating out of sanctuaries in Cambodia and the base areas previously mentioned, posed for Saigon. He had extensive forces at his disposal, but he also had a very large area of responsibility. Rather than sit back in a defensive role and let the enemy come to him, he wanted to take the war to the enemy where they were strongest. The problem, as he had learned only too well during his time in command of the Big Red One, was that it was difficult to bring the battle to the enemy on anything but their terms. Given the restriction against crossing into Cambodia, the key to success against the main enemy forces was to isolate them in their base areas inside Vietnam and preclude their escape to Cambodia once the battle was joined. Given the vastness of the area of operations and its proximity to the border, this was a continual problem.

In May 1966, with these challenges in mind, General Seaman directed his staff to plan an operation to clear War Zone C and eliminate it as a base of enemy operations. Ideally, the operation would pave the way for follow-on pacification efforts to counter any residual influence of the Viet Cong in that area. The operation, which would be called JUNCTION CITY, was to commence in January 1967. While IIFV was planning for that operation, General Seaman also directed his staff to plan for a similar strike into the Iron Triangle, another key enemy base area which represented a "dagger pointed at the heart of Saigon."[6] This operation would be called CEDAR FALLS.

For both operations, Seaman wanted to find, fix, and destroy the enemy forces in zone before they could escape to sanctuaries in Cambodia. As IIFV planning went forth on both plans, intelligence reports indicated a major buildup in the Iron Triangle area. General Seaman was very concerned with the growing threat there since it was closer to Saigon that the objective area for JUNCTION CITY. A buildup in the Iron Triangle might portend an impending attack on the capital city. Accordingly, he recommended to Westmoreland that JUNCTION CITY be postponed in favor of CEDAR FALLS. Doing so would alleviate any immediate threat to Saigon and would also make an additional division available for JUNCTION CITY, because the 9th Infantry Division was on its way over and would be assigned to IIFV upon arrival. Westmoreland agreed with Seaman's recommendation; CEDAR FALLS would go first and then the attack into War Zone C would be launched immediately after its completion.

The Iron Triangle was the name for an area about 300 square kilometers located some 30 kilometers northwest of Saigon that included the Thanh Dien Forestry Reserve. It had been a major staging area for the Viet Cong since the earliest days of the war. General Seaman defined the CEDAR FALLS mission as the destruction of enemy forces, installations, and infrastructure in zone. Specifically, the operation would target the VC Military Region IV headquarters and the 272d VC Regiment. Seaman wanted to eliminate the ability of the Iron Triangle to serve as a sanctuary and base of enemy operations. This included not only a direct assault against the VC in the area, but also the relocation of the civilian population and the destruction of their homes in order to deny support for the VC in the area. Once the civilians were evacuated, the region would be declared a "specified strike zone," meaning anyone subsequently found in the area would be considered an enemy combatant.[7]

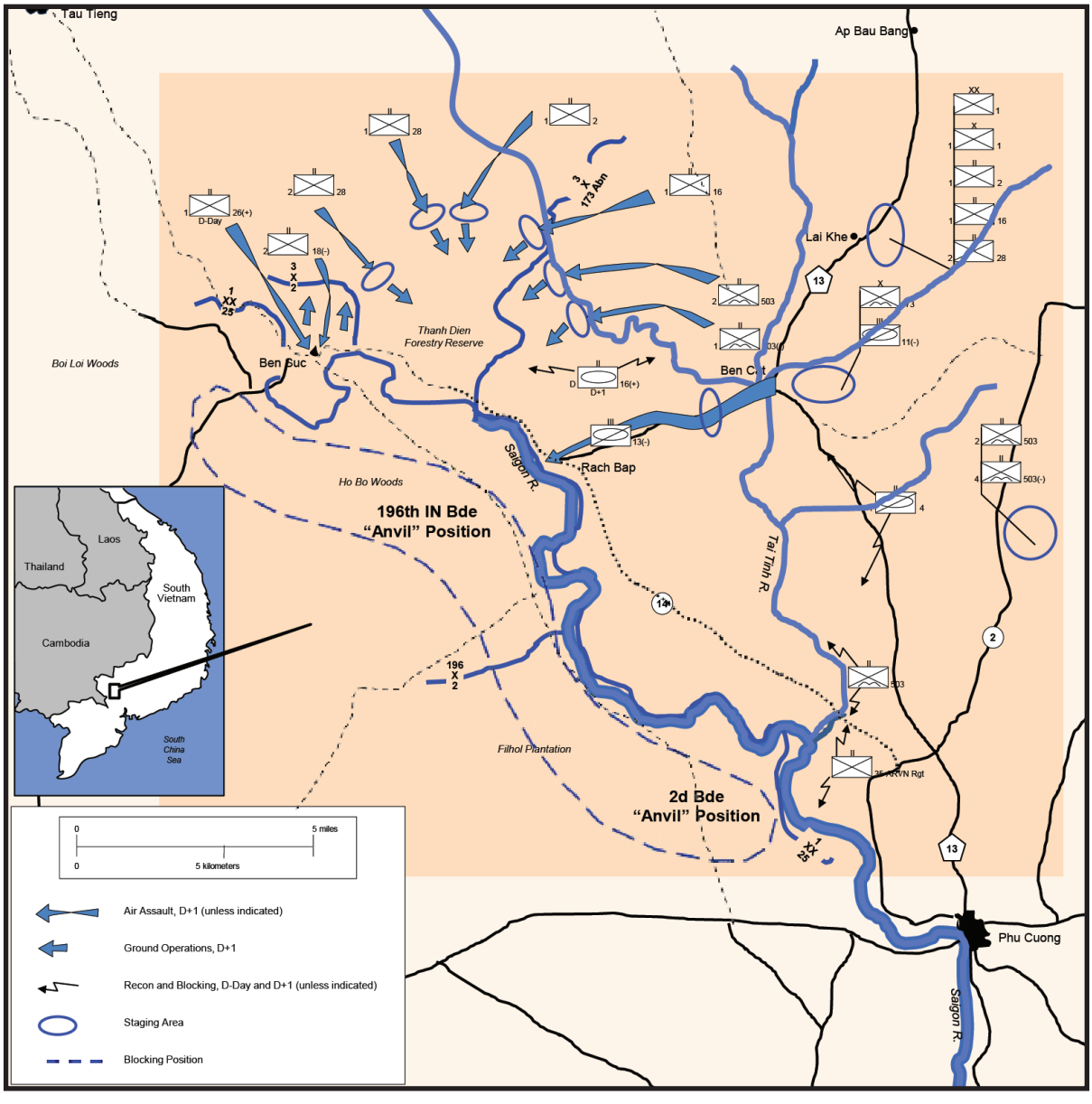

Figure 11.2 OPERATION CEDAR FALLS D-Day and D+1. Map created by CAC History for the authors.

Operation CEDAR FALLS began on 8 January 1967. It included two Army divisions, one light infantry and one paratroop brigade, and one armored cavalry regiment in addition to a number of South Vietnamese Army battalions – a total of 30,000 US and South Vietnamese troops. The plan called for a "hammer and anvil" operation in which part of the allied force assumed blocking positions as the "anvil," while the rest of the force was inserted throughout the area of operations to drive the enemy into the established blocking positions. At the same time, the entire area would be encircled by US troops to prevent the enemy from escaping. During the operation, the enemy proved to be very elusive, fleeing across the border into Cambodia or hiding in a complex system of tunnels that pervaded the area. There were no large-scale engagements during the operation, which ended on 26 January 1967, but Allied troops engaged in several small-scale fights and discovered a number of enemy supply caches. Concurrently, engineers were involved in jungle clearing operations and chemicals were used to defoliate parts

of the area in order to deny the enemy a sanctuary so close to Saigon. During the operation, the 5,987 inhabitants of the village of Ben Suc, which had long supported the VC, were rounded up for relocation and the village was destroyed. CEDAR FALLS resulted in 750 confirmed enemy soldiers killed and 213 captured.[8] Additionally, a large amount of weapons, ammunition, rations, and other supplies were captured or destroyed. Friendly losses were 72 US soldiers killed in action (KIA) and 337 wounded in action (WIA).

From Seaman's and Westmoreland's perspective, CEDAR FALLS had been a resounding success. Seaman wrote that the operation "demonstrated the value of extended operations within VC controlled areas" and the enemy would now have to "re-evaluate the relative capabilities of their forces as opposed to ours."[9] However, claims that "the Iron Triangle is no more" were grossly overblown. In reality, as soon as the US and South Vietnamese troops left the area, the VC quickly reoccupied their base areas. Additionally, CEDAR FALLS became a public relations nightmare following critical reporting of the forced evacuation of the residents of Ben Suc and the village's subsequent destruction.

Nevertheless, Generals Westmoreland and Seaman, believing that CEDAR FALLS was a step in the right direction and hoping to maintain momentum, subsequently launched Operation JUNCTION CITY. The objective area for the operation was War Zone C, a 50- by 30-mile flat, marshy area along the Cambodian border about 45 miles northwest of Saigon. The thousand-square-mile area was bounded by the Cambodian border to the north and west, while its eastern boundary ran parallel to Highway 13. It included portions of Tay Ninh, Binh Long, and Binh Duong provinces. The area was of particular concern to both MACV and IIFV because of its location between Saigon and the Cambodian border and it had long provided a popular jumping off point for enemy forces and supplies infiltrating into Vietnam from the Ho Chi Minh Trail. Additionally, War Zone C was the normal operating area for the 9th VC Division, one of the enemy's best formations. War Zone C was also thought to contain the location of the Central Office for South Vietnam (COSVN), the senior headquarters for all enemy operations in the southern half of South Vietnam.

The objective of JUNCTION CITY was to drive deep within War Zone C to find and destroy COSVN, while also seeking out and destroying the 9th VC Division and 101st NVA Regiment, another unit reported to be in the area. Additionally, all enemy base camps and installations within the area of operation were to be destroyed. Ultimately, General Seaman hoped not only to attrite enemy forces, but also to "provide a shield for revolutionary development in the area" in follow-on pacification efforts.[10] As part of the operation, IIFV was to establish a Special Forces Civilian Irregular Defense Group (CIDG) camp and airfield at Prek Klok. The initial concept called for the objective area to be cordoned off by friendly forces, while additional allied forces would then attack into the cordoned area to destroy enemy forces, supply depots, and base camps caught in the trap.

The planning for JUNCTION CITY was complex due to the size of the area of operations and the number of units involved. One of the main problems for General Seaman and his planners was how to generate maximum combat power on the ground in the most rapid fashion. If sufficient combat power could not be generated throughout the area of operations quickly enough, the enemy could easily avoid combat and escape to sanctuaries across the border in Cambodia before they could be engaged, just as they had during CEDAR FALLS.

To conduct this operation, IIFV committed 35,000 allied troops, including elements of the 1st and 25th Infantry Divisions, the 173d Airborne Brigade, the 196th Light Infantry Brigade, the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment, a brigade from the 4th Infantry Division, as well as several ARVN units. Although the divisions and brigades had organic units assigned and in-country, commitments to missions in other areas prohibited some of the organic units from participating in the operation. Thus, the task organization for the beginning of the operation included the following:

1st Infantry Division
1st Brigade, 1st Infantry Division
3d Brigade, 1st Infantry Division
173d Airborne Brigade
TF Wallace (ARVN)
25th Infantry Division
2d Brigade, 25th Infantry Division
3d Brigade, 4th Infantry Division
196th Light Infantry Brigade
11th Armored Cavalry Regiment (-)
TF Alpha (ARVN)

For this operation, IIFV had at its disposal a total of 22 maneuver battalions, 14 artillery battalions, and three ARVN battalions. This task organization facilitated task force operations in which combined arms operations at battalion and squadron level were commonplace.

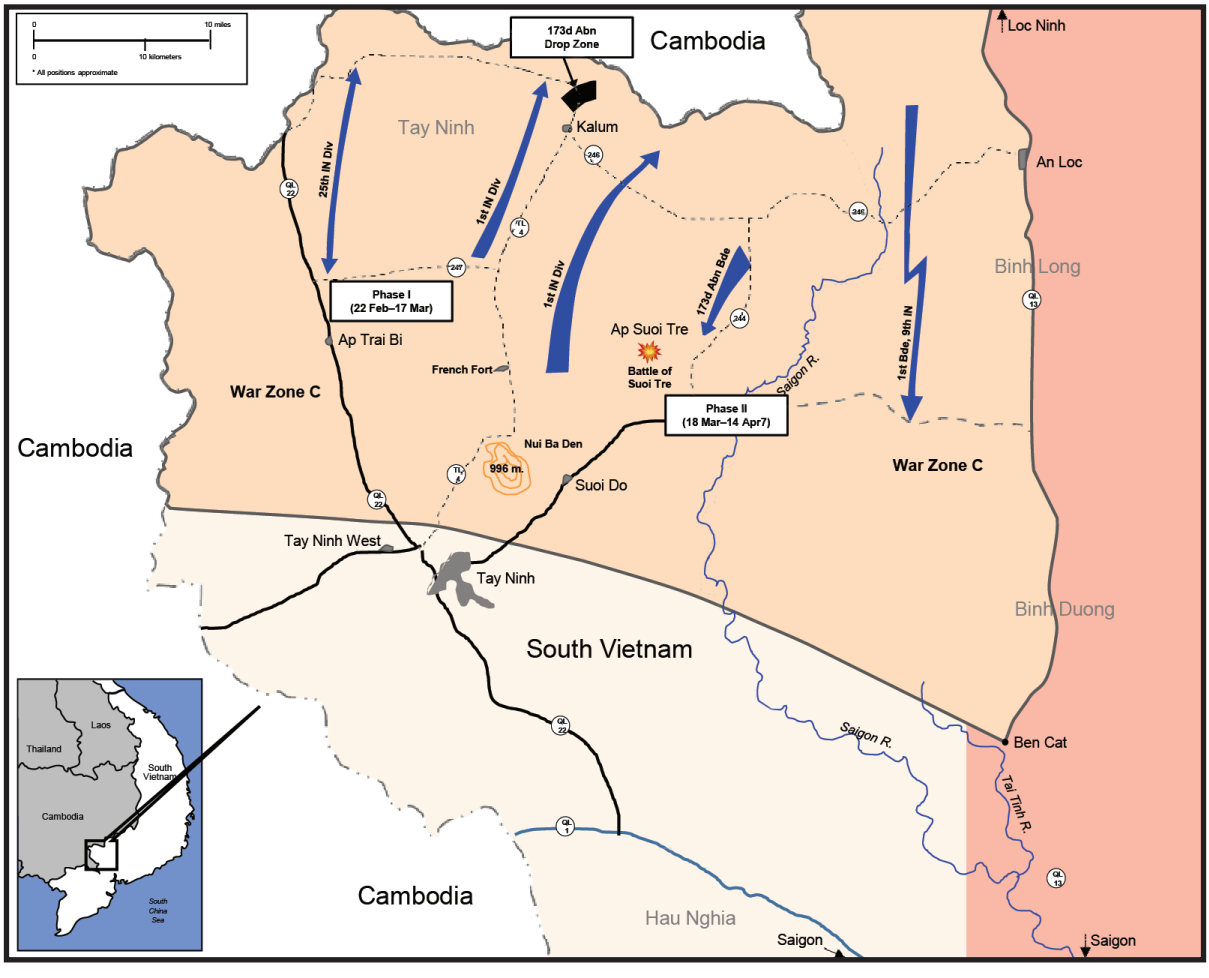

Figure 11.3 Operation JUNCTION CITY 22 February to 14 May 1967. Map created by CAC History for the authors.

Because of the size and scope of the operation, IIFFV had to coordinate a major troop and logistical buildup that might give away the operation prematurely. Therefore, planning for the operation was conducted under strict security.

As the combat forces prepared for battle, General Seaman directed two deception operations to cover the movement of troops and supplies into areas adjacent to War Zone C. Operation GADSEN was conducted by the 25th Infantry Division along the Cambodian border in the extreme western portion of the area, while Operation TUCSON was conducted by the 1st infantry Division in the area east of the Michelin rubber plantation.[11] General Seaman hoped that these shaping operations would serve two purposes; first, they would position the western and eastern blocking forces and hopefully they would cause the 9th VC Division to move its 271st and 272d Regiments into the objective area for the operation to come.

The JUNCTION CITY planners devised a two-phased operation that used the same "hammer and anvil" approach that had been employed in Operation CEDAR FALLS, but on a much larger scale. The plan called for five US brigades to form a giant, inverted horseshoe-shaped cordon formed by blocking positions in the western half of War Zone C. Once the cordon was in place, other forces would attack north to drive the enemy into the blocking positions. The plan called for the 3d Brigade, 4th Infantry Division, and the 196th Light Infantry Brigade to take up blocking positions in the west of the objective area along the Cambodian border, roughly four to five miles east of Highway 22 and Highway 246. The 1st Infantry Division would block in the north, along Highway 4. The 173d Airborne Brigade and the 1st Brigade, 1st Infantry Division would seal off the eastern section. Once the blocking forces were in place, the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment on the right and the 2d Brigade, 25th Infantry Division, on the left would sweep from the south into the giant inverted horseshoe. The idea was to push the enemy forces into the US blocking positions where they could be destroyed.

Since almost 250 helicopters were needed to move the eight infantry battalions under control of the 1st Infantry Division, the three battalions from the 173d Airborne Brigade would conduct a combat parachute jump into their assigned blocking positions. General Seaman hoped to put the maximum number of troops on the ground in the least amount of time before COSVN and the 9th VC Division could evacuate the area. The operation required timely deployments and tightly controlled movements to generate the required combat power and seal off the cordon. Fire support would be provided by seventeen artillery battalions and over 4,000 close air support sorties. Airspace control and coordination over the objective area would be a large concern.

JUNCTION CITY began at 0700 hours on 22 February with the parachute drop by the 173d Airborne Brigade. Some 840 paratroopers from the 2d Battalion, 503d Infantry, boarded 16 C-130 aircraft at Bien Hoa and parachuted into drop zones in northern Tay Ninh Province near Ca Tum, only seven miles from Cambodia.[12] This unopposed parachute landing was the only major US combat jump of the war.

Concurrently, 249 helicopters, in the largest single-day airmobile operation in the history of Army Aviation, inserted eight infantry battalions into the north blocking positions.[13] General Seaman hoped that the simultaneous insertion of so many forces would surprise the enemy. However, the level of surprise was hard to ascertain; there was little contact initially.

The following day, the southern forces positioned along Highway 247 began sweeping north into the horseshoe. The 2d Brigade, 25th Division and the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment (-) attacked against only light opposition; however, some tanks and APCs were damaged by mines and RPG fire. Both units began to uncover significant caches of enemy supplies and equipment, as well as numerous fortifications and base camp areas.[14] At the same time, units operating on the periphery of the horseshoe discovered enemy base areas as they conducted patrols around their blocking positions. Contact with the enemy remained light, with enemy forces reported at squad size or smaller.[15]

On 24 February 1967, General Seaman sent a message to the Commanding Generals of the 1st and 25th Divisions directing them to conduct a thorough search of western War Zone C.[16] The 2d Brigade, 25th Division and the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment were directed to continue their drives northward

into the blocking positions. The attackers continued to encounter enemy base camps and supplies. Significant amounts of weapons, ammunition, rice and miscellaneous supplies were captured and/or destroyed.

On 28 February, elements of the 173d Airborne Brigade discovered the VC's Central Information Office, including an underground photographic laboratory complete with film. Shortly thereafter, a company from the 173d made contact with an enemy company east of Katum. An intense engagement followed in which casualties were high on both sides; 20 paratroopers were killed and 28 wounded while the VC sustained 39 killed.

That same day, a company from 1st Battalion, 16th Infantry, made contact with a well dug-in and concealed enemy force near the Prek Klok River. After pinning down the lead platoon with heavy fire, the VC initiated a ground assault which overran the American unit, killing or wounding nearly every soldier. The VC then turned their attention on the rest of the company and a bitter firefight ensued. Close air support was called in as reinforcements were directed to relieve the embattled company. Two companies were inserted by helicopter after several airstrikes, which finally forced the enemy to break contact. When the reinforcements linked up with the company, which had by now taken casualties of nearly 50 percent, they all began to move to an LZ for the night. An inspection of the battlefield the next morning revealed 144 enemy dead and 40 weapons. US casualties for this fight were also heavy, with 25 KIA and 28 wounded. An intelligence analysis of the contact later indicated that the first company had probably stumbled into an enemy staging area for a planned attack against convoy activity along Route 4.

For the next ten days, there were many daily contacts within the JUNCTION CITY area of operations, but most of them were platoon or smaller in size. General Seaman had hoped to find and engage larger enemy forces, but the enemy battalions, for the most part, avoided contact. During the course of the operation during this period, allied forces uncovered dozens of major base camps and captured enormous quantities of enemy equipment and supplies.

At this point, General Seaman decided to abandon his northern positions opposite the Cambodian border; he wanted to extend the search for the main enemy formations, which had so for proved very elusive. On 1 March, Seaman directed the 1st Infantry Division to move against what had been identified as the 101st Regiment and possibly COSVN's intelligence bureau, both thought to be southeast of Katum and east of Route 4. At the same time, he ordered the 25th Infantry Division to send at least half of its forces into an area known as the Elephant's Ear west of Highway 22, where intelligence reports indicated the 271st VC Regiment was located.

On 10 March, the 272d VC Regiment attacked the 168th Engineer Battalion, which was building a Special Forces base camp near Prek Klok. The engineers were defended by the 2d Battalion, 2d Infantry and the 2d Battalion, 33d Artillery. The enemy decision to again commit large elements against an American position was possibly prompted by the entrapment of an element of the COSVN in the pincer movement along the Cambodian border. A prisoner later indicated that the attack was a diversion to draw off allied forces which reportedly threatened the military staff section of COSVN.[17]

The attack began at 2208 hours with a heavy bombardment by 60, 82, and 120mm mortars. When the indirect fires were lifted, two VC battalions attacked the infantry from the east and southwest. At the same time, the VC launched a secondary attack against Artillery Base One. The infantry, with very effective close air support, held the perimeter against the main VC attack, but the artillery, firing their howitzers point blank into the attackers, eventually broke the attack and drove off the enemy. The next morning, 197 enemy KIA were found on the battlefield.

On 18 March, JUNCTION CITY entered Phase II, which focused on clearing the eastern sector of War Zone C. For this phase, General Seaman and IIFFV gained control of 1st Brigade, 9th Infantry

Division, and 1st Brigade, 1st Infantry Division. The 173d Airborne Brigade was not scheduled to be part of Phase II, but at the urging of the 1st Infantry Division commander, the airborne brigade was subsequently retained and attached to the Big Red One. At the same time, the 3d Brigade, 1st Division relinquished responsibility for the security of Prek Lok SF Camp and surrounding area to the 196th Light Infantry Brigade and departed the operation for another mission in support of revolutionary development operations elsewhere. During the course of Phase I, US forces had combed the area inside the horseshoe; 835 VC/NVA were reported killed, 15 were captured, and 264 individual and crew-served weapons were captured, along with enormous amounts of supplies and equipment.[18] Seaman was disappointed that the results of Phase I had not been greater and that COSVN had not been found.

With the western portion of War Zone C cleared in Phase I, the plan for Phase II was to conduct search and destroy missions in the eastern portion of the area. General Seaman planned to continue to coordinate the operation, but he would allow the commanders of the 1st and 25th Divisions to operate independently within their respective assigned areas of operation. He hoped this would give the two commanders the necessary flexibility they needed to respond to developing situations in their respective assigned areas of responsibility. This approach resulted in several sharp battles.

During the night of 19 March, a troop of the 3d Squadron, 5th Cavalry from the 9th Infantry Division was attacked in its defensive position at Bau Bang by the 2d and 3d Battalions of the 273d VC Regiment. During the course of the intense battle that ensued, the cavalrymen buttoned themselves up inside their armored personnel carriers while artillery inside the perimeter fired antipersonnel "beehive" rounds at the vehicles to sweep off the attackers.[19] While the troop held on, the 5th Cavalry's Troops B and C fought their way into the beleaguered perimeter to assist their comrades. Throughout the night, the US Air Force flew 87 close air support sorties under illumination to help turn back the attackers. Ultimately, the combined firepower of armored cavalry, supporting artillery, and close air support caused the enemy to break contact. The battle resulted in 227 enemy killed; US casualties included three killed and 63 wounded.

In the early morning hours of 21 March, at Fire Support Base (FSB) Gold near Suoi Tre, the 2d Battalion, 77th Artillery and the 3d Battalion, 22d Infantry, from the 3d Brigade, 4th Division, came under heavy attack by two Communist regiments, the 273d from the 9th VC Division and the PAVN 16th Regiment (also known as the 70th Guards Regiment). Under cover of an intense, walking mortar barrage, approximately 2,500 enemy troops attacked, breaching FSB Gold's defensive perimeter. The human wave attacks were backed up by a tremendous volume of RPG rockets, recoilless rifle shells, and automatic weapons fire. The hand-to-hand fighting was intense, but the defenders held on grimly, thanks in part to the large volume of effective close air support that was employed against the VC. At one point, the artillerymen fired "bee hive" rounds directly into the attackers, but the attackers kept coming. As the battle wore on, the 2d Battalion, 12th Infantry, fought its way into FSB Gold to join the beleaguered defenders. The battle continue into the daylight hours, when FSB Gold was finally relieved by elements of the 2d Battalion, 34th Armor. The 70-vehicle tank and mechanized infantry column completely shattered organized enemy resistance and the surviving attackers fled back into the jungle. General Hoang Cam, commander of 9th VC Division, later acknowledged that his forces had suffered heavy losses during the battle for Suoi Tre. Unfortunately, so had the defenders; 31 Americans lost their lives and 187 more were wounded.

On 24 March, General Seaman was succeeded by Lieutenant General Bruce Palmer, Jr. as the commanding general of II Field Force, Vietnam. Palmer, based on the recommendations of his staff, decided that the search in southeastern War Zone C had run its course and was about to give the order to terminate operations in that sector when new intelligence revealed that the 271st Regiment was moving through the area toward Katum. Accordingly, Palmer ordered the 196th Light Infantry Brigade north to

intercept them.[20] However, the VC regiment was moving so fast that when the 196th reached Katum, the enemy had already moved through the area to the east.

The 271st Regiment would subsequently be involved in the last major battle of JUNCTION CITY, which took place near Ap Gu at Landing Zone (LZ) George, located 23 miles north of Dau Tieng (Tri Tam) and only three miles from the Cambodian border. The 1st Battalion, 26th Infantry, commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Alexander M. Haig, had occupied LZ George on 26 March. Five days after occupying the LZ, Company B was moving east from the LZ when it became under heavy attack and was pinned down. Haig committed his A Company to come to aid of B Company. Both companies were able to withdraw to the defensive perimeter near the LZ, which had been reinforced by elements of the 1st Battalion, 16th Infantry. In the early morning hours of 1 April, the 271st VC Regiment and the 1st VC Battalion of the 70th Guards attacked in force. On the northeast portion of the perimeter, defended by C Company, the enemy succeeded in breaching the perimeter, but the American troops pushed back until a combination of artillery, helicopter gunships, and close air support eventually drove off the attackers. During this battle, the US sustained 17 KIA, while 600 enemy soldiers were killed.

Although Operation JUNCTION CITY was originally planned to have only two phases, General Palmer, hoping to build on the success at Suoi Tre and Ap Gu, decided to extend the operation with a Phase III that kicked off on 15 April. A brigade task force of one mechanized battalion from the 25th Infantry Division and an ARVN battalion made constant sweeps through War Zone C searching for the enemy. At the same time, the 196th Light Infantry Brigade was released from the operational control of IIFV and sent north to I Corps Tactical Zone. Units from the 9th Infantry Division temporarily moved into the area vacated by the 196th. However, the Phase III sweeps turned up little. With almost no enemy contact made during this phase, the major friendly effort was directed toward upgrading and clearing roads, building bridges, and setting up the Prek Klok SF camp.

On 14 May 1967, General Palmer terminated Operation JUNCTION CITY. On the tactical level, Operation JUNCTION CITY was a success. Communist propaganda organs claimed that the operation had cost the US and ARVN more than 14,000 killed in action, as well as 800 armored vehicles destroyed and 119 artillery pieces captured. Actual totals included 218 killed and 1,576 wounded in action. Additionally, three tanks, four helicopters, five howitzers, and 21 armored personnel carriers were lost. IIFV claimed 2,728 enemy killed, with an undetermined number of wounded.[21] The allied forces also seized 490 weapons, 850 tons of rations, 500,000 pages of documents, and more than 5,000 bunkers and other military structures destroyed.[22]

JUNCTION CITY was the most successful operation to that date in terms of confirmed enemy losses. MACV and IIFV claimed that all major objectives for the operation had been accomplished, with the exception of the location and destruction of COSVN. Despite the inability to eliminate the senior enemy headquarters, the consensus was that a turning point had been reached.[23]

In retrospect, however, JUNCTION CITY failed to yield any long-term strategic advantage; the enemy was able to escape across the border into their Cambodian sanctuaries. The multiple assaults on the periphery of the horseshoe achieved tactical surprise, but by the end of D-Day, the shape and purpose of the cordon became clear to the enemy and they quickly dispersed. As one account stated, "It was a sheer physical impossibility to keep him [the enemy] from slipping away whenever he wished… The jungle was just too thick and too widespread to keep him from getting away."[24] There were some sharp battles on the periphery of the horseshoe, where allied forces inflicted heavy casualties on the enemy at Soui Tre and Ap Gu. Despite the destruction of some VC formations, the preponderance of the enemy, including the ever-elusive COSVN headquarters escaped to fight another day. General John Hay, commander of the 1st Infantry Division, explained several factors that contributed to this situation, which included the proximity of "a privileged sanctuary," the extreme difficulty in establishing "a

seal with sufficient troop density to deny infiltration routes," and the difficulty in gaining complete surprise "as a result of extensive repositioning of troops and logistical support prior to D-Day."[25] While JUNCTION CITY was in progress, War Zone C had been effectively denied to the communists as a viable base and staging area, but II Field Force was unable to preclude enemy forces from escaping the trap that the planners had envisioned.

Brigadier General Rogers, the 1st Infantry Division's assistant division commander, described a more lasting shortcoming of the operation. "One of the discouraging features of both CEDAR FALLS and JUNCTION CITY," wrote Rogers, "was the fact that we had insufficient forces, either US or South Vietnamese, to permit us to continue to operate in the Iron Triangle and War Zone C and thereby prevent the Viet Cong from returning."[26] As historian Gregory Daddis points out, JUNCTION CITY was supposed to provide a "shield for revolutionary development," but there was no plan for American units to stay around to do that.[27]

Thus, War Zone C was far from neutralized. Although three enemy regiments were shattered in the fighting, the losses were only temporary and they would be back in force less than a year later. Nevertheless, JUNCTION CITY had shown that the major VC operating and supply bases in South Vietnam were vulnerable to superior US firepower and mobility. As a result, the Communists moved their headquarters across the border into Cambodia. With the White House unwilling to approve the expansion of large-scale land operations across the border, American planners were left with little choice but to pursue a defensive campaign with the objective of wearing down the VC and PAVN through attrition.

While large, multi-division operations into enemy war zones like CEDAR FALLS and JUNCTION CITY produced some significant results in terms of keeping enemy main-force units at bay in their remote base areas, these operations left the heavily populated areas to the ARVN to handle. Westmoreland could not afford to keep substantial forces away from their bases more than a few months at a time without risking their own local security at those bases. When the US forces were pulled back from the more remote areas, the enemy reoccupied their base areas and began conducting operations again. IIFV, like its counterpart in the Central Highlands, did not have enough troops to protect its own base areas and the populated areas and, at the same time, generate enough combat power to drive the enemy out of their operating areas. Consequently, it could not occupy those areas to deny them to the enemy in any permanent way. Ten days after JUNCTION CITY, War Zone C was "literally crawling with what appeared to be Viet Cong."[28] The three regiments of the 9th VC Division were rated combat ineffective at the termination of the operation, but the enemy repeatedly demonstrated an ability to replace his losses.[29]

Operation JUNCTION CITY demonstrates the difficulty of dealing with a combat situation that includes both insurgents and enemy conventional forces in counterinsurgency operations. The key to such operations is to "clear, hold, and build," but often there is only enough combat power to clear the area in question, not to hold it. This situation is made infinitely more difficult when there are inviolate sanctuaries across an international border which friendly forces cannot cross to pursue the enemy. The result in this case was that areas like the Iron Triangle and War Zone C remained enemy strongholds that were repeatedly fought over from the time of CEDAR FALLS and JUNCTION CITY through to the end of the fighting in 1975.[30] Operations like JUNCTION CITY were impressive in size and scope, but they achieved no lasting strategic benefit, as Brigadier General John S. Brown, observed "as long as the communists had the means and will to continue such an uneven contest."[31] In the end, the result was a bloody stalemate as casualties continued to mount on both sides.

Notes

1. Bernard W. Rogers, *Cedar Falls-Junction City* (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 1971), v; Dave R. Palmer, *Summons of the Trumpet* (San Rafael, CS: Presidio Press, 1978), 108.

2. Palmer, *Summons of the Trumpet,* 3.

3. US allies in South Vietnam were known as Free World Military Forces, which included Australia, New Zealand, Thailand, Korea, and the Philippines.

4. Palmer, *Summons of the Trumpet*, 134.

5. In the north, III Marine Amphibious Force controlled all US forces in I Corps Tactical Zone, the five provinces south of the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ).

6. Stafford T. Thomas, "Operation Cedar Falls," in James S. Olson, *Dictionary of the Vietnam War* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1988), 328; Rogers, *Cedar Falls-Junction City*, 15.

7. George L. MacGarrigle, *The United States Army in Vietnam: Taking the Offensive, October 1966 to October 1967* (Washington, DC: US Army Center of Military History, 1998), 97.

8. Gregory A. Daddis, *Westmoreland's War: Reassessing American Strategy in Vietnam* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 106; Rogers, *Cedar Falls-Junction City*, 74.

9. Quote in Rogers, *Cedar Falls-Junction City*, 77.

10. US Grand Sharp and William C. Westmoreland, *Report on the War in Vietnam* (Washington, DC: US Government Printing Office, 1969), 133-134.

11. Rogers, *Cedar Falls-Junction City*, 84-85.

12. Project CHECO Report: Operation JUNCTION CITY, Headquarters PACAF, 17 November 1967, 2.

13. Combat Operation After Action Report (COAAR), Operation Junction City, HQ II Field Force Vietnam, 9 Aug 1967, 22; MACV Command History, 1967, Vol. I, 390.

14. Rogers, *Cedar Falls-Junction City*, 103.

15. After Action Report (AAR), Operation Junction City, HQ 1st Infantry Division (1st Brigade Attachment), 8 May 1967, 3.

16. COAAR, II Field Force, 21.

17. CHECO Report, 8.

18. COAAR, II Field Force 24.

19. These rounds were a version of canister grapeshot rounds, each containing 8,000 steel dart-like fleshettes.

20. MacGarrigle, *Taking the Offensive*, 136.

21. CHECO Report, 37.

22. COAAR, II Field Force, 34.

23. Rogers, *Cedar Falls-Junction City*, 153.

24. Rogers, *Cedar Falls-Junction City*, 157.

25. Rogers, *Cedar Falls-Junction City*, 153.

26. Rogers, *Cedar Falls-Junction City*, 158.

27. Daddis, *Westmoreland's War*, 222n65.

28. Rogers, *Cedar Falls-Junction City*, 158.

29. CHECO Report, 39.

30. In 1972, the 9th VC Division, by then made up primarily of North Vietnamese regular soldiers, played a major role in the siege of An Loc during the North Vietnamese Easter Offensive of that year.

31. Brig. Gen. John S. Brown, "Lopsided Tactical Win, Strategic Question Mark," *Army*, January 2017, 70.

Chapter 12

Desert Jayhawk: Forming Teams and Getting in Place to Fight

General (Ret) Frederick M. Franks, US Army

I wrote this chapter in three parts to cover the full range of the VII Corps operations in Desert Storm, a five division armored corps offensive operation. The first part covers command considerations and actions in transforming a razor sharp North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Cold War Corps to an offensive maneuver corps with different units in a totally different set of conditions. This part also covers getting from one continent to another with the strategic lift of the day and placing units so they were ready to attack as a corps. The second part covers planning activities and early combat actions that set us to attack as a corps according to the Third Army plan, only to have that plan changed to attack a day early. This part also discusses how large units must be able to constantly adapt to seize the initiative and keep it until victory. The third part deals with the major VII Corps offensive maneuver of a five division armored corps. It includes command on the move, supporting moves and attacks, decisions, adjustments, key initiatives and battles, and maneuvering the corps to attack into the flank, front, and rear of Republican Guard Forces Command (RGFC) and to sustain that attack momentum until victory and the liberation of Kuwait.

Forming Teams and Getting in Place to Fight

Any US commander of a large combat formation alerted to go to war must face geographic reality. A quick look at US military history will confirm that units at the beginning of any conflict were normally out of position when the conflict began. They were either on the wrong continent or in the wrong place on the right continent. They had to make big strategic moves to go somewhere and fight for our objectives. This is not because of lack of foresight, but a geographic reality because most US land forces are stationed in the Continental United States (CONUS). It might have been that our forces were forward stationed in a deterrent posture and the threat did not begin operations there, but somewhere we have few or no troops (e.g., 1990, 1992, 1995, 2001, 2003). A look to the future confirms this is an ongoing reality. Thus, US Army forces have to adapt rapidly from their current mission, change mission focus to the new reality, plus they have to depend on air and sealift to get where they need to be. Further, they may have to fight their way into a contested area from land or sea in coordination with other services. This strategic reality needs as much critical thinking as what those land forces will do after they get there. Confronting this reality is very much a part of being combat ready.

Large formations might also have to confront the reality that they are not properly configured. They don't have the right combination of units; combat, combat support, and combat service support to conduct this new mission. They will have to form a new team, sometimes considerably different from current alignments, plus reconfigure training to align with the new mission. I believe training to overcome these realities is very much part of being combat ready, especially in large combat formations.

Both of these strategic realities confronted us in VII Corps. The first reality confronting VII Corps during Desert Shield and Desert Storm in 1990-1991 was the one caused by our geographic positioning. While halfway to the Mideast, we were still at the mercy of airlift and sealift to get us all the way there.

Although not often examined in detail, at that time VII Corps was very much a NATO corps. We were part of a NATO coalition with all the standard operating procedures (SOPs), terminology, air-ground procedures, and host-nation support needed to make that operation a success. We were a tactical corps, but also part of a larger strategic operation that had both tactical and strategic nuclear weapons.

We were not a contingency corps by doctrine, operational focus, or mind set. Years and years of study, conferences, and war games had produced a General Defense Plan (GDP) of almost mathematical precision. We had discussed it in detail and rehearsed it. It was the subject of terrain walks over anticipated actions on the actual ground in all kinds of weather. It gave us a defensive posture. I used to joke that we could even discuss for a long time moving a particular phase line in the well-debated plan line five kilometers. It was defensive in plan and tactics and very tightly controlled without much freedom of maneuver. I think we suffered from a "defensive hangover" caused by the mathematical precision and obsessive control of the NATO GDP. It was all necessary to win that first battle if the Cold War went hot, but it was mind conditioning and culture forming. Yet, in a positive sense, it also let us operate for a long time in a coalition. As one senior German officer remarked to me "NATO is a school for coalition warfare." Such was the reality facing US Army forces in Germany as Iraq forces of Saddam Hussein invaded Kuwait in August 1990.

In the summer of 1989 the US Army in Germany remained in their Cold War configuration. A year later, with the opening of the Iron Curtain, that configuration began to change as units and garrisons were marked for inactivation or reassignment to the CONUS. For over 40 years, US Army forces in Germany were tailored to fight a war as part of the a multi-nation coalition to defend NATO territory against a numerically superior Warsaw Pact that had an offensive doctrine attacking in echelons to wear down or rupture the defense of NATO. But with the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe it was a time of historical transitioning.

One huge factor helped us rapidly adjust. We were trained to a razor's edge of combat readiness. To be sure, that razor's edge had come from being totally focused on our Cold War mission. Our *training* focus followed from these war missions and organizational configurations. Training was mission essential task-list based, drawn from those skills needed to execute our doctrine and mission in the NATO campaign. There was no consideration of going anywhere else to fight other than the well-rehearsed general defense plan over well-known Central European terrain. VII Corps was not expeditionary nor a contingency corps. There was neither thought nor plans to go anywhere else. Generation after generation of US Army Soldiers and leaders came to Germany to join units and train to fight and win against an echeloned Warsaw Pact attack from the east. Training was done in a NATO coalition context. Even though heavily influenced by US doctrine, NATO published its own doctrine that member nations, including the US, had to comply with. This included air-ground operations.

Over time a rapid alert system was put into place. This were messages triggered by the daily iron curtain border patrols to test how long notification would take (Handicap Black), or monthly no-notice pre-dawn alerts to exercise unit's ability to recall personnel, upload equipment on vehicles, and move out to general defense locations in two hours (Lariat Advance). Ammunition, war essential spare parts, and other equipment remained uploaded on vehicles at all times to include vehicles being "topped off" or with full fuel tanks in motor pools. Our mission was to be trained and be ready to fight and win right where we were stationed. During winter months when the ground was frozen and often snow covered, NATO units, to include US units, conducted division-size opposing force maneuvers in what were termed maneuver rights areas. Increasing restrictions over the years began to confine these exercises to minimal cross-country maneuver and thin out the density of heavy vehicles.

As with most of my generation I had personally served in US Army Europe (USAREUR) multiple times. Starting in 1960 as a brand new lieutenant in the 11th ACR along the West German/Czech border until now as a lieutenant general commanding VII Corps. Service was a generational calling for my family as for many others. Our daughter was born in Germany the year the Berlin Wall went up and her son was born in Germany the year the Wall came down in 1989. He is now an Army captain, USMA Class 2012.

In short, the US Army had a non-commissioned officer (NCO) and officer leadership developed since Vietnam raised with an ethos of being trained and ready, of winning the first battle of the next war, of training as you expect to fight, and of battle focused training. Our then Army Chief of Staff, General Carl Vuono was a fierce advocate of being trained and ready. The leaders, Soldiers, and units from small to large were arguably the best equipped and trained force the US Army ever had in the field.

From tank crew to corps we were ready to fight; ready to fight and win in that NATO war plan. After the Wall came down we were not waiting to be issued new mission scenarios but had invented some imaginative ones for ourselves. We just did not know it was going to be in the Middle East, in the desert, in a major offensive against the Iraqis.

I recall watching Armed Forces Network (AFN) television on Columbus Day weekend in 1989. I had been a corps commander for three months and I am seeing, all of a sudden, people coming from the East to West, at the border town of Hof. Of course Hof is right there in a key spot, in our own VII Corps sector, manned by the 2d Armored Cavalry Regiment. So, I called my G3 at the time, Colonel (P) Ric Shinseki, and said we ought to go up there and meet with the regimental commander, Colonel Don Holder, and see this for ourselves. We flew on up in our fixed wing C-12, met Don, transferred to his helicopter and got a view from the air, then a closer one on the ground. We got to see that with our own eyes. It was stunning. I never thought I would witness anything like that in my lifetime. Naturally I started thinking, what is the significance of all this?

As we drove around the town of Hof it was wonderful to see the excitement in both adults and children, doing little things like buying fresh vegetables (bananas and oranges had great appeal). We witnessed people of all ages experiencing freedom for the first time. It was profoundly inspiring and moving, and a tribute to the members of our armed forces across the generations, together with NATO, whose service and sacrifice enabled all that. Later I would be told that people would say they knew they were free when they saw American Soldiers. It must have been in a small way what our World War II Soldiers experienced as they liberated town after town and country after country. I remember seeing a little girl standing in-between her parents who were in the front seats of their Trabant, driving down the streets of Hof and the excitement in her face and that of her parents. I said, now that generation is really going to benefit from all this.

So you start thinking bigger thoughts beyond that inspiring scene of freedom. That is your duty. That was our duty to absorb this as best we could and figure out through critical thinking what this meant for us as Soldiers and leaders. What about our operational missions and training besides the obvious joy of freedom and lifting of the Iron Curtain?

What it meant to us, an armored corps in Central Europe, was that the world had changed dramatically. And we got to thinking about that. In January 1990 we had a Return of Forces to Germany (REFORGER) type exercise scheduled. The scenario had been planned to be a general defense plan (GDP) type exercise with two opposing corps level units, V and VII, lined up close and facing each other. It was to be a Command Post Exercise (mostly only command posts and leader wheeled vehicles) because of restrictions on large combat vehicles in the German countryside. Our US Army Europe commanding general (CG), General Crosbie Saint, himself a forward thinking armored leader and proponent of mobile armored warfare, quickly changed the scenario from one of lining up against each other like we did in the old GDP war plan, to one where we moved toward each other in a movement to contact. It wasn't a long movement, perhaps 50-75 kilometers, but it was a movement to contact. So we got our first sense for what the future might call on us to do.

In VII Corps we later published a training circular talking about this movement to contact over distance and fighting the corps as a corps, not individual fights in GDP defense sectors. In March 1999 we were to be the senior headquarters of the 1st Infantry Division, back at Fort Riley, Kansas, in a com-

puter assisted warfighting exercise. I sent Colonel (P) Shinseki to Fort Riley with instructions to, "Tell Major General Tom Rhame (division commander) we're going to undo the scenario and we're going to do it differently." Thirty days ahead of the Battle Command Training Program (BCTP) Warfighter we changed the scenario completely. To his credit Major General Rhame said okay. So they ripped down the old map sheets and put up the new scenarios and adapted quickly. We ran the exercise and got a lot of benefit both our VII Corps headquarters (HQ) element and Major General Rhame and his leaders. Our senior BCTP mentors, as was custom in those days, were General (R) Dick Cavazos and Lieutenant General (R) Dave Grange.

We did other things that began to get us out of what I thought was a defensive, restricted movement, set-piece, battle focus. We had to start thinking differently. We didn't know we were going to go to Saudi Arabia, but we had to start thinking differently. We had to shake ourselves out of that old way of thinking to a mindset that we were going to be doing something different in the future. We did not know exactly what that might be, but we had to get out of that old mindset. Our own military history showed us we sometimes having a hard time getting over history and looking to be ready for the future.

The best way to do that, in my judgment, is through training scenarios. As a senior commander one of your responsibilities is to see to it that you stay relevant to the times you are in. We had a seismic shift going on then, the beginning of the end of the Cold War and beginning of the end of the Soviet Union. You have to think your way through that; you can't wait for instructions or orders; until the bureaucracy figures it all out and puts it in memoranda and directives. As a senior commander you have to do some critical thinking about that, with your leadership team, and that's what we tried to do. General Saint had created that kind of command climate of forward thinking and of mobile armored warfare. Our Army Chief of Staff, General Carl Vuono, was totally committed to staying trained and ready and that ethos permeated our Army.

So we did that with the 1st Infantry Division and I thought as a team we did it well. It also gave me a good read on all the leaders there. Tom Rhame was the division CG, Brigadier General Bill Carter was the Assistant Division Commander (ADC) for maneuver, Colonel Bert Maggert was the 1st Brigade commander, and Colonel Tony Moreno the 2d Brigade commander. They were leaders I would want to go to war with if it ever came to that. That exercise gave me a sensing for the leadership of the Big Red One, who were in our war plans in the old GDP. Little did I know they would later be in VII Corps during Desert Storm. The professional relationships developed in the crucible of training were invaluable in combat.

In early summer we had another BCTP with 3d Infantry Division, in Germany, and again VII Corps was the senior headquarters. By this time I had promoted Colonel Shinseki to Brigadier General and he was off to new duties in Italy. I chose Colonel Stan Cheerie, who had just given up command in northern Germany to be new G-3 and he rapidly become a member of our team. I had known Stan from our days together in the amputee ward at Valley Forge General Hospital and then as our 3/11 commander when I commanded the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment. We served together at the Command and General Staff College (CGSC) at Fort Leavenworth as well, as had our Chief of Staff Brigadier General John Landry. Professional relationships are invaluable in forming teams. Again, we used a movement to contact scenario. By that time, the Battle Command Training Program was okay with that change, and as they had been with 1st Infantry Division, and they quickly adapted, developing an even more challenging scenario. Major General Ron Griffith had just recently assumed command of the 1st Armored Division in VII Corps. He was not scheduled for a BCTP for another year, so he called me up and did what senior leaders do. Train however you can. Anticipate. Be forward thinking. He said, "Do you mind if I kind of shadow the 3ID and their BCTP?" I said of course not. So we had the benefit of that, with the 1st Armored Division leadership. That was our second training scenario.

In early summer we had sent part of our 11th Aviation Brigade to Israel to assist the Israeli Defense Force training with their new AH-64 Apache attack helicopters. I had the chance to visit that training and observed. It was invaluable live fire for our aviators over terrain they would see again. As well it taught us some things about deployment.

Major General Butch Funk, CG, 3d Armored Division in V Corps, had, on his own initiative, scheduled a BCTP Warfighter exercise in the spring when another unit cancelled. 3d Armored Division gained invaluable training from that exercise to add to the considerable command, combat, and training experience Major General Funk already had. It was another example of senior leaders passionate about the professional ethos of staying trained and ready. Funk jumped at an opportunity to train even though at that point we were out of our Cold War mission.

On 5 August 1990 soon after Iraq invaded Kuwait, President Bush said, "This will not stand, this aggression against Kuwait." Soon followed deployment of elements of XVIII Corps, beginning with the 82d Airborne Division. So we said to ourselves, even though we were not part of any deployment orders or plans (although some USAREUR units were deployed, principally aviation and chemical), we will follow the old adage, "March to the sound of the guns." We put up maps in the operations room of our HQ at Kelley Barracks Stuttgart, Germany. As we were on distribution of the classified operational messages, we could began to track operations and deployments and generally read ourselves into this potential war scenario. Our thinking was, if they need anything from VII Corps, units or individuals, we're going to be ready to help our fellow Soldiers in the XVIII Corps. It also continued to open us up to a different world from the GDP and the Cold War gone by.

At our September readiness meeting at USAREUR HQ in Heidelberg, Germany I said to General Saint in a private meeting, you know, we are out of our mission, we are at the peak of readiness in VII Corps, so if a strategic scenario demands it or calls for it, I said we are here and we are already halfway to the mid-east. Call on us. He told me later that got known. He made that point to General Jack Galvin, the European Command (EUCOM) Commander and the Supreme Allied Commander Europe (SACEUR).

One other thing I later learned from President Bush and Brent Scowcroft's book, *A World Transformed*; Secretary of Defense Cheney and the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) led by General Colin Powell as Chairman were looking at a military option if military force were needed to liberate Kuwait. In the fall there were no indications that Iraq would leave Kuwait despite intense economic, information, and diplomatic efforts. Thus, if there were to be a military option, plans would have to be drawn up and adequate forces sent to Saudi Arabia in time to execute such an option. The Central Command (CENTCOM) staff was summoned to Washington to give a briefing on a military option to the National Security Council (NSC). But the attack option briefed was frontal attack right up the middle, straight through Iraqi defenses to Kuwait City. No one liked it, even the briefers. The reaction to the briefing reportedly embarrassed General Schwarzkopf, who did not attend with them. According to CENTCOM, their challenge was they did not have enough forces to do much more than that. So they were sent back to go look at other options using more forces.

Another piece we did not know at the time was that the Iraqis almost doubled their forces in the theater. Given the Iraqi force increase, CENTCOM needed to add more combat power to XVIII Airborne Corps to provide a real offensive option if the United Nations (UN) authorized all means available to liberate Kuwait. That sizeable Iraqi force led to the planning of adding US forces to provide an offensive option. President Bush and his national security team, with the advice of General Powell and the JCS, decided to use overwhelming force and made the decision to send VII Corps. This decision would come to us in two iterations.

The first iteration was to add an armored division from Germany. That got to us through command channels, and we put a big planning cell together and worked with the 1st Armored Division to deploy them. Then we were ordered to cease work on that plan.

About a week later General Saint called me and told me to get a small planning group together, with a limit of eight people. The thinking now was to send all of VII Corps, but we had to keep tight operational security on that plan. (As an aside, years later when I was interviewing General Colin Powell for my book, *Into the Storm*, he relayed how that came about. He went to Saudi Arabia and while there reviewed options with General Schwarzkopf. It was Powell who devised the two US Corps option for General Schwarzkopf, and Colin told me he did it on a hotel paper napkin. The concept was use overwhelming force and come around from the west rather than a frontal attack straight at Kuwait City. I knew none of that at the time). So I convened that planning group quietly. We began serious planning to deploy VII Corps, but I couldn't tell anybody else, including my own wife Denise. She thought I was going to the corps headquarters for long hours for routine planning of inactivation of units in the VII Corps because of the end of the Cold War. The rest of VII Corps was equally in the dark.

That small group included our Chief of Staff Brigadier General John Landry, G3 Colonel Stan Cheerie, chief of Plans Lieutenant Colonel Tom Goedkoop and his fellow School of Advanced Military Studies (SAMS) planners from G-2 and G-4 plus Brigadier General Bob McFarlin, Corps Support command (COSCOM) CG, our chief logistician. The previous month in September we had done a Battle Command Training Program Warfighting Seminar at Kelly Barracks in Stuttgart and again the scenario was a movement to contact. That training scenario afforded us invaluable teambuilding time plus sharpened our skills at dealing with offensive operations. This was the fourth iteration of movement to contact training; REFORGER, 1st Infantry Division, 3d Infantry Division, and now VII Corps. Warfighting exercises normally were six months after seminars so ours would have been in the January-February 1991 timeframe, a curious coincidence when compared to having our real "warfighter" in February 1991).

By that point we had experienced planners and commanders, seasoned by our recent training experiences, and capable of tackling almost anything. I also had a pretty good idea of how our current Airland Battle doctrine might fit but also where it didn't fit, as it had been devised for the Cold War. We were going from the well-known to the unknown; from defense to offense, to large unit maneuver and combined arms, to vastly different terrain and weather, no local infrastructure for support, a totally different enemy, and a non-NATO Coalition rapidly formed and commanded by CENTCOM. Plus, for the first time, our forward deployed corps with family members in place would deploy again and leave our families in that first deployment location.

We had done a lot, to include shaking ourselves out of the Cold War mindset, and there was lots to do. From a senior commander standpoint, defense tended to be very tightly controlled, with a lot of control measures. There was no maneuver by the corps. Individual units fought their defensive battles in their sectors. We were thinking about something totally different, about deploying and then maneuvering the corps in a rapid combined arms attack. The more successful the attack the more stretched we would get and the more we would pull away from our logistics.

Sure, we had lots to do, much for the first time, but we had a great team in VII Corps. We had kept an intense focus on training even as the Cold War threat had gone, and had tried some new scenarios to stretch ourselves. So we were confident we could go do what we needed to get done for the mission and do it at the least cost to our Soldiers.

We knew that setting conditions for success early was a set of challenges in front of us: getting to the operational area, forming new teams, focusing on new missions, focusing on mission essential training, fitting into new coalitions and commands, and then placement of that force in the operational battle space with units in the right positional relationship to each other. We found out after our fight that there was an additional demand for humanitarian missions. Those challenges will not go away no matter the era or type of conflict. The current generations have adapted rapidly, and in my opinion admirably, to the demands

of counterinsurgency. Commanders need to get their minds around this even as they begin the almost mechanical processes of deployment. To focus on what is really important for the mission we had to keep our heads out of the container express (CONEX) metal containers and into forming teams, force placement, and training to fight. This demands high energy and critical thinking early from senior commanders and their staffs to set conditions for later success by making decisions and establishing priorities that cannot wait until later. You have to figure it out now and get it about right.

Figure 12.1. Lieutenant General Frederick M. Franks, Jr.. Photo courtesy of the author.

On the afternoon of 8 November 1990 I got a message from headquarters that the President would make a public announcement about deploying VII Corps that evening, on Armed Forces Network. As I got ready to leave my wife said to me, "Where are you going?" And all I could tell her was to be sure to watch AFN that evening; she thought I was going to a drawdown meeting. I convened my group of eight in our headquarters and we all watched the television. Of course, when I came home later that night, she knew. Then it was a reality for us personally and for all the leaders, Soldiers, and families of VII Corps. The news hit like a thunderclap. We are going to take this new VII Corps team and deploy it to Saudi Arabia. We're going to deploy it with everything; equipment, ammunition, all our soldiers, all our spare parts, and everything else we needed to live and fight in the desert. I had learned that the more senior you get, the fewer major decisions you really get to make. You get, as a corps commander, in an operation like we had, five or six key decisions early to set conditions then later in our attack about the same number or less. I needed the self-discipline to focus on those.

To me it seemed we needed to figure out the order of deployment, and then figure out where we were going to place ourselves in the desert, our initial tactical assembly areas from which we would

train and possibly fight. Force placement is crucial in large unit operations, especially in the offense. You want to put units on the ground in a relationship that mirrors the attack scheme you have formulated. We were far from that at this time. We also needed to focus on forming this new VII Corps team now tailored to our new mission. We had only 42,000 of the original 110,000 Cold War VII Corps. The remainder of our 146,000 VII corps were new. We had to establish training priorities aligned to our new offensive mission to use the time while deploying and after getting there to focus on mission essential training. What's important to do before you deploy, as you're deploying, and after you get there. I knew we had to set training priorities that would prepare us to translate our razor sharp combat readiness for the Cold War GDP to be razor sharp for this new mission in a totally different set of Mission Enemy Terrain, Troops, Time (METT-T).

We also had to decide how we were going to organize ourselves for family support in Germany while we were forward deployed and going to war. For the first time in the history of the US Army a sizeable number of family members, who were already forward deployed with their service member, were going to be left in that forward location while the service members went off into a theater of operations and potentially into a combat situation on a different continent. That is done routinely now but certainly was not done or even talked about then.

Initially, we had two advantages. We would not have to fight our way in, and our fellow Soldiers and units from XVIII Corps were already there and we could learn from them.

I was mindful of von Moltke's admonition that, "an error in initial disposition might not be able to be corrected for an entire campaign." Placing forces on the ground in the right relationships to each other was a vital task because from those initial tactical assembly areas we would move to attack positions and then fight. I did not want to spend time moving units around but rather allow them to use that time to train for our new fight. So, we needed to figure force placement out ahead of time even if we did not yet have a specific mission. Better ideas later would waste time. I knew we had to get it close to right the first time. I knew I could not order, say, the 1st Armored Division to a certain place on the terrain then change my mind and ask them to move again. These were large organizations with thousands of tracked and wheeled vehicles; an armored division with attached forces had up to 8,000 vehicles. I had to get it right the first time so we could get to training right away and not spend a lot of time settling into initial positions. We had to set formations in relation to each other we would later use to conduct an attack if it came to that.

Attitudes are also important. We were good and we knew that. We worked hard at training and being combat ready. We were confident we could execute our former wartime GDP in Germany. Now we were going to a totally different set of conditions and fighting a new enemy in a large offensive operation. We wanted to stay confident, focus on the right priorities, stay positive to overcome all the nagging setbacks and friction that comes from a rapid deployment anywhere, and go fight and win boldly if it came to that. There were yet no plans for an attack I was aware of, nor any UN Resolution authorizing one, but I figured we were not being sent there on some large emergency deployment readiness exercise. We were going there to get ready to fight and win.

Those were the big ideas. I think you really need to get those right. So, for a senior commander and his staff, there's got to be a lot of high energy critical thinking early on, as opposed to kicking the can down the road and saying we'll figure that out later. Our attitude was units and leaders can't wait. Those early decisions sets things in motion and you've got to get them about right. A senior commander, especially in an armored corps, with 50,000-some vehicles, five divisions, a support command, a corps artillery, eight separate corps brigades, and a cavalry regiment, you can't issue an order then change your mind. A young platoon leader or even a battalion commander can change his mind two or three days later say, "I have a better idea" and move off in a different direction. It doesn't work that way with

big organizations. Subordinate leaders have got their own troop leading procedures; they have got to do missions their own way using methods that work for them. You have to build a command climate that allows for, encourages, and demands that initiative. Plus they had their own team building to do as we all added organizations and new units. For example, we added in the 1st British Armoured Division. You want to allow for that initiative and creative thinking in your large organization, so you've got to set out these major decisions, and get them about right early.

I used to use the expression the "good idea cutoff date." You've got to stop tinkering at the margins. As the Army has transitioned mainly to brigade combat team level operations, that's true to a certain extent at the brigade level but not like a division or a corps with major subordinate units. You can still continue to adjust a little as the brigade commander, or a regimental commander, but you get to a point where you say okay, that's it, and let it go. You have subordinates who have ideas of their own and you want to let them put those in action. So I wanted to get the big ideas right early on.

You also want to talk with your senior HQ. General Saint, US land component commander in NATO, practiced that kind of continuing dialogue and freedom to candidly exchange ideas. I made a point to talk to Lieutenant General John Yeosock, who was Third Army commander and my immediate headquarters for VII Corps. John and I had known each other from the 1970s. We served together for a short time in the 3d Armored Cavalry Regiment at Fort Bliss, Texas. John had his own teambuilding to do, transitioning from a force providing HQ to a two corps warfighting HQ. During the Cold War the US Army had abandoned the concept of multiple corps operations anywhere but in NATO. We had no doctrine. John had his work cut out for him.

John gave me some good initial thoughts and guidance, plus made me feel part of his Third Army team. He said he was short of transportation and because he already had a lot of XVIII Corps down here, he had enough security and recommended I get our logistics and communications footprint in before anything else. I said I would like to lead with the 2d Armored Cavalry Regiment since I'm comfortable with them having commanded one; I know what they can do. They're a sizeable organization used to operating on a broad front and they'd be a natural connection with us, with XVIII Corps, and to screen VII Corps, Behind that cavalry screen I will deploy my logistics units, set up our log bases and communications footprint. I kept the notes I took as we talked. Because Lieutenant General Yeosock was talking about names of towns and terrain features I had never heard of I was writing them down phonetically. I went back and looked at these after I learned more about the geography of this place and it was kind of comical. There used to be an old saying in the Army that when you get surprised with no notice they send you to a place nobody's ever heard of before, you can't pronounce the names of the towns, and you don't have any maps. In our old paper map days that was literally true and would plague our small units right until the end of our attack and liberation of Kuwait.

John told me what he thought might be the eventual attack scheme of maneuver. He thought we might attack north up a natural terrain avenue of approach called the Wadi Al-Batin toward Kuwait City. That initial conceptual warfighting thought by John was invaluable in our positioning of units and my own beginnings of formulating an attack maneuver in VII Corps. It allowed me and my planners to finalize unit positions, establish training priorities, and set our own war fighting thinking in motion early.

Fortuitously, we had scheduled a ceremony the next morning at Kelly Barracks, the headquarters of VII Corps, to commemorate the end of the Cold War. We built a monument there at the front gate to remember the service and sacrifice of the generations of Soldiers and family members who achieved that victory. Most of my subordinate commanders were coming to the ceremony, so after I made a short talk at a reception with our German friends and dignitaries about the announcement the night before and asking for their help with our families remaining in Germany, we convened a Commander's meeting.

Based on my talk the previous evening with Lieutenant General Yeosock I was busy in my own mind determining what the big ideas were that I needed to share in that meeting.

As I looked over the group it occurred to me that one of the advantages in commanding a large unit is you're talking to very seasoned, wise, and experienced commanders, who have grown professionally through opportunities the Army has provided in peace and war. They are all War College graduates, they had considerable experience, most all of them were Vietnam veterans at the time. These were wise, savvy commanders who really knew what they were doing. I was honored to be their commander. I think, in large unit operations, you have a depth of mature, accomplished leadership, at corps, division, separate units, regiments, and brigades that you don't have in smaller units. All our senior NCOs were SGM Academy graduates. There is a depth in the leadership that provides big units with an extraordinary amount of resiliency, being able to adapt and adjust and think their way through complex problems if you give them a chance to do it. If you tightly and centrally control everything as a senior commander, you are just not taking advantage of all of that talent you've got in the organization. And as I looked out at that talented team I knew, they were winners. So I needed us to get the big things right, and then they would take it from there.

Some other thoughts flashed through my mind.

If you want something to happen a month or so from now, as a senior headquarters, you have got to use the critical thinking energy way before that, to set things in motion; to set conditions for mission success. The staff has got to be up to that and the commander has got to be up to that, even though you're dealing with a lot of unknowns and the situation might be foggy. As a senior headquarters you've got to set things in motion early on, to set the conditions for that success later. That is what we were doing and that is a little different than what we'd been used to in the old GDP. Everything there was well known and most major decisions had been made over the years. We had analyzed things there to a mathematical certainty. But we were out of that now in a much more fluid situation. I thought we were being sent to provide an option for offensive action, if it came to that. We were going to fight and to win, to gain victory.

The other key element was teambuilding. From their beginnings in the US Army, corps were strictly tactical headquarters; they had no logistics responsibilities whatsoever. During World War II over 20 divisions served under VII Corps during less than a year. Never more than two to five at any one time, but they brought all their logistics capacity with them as a division, and then would plug directly into the theater army; the corps had nothing to do with that. They were a tactical headquarters. Over the years, because our corps was in Central Europe for the Cold War, we became not only a tactical, but also a logistics headquarters; almost like a mini theater army. Over time people got the idea that corps were fixed organizations when in fact that was never Army doctrine, even as we became logistics headquarters in addition to being tactical headquarters when the Army gave up the Field Army. Corps were always intended to be tailored for specific theaters of war with specific combinations of units for a specific mission. So our corps needed to be re-tailored for that Southwest Asia mission as opposed to the Cold War mission. We needed additional combat power, another division, maybe two, maybe three, over and above what we had.

Prior to this meeting that morning of 9 November, General Saint and I actually sat around a conference table in his office in Heidelberg with a long yellow pad and put units together. We wanted to keep tactical integrity, but we also wanted the most combat modern units to go to the fight. We knew we had some real plus-ups to do. So, we took a brigade out of the 3d Infantry Division, because it was more modernized than the brigade in the 1st Armored Division. We decided to use the 3d Armored Division from V Corps. For any offensive action we wanted two armored divisions with their combat power: 348 plus tanks in the division, six tank battalions, five mechanized infantry battalions, an aviation brigade commanded

by a colonel with two Apache battalions, three cannon battalions and a Multiple Launch Rocket System (MLRS) battery in a division artillery commanded by a colonel. So we took 3d Armored Division from V Corps, and then they added a tank battalion and additional air defense from the 8th Infantry Division. (The 3d Armored Division had previously deployed one Apache battalion early to support XVIII Corps and I was aware of that and wanted to add that back if possible). Then we put a corps air defense unit together, composed of four Patriot batteries and two Hawk batteries that was formed from the air defense brigade in Europe. Our VII Corps Support Command grew from 7,500 Soldiers in our GDP scenario where we had a lot of host nation support in the mature infrastructure of central Germany, to over 26,000 for the austere desert environment. Later we would add a 15-hospital, 7,500 Soldier medical brigade commanded by a brigadier general. All our corps brigade-sized units: military police, signal, military intelligence, personnel, finance, and engineers, grew by almost a factor of two to be tailored to this new mission and set of conditions. Much of that addition came from Reserve Components in the CONUS and was done expertly by FORSCOM and their CG, my West Point classmate General Ed Burba. As it happened, tailoring VII Corps for this mission left us with only 40 percent of the old Germany-based Cold War VII Corps. Adding units would require a substantial leadership dimension of teambuilding so by the time we attacked we would have tight combat ready teams with these new units added. Such rapid tailoring would be the norm in the future for the US Army. It was not in 1990.

Putting a new team together is not automatic. Leaders need to assimilate new organizations, welcome them, and employ them in accordance with their tactical capabilities. When you take a big organization and rebuild it, tailored for the mission, you have got two things going on in terms of forming new teams. You have got a leadership piece of that, where you want to welcome Soldiers and leaders, make them part of your organization, make them feel wanted and needed, which they obviously were. You've got to get to know each other, get to know the new commanders, and how to communicate with then. Let Soldiers talk and get to know each other. Then you also want to know the capabilities. You want to employ them in accordance with their capabilities, be it a British armored division, like we eventually got, or if you're a new brigade going to the 1st Armored Division for example. The 2d Armored Division Forward, a separate Brigade from northern Germany, joined the 1st Infantry Division which deployed from Fort Riley, Kansas in Saudi Arabia to become their third maneuver brigade. Our engineers added two engineer brigades, so they were like an engineer division. Everyone had some kind of a plus up; so everybody had their own teambuilding. As corps commander I needed to talk about that and allow for that in all the units. That is a specific leadership skill set; how you welcome people in from individual soldiers to new units. You make them part of your combat team, and then get to know them and their tactical range of competencies. You don't want to stretch that out but you don't want to ignore it either. There was a lot of work on teambuilding. Getting in place and building the teams had to be stressed early on, in addition to training priorities.

Once we set our deployment order we wanted to continue to train gunnery skills of crews of units who had already deployed their equipment. So I asked the 3d Infantry Division to send equipment to Grafenwöhr training area so tank and Bradley crews from 2d Armored Cavalry Regiment and 1st Armored Division who needed qualification could do so before deploying. In a splendid act of selfless teamwork, soldiers, NCOs and leaders of the 3d Infantry Division responded immediately to provide training cadre and equipment so our crews could be razor sharp when they arrived in theater and got back on their own equipment.

Here is an extract of that meeting I wrote for *Into the Storm*:

> There was electricity in the air. At the beginning of some meetings, you look around and can tell from body language and lack of energy in small talk that you need to do something dramatic to get everyone's attention. That was not the case today.

It was an impressive collection of talented and savvy commanders who were now ready to serve the same cause, only on a different continent against a different enemy. The only commander at that meeting from outside the regular corps lineup was Major General Butch Funk, CG 3d Armored Division, normally assigned to V Corps. Following the two phone calls from Saudi, I had made myself some notes on three-by-five cards, as I did not want to leave anything out of this meeting. It was to be brief, but also important for all of us.

Attitude was important – mine and theirs. I needed to set the tone of command for this whole operation right from the start. I was pumped up. We had trained hard. We were confident. We were ready. I was sure of that. What I wanted was attention to thoughts we had previously adopted for VII Corps: focus on teamwork, discipline, agility, and skill in fundamentals. I wanted to reinforce the confidence, rapidly build this new team, set the attitude, and issue instructions for training priorities and rough order of deployment."

Welcome. You all know where we're going unless you missed AFN last night. This will be a different kind of meeting than we originally had planned for this morning. Butch [Major General Butch Funk], welcome to the VII Corps team. As I understand it, you will report here for operational matters, but stay plugged into V Corps for your deployment.

I am proud that we are able to answer the call. Proud that the JAYHAWKS are going. I told the CINC [General Saint] two months ago that if they needed another corps in Saudi, we were ready. We finished our mission in Europe and, besides, we are halfway there. Getting there will be a tough challenge, especially from a standing cold start. We can do it and will. We need to do what we know how to do. I want teamwork, since we will have a new lineup. We need discipline and reliance on the chain of command, since there will be a lot to do at the same time. There will be adjustments necessary, to be sure. Stay loose. This deployment will not go with the precision of laser brain surgery. Don't get frustrated because there is not much you can do about it anyway. As deployment friction generates time, use that time for training, especially in fundamentals. Remember, skill in fundamentals wins in combat.

In the absence of any mission orders, I want you to use your training time to concentrate on the following: chemical protection; weapons skills to be razor sharp, especially long-range gunnery; field craft, or living in the desert [later we would call it getting desert-smart and desert-tough]; and maneuver of large formations."

One other thing. We will go do what we have to do and talk about it later. We are going to join our fellow soldiers who have been there now in a tough situation for three months. We are good, we know that. If we have to kick some ass, we know how to do that, too. But we do not need a lot of swagger bullshit about us coming into theater as saviors of the situation down there. Quiet professionalism is what I want. Inner toughness. My words to my cavalry friends fit here; that is, I want more gun smoke than horseshit."

It was a short meeting. I wanted to get things in motion rapidly. The corps needed to explode into immediate action. It is what we would have done if the Soviets had launched a surprise attack. For us it was something that we had lived with in Central Europe for forty years. For all those years, we had had unannounced readiness alerts every month, in which we would have to clear our barracks and motor pools, in less than two hours. We could handle this cold start. I was sure of it."

> The other reason I was sure was that I was talking to winners. Leaders who had stayed the course, who had been part of a twenty-year rebuilding of the US Army, who had just helped win the Cold War without a shot fired. I recognized this kind of an outfit."
>
> I had been through this before. It would be the same in a lot of ways, but one thing was certain – this time the results would be different! I personally owed that to my fellow amputees from Valley Forge and to the soldiers now entrusted to my command."[1]

There were other priorities to get to work on.

We wanted to continue to modernize our heavy equipment and navigation devices and also ensure our Soldiers were protected against any chemical or biological attack through available vaccinations. Modernization speeds up in a crisis as Army priorities change and more money becomes available. Some of this happened before deployment, mostly after we got in country. We traded our quarter-ton vehicles for high mobility multipurpose wheeled vehicles (HMMWVs), traded some of our Bradleys for those with additional overhead protection, traded out 105mm gun tanks for 120mm gun tanks in two battalions of the 1st Infantry Division after they got in theater. We received some new global positioning satellite (GPS) devices in theater in addition to long-range navigation (LORAN), which used Iraqi transmission towers they left standing. We also painted our vehicles tan and with chemical resistant paint. We added armor protection. All this simultaneously with other priority activities.

Another dimension of this deployment was our families. We needed them to have a structure, so we formed a VII Corps family support directorate with Colonel Bob Julian as Director. He had been the signal equipment modernization person in the corps. We made Major General Roger Bean, Pershing Brigade Commander and an old friend of mine the VII Corps Base Commander, with General Saint's OK. I selected my Resource Manager, Colonel Jerry Sinn, a very imaginative and thoughtful officer who retired as a three-star, to be the Chief of Staff. Jerry had been a tunnel rat in Vietnam and was a friend. General Saint was very, very supportive as was his Chief of Staff, my West Point classmate, Major General Bill Burleson. They wanted to set conditions for us so we would be successful to include the family support. I know my wife just dove into that as the other command spouses did. They formed what they called Family Assistance Centers, FACs, where you got the facts. Since there are normally a lot of rumors we wanted to have a place you could go to get the facts. They invented newsletters and gave them names as my wife Denise did, calling the one at HQ, *The Sandpaper*.

Our German friends, civilian and military, were tremendously supportive. Their outpouring of support for our families, for providing us security, and to a certain extent resources was extraordinary in every respect. There were stories of German people driving out to front gates to talk to our Soldiers. They provided us security to supplement our own. My wife told me later that at Kelley Barracks they were handing gifts for our Soldiers through the front gate, that they left money for buying Christmas gifts for family members. I can't say enough about our German friends and neighbors who really helped us out. General Carl Vuono, Chief of Staff of the Army, came over to visit us while all the deployment was going on and he said to me, "Fred, we just don't have the lift to get all our family members back to the States. You've got to convince them to stay here." I said, "I don't think I need to do a lot of convincing." For example, a reporter asked my wife, 'are you going home'? She said, "What are you talking about, I am home, this is my home." Just about all the family members felt that way. There was another dimension of that, too. I met with the head of Department of Defense Dependent School System (DODDS) Europe and we talked about how they would help us identifying any issues with children or families they might be having difficulties. Teachers were particularly sensitive to changes in behavior of their students and could get needed help.

It was the first time that our Army, actually since World War II, had deployed an already forward deployed unit to another theater and left their family members in the forward deployed location. This

was all brand new. There were no family support groups. The Army had thought about family but it was all in the context of everybody being in the forward location; it was not absent service members. So it was all brand new and to their great credit our family members, our spouses, showed an extraordinary amount of leadership, by being there by themselves, with their own brand of courage. I remain so enormously grateful, as Commander of VII Corps, for the way our family members just took up the challenge and got after the whole dimension of family support, including being ready for casualties. General Saint made military assets available like transportation, office space, and phones. My wife used my old office there in the Corps Headquarters. Community transportation, communication, papers, he said go ahead and do all that. So there was a lot of concurrent initiative shown by our family members and I still don't think that story is very well told. I have extraordinary admiration and appreciation for all of them for what they did, all our footprint in Europe and of course back here in the United States, at Fort Riley and Fort Hood. And we got a considerable amount of help from the United States Army Reserve (USAR) and the Army National Guard that in their own hometowns around the USA. We published an order establishing in Germany VII Corps Base on 6 December 1990. All this is routine in our Army now, but it was not then, certainly not on that scale and without noticed.

So the whole team had to shake itself out the current mindset in a cultural sense as well as an operational mission sense. That may include casualties, it may include Soldiers killed in action and wounded coming back to Germany. In the context of the times in 1990-1991 there was no email, no cell phones, no text, or Facebook, or any social media. The fact that leaders, Soldiers, and Families were able to adapt very quickly was a great credit to the whole team.

As a major unit commander, what you want to do is set the big ideas in place and foster that command method that suits the mission and allows your extraordinarily talented and deep command structure to exercise initiative. This is corps, divisions, separate brigades, and regiments. The Army calls that now disciplined initiative, initiative within the commander's intent, and that's what we were trying to do. These were talented, wise senior commanders, combat veterans. We needed to have a common understanding of what we were doing, a clear intent, our priorities focused on the big things, and then demand of ourselves initiative and agility in getting after it to achieve victory if it came to offensive action.

Our preparation, planning, packing, and movement to ports were all enabled by an enormous effort by the German government. They give us road priority for road marches to ports, movement by rivers on barges, rail and train priorities and necessary flat cars to move our heavy equipment (tanks, Bradleys, and aircraft). All of this would be for nothing if there were no strategic sea and air lift available. Our plan was to move to the ports, then load equipment tailored by combat unit, then fly units of Soldiers to the airfields near the ports in Saudi Arabia to link up with ships. When they arrived we would then road march wheeled vehicles and tracked vehicles on HETs the 500 kilometers to our tactical assembly areas. It would take 152 ships to transport our equipment from Germany alone and 928 aircraft sorties to move our Soldiers in units. Without strategic lift the US Army is helpless to get to the operational area. This was a cold start. Ships and aircraft came from all over the world arranged by Transportation Command. But investment in strategic lift has to be a continuing priority to get the Army where our nation needs its Army to fight. Strategic lift is key and essential. We got the strategic lift but the deployment was not smooth. We had crowding in the ports while Soldiers waited for sea shipments, commander getting distracted from the focus on war fighting, units arriving on ships with no tactical configuration, CONEX containers loaded with spare parts and other necessary gear had no in-transit visibility and were scattered on ships and ports causing units huge difficulties finding them, and later Scud missile attacks on ports. Ships were of all types from break bulk World War-II era ships to more modern roll-on/roll-off ships. It got done but it was a huge lesson for the future. Strategic lift must be part of land forces, Army, combat readiness. You have to be able to get there.

The big challenge in our deployment was the actual strategic lift. Not so much airlift, since there were plenty of airplanes both in the Air Force and contracted Civil Reserve Air Fleet to move our soldiers from Germany to Saudi Arabia. The big challenge was sealift. We ended up using essentially three ports, Bremen, Bremerhaven, and Rotterdam. The Germans were wonderful getting our units from home station on flat cars, and via route convoys, and even, in some cases, on river barges for a short period. Day and night, seven days a week, the German railway system worked around the clock to get us there. They had the expertise and equipment because we had had a sizable presence in Germany for a long period of time and typically moved our tracked vehicles by rail. They had a lot of flat cars then but they don't anymore.

But sealift was a challenge. We used a combination of modern ships and World War II Liberty ships with the old cargo nets. The a few roll-on/roll-off ships we had were very easy to use. Unfortunately the ships were loaded not with tactical integrity but to take advantage of the space on the ship. We had one battalion which was on eight different ships! We had estimated we would move our soldiers by air and then link up at two ports. Those were Al Jubail, where the 2d Armored Cavalry Regiment went in, and the port at Dammam, where most of the corps went in. We linked them up with their equipment there, then they would load heavy tracked vehicles on theater heavy equipment transports (HETs) and our own HETs, then road march the wheel vehicles and the track vehicles on HETs 400-500 kilometers out to the tactical assembly areas. That estimate was way off. We thought we'd have 8-10,000 Soldiers in the port at any one time. As it turned out we peaked at about 33,000 Soldiers in the ports, waiting on their equipment to arrive.

We started paying more attention to deployment than to war fighting. I was drawn into the deployment as well, getting involved in reducing friction and asking for help from higher HQ where needed. But my attention was needed elsewhere. I used to say that we had to get our heads out of the CONEX containers and into the war games, and training, and war fighting. So we started a couple of war games there in Germany so we could get back into that. I told the commanders, "Look, this is not going to go according to the precision of laser brain surgery. This deployment is going to be full of friction, and delays, and so forth. And there's not a whole lot we can do about it. We can lose our temper. We can scream, and rant, and rave, and throw our kevlars around, and do all that stuff, but it's not going to do any good at all. And all we are going to do is add pressure and stress to ourselves and our Soldiers, and we have enough of that already. Meanwhile we, me included, are not paying attention to what we ought to be paying attention to, which is the war fighting mission and getting ready for that." So we just forced ourselves to tolerate deployment imperfection.

Strategic lift, sealift and airlift, are vital to land success as part of the joint team. The Army is the only service that depends on the other services to move from one continent to the other, or to a different place on the same continent. We're always out of position when there's a contingency almost by definition. The Air Force moves its own. They fly their own fighter squadrons there. The Marine Corps has got the Navy. And, of course, the Navy is the Navy. The Army, though, depends on sealift and airlift. Naturally the other services don't want to invest a whole lot in strategic lift. They would rather invest it in capital ships and combat aircraft. I understand that. But part of combat readiness for the land forces ought to be the ability to get there. That ought to be rated also, in terms of investments and actual sealift asset capabilities. In the no-notice scenario in 1990 and 1991, our sealift capacity was not impressive and unable to efficiently move an armored corps from Germany to Saudi Arabia with no notice.

So it took us a while to get there. Some ships broke down. One crew got off, I think in Cyprus, and would not get back on the ship because they were going into a war zone. Not much you can do about all that. Military Sealift Command and Transportation Command were doing all they could with the assets they had to get us there and get us there as rapidly as possible. Senior commanders need to trust

that those agencies will do the best with what they have. We need to establish some early deployment priorities, set attitudes, and then let them go about helping you out. Then you can stay focused on training and war fighting.

Getting there is a huge challenge for the Army and senior commanders need to be aware of what's available. I think they ought to monitor that. They ought to train to that if they can. We were pretty good at rail loading and shipping vehicles around in Germany, because we did it all the time, because we went to major training areas by train with our heavy equipment from home station all the time.

Because of all the friction in sealift the number of Soldiers in the two Saudi ports accumulated beyond our initial estimates. What I needed to do was get the corps headquarters out of the port and into the tactical assembly areas. In that way I could draw our attention and command focus out there, to training for war and getting what we called desert smart and desert tough.

But to do that I needed a mature, tough-minded command team to run the ports. I knew the perfect choice. My West Point classmate, Brigadier General Bill Mullen, was the commander of the 1st Infantry Division Forward in Germany was in the process of drawing down his unit. So I cleared this with General Saint, called Bill, and told him, "I'd like you and your entire chain of command to come on down here and run the port operations, so I can get the corps out into the tactical assembly areas and get ready to fight and win. And I need to be out there with them." He said okay. Assuming this mission was just a wonderful act of selflessness on his part and that of his NCO, officer, and Soldier command team. Bill was a genuine hero from Vietnam, a Distinguished Service Cross infantryman. A wonderful man, a great friend. He is one of those people, through our friendships and our past associations, I could just give him a couple of sentences, general intention and direction, and he just took it from there. He said, "Fred, don't worry about it. I got it. I know what needs to get done here; I'll just keep you informed." That was about it. That's all I needed. As you develop those kinds of relationships and relationships with those who are in your command, you can communicate in shorthand. You don't have to go on long-winded explanations. You do not have time for that. Besides, these are savvy people, they know what they're doing, and you don't need long formal orders with a lot of annexes. So Bill and his chain of command came down there with his battalion commanders and did a superb job. They were the first ones under attack. They got Scud missile attacks before anything happened to us out in our tactical assembly areas.

From *Into the Storm*:

> Their accomplishments were staggering. Between 5 December and 18 February, 50,500 vehicles were off-loaded and staged (checked and readied for heavy equipment transporter movement), 107,000 troops were billeted, supported, and secured, as well as thousands of other soldiers from other units. There were 900 convoys (the numbers of trucks in the convoys varied from twenty to fifty). More than 6,000 armored vehicles and other pieces of equipment were moved the 550 kilometers to desert assembly areas. Thirty-five hundred containers with spare parts and other critical items were sent forward. Eighty-six hundred vehicles were painted sand color. The maximum number of soldiers in port waiting for their equipment peaked at 35,981 on 9 January 1991 (many more than the eight to ten thousand soldiers they had planned for!). Maximum ship arrivals were eight in one day. On 12 January, nineteen ships were waiting to off-load. The last tanks and Bradleys arrived from Germany from the 3d Brigade, 3AD, on 6 February 1991. The last of VII Corps units to arrive was the 142d Artillery Brigade from the Arkansas National Guard on 17 February 1991. The types of ships varied: 11 US Navy fast sea lift; 63 so-called roll-on roll-off ships; 74 World War II-type break bulk ships; and 4 lighter aboard ship. Total ships: 152. The flow was not steady. In one week, 7 to 14 January, forty ships arrived.[2]

This is an entry from my own command journal of December 7, 1990 from visit at port of Al Jubail: *"Saw 2/2 ACR. Troops look great. Spirited, cleaning weapons. Chain of command present. Landed in AM and right on their vehicles w/o sleep. Inspiring. Gave coins to Soldiers cleaning weapons."*

Being with Soldiers clears your mind; it's inspiring and reminds you of your main duty of mission accomplishment at the least cost to them. They were giving it their all, even the first day there, and would continue that spirit right through to final victory. Inspiring.

I had initially estimated we needed three weeks from landing in Saudi Arabia to find our equipment, unite Soldiers with it, move to our assembly areas, and then train for war. I backed that off to two weeks later. But reception, onward movement, then mission-focused training is combat power because it enables Soldiers and units to adapt to their new conditions. We got our two weeks, but barely.

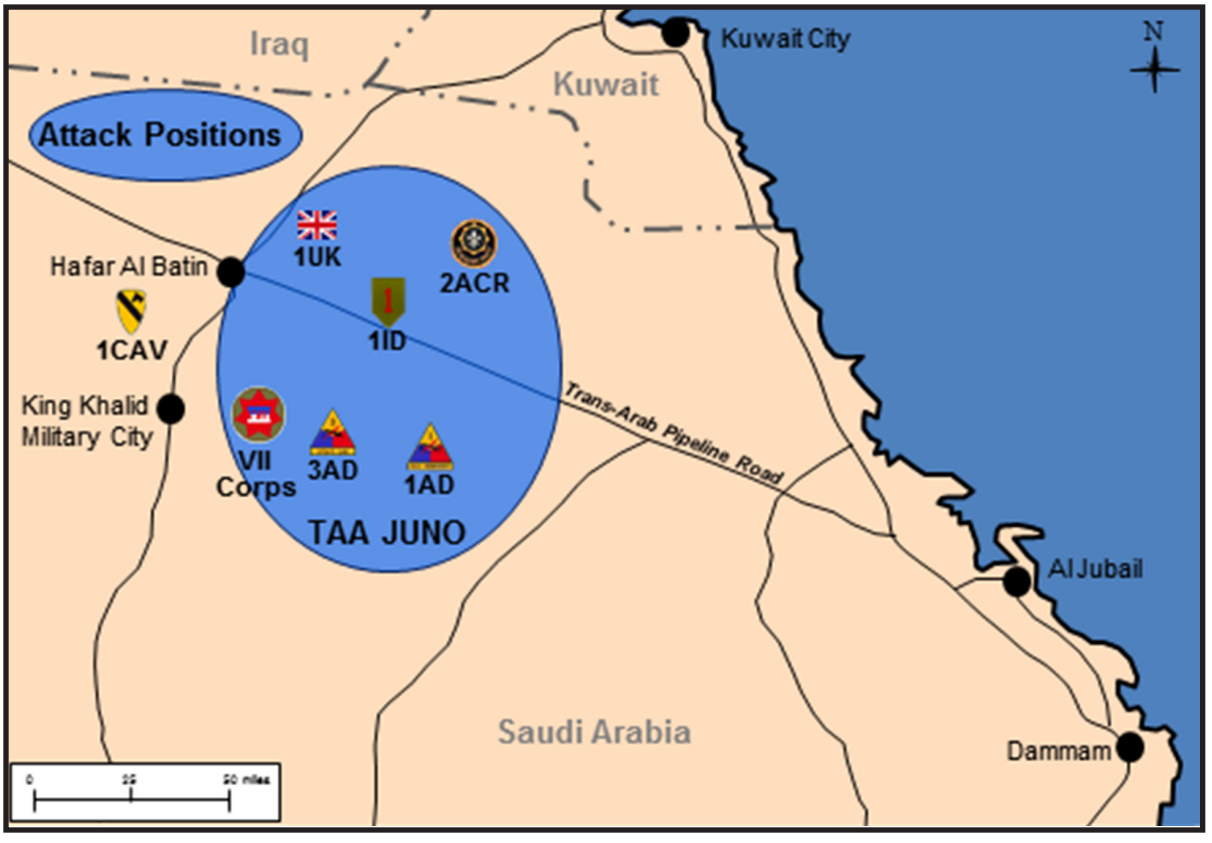

Figure 12.2. VII Corps Ports, Tactical Assembly Area, Attack Positions. Map created by CAC History for the authors.

We had set out getting desert smart and desert tough. In current terminology, "Leaders and Soldiers at all levels used disciplined initiative and prudent risks flowing from shared understanding and the teamwork fostered by trust" to make that happen. They devised their own training methods for gunnery using wartime ammunition, used to stand to early morning alerts, and did large unit exercises to practice maneuvering such formations over big distances. Our leaders knew how to do battle focused training and flat got after it after arriving in country. We got a concept of the operation on our leader's reconnaissance early on that we used to focus training, then gradually got more focused as war planning got more specific especially after the 29 November UN Authorization of Force Resolution. As a commander visiting their training I saw different approaches used but all focused on the same objective. It was an extraordinary display of selfless teamwork and the positive effect of mission command on building combat power.

After the initial meeting on 9 November, we got our leadership team to Saudi Arabia on 11 November for a leaders' reconnaissance, a time-proven method for commanders and senior NCOs to go look over the actual operational area with their own eyes before finalizing any plans. We got our leaders down to Saudi Arabia early. Fortuitously, it was at that time that GEN Schwarzkopf and Central Command had sketched out a rough concept of operation that was changed into a plan a couple months later. But we got a concept of operation. General Schwarzkopf's briefing was positive, concise, and done with enthusiasm. We all felt strongly confident we could do this mission he had just outlined. What I knew is we were going to be the main attack, it was going to be somewhere west of Wadi Al-Batin, and our target was to destroy the Republican Guard's forces in our sector of attack. That's really it. I did not need to know much more than that. That became the basis for our own planning, talking, sketching out a variety of possibilities, and also mission focused training. That mission focus confirmed the value of the training priorities we already had established such as long-range gunnery, offensive maneuver over bigger distances, and command and control, and command on the move of large formations in an attack.

I had personally been thinking about how you conduct a big corps attack for some time. Back in the Cold War days we only talked defense. Only General Saint talked about conducting large unit attack maneuvers as part of his GDP plan when he was III Corps Commander. He would deploy to northern Germany from Texas, then conduct a counterattack in northern Germany to restore the territorial integrity of NATO. No one else talked about mounted corps attacks. Defense tends to be very neat and controlled. Everything is set piece. Attacks tend to be relatively disorganized from a control standpoint, because you want subordinates to use their initiative, to take advantage of enemy vulnerabilities or exploit their own successes without having to check with higher HQ. You want subordinates operating within a clearly understood intent. So in the attack you use fewer control measures. You don't want to talk about control and you want to let people go. You want your style of command to be mission orders. The last US corps in the attack was in Korea. There were lots of examples from World War II, but none now. I got to thinking about that as a corps commander, how would I do that? So I went back and leafed through some books. I took five books with me, but I thought *The Desert Generals*, by Correlli Barnett, talking about operations in the early 1940s, even before Rommel got to North Africa, was especially enlightening. He described this as almost an operation at sea, with ships. You could go anywhere you wanted to. Control of the air is very important, movement control for large formations is important, as is logistics and keeping up fuel, ammo, and water. So a lot of that was helpful, just leafing through those books. Those are enduring thoughts. Books on Rommel's war in North Africa, and the retaking of Burma in *Defeat Into Victory* by Field Marshal William Slim, all described thoughts about getting the big ideas, the intent, the commander's intent, and you do that yourself.

Reflection on my reading led to some thoughts. It occurred to me that there is a real art to commanding a large unit moving toward an enemy that may or may not also move toward you. Some years ago I put these thoughts into words during the writing of *Into the Storm* and have presented them often in the classroom and in other writings.

> A mounted corps moving and aimed at a moving enemy force can put itself into any number of configurations on the ground. When you are certain the enemy will be at a place and time and in a known configuration, you can commit your own forces early to the exact attack formation you want and leave them that way. When the enemy is less predictable and has a few options still available to him, then you want to move initially in a balanced formation, and commit to your final attack scheme as late as possible. You want your own forces to be able to execute, but you don't want to give your enemy time to react. That is a matter of judgment and a – much-misunderstood – art form that takes much skill, brains, intuition, and practice to develop well. It is the essence of senior-level tactical decision making. To commit to an attack maneuver prematurely is to give the en-

emy time to react. To commit too late is to prevent your own forces from accomplishing the maneuver.[3]

I also liked Field Marshal Erwin Rommel's definition of risk and gamble. My own use of this is borrowed in part from remarks attributed to Rommel in Desmond Young's book, *Rommel: The Desert Fox*. "A risk is a chance you take that if it does not work you have the means to recover. A gamble is a chance you take that if it does not work you hazard the entire force because you do not have the means to recover." Normally I believe to succeed, to gain victory, you must take risks and on occasion a gamble.

Another consideration was what type of command posts would we use and what would each do to command this armored corps on the move while retaining accurate situational awareness. In the GDP scenario, a corps almost didn't need a tactical command post, and it was hard to find doctrine on that at the time. When I assumed command of VII Corps, because of our GDP focus VII Corps had not practiced establishing a tactical command post; a smaller, more mobile HQ closer to front line units. The terrain and defensive mission did not demand that. We did establish one for our REFORGER January 1990 exercise and had some growing pains. So we had worked on that. After our initial concept briefing, I said we are going to use tactical command posts, we are probably going to have a couple, to keep up with the movement and the limitations of direct line of sight communications. My G-3 Colonel Stan Cheerie took that on and we formed a main TAC CP as well as two "jump" TAC CPs. And the corps main headquarters, it turned out, it got to be so big, with the add-ons and so forth, that I just told John Landry, Corps Chief of Staff, don't even attempt to move it. It will take you four days to break it down, pick it up, move it, set it up again. Hell, this thing may be over by that time, so just stay where you are. What we ended up with was FM line-of-sight, push-to-talk radios to command a corps; which was a little different than the doctrine of time. Stringing wire communications was totally impractical and satellite communications were notoriously unreliable and mostly unavailable. So FM was the only way to do this. I wanted to be close to our maneuver units, to be able to get around and talk face-to-face with commanders, to get an intuitive feel and picture in my mind what was going on from seeing and sensing up front and from continuous exchanges with my subordinate commanders. We ended up with a tight team able to keep up physically with the advance of the corps with accurate situational understanding. From essentially nothing to that performance was a great achievement by our G-3 operating under Colonel Cherrie's leadership.

Later I would estimate that my decision making after the attack began by getting about 20 percent of my information from staff updates; about 40 percent to 50 percent from input from subordinate commanders when I talked with them, what I was seeing and hearing myself, my own intuition, their judgments; and the rest from my own background, professional education, self-study, reading history and my experience. The old planning cycle for a corps was a 72-hour planning cycle. That was old Army corps doctrine. But that wasn't going to work either, as this operation was going to go so fast. If orders to divisions reached all the way down to the Soldiers within 24 hours, that would be a huge achievement. But we would need to be even faster; we need a system probably closer to 12 hours, so we had to get into a much more rapid tempo of orders and actions. We had to focus on mission orders, verbal orders, be inside each other's heads so to speak, and have continuous common understanding. The team of commanders I had the honor to command and serve with could do that, as could our staffs at the various tactical command posts throughout the corps. But getting to that level took a lot of practice and talented staff officers and NCOs.

Command on the move of large mounted formations is a set of military competencies all their own. Later after the war while at TRADOC, we would do a lot of work in the art and science on command on the move. New advances in information technology in sharing simultaneously information aided that.

Yet most importantly, such competencies require judgment and continuous sharing of understanding gained through personal interactions in addition to staffs and commanders seeing the same icons on screens while separated geographically.

So we almost had to create a whole new command climate and culture for that set of new conditions. Doing that requires considerable leadership skills at all levels and a good amount of social intelligence or emotional IQ. I don't think that is unlike what this generation has been doing, that they've done in Iraq and Afghanistan, to create their own set of command climate and command methods to suit the mission. Not every set of command method fits everything, so you've got to adjust and adapt. The mission is important; carry out the mission at least cost to those entrusted to your command. Fulfill that trust.

Shortly before we attacked in February 1991, I was talking to a group of Soldiers in 3d Armored Division about our attack plan by then published and being rehearsed. A noncommissioned officer stopped me, and said, "*Don't worry, general, we trust you*." I was stunned and humbled, overcome by my own emotions and almost could not answer. That NCO had captured, as NCOs frequently do when we have the patience to listen, the essence of command, fulfilling the trust of those entrusted to our command by the methods and judgments in decisions we use to accomplish the mission at least cost to them. I vowed to do all I could do fulfill that trust as CG VII Corps. I would later repeat that story in an article in *Military Review* on Battle Command in 1996, in the book *Into the Storm* and repeatedly over the years to a variety of professional groups, most recently at West Point in my duties there as Class '66 Chair, and then in a visit to MCCC at Fort Benning in February 2017. The point was always the same – *fulfilling trust is the very essence of command and leadership.*

An example of the success of adopting command methods, of using mission orders to fulfill trust, was the deployment of the 2d Armored Cavalry Regiment. Their motto is, "*Toujours Prêt*," I said to Don Holder, okay, I'm going to take you at your word, "Always Ready." They responded just as a great cavalry regiment would. They reacted quickly to get ready, and deployed, and were in country on 6 December, inside 30 days, from a no notice start. Impressive. I sketched out to Don the tactical assembly area, and I told him generally, I want you to connect to the east with XVIII Corps, and also start your training in accordance to the priorities. I also want you to be the tactical screen, so you've got an operational mission here in case something happens. You have got to protect the infrastructure. That was about the extent of it, and he took it from there. So right away, we are using mission orders, here's the task, now you figure out how you're going to do that, how you're going to position your squadrons and your footprint and so forth. That was all Don's business, he could handle all of that; the regiment could handle it. So right away it was mission orders. They and all our leaders and units reacted the same way. They all would later do that in our rapid 89-hour attack. Superb.

We started talking like that right from the beginning. If that's the command methods we're going to use to accomplish our mission, we need to start practicing those, even in our deployment. All commanders went about training to conduct large unit operations differently. To insure our intent was met I would go visit training and observe the differing methods while also seeing if they needed any additional resources to be successful. They each were talented, experienced commanders, had their own organizations to work with, knew their own talent and their capabilities in those organizations, so they all used different methods to get to the same goals.

We wanted to train on some specifics we had discussed at that first training priorities meeting on 9 November. We also wanted to practice long-range gunnery. We wanted the Soldiers to fire their service or wartime ammunition. We negotiated with the local government to get some land to do that, and to fire depleted uranium in the desert. It is different firing a war time ammunition tank round. For example, it's going about a mile a second and its accuracy is way beyond the normal training round accuracy of 1500 meters. After combat, as I made my way around thanking leaders, units, and Soldiers, I habitually asked

what was the longest target hit. As I recall our longest target hit – described to me anyway – was around 3,300 meters, which is almost two miles. Since the majority of the corps were not combat veterans, you want to build some confidence with live fire wartime ammunition.

We also wanted confidence in being able to move in the desert. I think of maneuvering as moving your own force and keeping that force in a coherent all arms posture as they move to a position of advantage over the enemy. Then as the battles go on to continue to move them to keep that advantage and that coherence. That usually is more tempo than absolute speed. Before you do that maneuver, you have to be able to move quickly to those places of advantage, to navigate. If you can't get there with that whole coherent all arms team, then there's no maneuver. So you've got to be able to move in order to maneuver; to get to places of advantage or phase lines or objectives by a certain time to gain positional advantage over the enemy. You want confidence to be able to do that. We had that in Germany. Now to gain it here in the desert with few or no landmarks.

So we practiced to gain that movement and maneuver competency in that terrain. We did get some GPS. We had to pay a lot of money for those, and I think we ended up with over 3,000 of those in the corps. But with 50,000 vehicles, not everybody got one. Maybe there was one per platoon and one per company, one per troop, one per battery. Our aviators held them in their hands pointing through their greenhouse toward satellites. Sometimes during the day those satellites were not available. But we wanted Soldiers and leaders to get confidence in being able to move and maneuver in the desert.

I also wanted all of our units to have some experience of firing at the actual enemy. That led us to start doing artillery raids as 1st Cavalry Division was doing their feints and demonstrations in the Rugi Pocket in the Wadi Al-Batin to deceive Iraqi forces about our location of our main attack. This mission was given to the 1st Cavalry Division and it served as more than just training. There was an operational practicality to it. I wanted the Iraqis to believe we were attacking up the Wadi Al-Batin when in fact we were going much further to the west. I also wanted artillery raids to destroy and degrade the Iraqi's artillery within the range of the planned breaching operation. So we did that in these artillery raids, and that was orchestrated by our corps artillery commander, Brigadier General Creighton Abrams and his staff using all artillery assets in VII Corps, to include our new members 1st British Armoured Division.

We also turned to Stand-To, getting combat ready before first light, as well as did drills with NBC: mask, unmask, wearing the Mission Oriented Protective Posture (MOPP) gear, the protective posture gear.

All that training builds confidence but also needed competencies to execute our mission. That all starts to build confidence, just like the old methods in the Cold War scenarios of the terrain walks and the wargames, that patterned themselves after the general defense plan. We had to build confidence in this new scenario, and that's part of command methods. I played a lot of baseball, and I made myself a note in my journal that we needed to get some "batting practice" before we attacked. That was my terminology to myself, about how you gain confidence by Soldiers and leaders just going out there and executing needed training that mirrors skills you need for the mission. All this was part of forming teams and getting in place.

As the weeks went by I checked in on as many units as I could, visiting from time to time, going out there to see how they were doing. My aide at the time Major Toby Martinez was my navigator and always got us to the right place in addition to keeping an impeccable journal of our visits and context of the exchanges before, during, and after the war. I had my own armored personnel carrier (M113). We went and visited the 1st Infantry Division and we were actually dead reckoning, navigating with just a compass, as we didn't have a GPS in the M113. You know, when people see you roll up in a M113 as the corps commander, hop out and go visit them, that's different than arriving in a helicopter with a cloud of dust and surrounded by security. So you get out and around, see how people are doing, how they are learning to navigate in the desert. One day I visited Major General Butch Funk on 5 February mentoring

Figure 12.3. Lieutenant General Franks talks with his Soldiers. Photo courtesy of the author.

his 3d Armored Division in conducting a division attack using HMMWVs in a command post exercise. It was an extremely effective training technique. Butch had commanded at the National Training Center (NTC) at Fort Irwin in the California desert and knew what he was doing. Visits provided other opportunities. After the air war began on 17 February, we began to collect deserters from front line units of VII Corps. I wanted to visit our collection facility and interrogation facility, to ensure we all saw this together, that is the rule of land warfare rules and how we treated and interrogated prisoners was a mark of who we are and what we stand for. I also got to visit a hospital where a Soldier from the 2d Armored Cavalry Regiment was recovering from a training accident. When I asked what I could do for him, he asked to go back to his unit. After checking on his condition with the hospital commander, we put him on our command helicopter and took him back to his unit. His last name was McLemore from Troop B, 1/2ACR. Those examples gave me a great insight into the character and spirit of Corps Soldiers and their intense preparations getting ready to fight and win. All our commanders were doing similar visits getting out and around during this period.

Another reason I was visiting units personally was I needed to fine-tune my sense of time and distance in theater on that terrain. The Germans call it "*fingerspitzengefühl*" (roughly translated as flair). I didn't have it for the desert, even though I commanded a cavalry squadron at Fort Bliss (1st Squadron, 3d Armored Cavalry Regiment) and spent a lot of time maneuvering at that level in the desert. So I was a little familiar with the desert, but I needed to recalibrate my thinking about how fast units can move in

that set of conditions. I was good at it, I thought, in Germany, with all the moving around we did over roads and bridges and valleys and streams and rivers. But I needed to get a better feel personally in the desert. That's another reason why I got around in a HMMWV, in a M113; so I had a pretty good sense of movement in that terrain by the time we attacked. I needed to get my head into the new situation, personally as a commander, so later my mind picture would be accurate as I heard reports on the radio or listened as commanders described actions during our personal meetings. It seems to me you have to set the right command methods that suit your mission to include working on your own competencies.

There had not been a mounted corps level offensive operation in the US Army since Korea. We would be the first and we were on a mission to get this right and achieve victory as part of the Coalition. We all also remembered Vietnam. For me personally there was not a day I did not remember Vietnam and that broken trust with our Soldiers who went and did what our country asked them to do with great skill, courage, and teamwork. "Don't worry, General, we trust you," that non-commissioned officer had said to me on 15 February. There would be no fractured trust this time. We would all see to that. That was an unbeatable element of will in our attack.

Go Early

In offensive operations, especially with large mounted formations attacking at a rapid tempo, commanders need to be adaptable to change. That had been clear to us in our own operations since 8 November in forming teams and getting in place to train, then to fight and win.

But first, a quick summary of our evolving planning for war, and the decisions made to take advantage of opportunities afforded by our Iraqi enemy, by our own higher command in adding forces for contingency missions, and opportunities we created for ourselves by being trained and ready.

Concurrent with all the training for war, we began planning right after our leader's reconnaissance to Saudi Arabia on 27 November, soon after we got the concept of operations from General Schwarzkopf. We were also admonished about operational security (OPSEC) and that he would deal brutally with anyone violating operations security. Because of OPSEC in Europe and because we were arguing to get our tactical assembly areas (TAAs) another 200 kilometers west toward King Khalid Military City (KKMC), I delayed starting war planning in Germany. Third Army and CENTCOM were also doing their own planning. Our mission never changed; "to destroy the RGFC in our sector of attack." In our sector of attack, to get to where the RGFC were from the Saudi-Iraq border was about 150-200 kilometers. The RGFC in our sector at that point were the Tawakalna, Medina, and Hammurabi Divisions, the Jihad Corps of the 10th and 12th Armored Divisions, the 17th Armored Division, and the Al Faw Infantry Division. In between was navigable terrain and the Iraqi VII Corps with five infantry divisions (26th, 48th, 31st, 25th, 27th) and the 52d Armored Division in reserve. The Iraqi VII Corps had also established a complex obstacle along the Iraq-Saudi border that got less complex the further west from the Wadi Al-Batin. We had to breach that obstacle and get our combat units through that plus the necessary logistics and fire support maneuvered into the right combination 150 km forward for a rolling attack into the RGFC and sustain that momentum against the RGFC for as long as it took to destroy them.

We kept adding forces to our own formation as the Third Army plan evolved. We added the 1st British Armored Division formally on 24 December 1990 when I met with Lieutenant General Peter de la Billière, the senior British officer in the Theater, and we agreed verbally to conditions under which they would be employed even though we had orders much earlier in December. No written contracts, just two senior commanders who trusted each other and shook hands. It was there I met again with CG 1st UK Armoured, Major General Rupert Smith, a superb officer and commander. We saw eye to eye on most everything right from that beginning. We also had been directed to send the 2d Armored Division

(Forward) to join the US Marine Corps (USMC) attack to give them more combat power. I objected, as they were the third brigade of my breaching division, the 1st Infantry. Lieutenant General Cal Waller, General Schwarzkopf's deputy, asked me for an alternative. I recommended the separate brigade of the 1st Cavalry Division, the Tiger Brigade, as 1st Cavalry as initially Theater Reserve would more than likely be sent to VII Corps the main attack soon after the attack began. General Schwarzkopf agreed and the Tiger Brigade went with 1 Marine Expeditionary Force (MEF). We also argued for more artillery so each of our attacking units could have an artillery brigade and were given the 75th Field Artillery Brigade who ended up firing the first ever Tactical Missile System (TACMS) missile against an SA-2 enemy air defense target successfully, and was Major General Ron Griffith's supporting artillery brigade with 1st Armored Division.

There were many plans, conferences, and map exercises (MAPEXs) where commanders exchanged ideas about maneuver space, maneuver options, and force allocation, to include especially fire support. These exchanges were sometime heated and always with professional candor. We were dealing with the deadly serious matter of warfighting against a real enemy and the best way to accomplish each mission and the overall theater mission at least cost to the Soldiers and Marines entrusted to us. We also had to get used to new procedures for allocation of fixed wing air that differed considerably from NATO procedures. We also had to get used to working with Special Operations Forces (SOF) in our sector of attack, something a NATO corps never did. We solved that and got valuable intelligence from them on terrain and enemy forces. We also had two briefings with Secretary of Defense Dick Cheney and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff General Colin Powell. After the first briefing on 15 December 1990 Secretary Cheney said he felt better now. At the second briefing on 9 February 1991 he asked, "How will it all end?" the strategic question of the campaign.

All this was going on as simultaneously we were doing deployment and movement to our tactical assembly areas and doing intense war focused training. In the end we went from first units on trains to port in Germany on 19 November 1990 to our attack on 24 February 1991 with a four then five division 146,000 Soldier US and British VII Corps. 97 days. Then we attacked over 250 km in 89 hours, destroying the better part of 11 Iraqi divisions to include the two RGFC divisions then in our sector of attack that resulted in victory as part of the Coalition air-ground-sea attack that liberated Kuwait.

UN Resolution 678 was passed on 29 November, which stated that if the Iraqis didn't withdraw from Kuwait by 15 January of 1991, then all available means could be used to get them out. So that pretty well nailed it down for us, and we knew at that point, if they did not move, and there was no indication they were going to, that we were going to conduct an attack. So then the command visits and the planning were even more frequent. We did another leader recon from 6-8 December to get a feel for deployment and onward movement from that end, and then deployed the Corps HQ on 13 December. During this time of developing the final plan plus simultaneously deploying and training, I liked to go around and visit subordinates before I came to a decision; listen to them, take a look at their units, see their sensing of things, include them in some thoughts and ideas that I was having. And then, from time to time, get the unit commanders together and talk over things in a group, wargame possibilities, and listen to what the collective issues were. All the time we were reinforcing our common understanding and teamwork, sharpening my own ability to communicate with each of them, using judgment to make decisions, plus I had an opportunity to listen and find ways I could help them and by extension the corps be successful. Later Merwyn Hayes and Mike Comer would write a book, entitled *Start with Humility*, where I used the expression, "to lead is also to serve." That also works in senior level armored command in battle.

The point of all this is that senior commanders are drawn in many different directions, necessarily so for the mission. They must have the professional and personal skills to handle all of that plus shield

their subordinates who have their own competing demands to deal with. You have to fit into a new culture as it was in our case. We were a NATO corps now fitting into CENTCOM. There were procedures to realign to or discuss possible changes, like air allocation, changes to plans in rapidly moving situations, dealing with CENTCOM doubling as the land component headquarters located some 600 km plus from our operation, determining command post arrangements for higher HQ during the attack, and agreeing on procedures to give higher HQ continuing situational awareness. As I was to learn later, CENTCOM had run an exercise in July that almost anticipated the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait and possible responses, so they had shorthand understanding of the situation and we did not. There were also considerable command climate differences from NATO USAREUR to CENTCOM that took a lot of getting used to. Combining units to go to a contingency area will always involve these issues and large unit commanders must get used to them and deal with them. These were all elements of senior level battle command in an offensive mounted attack. It demanded every ounce of my own character, competence, and leadership skills as a corps commander. I owed that to the Soldiers and leaders of VII Corps.

After the UN Resolution passed, our planning got intense. While in our tactical assembly areas we had some wargames at Third Army in Riyadh, XVIII Corps and us, and the Theater Support Command. Eventually the Third Army order was published, which tasked us as the main attack in a sector 120 km wide west of the Wadi Al-Batin, to attack and destroy the Republican Guards in our sector. At that point in time, our sector went directly north-northeast, and included all the Republican Guard's forces. XVIII Corps was to attack west of us due north and cut Highway 8. After completing that mission, side by side with our attack, when we got to Highway 8 XVIII Corps would have been pinched out of maneuver room. They would have been sitting out there with 24th Infantry Division, 101st Air Assault, 82d Airborne, and a French light division; all that combat power. And so in discussions with my planners I said we need to come up with a series of fragmentary plans (FRAGPLANS) about how we were going to conduct our mission to destroy the RGFC in our sector. Such planning was dependent of what the RGFC tried to do or what we forced them to do. We developed seven FRAGPLANS to accomplish the mission. We also considered how our operation could possibly free up that combat power in XVIII Corps to join us in a two corps Army level attack to destroy the RGFC before they could escape the Theater. I and my staff discussed this option with Lieutenant General Yeosock and Third Army. John liked the idea. Our corps planning challenge was to develop a campaign to maneuver the corps through a series of actions, some simultaneous, some sequential, some unpredictable that would capitalize on our success. Our plans had to allow us to maneuver in a rolling attack against the RGFC with sufficient combat power and logistics support in the right combination to sustain that attack to completion. It was operational art we had all talked about in theory. Here we were practicing it.

We held a big wargame in a cafeteria in the Saudi military city called King Khalid Military City 6-8 January, where we put up brown paper to cover the glass windows for OPSEC. We went over the entire plan as it was then with each major subordinate commander briefing how they would execute their part of the plan. It was a great forum for commanders to listen to each other, air issues, get a sensing of the entire operation, and build common understanding. We even had BCTP assistance from Fort Leavenworth to set it up. The one major issue I still was not pleased with was the plan to breach the Iraqi frontline obstacle, then pass all corps combat, combat support, and combat service support units through in a column. That issue had been a continuing one ever since we put up maps in the basement of Corps HQ in Germany. We needed to solve that in addition to formulating FRAGPLANS to execute the final attack to destroy the RGFC. I was also beginning to formulate my priority intelligence requirements, those five to seven questions I needed answered and by when. As an aside I really believe, especially these days given the enormity of intelligence collection assets, if senior commanders are not getting the Intel they want or need they are not asking the right questions. I always figured someone in the US government had the answer to my Intel question. It was a matter of getting questions to the

right places with the right priorities then rapid dissemination of answers bypassing echelons to get it to the right place in time. Sometimes intelligence generating organizations do not understand the rapid perishability of tactical intelligence and the sense of urgency to get it to the right place in time. Missing the timeliness makes it history not intelligence. It was my responsibility to create those priorities and that sense of urgency and communicate when I needed the Intel. Later I would tell my own G-2 Colonel John Davidson, and the Third Army G-2 Brigadier General John Stewart, I needed to know by the afternoon of the second attacking day whether the RGFC were going to defend from current positions or would attempt to maneuver against us or try to escape the theater.

We tried to have as much command chatter as we could. At that meeting, which took three days, I wanted to hear commanders' ideas before we settled on a final plan. I wanted to hear what their concerns were, how they were going to execute their mission. It gave me a good idea of how comfortable or uncomfortable they were. When things are relatively static, when there's no active operations going on or there is not much movement, as in defense, then the staff and commanders are pretty much together in understanding everything. You have a common understanding among you and your commanders and between you and your staff. But once an offensive unfolds, the attack begins and the battle is joined; when a plan gives way to the reality of chance, friction, enemy action, weather, movement across terrain at different rates, changes in missions, then the commander and staff tend to drift a little apart and situational understanding across the corps and the theater can vary considerably. That is not because people are not paying attention, but because the commander gets a different set of realities by going around the battlefield, by talking to subordinate commanders, by sensing the battle, by seeing some of it personally, by seeing captured enemy, by seeing destroyed equipment. The staff has not had the opportunity to see all that. So you are constantly bringing it to them, and then they are getting a lot of information that maybe a commander is not getting, as commanders are out going around the battlefield.

You are constantly recalibrating your own knowledge of what's going on with your staff. The challenge of maintaining continuing common understanding and common situational awareness increases as the tempo of an attack increases and commanders work hard to overcome that challenge. As we began our attack, as I left Saudi Arabia, we used a Tactical Command Post (TAC), run by my G3 Colonel Stan Cheerie, and a Jump TAC to keep up because of the tempo of the attack and the width and depth of our attack and the limitations of line of sight radios. The Jump TAC was commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Dave McKiernan, who retired as a four-star. I was out with them, out visiting subordinate commanders, as our corps attack progressed. Meanwhile, the main command post (MAIN CP) portion of my staff was still in Saudi Arabia. They never moved during our attack but were valuable to stay in touch with higher HQ some 600 km to the rear in Riyadh and collect intelligence using communications the TAC did not have and doing future operational and logistics planning. Yet, the longer the corps attack went on, the less battle reality they were aware of because they could no longer hear radio transmissions. So we had to rely on updates often sent verbally at prearranged times. Those updates were also going back to Third Army and then to CENTCOM, back to Riyadh, a distance like from Paris to London, and six floors down underground. In Riyadh, I later found out, they were often 24 hours behind. That was a reality of communications of the day and the positioning of command posts. We did have liaison officers with us from Third Army who often could also relay movement and position information to Third Army HQ. That was a huge change from our exercises in Europe where HQ tended to be much closer together. Better communications these days solves some of that. Yet ensuring common understanding and situational awareness with higher HQ is vital to campaign success and takes much effort. It is vital to battle success and informed judgment and decision making. President Lincoln visited the telegraph office every day during the Civil War to keep himself informed. We have come a long way since then with information distribution, but the issue of currency and common understating remains for senior HQ.

Later, as Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC) Commander, we talked and experimented a lot about command on the move, and all of the command techniques that took, including the technical capability to keep people linked together, and give people a common situational understanding. It was really hard for us in those days and it will again be a challenge if we ever go on an offensive operation, even as electronically linked as we are now, to keep up a common situational awareness. You can see all that on screens, but you have got to sense and feel some of it as well: morale and spirit in Soldiers and units, a sense of the will and courage, and also how tired Soldiers and leaders are, how stressed they are given the tactical situation, and how commanders are dealing with all that. Plus you want to listen to see if they need anything to exploit success or eliminate vulnerability and how urgent all that might be. You have to read Soldier and leader body language, you have to have a certain amount of emotional intelligence as you're going around doing all that, where people are communicating to you sometimes nonverbally. Most importantly, force of will gets communicated during those brief but vital visits. The only way you can get all that is by being out there with Soldiers and continually positioning yourself where you can add value and best influence accomplishment of the mission at least cost to your Soldiers. Just because staffs at your

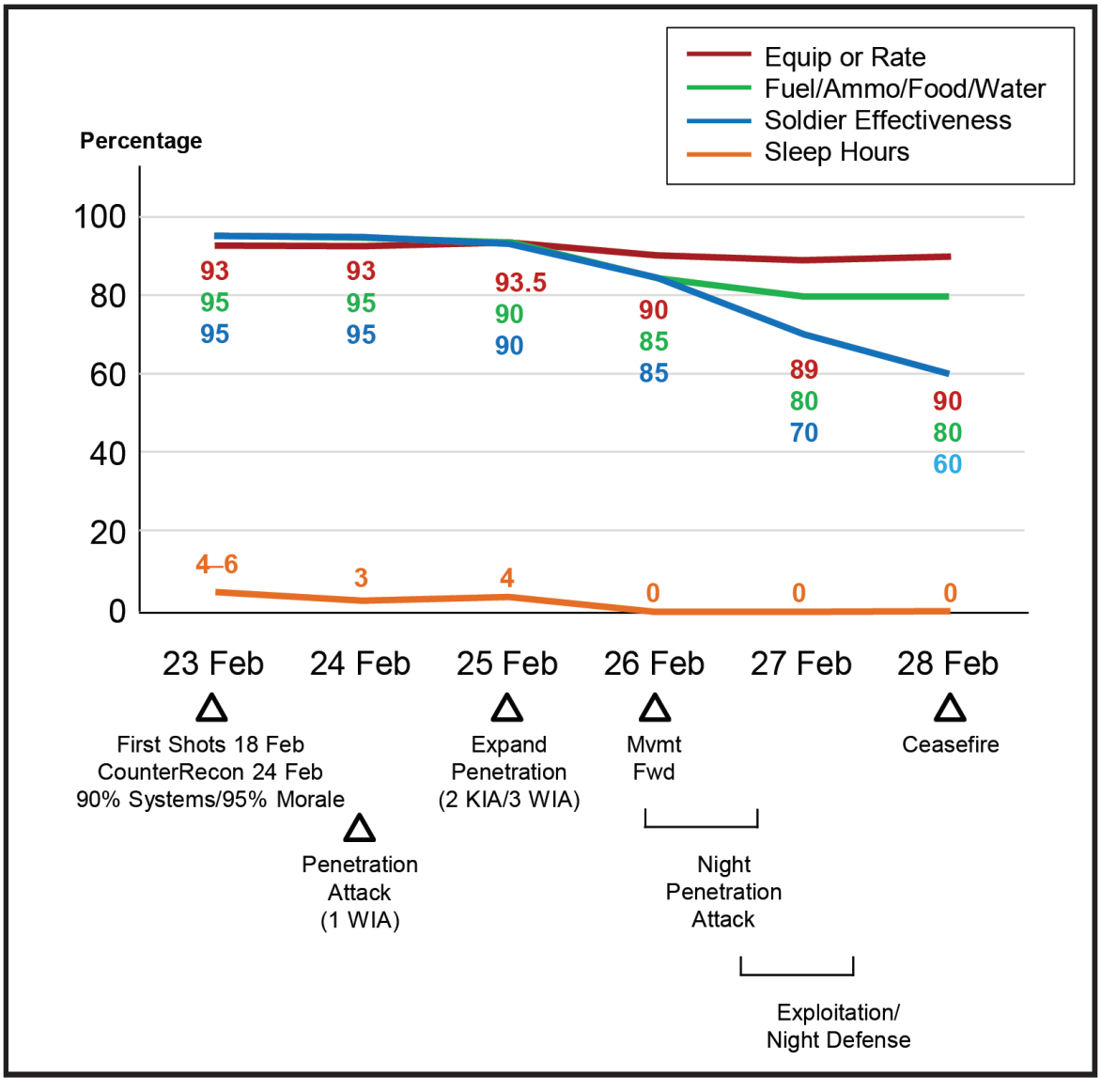

Figure 12.4. Greg Fontenot's TF 2-34 Armor Unit Effectiveness Chart. Graphic created by CAC History for the authors.

headquarters or your command post, however big or small they are, know where everybody is, doesn't mean they've got the same feel for the situation as Soldiers and leaders who are actually out there on the ground; in the arena. Looking at the same electronic screen even with the same display but in different geographic locations does not mean you have common situational understanding.

I recall, after Desert Storm, I asked Greg Fontenot, who had been Chief of my planning group at TRADOC after the war, and who commanded 2-34 Armored Task Force in the 1st Infantry Division, to draw up a chart about combat power, and so he did. He had a combat power on a vertical axis and time on the horizontal axis. So he tracked fuel, availability of major equipment like tanks and Bradleys, ammunition, and then sleep. On the bottom axis he had how much sleep Soldiers were getting each day from two hours, three hours, to zero – zero! By the end of the fourth day, his combat power dropped down to below 70 percent, even though his equipment, fuel, and ammunition showed it was up in the high 90s. That drop in condition came from a lack of sleep for Soldiers and leaders.

Senior commanders need to pay attention to that human dimension, continually and personally. Warfare in our era remains an intensely human activity. Behaviors are contagious. Courage, strong will, resiliency or coming back quickly from a tough setback, enthusiasm, and positive attitudes are all contagious. But Soldiers and leaders get tired; they've seen casualties, maybe seen some of their friends die or get wounded or be medically evacuated. That all takes it out of you and might turn those positive contagious behaviors the other way. Senior commanders need to ensure all that gets factored into major unit operations on the move, at all levels. All that needs to factor together, to see when you're going to reach a culminating point. Then how much can you ask of a unit from there? I recall on the morning of 27 February, going out to visit 1st Infantry Division TAC CP in the morning after they conducted a forward passage of lines through the 2d Armored Cavalry Regiment in contact, then an all-night attack on the 26 February immediately after. They later called it "Fright Night." They had completed the breach operation, moved well over 100 km in bad weather, passed through the 2d Armored Cavalry Regiment in contact after the Battle of 73 Easting, and then they attacked all night. I saw Iraqi prisoners and their condition. I talked to some of the aviators who had flown all night long, and heard from them what they had seen and what they had attacked and destroyed. I went into their tactical operations center and got a sensing for how upbeat they were, full of enthusiasm about what they had accomplished and deservedly so. I talked to Brigadier General Bill Carter there and Major General Tom Rhame by radio; he was further forward. My orders to them that morning were not in full military terminology. I was looking for something motivating to spur on their pursuit when I looked at the map and noticed, just at the edge, some blue of the Persian Gulf near their objective. I told them to continue to attack toward objective Denver and to go for the "blue on the map" because that would be bringing the ships to take us home when victory was complete. I came out of there thinking they're still on the top of their game, and we were transitioning to a pursuit in their sector; they would swiftly get this mission accomplished. But I also knew that 1st Infantry Division maybe had another 24 hours in them and they were just not going to be capable of doing a whole lot more for a while, for another 24 or 48 hours. But you don't get that feeling unless you go out and talk to Soldiers and leaders, especially in a fast moving operation. At the senior command level you always need to factor in the human dimension of combat.

Later, upon some reflection, I would say this:

> Modern land warfare is tough, uncompromising, and highly lethal. The enemy is found and engaged at ranges from a few meters to thousands of meters. Casualties are sudden and unexpected even though you know they will happen. Because of that, commanders and soldiers at every level are aware not only of the tactical, operational, and strategic problem solving demands of war but also the intense human dimension. They know results are final and will be frozen in time for a lifetime. Objectives are achieved but always at a cost to your soldiers. It is why at

all levels the aim always is mission at least cost. Often that least cost is achieved by seizing the initiative and by bold action. Commanders and soldiers have to feel it all to really know what to do. But in feeling it all they must not be paralyzed into inaction. They must decide, often in nanoseconds, make the decision stick, and go on. They must feel but they must also act. They cannot give in to second guessing themselves nor to their emotions. That is what makes combat leadership so demanding. It is why commanders train hard and continually throughout a professional lifetime so they can make the few tough decisions they have to make in battle to put their soldiers at the best possible advantage over the enemy. Soldiers trust battle commanders to be able to do that, but also to assume responsibility when things do not go as planned and quickly make the right adjustments to keep them at that advantage.[4]

But back to the planning. Our initial VII Corps plan called for all of the corps to pass through the breach. One division after the other in column. The 1st Infantry Division would conduct a breach of that complex obstacle in front of the 26th Iraqi Division, then the entire corps would pass through that, to include the Brits. I never did like that, nor did my planners. It would take way too long. The reason for this scheme of maneuver was the threat of the Iraqi 7th Corps extending their obstacle system west to our border with XVIII Corps. If they were not able to do that we would have approximately 40 km of opening to fit our enveloping force through; the 2d Armored Cavalry Regiment followed by the 1st and 3d Armored Divisions. So, borrowing from football, I came up with the idea of calling an 'audible' to our plan. As we came up to the line of scrimmage (the Iraqi defense) if we saw that opening I would call the audible and pass our enveloping force around to the west. I also thought we needed a deception scheme to make the Iraqis feel as if we were going to attack up the Wadi Al-Batin and keep their focus over there while our main attack was almost 100 km to the west.

Our knowledge of the Iraqi 7th Corps infantry frontline divisions was mostly learned from POWs. They were decimated by desertions caused by our artillery raids and the air campaign, health problems, officer desertion, lack of will, and some health problems. But they had a reasonably competent defensive design. They wanted to construct a complex obstacle that got less complex the further west they went. Their last division in that scheme was the 26th Infantry Division. That division refused their right flank as we faced them, their left, by placing a brigade obliquely curved backwards to protect that flank. They tried to do that in a reasonably competent way. However, they extended it too much in depth, so that last brigade that was refusing the flank was separated from the main body of the division, by some 40 to 50 kilometers and out of communications. So it was not very skillfully executed.

That still left a gap from the west of that 26th Division of some 40 km west to our corps boundary. I had tried to get our corps boundary extended west to give us more room (a 120 km wide attack sector in the desert had us cramped) but Lieutenant General Yeosock turned me down as XVIII Corps did not have movement assets to get any further west according to Third Army (one of those intense planning issues you raise as a senior commander and argue your case but then accept the decision once made). If the Iraqis did not build an obstacle west to our boundary we would have an opening to fit our cavalry regiment and two armored divisions in that space. Tight but doable.

On 2 January, I watched one of our engineer battalions build an exact replica of the Iraqi multiple defenses, given the tank ditches, and mines, and barbed wire. As I watched that and their construction pace, I figured our engineers were twice as good as the Iraqis, and especially given the air campaign that was going on then, and our artillery raids, that the Iraqis did not have the capacity to extend any further west. That led me to call the audible mentioned above during our 6-8 January MAPEX with all commanders in KKMC, changing from the previous one of all corps units through the breach to only the 1st Infantry doing the breach then the 1st UK passing through and attacking and destroying the Iraqi 52d Armored Division or their tactical reserve right behind their front line divisions. Our main attack

would shift west to the 2d Armored Cavalry Regiment as offensive covering force followed by the 1st and 3d Armored Divisions. My G-3 and I flew out to look at the terrain and agreed it was doable. I also asked Major General Griffith, 1st Armored Division CG, and Major General Butch Funk, 3d Armored Division CG, if they could do that. They both said yes after looking for themselves. Because the 1st Armored Division had the furthest to go on our attack, I gave them a 25 km or a two-brigade front and the 3d Armored Division 15 km so probably brigades in column. That both commanders adapted quickly to make this happen was yet another indicator of our intense teamwork and of the depth of our leadership and the rapid ability to adapt that brings. That whole planning effort of our "audible" convinced me of another truth of commanding large units. That is, you have to be intensely competitive, to have an iron will to win, that translates to constantly looking for an edge over the enemy, and always positioning your forces and combinations of forces supporting to keep that edge over the enemy until victory.

Another opportunity presented itself for our deception scheme in the form of an Iraqi threat. We got warning in intelligence that the Iraqis may try a spoiling attack down the Wadi Al-Batin that they had done in Kanji over on the east coast. They had the forces there that could probably have done some of that. For this threat we were given a brigade of the 101st Airborne Division. They responded rapidly and conducted an air-mobile assault over to our area. As they started digging defenses to prevent a spoiling attack the weather turned to heavy rain. I went out to visit them arriving in my HMMWV because it was a no-fly day. The troops were doing the best they could in the rain and thick mud but they needed help. So I called my chief, Brigadier General Landry, and said, "Get everything that can dig in the corps that's close to here, and send it over and help these troops out." So he did, and with that help they constructed a defensible position.

We had been given tactical control of the 1st Cavalry Division on 8 January; they were totally in the theater at that time. They had moved west and were now located near King Khalid Military City. I called Major General Tilelli and chopped that brigade to him, and told him he was in charge of the defense. And so he subsequently maneuvered his division up in front of the brigade of the 101st Airborne. It occurred to me that this was the same area I wanted to conduct our own raids and demonstrations to deceive the Iraqis that we were attacking there and not 100 km west. So I thought, after we deal with this threat by preventing or at best deter the Iraqis from doing their own spoiling attack, I could use the 1st Cavalry Division to conduct our deception attack. They now were part of VII Corps and would remain so until 24 February when they would revert to CENTCOM reserve.

I had initially given the mission to 3d Armored Division, our temporary VII Corps reserve in our attack, to do the spoiling attacks out of their forward attack position. They would then join the attacking enveloping force, but this would result in a considerable delay caused by them having to catch up and be at the place 150 to 200 km deep to form our three-division fist to destroy the RGFC. I now had an alternative.

Given now that VII Corps had given tactical control of the 1st Cavalry Division, I said I didn't need to use the 3d Armored for that mission and can call that audible placing them aside the 1st Armored Division behind the 2d Armored Cavalry Regiment as our main attack. We did that. So, I left the 3d Armored Division where they were and used the 1st Cavalry Division to execute the feints and demonstrations to make the Iraqis believe we're attacking up the Wadi Al-Batin when in fact our attack was 100 km west. That started the war for us well before the actual attack on 24 February. Subsequent questioning of Iraqi prisoners of war (POWs) after the war by our VII Corps G2 section and recorded in a booklet I had asked our G2 Colonel John Davidson to put together, *The 100 Hour War, How the Iraqi Plan Failed*, showed that deception really worked.

So the 1st Cavalry Division began these feints and demonstrations in what we called the Rugi pocket. Some of them were sharp engagements. They were skillfully and courageously done. Some were

brigade level operations. They resulted in considerable attrition of Iraqi forces but we also took some casualties. One 1st Cavalry Division Soldier, Private First Class Ardon Cooper, 2/5 CAV, 2d Brigade, was awarded the Silver Star posthumously by selflessly and courageously shielding his wounded comrade and he was killed in action doing that. We also did a deep attack with an Apache battalion from our corps attack aviation 11th Brigade to further damage Iraqi forces and give our own aviators experience in conducting those types of attacks. Then we worked in artillery raids, because we wanted to destroy Iraqi artillery in range of the breach. And I also wanted our units and Soldiers to get a feel for, and confidence in, firing against the enemy. So that was all orchestrated by our corps artillery commander Brigadier General Abrams while Major General Tilelli and his 1st Cavalry simultaneously kept up the sharp tempo of the feints and demonstrations. Again, back to the density of leadership in the organization. They could rapidly plan and execute all this. Following reduction of the Iraqi preemptive attack threat and the beginning of the feints and demonstrations by the 1st Cavalry, the brigade of the 101st went back to their parent unit, then moved west with XVIII Corps.

Meanwhile, we needed to get from our tactical assembly area to attack positions near our attack line of departure. Looking at the map reminded me why force placement is important. It occurred to me that we were in a position to go from east to west into our attack positions in the same relative formations that we were later going to go in our actual attack. That meant the Brits could make a forward passage of lines through the 1st Infantry Division into their attack positions. And then the 1st Infantry could move forward of them, getting ready to do the breach. And the 1st and 3d Armored Divisions, with the 2d Armored Cavalry Regiment out in front as corps covering force, could conduct a 180 kilometer move into attack positions with the same configuration we were going to use in our actual attack. If you get the force placement about right it opens other opportunities for you, and in this case it did. It let us really rehearse, without opposition, the movement that led to the real maneuver, our turning movement or left hook, the right turn in a rolling attack into the Republican Guard. That all traces back to getting the force placement about right from the beginning. It was also another opportunity taken to add value to the mission and sharpen our readiness to fight and win.

Who you choose for what missions is also clearly vital to victory, to achieving your mission. This is especially true for large organizations, as you cannot easily change your mind later. The first day at Gettysburg, 1 July 1863, General Meade, new Union Commander since 28 June, led with his best cavalry division commander Brigadier General John Buford and his best corps commander Major General John Reynolds commanding a wing of three divisions to move north into what was his most challenging sector. In World War II in Normandy, General Bradley picked the veteran 1st Infantry Division and the newer 29th Infantry Division to attack at Omaha Beach on D-Day with V Corps and VII Corps to attack Utah Beach with 4th Infantry Division.

I determined early on that I wanted the 2d Armored Cavalry Regiment to be our offensive covering force. They had a veteran commander in Colonel Don Holder, knew that mission well, and were quick and bold in their actions. They were a perfect fit. I wanted the 1st Armored Division, commanded by Major General Ron Griffith, since that was a VII Corps unit, to be my outside division with the furthest to attack. We knew each other well from our own training well before this operation and could communicate quickly. I wanted 3d Armored Division, which was a unit of the V Corps, to be the initial corps reserve, and from that the inside division. The 3d Armored Division was commanded by Major General Butch Funk who had previously commanded the National Training Center at Fort Irwin in California, and was able to deal quickly with a variety of contingencies in the desert that they did skillfully and boldly. I wanted the 1st Infantry Division to do the breach, since they had just recently done some of that at the National Training Center. Plus their division commander Major General Tom Rhame had volunteered to do the breach and was then prepared to do more. I gave the British 1st Armoured Division commanded by Major General Rupert Smith the mission to attack the Iraqi tactical reserve after

discussing that with him. Especially with allies you want to give them a mission that's within their capabilities. They want to be successful as well, as a matter of national pride. Their swift and aggressive accomplishment of that mission was vital to our overall attack success. We had an entire corps artillery organization commanded by Brigadier General Creighton Abrams, a superb trainer whose staff expertly coordinated the actions of our four corps artillery brigades. Our aviation deep attacks were conducted by our 11th Aviation Brigade, commanded by Colonel Johnnie Hitt, who personally was always at the right place when I needed him. Our separate brigades used initiative continually in adapting their own plans to our changing orders. Our logisticians led by COSCOM CG, Brigadier General Bob McFarlin, and using corps support brigades with each division, and on their own initiative positioning fuel and ammo forward always kept up right in line with our intent. It was a superb team all the way around and I was honored and proud to lead them into battle. Choosing units for missions is a vital decision for commanders of large formations in the attack.

But our corps operation was not in a vacuum. It had to be nested in Third Army's plan as well as CENTCOM's plan. It also had to fit the strategic goals for the campaign as set by our Commander in Chief, President George H.W. Bush. The overall CENTCOM and Third Army plan for land forces had Third Army's two corps, XVIII and VII attacking west of the Wadi Al-Batin into Iraq. Just east of VII Corps was Joint Forces Command-North (JFC-N) that included the two-division Egyptian Corps commanded by General Salah Halaby, who would later become Chief of their Joint General Staff, who would attack from Saudi Arabia. To their east was the 1st Marine Expeditionary Force who was to attack due north toward Kuwait City. To their east was Joint Forces Command-East (JFC-E), the other half of the combined allied corps commanded by General Khalid bin Sultan of Saudi Arabia. The attacks toward Kuwait City were planned to begin at first light on 24 February 1991 and cause Iraqi forces in theater to include their RGFC forces to focus attention there and even move toward Kuwait City to reinforce. In addition, CENTCOM and the US Navy had also conducted an elaborate deception scheme to lead defending Iraqis to believe there was an amphibious attack to land just north of Kuwait City. It had the effect of pinning down the entire Iraqi IV Corps defending the beach area. VII Corps and XVIII Corps were to remain hidden away from the border to avoid detection. Our own VII Corps raids and demonstrations by the 1st Cavalry Division in the Wadi Al-Batin just west of the Egyptian corps added to the overall deception scheme as well as our own in our sector. Following the first day attacks, Third Army was to attack at first light on 25 February 1991.

In VII Corps, all our timing and synchronization of fires, positioning of ammunition, and movement was based on this timing to include: time to complete the breach by 1st Infantry; pass the British through under cover of darkness; while simultaneously attacking with 2md Armored Cavalry Regiment as corps covering force, and following with 1st and 3d Armored Divisions in an envelopment attack west of the beach through that 40 km opening. The timing determined our rehearsals, wargames, map board exercises, and Rehearsal of Concept (ROC) drills at corps level and every echelon of command. We had planned two-hour preparatory fires into the breach using two separate artillery brigades plus the division artillery of both the 1st Infantry and British 1st Armoured all planned and coordinated by our Corps Artillery under command of Brigadier General Creighton Abrams. Our corps logistics command, 2d COSCOM, had planned to follow through the breach and establish log base Nelligan just north of the breach with fuel storage of 400 vehicles and 1.2 million gallons to fuel the attacking enveloping force of two armored divisions and a cavalry regiment (one armored division in those days used about 800,000 gallons of fuel a day). All our forces were in position to execute this attack. We had planned deliberately and were ready to attack violently.

In his book, *Battle Leadership*, translated from the German while George Marshall was deputy commandant of the Infantry School in the early 1930s, Captain Adolph von Schell explains there are two types of surprises in battle leaders must be prepared to deal with and even exploit: the "psychological" surprises

of human behavior and the extraordinary acts of valor that will take place enabling success, and the second caused by enemy actions. To that I would add a third. Those are decisions from higher headquarters with no warning or hint of change ahead of time, necessitated by many factors most difficult to predict ahead of time. But they happen and you have to deal with them. The normal practice, if you can, is to issue a warning order to give subordinate units time to think about changes and anticipate.

Ever since we got the no notice order to deploy on 9 November we had been dealing with changes; some minor, some major. Some were caused by changes at higher HQ; some we did to ourselves. You try to keep those at a minimum but they happen. We changed our TAAs west some 200 kilometers in late November. We changed our own plan to call the audible placing our enveloping force west in a tight opening afforded by the Iraqi defenses instead of passing the whole corps through the breach. We used the 1st Cavalry in our deception raids and demonstrations in the Rugi pocket. We adapted to the sometimes-erratic strategic lift flow of units fragmented on many ships, and also adding the 1st Infantry (Forward) as our port command authority allowing us to get to the desert to train for war. We kept adding needed formations to the corps as they became available. Dealing with change can have a positive effect for large units if you deal with them in a positive way, learn to adjust rapidly, and learn to do them better each time. In a way they condition you and your unit for the chaos and changing nature of fast moving offensive operations where you need to adapt and adjust more rapidly than your enemy to keep the edge for your Soldiers and leaders and keep that edge and initiative until victory is won.

The first morning, 24 February, and unknown to me at the time, the Marines were fairly successful in their early attack, and so the concern was that maybe their left flank was exposed creating a vulnerability that might slow or stop their attack toward Kuwait City. General Schwarzkopf asked Lieutenant General Yeosock if he could move the Third Army attack up to attack one day from 25 February at first light to today 24 February. He first called XVIII Corps, and then he called me, and said, "Fred, can you go early?" He also told me XVIII Corps had agreed to go early on a two-hour notice. I figured it was a rhetorical question. Not, "Can you go early?" but "When can you go?"

I took a deep breath and in a flash thought instinctively about the magnificent team of commanders and Soldiers we had, the depth of leadership, that we have been through all the wargaming, preparations and timing synchronization and day-night considerations, and we had developed intense close teamwork relationships with subordinate commanders and throughout the corps.

So I immediately told Lieutenant General Yeosock,

> "Yes, we can do it," I told John, after a pause of no more than a second or two. "Tell the CINC yes, but I still want to talk to my commanders. XVIII Corps said they could go on two hours' notice, Yeosock answered. How does that sound to you? Based on how soon the Egyptians can get ready, it looks like 1500 at the earliest. Take that as a warning order, with a confirmation at 1300, for a 1500 attack. Sounds OK to me, but I still want to talk with my commanders."[5]

So I did. I talked to each one of them. And they all said yes, they could go. As a matter of fact, Tom Rhame said, "We can go at one o'clock instead of three." Which is also what XVIII Corps had told the Third Army. So I called John back about 1130 and said, "We can go, but I'd like to go now, or one o'clock." This was because we had wargamed this out, and if we had attacked the second day at daylight, we would finish the breach in daylight, and pass the British 1st Armoured through the breach in the cover of night, and then they could immediately begin their attack the next day to destroy the Iraqi tactical reserve. And meanwhile our 1st and 3d Armored Division, led by the 2d Armored Cavalry Regiment, could move without interruption all the way up into a rolling attack into the Republican Guards. I figured if we began at 1300 we had a reasonable chance of finishing the breach during daylight and our timing would be the same as if it would have been the second day. That was not to happen. Instead, we got the order to attack at 1500, three o'clock.

In addition to adjustments by maneuver forces, our corps artillery would have to make significant adjustments to get firing units into place, and ammunition placed. Brigadier General Abrams advised me he could only get enough ammo placed for preparatory fires of 30 minutes instead of two hours. It occurred to me that if our wargaming and enemy analysis had necessitated a two-hour prep, what kind of risk were we taking with now only 30 minutes. That factored into discussions and I thought the risk acceptable.

We had designated as crossing site commander at the breach site, Major General Gene Daniel, Corps deputy CG, with another what we called "jump TAC CP." They were in position and could also handle the change. Having him as crossing site commander also helped enormously with coordination of passage of units, fires coordination, and passage of other corps units through that site later. For example, the 42d Field Artillery Brigade, after the firing of the initial prep and following passage of the 1st UK Armored Division, would also pass through the breach, then move on their own cross-desert almost 100 kilometers to link up with a moving 3d Armored Division. The depth of leadership advantage and intense teamwork of our large organization was everywhere apparent.

I could also imagine the time needed to get the new order out and allow some explanations by commanders to Soldiers without breaking confidence we had in our well-rehearsed scheme of maneuver and coordinated fires and logistics. From me as corps commander to a tank crew there were seven echelons of command. It was no small undertaking. But in reflection it was a great example of the value of the depth of leadership and the US Army's continuing focus on being trained and ready to fight and win this kind of fight over the past almost 15 years. Win the first battle of the next war. Train as you fight. Fight outnumbered and win. It was an Army identity, an ethos, a creed we all believed in for a long time and practiced like Olympic athletes to execute. We were trained to a razor's edge of combat readiness to fight and win a mounted all arms combined arms fight against the best in the world. That gave us the ability to rapidly adjust within that type of war to do almost anything asked, or to even adjust to other types of warfare as our nation might demand as happened later and on up to 2001, 2003 to Baghdad and to the so-called surge.

So I ordered Colonel Don Holder to attack at 1430 to get our covering force moving. Corps artillery quickly adapted and reduced our prep fires from two hours to 30 minutes. That prep involved the coordinated fires of the artillery of the 1st British Armoured Division and the artillery of the 1st Infantry Division. It involved the artillery of the 142d Field Artillery Brigade of the Arkansas National Guard, and of the 42d Field Artillery Brigade. So that's essentially four brigades of artillery, 12 cannon battalions and four MLRS batteries that the corps artillery commanded. The density of leadership available as well as experienced planners at senior headquarters and their Soldiers made it happen. They compressed all that from two hours to 30 minutes. They fired 5,500 cannon rounds, and almost 500 rockets in a half an hour. But the fact was that the corps, the commanders, the units and Soldiers, and the artillery, and the Brits, in the short time we had to make adjustments gave me an estimate that, "Yes, we can do this. As a matter of fact, we can do it quicker than we were asked to do it." That was a tribute to them all and I was at that moment even more honored and proud to be their commander. I attribute such agility to keeping your head in the game, keeping focus on what's important, the mission, the plans and training to execute the mission, the possible adjustments that are going to need to be made, and being able to absorb the chance, and friction, and even surprise by your own side and the enemy, and make it all work to your advantage.

We had two big surprises in the war. One was attacking early, and the other one was stopping after eight o'clock in the morning of 28 February. Nonetheless, those are things you deal with. As a commander, at all levels, you should always remember that battle is chaos on a large scale. You've got to be relatively good at, and comfortable with, dealing with chance, friction, or luck and not be put off by the lack of order and changes. I think sometimes we get too enamored with the goal of everything has got

to be neat and orderly. Order is not the goal. Winning is. So, in battle, what you're trying to do is not establish order. You just want enough order that your attack has got some kind of all arms coherence and retains the initiative, keeps the continuous edge over the enemy by the decisions and force placement, the timing of attacks, tempo of movements to ensure concentration when you need it, reacting to and exploiting opportunities. And it doesn't matter if it's a little disorderly, if one unit is a little out ahead of the other, or if the plan changes. It is not the plan that is important but the planning that gains everyone common understanding, that forms a base from which you can adjust as you surely know that

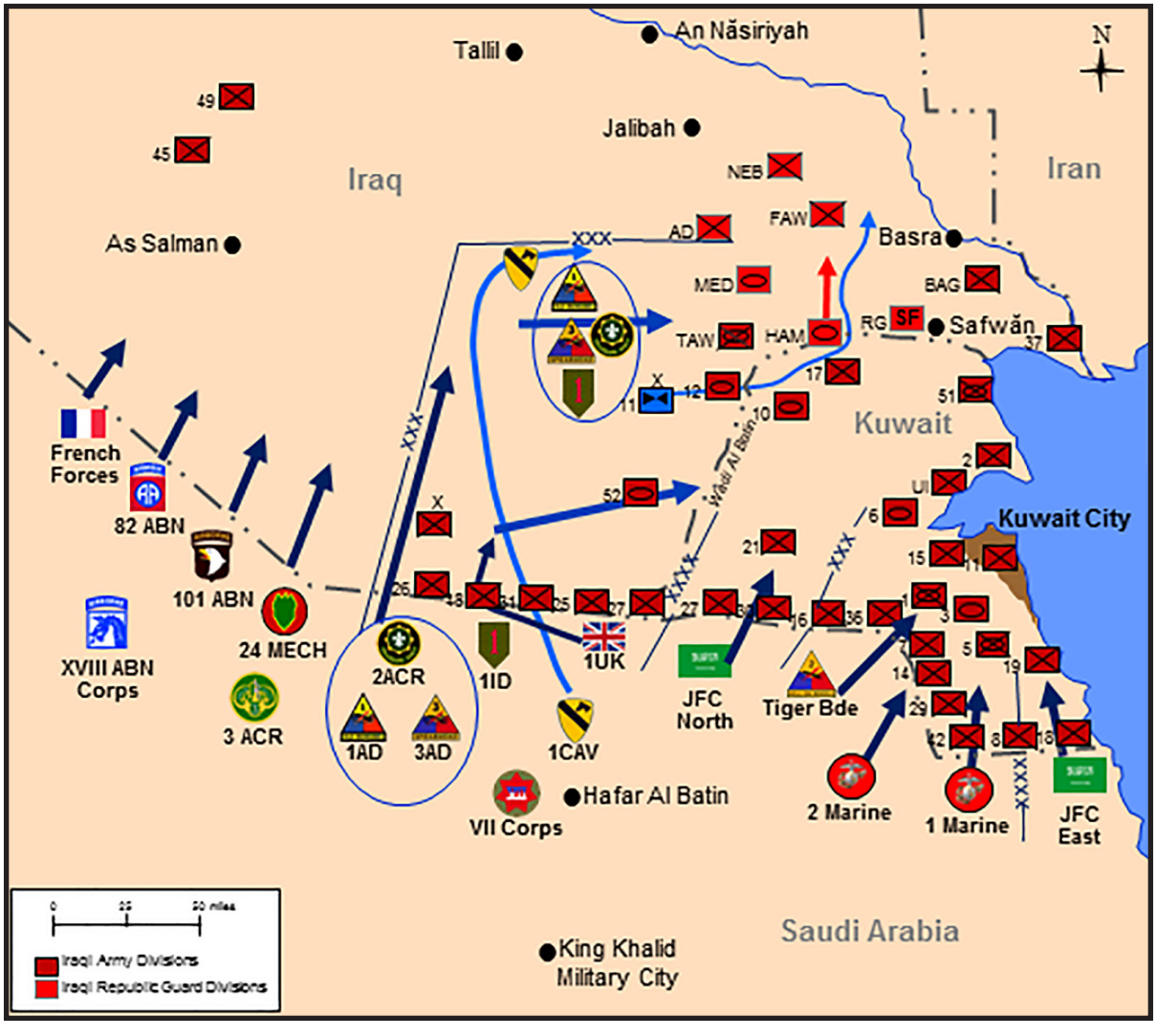

Figure 12.5. VII Corps Attack and Turn to the East. Map created by CAC History for the authors.

is necessary as your plan confronts the realities of battle, and the terrain and weather you confront. As long as you retain all arms coherence and retain the initiative you can press on through changes, as we did here, and win victory. Wars are fought to achieve strategic objectives leading to victory and tactical battles get arranged in sequence or simultaneously then fought successfully to enable that strategic success. Tactical battles are not ends in themselves.

Turn East Attack to Destroy the RGFC

Our mission was force-oriented and not terrain-oriented. That was clear from the very beginning of our first briefing on that early leaders' recon in November. Following our commander's wargame 6-8 January 1991, and our own plan being published on 13 January, then the audible putting our enveloping force west into the 40 km opening left by the Iraqis, we went through a series of FRAGPLANS based on our intelligence and what we thought the Republican Guard was going to do. Those seven FRAGPLANS that we had begun developing the end of January, each had as their objective destruction of the RGFC in our sector. They varied based on what the RGFC chose to do or was forced to do by our own surprise direction of attack and some effects of the air campaign.

If the RGFC stayed about where they were or repositioned or moved forward to defend from where they were, the plan that made the most sense to me was our FRAGPLAN Seven. That alternative was to make a decision after the success of the breach and about 12 to 24 hours in advance of when we estimated execution, to turn VII Corps 90 degrees east and attack and destroy them with a three division fist. It would also require me to maneuver the corps and our logistics and fires plus attack aviation over those two days so we got to that point and could attack in a rolling coordinated attack from the move after turning the corps 90 degrees. I wanted a fist to slam into the RGFC, not individual fingers poking at them. I also wanted it to happen on the move. The early estimates were we would have to stop and refuel and rearm in front of the RGFC then attack. I did not want to do that. I wanted to maneuver the corps so we had a rolling attack with that three-division fist. To punctuate this main attack, and even though I am not usually given to dramatics as a commander, I would pound the map with my left fist to emphasize the point as well as no halts in front of the RGFC. We even named our final phase line just before getting to the RGFC, "Smash." (The principal planner of this FRAGPLAN was Major Nick Seymour, a British officer who named two of the objectives "Minden" and "Norfolk.")

We also had an agreement from Third Army that this would trigger a Third Army order that opened an attack lane north of VII Corps for XVIII Corps to also attack east. Rather than VII Corps pinching out XVIII Corps, both corps would form a two-corps, Third Army attack east toward Basra and Highway 8 to destroy the RGFC in what was now Third Army sector. General Waller agreed with this when he was acting Third Army commander for a while when General Yeosock went to Germany for a gallbladder operation. Then John agreed with it when he got back. That VII Corps would turn 90 degrees, our FRAGPLAN Seven, activate a border, east-west border between us and XVIII Corps, and we'd end up with a two-corps, west to east attack to destroy the Republican Guards in the Kuwaiti theater. Third Army eventually published their own FRAGO to that effect. And with air controlled by CENTCOM and General Horner, the theater air commander would seal that Kuwaiti theater off, and we together would destroy the Republican Guard. That was the general scheme of maneuver to end the war.

And so the afternoon of the second day (25 February) and with the battle going on just to our east, I convened a huddle out in the middle of the desert with our Chief of Staff, and G2, and planners from our main command post, and Colonel Johnnie Hitt, the 11th Aviation Brigade Commander who had flown to meet at a spot in the desert sand. There was no particular terrain feature but the spot is one of historic consequence for all of us. The 1st Infantry Division had finished the breach and were finishing passing the 1st UK Armoured Division through who already were attacking the rear of Iraqi VII Corps and beginning to approach the Iraqi tactical reserve the 52d Armored Division. CENTCOM still retained the 1st Cavalry Division as theater reserve so I was thinking of where I might get the third division of our fist. Our G2 had the intelligence from John Stewart on the early afternoon of 25 February that the Republican Guards were going to stay where they were. I said, "Okay. We'll execute FRAGPLAN Seven." And that was the key decision that turned the corps 90 degrees east, what we later called a left hook, or turning movement. (Later the Army War College made a print of that scene). That order also called for an attack deep in front of our fist by our 11th Aviation Brigade toward Objective Minden. All that of course had to be turned into orders from both our TAC CP to our attacking units as well as

from our Main CP to the rest of the Corps to include Corps artillery, our eight separate brigades, our COSCOM, and also to our higher HQ in Riyadh over 700 km from that small piece of sand. We also had to inform our higher HQ because it triggered the Third Army FRAGO. All the drills, rehearsals, BCTP exercises had us trained and ready to accomplish this rapid execution. We also had to maneuver the corps and separate units in it; maneuver units, fires, and logistics; at such a tempo and direction that our corps would roll into the attack coordinated – an all arms concentration with the means to continue the attack for as long as it took to destroy the RGFC in our sector, our mission. It was no small feat as some units only got the graphical control measures posted on their maps by the next morning. The G-3 planner of 3AD, Major Rosie Rosenberger wrote the 3d Armored Division FRAGPLAN to execute in longhand on a yellow pad and reproduced it. But they got it done and continued moving even while positioning their units and the fire support and the deep Apache attacks by our aviation brigade twice to Objective Minden to execute that order. It was command on the move supported by savvy, talented commanders and staff with courageous, confident, bold small unit leaders and Soldiers in an attacking armored corps team confident we could execute that maneuver and achieve victory. The old 72-hour planning cycle of a corps to make a major change of orders was reduced to inside 24. Training, teamwork, and trust in each other made it happen.

Incidentally, there never was a "Hail Mary." That was way out of line. A Hail Mary is an act of last minute desperation to just throw the ball up toward the end zone in football and hope for the best. We definitely were not in any "Hail Mary" situation. We were an attacking armored corps of almost 1,600 tanks and over 700 infantry fighting vehicles, some 200 Apache attack helicopters, and four artillery brigades in addition to each division having their own division artillery skillfully executing a rapid rolling attack maneuver that turned 90 degrees into a two-day armored attack of the RGFC and achieved our mission and victory. There had been nothing like that since World War II and given the size of it, nothing like it, ever.

I recall describing it to journalist and author Rick Atkinson after the cease-fire that we had executed what amounted to a left hook into the RGFC, a turning movement that had the effect of turning Iraqi forces in the Kuwaiti Theater out of position and into retreat. He picked it up and used it. This was a VII Corps initiated Third Army maneuver, approved by the Third Army Commander. One issue of senior command that arose was the Theater Commander also being land component commander. Normally there is a theater commander and a land, sea, and air component commander in a major theater. Even though for good and sufficient reason, the CINC had appointed himself also as a Land Component Commander, being concurrently both Theater Commander, and the Land Component Commander. I think that was in order to keep the land component together and working as a team, since he had a number of coalition nations with large formations. For US ground forces CENTCOM had the Marine Corps of two divisions in I Marine Expeditionary Force, and the Third Army with two US Army corps, plus Special Operating Forces (SOF). There was an Egyptian Corps with two divisions as well as a Syrian armored division. Being land component commander was a good idea from Theater and strategic perspective of keeping the Coalition together in the liberation of Kuwait. But in a fast-moving ground attack, coordinating ground, and air, and the various elements of the land force, normally would require some forward command element. CENTCOM HQ was located six floors down, 600 kilometers-plus from the battlefield, where a large strategic HQ needed to be for all the various command functions at that level. Yet, some forward command element, especially as the ground maneuver space gets smaller, would have helped final land air coordination especially in the final 48 hours. So essentially we and XVIII Corps were working directly with Third Army. Third Army had intended to publish each 24 hours a fragmentary order controlling ground and air forces to destroy all remaining RGFC in the Kuwait theater. The cease-fire preempted much of that. Some of the Republican Guards in the Hammurabi Division who had moved out of our sector into XVIII Corps sector and were hit hard

by Major General Barry McCaffery's 24th Infantry Division and Major General Binnie Peay's 101st Airborne (Air Assault) Division. Some also later managed to leave the Theater. If the strategic goals dictated, the whole theater possibly could have been sealed off by air, and allowed both XVIII and VII Corps to either capture or destroy the remnants of the Republican Guards in the theater. But there was no time nor directing authority to control the air and the land forces out there close to the fight. What you had was what was called in those days the fire support coordination line (FSCL) pushed way too deep and thus by procedure, agreed to ahead of time, there was no air applied inside of it except for eyes on close air support. We needed air interdiction, without eyes on, of the RGFC escape routes from the theater. The air would seal off the Euphrates, and knock all the bridges down, including any temporary military bridges that they put up, and keep that sealed off. Not much of that happened. It was a matter of air-ground coordination in tight maneuver space requiring close coordination. CENTCOM could have coordinated that and was the appropriate echelon to do so.

Yet the strategic objective had already been accomplished. Kuwait had been liberated. "This will not stand, this aggression against Kuwait" was President Bush's statement on 6 August 1990. The aggression had been defeated. Kuwait had been liberated. The strategic goals had been achieved. There had been victory.

So that is how the whole left hook happened.

I always figured that if the Republican Guards stayed where they were – that is, the Tawakalna, the Medina, and, in fact, the Hammurabi – who were positioned deep in our sector initially, we needed a three division armored fist to hit them hard from an unexpected direction then sustain that attack momentum for at least two days toward Highway 8 near the Iraq-Kuwait border. As our attack began and gained momentum I found out, first, from a battlefield visit to the 2d Armored Cavalry Regiment, that the Hammurabi Division was starting to move out of our sector into XVIII Corps' sector. Also in our sector of attack were the Iraqi 10th and 12th Armored Divisions, the so-called Jihad Corps, plus the 17th Armored Division. Elements of the Iraqi RGFC Infantry Division Al Faw were also in our sector and Iraqi artillery had the capability to fire into 1st Armored Division's sector. They were all there as the Iraqi theater reserve. Destroying them was our objective. So if we included the original Iraqi VII corps of six divisions plus the RGFC and others there as theater reserve, and after 1st Cavalry Division was placed in VII Corps on the morning of the third day, 26 February, we had been five attacking 11 at that point, and at the point of main effort we were three attacking at least six. So we figured we needed a three-division fist. From the beginning when discussing our main effort, attacking the RGFC to destroy them, which was our mission and we were the main attack, I always used a fist, and I would bang the map with a fist. I said, "We're going to hit them with a three division fist with the combat power to sustain the momentum of the attack until we destroy them in our sector of attack. Before that we are going to maneuver the corps to get into position to do that. We're going to control the tempo of our movement so that we have a coordinated, synchronized, three-division fist to hit the Republican Guards, and keep hitting them until they're destroyed in our sector." And we thought we needed three divisions for it. The 2d Armored Cavalry Regiment as covering force, and the 1st Armored, and 3d Armored Divisions. The third division was going to be the 1st Cavalry Division, but they were not released from theater reserve until too late.

When I saw the 1st Cavalry Division was not being released in time I ordered the 1st Infantry Division, following the breach and successful passage of the 1st British Armored Division forward, to be that third division while also leaving a battalion task force to continue to secure the breach. One of my BCTP mentors always said do not run out of options. Run the enemy out of options. So, just in case 1st Cavalry Division was not released from CENTCOM reserve until mid-morning of day three (which in hindsight is curious because of later claims that the Iraqis were in a rout from the beginning

and we were in pursuit mode – if that was correct, why didn't CENTCOM release the 1st Cav earlier?), we needed an option and that option was 1st Infantry Division. Earlier on the 25 February Major General Tom Rhame had told me, after the success of the breach, "Hey, boss," he used these words, "don't leave us behind." I said, "Okay, Tom, you got your wish." So, after the Brits passed through the breach and began to attack the Iraqi 7th Corps Tactical Reserve, the 52d Armored Division, which was vital to our enveloping force success as that 52d Division even if they were only trying to move to get out of the theater, they would cut across our logistics lines of our main attack. The British mission was vital to success of our RGFC attack and our ability to sustain it. Major General Rupert Smith knew that and the British executed it quickly and violently. I said to Major General Rhame, "After the Brits pass through, I want you to pick your division up and move rapidly forward. Just insert 1st Infantry in the FRAGPLAN graphics where they say 1st Cavalry Division and you are the third division in our fist. I want you to make a forward passage of lines through the 2d Armored Cavalry Regiment to become the third division in that fist."

Now for Major General Rhame and his leaders and Soldiers, this came after finishing a breach of the Iraqi obstacle system with his three brigade division, passing through the 22,000 Soldier British 1st Armoured Division that included (under their operational control) the 142d Field Artillery Brigade of the Alaska National Guard (we put them with the British for compatibility of ammunition as both the 142d and British artillery had the only 8-inch artillery battalions). Then Major General Rhame had to disseminate new orders and graphical control measures, then physically move his division the over 100 km to reach the 2d Armored Cavalry Regiment, then coordinate a complex forward passage of lines under enemy contact then conduct a night attack followed by an all-day attack on 27 February. Before passing lines with the 2d Armored Cavalry Regiment, they also received control of the 210th Artillery Brigade who had been with the 2d Armored Cavalry Regiment for their covering force mission. There was also an Apache battalion we had given to the 2d Armored Cavalry Regiment for their covering force mission from our Corps aviation brigade and I sent them to the 3d Armored Division. The 3d Armored Division had much earlier been ordered to deploy theirs to XVIII Corps and they were not returned when we entered the theater. As an aside, as a senior commander if you want to reinforce your main attack, you want to try to do it with rapidly reusable combat assets. Aviation and Artillery are rapidly reusable, in other words, you can shift them to another unit quickly. Returning ground maneuver units in a fast moving attack to their original locations would be too time consuming. Thus we had reinforced 2d Armored Cavalry Regiment with an Apache battalion and an artillery brigade. Both got back into action quickly.

Meanwhile the 1st Armored Division had to get out from behind 2d Cavalry Regiment and get in their own attack zone. And the 3d Armored Division also had to get out to the north of the 2d Armored Cavalry Regiment, who was providing extraordinarily effective covering force for VII Corps. Don Holder and I estimated, through some time-distance estimates just looking at the map, that the passage of lines would take place on the six-zero, north-south grid line.

One of the enduring truths about senior command is that in a rapid paced 89-hour attack you only get to make a few decisions of any real consequence. The timing for those decisions turns out to be as important as the decision itself. Later I read Adolph von Schell's book mentioned earlier (*Battle Leadership*). He also had this to say:

> One of the most difficult things we have to do in war is to recognize the moment for making a decision. Information comes in degrees. Shall we make a decision now or shall we wait a little longer? It is usually more difficult to determine the moment for making a decision than it is to formulate the decision itself.[6]

In early afternoon Major General Rhame found me for a quick meeting in the middle of the desert at our forward TAC CP in some really bad weather of sandstorms and rain, "Boss, we had trouble getting out of the breach and I had to alter our movement formation to a column of brigades. Plus the weather's bad, as you know, because we had trouble finding each other." That was on 26 February but it was also face-to-face. Just Tom and me. Indispensable for our communication and common understanding. No staff. Commander to commander. One of those crucial moments for this operation and for both of us personally for a lifetime. He said, "I'm not going to make it before dark. What do you want me to do?" Now, sometimes for a senior commander, decisions will not wait for staff studies, will not wait for staff options even as helpful as they are. Tom needed a decision right now. And so that decision, in my own professional lifetime, was the hardest tactical decision I ever made. More difficult than any in Vietnam. Most difficult of all of Desert Storm. But I also knew that executing that difficult decision at night would be Soldiers and small unit leaders, and it would be more difficult for them. They said, "Don't worry, general, we trust you." How to accomplish the mission by fulfilling that trust? Do I pass the 1st Infantry Division through the 2d Armored Cavalry Regiment after dark and in contact? I had grown up in the armored cavalry. I knew passages of lines and how complex they were, in training and in combat. And here we were going to pass a mechanized infantry division of three full brigades through a full-up cavalry regiment, at night, in contact. But I went over in my mind, "What does the mission demand of us?"

To me, the mission demanded that we have a three-division fist that could sustain that attack for another 48 hours. And the 2d Armored Cavalry Regiment would have used up some of its own combat power, and probably would, by that time, if I ordered them to continue to attack east have broken the Iraqi security zone and maybe even destroyed part of a brigade of the defending Republican Guard. So I told Don Holder to continue the attack east past our previous estimate of making the passage at the 60-north south map grid line. That is how the Battle of 73 Easting happened. Colonel Holder ordered his regiment to aggressively attack forward. Around the 73 Easting (north south 73 grid line) they confronted the Iraqi security zone and a brigade of the RGFC Tawakalna Division and other Iraqi defending forces. In an action fulfilling the decades long saying, "win the first battle of the next war" their Troops E, G, and I attacked outnumbered and destroyed not only the security zone but also much of the defending brigade. They did this along with the rest of the Regiment as well as their aviation and artillery. It was a masterful attack executed boldly and with perfection by Soldiers and small unit leaders of NCOs and junior officers. Much has been written about that action and deservedly so. Simulations were made which I used years later teaching a battle command elective to West Point seniors. A few days after the cease-fire I would visit the site that was near where our Corps TAC CP was located, to listen to Captain H.R. McMaster (Troop E Commander) and Captain Joe Sartiano (Troop G Commander) (Troop I Commander Captain Dan Miller was not present that day to review his part of the battle) explain the actions as we moved around the battle site. A testimonial to their Officers', NCOs', and Soldiers' courage under fire, boldness, and expert execution of an attack, expertise gained by years of drills, and combat simulated training maneuvers, to a dedication to an ethos of being trained and ready to fight and win against any enemy in high end combined arms operations.

And so Major General Rhame led his 1st Infantry Division forward, and after intense coordination of the forward passage of lines orchestrated by Lieutenant Colonel Steve Robinette, 2d Armored Cavalry Regiment executive officer (XO), and Colonel Holder plus the leadership of the Big Red One made that night forward passage of lines, and continued the attack that whole dark night.

All of this movement and arranging combinations of units in space and time is what I mean by maneuvering the corps; from our attack early order on 24 February to the point of main effort of attacking the RGFC with three divisions supported by fires, and the logistics to make that possible. What you need to do is effect concentration of the force for impact on the enemy and your own security, through some control over tempo as opposed to absolute speed of movement. Certainly that imposes its own

tensions between absolute speed and the necessity to keep this armored first in an all arms configuration as well in fuel and ammunition, and consideration for Soldier endurance so when they get to the attack point they can slam into the enemy at full power and sustain that power advantage and initiative until victory. As a commander you are deciding how tight or loose your command methods are to benefit the whole corps and its concentration when you need it and to avoid what my good friend Colonel (Ret) Rick Swain calls "entropy."

There are some examples of corps units maneuvering individually within a whole corps maneuver. While commanders were doing this, my own perspective as corps commander was to make adjustments as necessary so we could meet our intent of a rolling three division armored fist smashing into the RGFC with a momentum we could sustain until we finished them. For example, 2d Armored Cavalry Regiment was maneuvering at a tempo to stay about 30 minutes ahead of the follow-on armored divisions even as they were fighting battles and engagements and providing offensive cover for the corps. The 1st Armored Division was moving faster on the outside of the corps sector because they had further to go. They also had to fight Iraqi resistance along the way, but still maintain a tempo to be concentrated when we needed that on 26 February. The 3d Armored Division was moving behind the 2d Armored Cavalry Regiment to sustain the 30 minute separation but also moving to widen their attack zone to two brigades abreast to effect better concentration while maintaining the right tempo to do that even as the 42d Artillery Brigade was moving at an absolute speed to rejoin them after completing the prep fires mission for the breach. The 1st Infantry Division, after completing the breach, moved as rapidly as possible to reach the desired point to pass through the 2d Armored Cavalry Regiment. Thereafter in their night attack they maintained an attack tempo consistent with retaining the initiative even with enemy action, the terrain, and darkness. Fire support and logistics were making necessary adjustment to keep up and stay concentrated with sufficient logistics to sustain the main attack. That is maneuvering a corps in the attack.

Such maneuver of the corps also depends on the preference for attack methods. Ever since my own service in Vietnam I had a strong preference for overwhelming force. I saw that repeatedly achieve mission success at least cost to Soldiers in mission after mission there with 2d Squadron, 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment. It is okay in the NFL to win 24-21 on a Sunday afternoon. Not on the battlefield. There is no next time. This is for keeps. 100-0 was about right in my judgment. That preference informed my own decisions for the mission we had. I did not want to poke at the enemy with individual fingers, but hit them with a closed armored fist. We did not want to sting the enemy but crush them. That was our mission. That attitude ran throughout the corps. An example is Major General Funk and 3d Armored Division. They had 348 tanks in the division all in operating condition when we attacked. They also had 12 float tanks available to replace damaged tanks or those lost to maintenance. When they began their attack they not only had the 348 but also managed to put crews on the other 12 to have that additional combat power.

So that goes back to the depth of the leadership in large units, how they can absorb a mission change, or adapt to the situation, how they have the capacity to understand brief verbal orders, and their Soldiers, NCOs and small unit leaders have the razor sharp skills to go execute. So here I am talking to a colonel commanding a cavalry regiment that was attacking with great skill and all arms coordination, Apaches, close air support (we used 348 close air support sorties in our 89-hour attack), ground units, and artillery. And I was talking to a mechanized infantry division commander. And they had been thinking about this ahead of time, anticipating, and we had common situational awareness because of frequent communications and face to face visits over the past three days and the intense preparation and rehearsals before the attack.

They weren't starting from scratch here, either. We were all in each other's heads. I learned later that Major General Rhame had already wargamed some of this ahead of time, anticipating (as we both knew) release of the 1st Cavalry Division from CENTCOM was problematic and the mission depended on an attacking three division fist. His attitude was, if VII Corps calls us to come forward and do this, we're ready to do it. Don Holder was also able to continue the attack, to resume his momentum. The regiment was anxious to continue the attack. There was understandable frustration at changing orders that afternoon as we estimated possible passage of line sites. We tried to keep that to a minimum but interrupting momentum of an attack is something you take great measures to avoid. So to their credit, they made a lot happen. It was not easy. They also identified a seam between the RGFC and other units we could later exploit.

We also had blue-on-blue fires, a mistake resulting in casualties that evening, in the night attack, which I forever deeply regret. But my judgment was that the mission called for a three-armored division attack to destroy the Republican Guard. And it turns out that that is what happened. The Tawakalna, Medina, 10th and 12th, and the 17th, pretty were pretty much destroyed in that attack. The 2d Armored Cavalry Regiment's Battle of 73 Easting, and other division attacks to the north by 3d Armored Division at their Phase Line Bullet into the teeth of the RGFC defense and Tawakalna Division, and 1st Armored Division at what they called Medina Ridge destroying a brigade of the Medina RGFC Division, and the passage of lines coordinated by a regiment who knew how to do that very well, all from its REFORGERs and other exercises in Germany. It went fast but it was not easy. Our Soldiers and their leaders just knew what we were doing and had the confidence born of intense training and leader development over the many years leading to that decisive moment on the battlefield.

> That night was the most intense of the war, with the most concurrent activities . . . for me as the VII Corps commander . . . for the soldiers in the tanks and Bradleys . . . for the small-unit commanders trying to maintain order in their attack east in the dark . . . for my brigade and division commanders. The largest corps tank force in the history of the US Army was on the attack. There was no time to stop or for summary briefings. I just listened and absorbed it all and used my imagination to picture the battle in my mind's eye.
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> We had the 1st and 3d Armored Divisions side by side in contact with the Iraqis on about a seventy-kilometer front, with five brigades attacking, or about 500 tanks and 300 Bradleys. These were supported by twelve battalions of cannon and rocket artillery (close to 300 systems). Coming on line with them on about a thirty-kilometer front in the south was the 1st INF passing through the 2ACR. They would attack forward with two tank heavy brigades – or about 230 tanks and more than 100 Bradleys. To their south, the British were attacking with their two brigades, numbering almost 150 tanks and a similar number of Warriors. In all we had literally nine tank heavy brigades on line in a night attack against the Iraqis, plus the Apache attack deep into Minden.
>
> At one point, the noise was so great I thought there was a thunderstorm, grew concerned about the Apaches, and stepped outside the TAC. It was no thunderstorm. It was a JAYHAWK storm of firepower crashing down on the Iraqis. The sky was lit up by tracers big and small, and by the sparkle effect given by the MLRS as they fired off on the ground onto Iraqi positions. The air was filled with the constant roar of exploding artillery and the thump of tank and Bradley cannons. The ground vibrated. It was awesome. All the while, like all my commanders that night, I had to make quick decisions about this current battle even as I continued to think about the next day's fight. Should we pass the 1ID at night? Yes. Should we conduct a deep attack with the Apaches? Yes. Should we do a second attack on Minden? Yes. Should we go beyond the FSCL in that second attack to Highway 8?

No. There were reports of fire across boundaries and fratricide. Time to call 1st Armored Division and 3d Armored Division commanders and order them to get their flank coordinated so that it would stop.

Then came the plans for the next battle. If I wanted to maintain the tempo of the attack, I had to issue orders soon, before the current fight was finished. So we drew up the double envelopment, our tentative maneuver scheme for the next day.

Time to give John Yeosock a word picture of what was going on, and to request more maneuver room for the British, and also in the north between us and XVIII Corps (Stan Cherrie had asked for another ten kilometers of space to the north of our sector to ease fitting the 1CAV into our attack east; he was turned down). Watch the open flank of the 1st Armored Division in the north. Track the progress of the 1CAV to Lee, and then tell them to go to Horse. Figure where to displace the TAC in the morning.

I was enormously proud of the soldiers and leaders in the small-unit actions all over the corps. I knew it was not easy. I had been in battle at night but never like this, not on this scale, not with almost 1,000 tanks, not with nine brigades on line.[7]

That night's operation was superb. And my admiration just grows over the years. Our units, and Soldiers, and leaders got to execute that from top to bottom. It was just superb execution, heroism, intrepid courage, and skill, and no quit. Staying after it, making it happen. Executing this coordinated, rolling, no pause attack, FRAGPLAN Seven, and the Third Army order for XVIII Corps that opened a lane for their attack just now to our north. There were no RGFC in our zone of attack when the cease-fire went into effect. And yes, there was the lack of air and land synchronization to seal off the Kuwaiti theater of operations, to either capture or destroy the remaining Republican Guards leaving the Theater. And that was CENTCOM's issue, if it was an issue. given the superb land air, sea, campaign that liberated Kuwait.

Following that all night armored attack, we had set in motion a double envelopment of remaining Iraqi forces in our sector of attack. The southern arm was to be the 1st Infantry Division. The northern arm was the 1st Cavalry Division. After they had been released from Theater reserve, I had ordered Major General Tilelli to move his division rapidly forward and to the north of 1st Armored Division to attack east just north on 1st Armored Division and toward Basra. In a remarkable example of agility they moved almost 250 kilometers in 24 hours to be in a position north of 1st Armored Division. The Battle of Medina Ridge happened on 27 February with 1st Armored Division's northern brigade, pushing passage of the 1st Cavalry Division to their north back until first light on the 28th. The cease-fire preempted that operation the next day even as the cavalry squadron of the 1st Cavalry Division, 1/7 Cavalry commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Skip Sharpe, had been in position to lead the division forward.

I wrote later about how at some point in the battle a commander gets in a zone:

At this point late at night, with the sounds of battle close by, my emotions were running high. I wanted to pour it on the Iraqis, just pound them in an unrelenting attack with everything we had. We had the fist where we wanted it and wanted to drive it home. Go for the knockout. Boom. In sports, they call it the killer instinct. I had been in these situations before in Vietnam, only with much smaller units and with much less combat power and fewer complex organizations to maneuver. I was not alone in these feelings. You could sense the same thing all over the corps. I had already seen it in training, in chats and visits with the soldiers and leaders – seen it in their eyes. Now I was seeing it in combat. It was in the 2d Armored Cavalry Regiment at 73 Easting. It was in the Apaches' deep strike

that night. It was in the Big Red One during their night attack through Objective Norfolk. Later, it was in 1st AD's battles at Medina Ridge and in 3d Armored Division's battles at Phase Line Bullet. It was in all the cavalry squadrons out front or on the flanks of their divisions. Get the job done. The Army calls it the "warrior spirit," but it is more than that. It's about being a warrior, yes, but also a soldier, which means the disciplined application of force, "according to the laws of land warfare and our own values as a people." It goes beyond being a warrior.

And so, as warriors and soldiers, we all experienced this go-for-it-and-win feeling. It was nothing personal. But if they wanted a fight, they had come to the right place. There was no holding back. These intense feelings heightened senses to a new level. They put you in a zone. I cannot explain it, but I have never been so aware of sights and sounds as I have been in combat. You can just sense things you could not before. Maybe it is a function of the physical danger to those for whom you are most responsible, like a parent in a crisis situation with his family. You just know and do things that seem right at the time. You reach into the depths of your memory and recall things from your training, education, study, and experience that were not available to you before. You make patterns out of scraps and pieces of information that you could not make before. Later, when people ask why you did do such-and-so, you answer, "It felt right at the time." There is an uncanny sharp intellectual focus that allows your brain to process information, accept some, reject some, form conclusions, decide, not decide, all in nanoseconds. Napoleon said it was the result of "meditation," of enormous and continuing concentration on an area, off it, then back to it – and then things just appear to you." A certain calmness comes as well, it is all suspended in front of you in your head, the knowledge of what to activate and what not to. You can see it all in your mind's eye. Things go into slow motion; moments seem to last longer than they actually do.

All of these experiences have happened to me in battle, and I have never been able to replicate them anywhere else. I especially felt them when I was out and around the soldiers, sensing their pride and pain. Even though I was not out there in the middle of it, I was close enough and I knew what the soldiers were feeling, because I had been there myself, had been shot at and hit and missed many times. I could feel it all – the emotions, the highs and lows of command and combat.[8]

The American Army borrowed this *Auftragstaktik*, the mission orders, from the Germans who invented it back in the 19th century and practiced it. I was given a copy of the German troop leading procedures published in 1922 in German by my German counterpart when I was TRADOC commander. Even today, given the almost ensured electronic continuation of links between units, and headquarters, those connections will break down at times. Things are going to happen. Weather is going to force airplanes down, and going to break up communications here and there. Or a commander is going to be so involved in the local fight that they can't pay attention to their headquarters. So I think you establish a clear commander's intent. And you depend on your subordinates to use their initiative in figuring out how to accomplish their mission inside what I would call the parameters of that intent. As long as all the initiative goes on inside those parameters, we will all be coherent. And you depend on the density of leadership and the wise command knowledge of the executing battle commanders to use their considerable initiative that way and issue their own intent which all of our great commanders did superbly.

So I think Commander's intent is extraordinarily important. I think commanders have to do that themselves. For me, I don't like being constrained to a particular format. I think the Army gets in a little trouble when it tries to channel everybody's thinking into a particular format.

I think that Field Marshall Slim got it right in his book, *Defeat into Victory*. He said:

> One part of the order I did, however, draft myself - the intention. It is usually the shortest of all paragraphs, but it is always the most important, because it states - or it should - just what the commander intends to achieve. It is the one overriding expression of will by which everything in the order and every action by every commander and soldier in the army must be dominated. It should, therefore, be worded by the commander himself.[9]

I think as a senior commander thinking it all through is a matter of critical thinking synthesis. You gather all your own observations, you recall studies and history, you recall your own experiences, you listen to other opinions and ideas, to intelligence, and synthesize everything together. Then in two, three, or four sentences, you precisely and concisely describe your intent for the operation. Then you make sure that that's well understood in the execution of the operation. So I think the commander's intent is an expression of the collective will of the entire organization, and that everybody needs to be able to internalize that. The old rule about two levels down, I think is good. Everybody needs to be able to remember that without referring to notes, or 3x5 cards, or their iPhones, or iPads, or whatever. They just need to be able to express that. In a division, what's the corps' intent here? Or in a regiment, at the troop level, what's the division commander's intent? What are we trying to get done here? And then when the communication breaks down, and you can't talk to anybody, you just go ahead and use your own ideas and initiative to execute boldly within that intent.

My own intent looked like this:

> I intend to conduct a swift, violent series of attacks to destroy RGFC and minimize our own casualties. Speed, tempo, and a coordinated AirLand campaign are key. I want Iraqi forces to move so we can attack them throughout the depth of his formations by fire, maneuver, and air. The first phases of our operation will be deliberate and rehearsed. The latter will be more METT-T dependent. We will conduct a deliberate breach with precision and synchronization resulting from precise targeting and continuous rehearsals. Once through the breach, I intend to defeat forces to the east rapidly with one division, as an economy of force, and pass three divisions and the ACR, as point of main effort, to the west of that action to destroy RGFC in a fast-moving battle with zones of action and agile forces attacking by fire, maneuver, and air. CSS must keep up because I intend no pauses. We must strike hard and continually and finish rapidly.

(My saved copy of that intent I have framed because it is written in pencil with strikeovers and insertions showing my own thinking to get it right. I still use it in presentations, most recently at Maneuver Captains Career Course (MCCC) at Fort Benning in February 2017.)

There are four examples from our operation 26 years ago. The first were the verbal orders to Don Holder and the 2d Armored Cavalry Regiment to continue the attack before the passage of lines beyond our initial line for that passage when we realized that line was overcome by battle and weather events. From that 2d Armored Cavalry Regiment initiative within the intent came the subsequent Battle of 73 Easting, and all of the destruction of the Iraqi security zone and the main force units of the Tawakalna Division, and identifying a seam between the Republican Guards and the non-Republican Guards units that we could exploit with the 1st Infantry Division. Don Holder and his leaders and Troopers did all that within that intent, and with just a short verbal order. The second example occurred the morning after the night attack of 26 February, when I went out to visit the 1st Infantry Division. I talked to the ADC Maneuver, Brigadier General Bill Carter, as Major General Rhame was forward. I told him that I want him to continue the attack and cut Highway 8 by the end of that day. I could sense they were tired. So as I looked at the map, I saw the glimmering of some blue on the east edge of the map. That blue was the Persian Gulf. And I said, "go for the blue on the map. That's carrying the ships that will

Figure 12.6. Lieutenant General Franks discusses the battle with his officers. Photo courtesy of the author.

take us home." So sometimes you use sort of non-military terminology, even though I had already given the order in military terminology, I wanted to reinforce it with that. Realizing how tired people were, and I wanted to give them a little bit of motivation, and was trying to grab some motivating factor. When their cavalry squadron, 1/4 Cavalry under command of Lieutenant Colonel Bob Wilson ran out of communication connections, he remembered that and the intent and continued the attack to cut Highway 8, preventing any further Iraqi retreat and capturing over 5,000 prisoners. The third example happened early the morning of the fourth day when the 1st Armored Division got very low on fuel. Major General Griffith informed me in a quick meeting we had in the desert. Our Corps logisticians responded immediately. Yet, unknown to me was the fact that Major General Funk, CG of the adjacent 3d Armored Division, hearing the radio traffic about fuel and knowing the importance of a sustained three division fist, ordered his logisticians to send 20,000 gallons of fuel to 1st Armored Division. It was enough to keep them going until other fuel arrived. The fourth example was the initiative of our corps logisticians, Colonel Bill Rutherford Corps G-4, and COSCOM CG Brigadier General Bob McFarlin figuring out on their own initiative that to sustain the attack against the RGFC they needed to push a logistics base with fuel forward of the breach. They called it Log Base Nelligen and placed 1.2 million gallons of fuel there in over 400 fuel tankers. That initiative with the no pause allowed us to "strike hard and continually, and finish rapidly."

We had started out far from that point two and a half days ago. So I think that the commander's intent, the intention, the central idea of the operation is critically important. I don't care what kind of operation. Counterinsurgency, to high-end mounted operations, to division and corps attacks over considerable distances. I think the commander's intent remains, in this day, perhaps, even more important, that it dominates as a core idea above all of the chaff and noise that goes on, and email traffic, and chatter about this, that, and the other. That's all okay. I like a lot of command chatter. But you have got to retain the core idea of what it is you're trying to get done, and not dilute that in any way. If people

and subordinate echelons understand that, I think that that unifies big operations. The more senior you get, the more clarity there needs to be in that commander's intent. Then you have to change it, if the operation changes significantly. There needs to be clarity and precision in that. You need to work hard to make it so, as a senior commander. I spent a lot of time thinking about that. That is one of those big things you've got to get right, like force placement, like priorities in training, like FRAGPLAN decision timing for the main attack, like family support back home.

When I go around talking about Desert Shield and Desert Storm, one of the things that I like to point out is that we had great clarity of intent from our Commander-in-Chief and the National Security decision-making organizations of our nation, the National Security Council, the State Department, Department of Defense, and the Joint Chiefs of Staff. I often say that we could feel the steel in the will of the Commander-in-Chief from the Oval Office to our tank turrets. One of our tankers, a private first class in Lieutenant Colonel Ed Dyer's 1/37 Armor, 1st Armored Division, said, "They asked for our help and we are going to give them that help, free their country then go home and carry on with life." There was clarity in that will from two National Security Decision Memorandums, one of which was published in September, which described the approach to getting the Iraqis out of Kuwait. And then the second that was published in January that described the military and strategic goals for the campaign. And that was, from a national level, this core idea of the Commander-in-Chief, after a lot of consultation and some really wise decision-making, that is what we were going to do. And the President stuck to that, and saw to it the resources were available to do that, and depended on the military and his Theater Commander and team to be able to execute that. And so there was great coherence in the strategic ends, in the means, and in the ways. And that's become increasingly clear to me, in the years following Desert Storm.

The second thing that I would like to add is that at the end of all of our briefing charts, and all of our after action reports, we ended up with a bottom line that it was the courage and training of our Soldiers and our small unit leadership that carried the battle to the enemy, day and night, in sandstorms and in the rain, that in the end achieved victory and strategic success in Desert Storm. Now, it certainly is the responsibility and duty of senior level commanders to get our small units, (we are a team of teams), to get that team of teams at the right place, at the right time, in the right combination. That's what senior commanders do. It is the Soldiers, and the sergeants, and the lieutenants, and the captains that do the tough, hard, often cruel duty in the arena that is ground, land combat. And so, it is to their great credit that we achieved what we did. And that was the bottom line of every one of our briefing charts. And I remain convinced of that to this day, that if we remember our history, what wins and who does that, that we'll be successful any time that our nation calls on our military to go execute a military operation across the wide spectrum of types of military operations that might happen in the future. The totality of this effort was due to the teamwork, courage and the selflessness of the members of the VII Corps.

To remember and document our major decisions, on 31 March 1991, I sent a message to commanders entitled *Fighting a Five Division Armored Corps* with each major assessment and decision we made in our 89 hour 250 kilometer attack that as part of the Coalition liberated Kuwait, our overall strategic objective. Each commander replied from their own perspective. That document is in the archives at the Ike Skelton Combined Arms Research Library at Fort Leavenworth.

At the end we had attacked 250 kilometers in 89 hours and destroyed the better part of 11 Iraqi divisions, with their 1,350 tanks, 1,224 personnel carriers, 285 artillery pieces, 105 air defense pieces, and 1,229 trucks. There were no RGFC in our sector of attack at the cease-fire. Our Corps had fired 55,000 cannon artillery rounds, 10,500 MLRS rockets, and used 348 close air support sorties mostly in daylight. We had consumed 5.6 million gallons of fuel and 6 tons of ammunition, in addition to 1.5 million meals and 3.3 million gallons of water.

All that had come at a price, as it always does. In VII Corps we had 47 US Soldiers KIA and 16 British Soldiers KIA. Total coalition casualties were 358 Soldiers KIA and over 776 WIA. Each year at our Reunion we remember each of our fallen in a Memorial Service by reading each name one by one. Everything we did we did as a team.

From *Into the Storm* 20 years ago:

> I was humbled to have had the privilege to lead such a magnificent armored corps into battle. Their battlefield achievements had come about because of twenty years of rebuilding, and because of their courage and selfless sense of duty. That I had been permitted to return to battle with that Army after we had both been badly wounded was something more than I could ever have dreamed of684

Today I remain equally humbled and deeply honored and extraordinarily privileged to have been VII Corps commander. To our formations and Soldiers and leaders at every level who did everything we asked of them and then some, with intrepid courage, great skill, teamwork, and discipline, my profound admiration, respect, and everlasting gratitude as a fellow Soldier. You did all of this in carrying out a rapid adjustment from the Cold War to a totally different type of campaign with totally different METT-T factors, fighting and winning in as tough and as harsh of a ground combat situation of a desert, with tough weather, and against a different enemy. To see as well with enormous gratitude, admiration, and respect the selflessness of our family members who remained in Germany and in the USA and UK, and who did what they did with great skill and their own brand of courage, and savvy, and initiative. My everlasting gratitude to our Soldiers and leaders, to the men and women of VII Corps, to have had the honor and humbling privilege to have been your corps commander in this war. My everlasting respect and honor to those of our ranks who in Lincoln's words, gave that last full measure of devotion, and to their families who bear the pain of their loss. JAYHAWK!

Notes

1. Tom Clancy and Fred Franks, Jr., *Into the Storm: A Study in Command* (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1997), 186-188.

2. Clancy, *Into the Storm*, 204-205.

3. Clancy, *Into the Storm*, 159-160.

4. Headquarters, Department of the Army, Field Manual 3-0: *Operations* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 14 July 2001), 5-4.

5. Clancy, *Into the Storm*, 266.

6. Adolf von Schell, *Battle Leadership* (Fort Benning, GA: The Benning Herald, 1933), 55.

7. Clancy, *Into the Storm*, 385-386.

8. Clancy, *Into the Storm*, 384-385.

9. William Slim, *Defeat Into Victory: Battling Japan in Burma and India, 1942-1945* (London: Cassell, 1956), 210-211.

10. Clancy, *Into the Storm*, 447.

Chapter 13
V Corps Command Decisions

General (Ret) Scott Wallace & Colonel (Ret) Kevin Benson

From the initial fights across the line of departure on 20 March to the last battle at Objective Titans on 10 April 2003, V Corps fought its way forward over 300 miles, defeated elements of five Iraqi divisions and two corps, and uncounted numbers of irregular forces to wrest control of the ancient city of Baghdad from Saddam Hussein. These were desperate fights as tough as any in the storied history of the US Army. This chapter uses the initial phases of that fight, Operation COBRA II, to describe the operational environment, the conditions, the thoughts, and the personal relationships which enabled decision making. Woven throughout the discussion – although not necessarily stated as such – are lessons, both good and bad, in Mission Command. Importantly, this article is focused on decisions at the corps level and might not reflect the same "reality" that might have been understood at other echelons of the command.

We will use two key V Corps decisions as the vehicle for lessons in Mission Command and for context. The first decision set are the decisions made to redirect the corps effort in multiple directions in advance of the attack thru the Karbala Gap. The second decision set are the decisions made associated with the well-publicized "Thunder Runs," the decisions associated with the attacks by 2d Brigade, 3d Infantry Division into Baghdad, and the critical decision for the brigade to stay in the city once its second attack had been successful.

Setting the Stage – Operation Iraqi Freedom I

The planning staffs of Third US Army/Combined Forces Land Component Command (CFLCC), V US Corps, and I Marine Expeditionary Force (I MEF), worked together closely in crafting the major operations plan for land operations and the supporting corps/MEF plans for the advance on Baghdad, Phase III of the major operation. This planning and supporting war game efforts at all levels established the broadest possible understanding of potential conditions after land forces crossed the line of departure. This broad understanding established conditions for the subsequent corps level decisions taken by then Lieutenant General Wallace as V Corps made contact with the enemy main body. The first event which established the conditions for understanding of commanders' intents and the scope of the operation was the CFLCC combined arms rehearsal.

On 14 February, 2002 CFLCC conducted a combined arms rehearsal of COBRA II.[1] The combined arms rehearsal was conducted on a huge terrain model constructed by staff non-commissioned officers, under the guidance of the CFLCC Command Sergeant Major Sparks. All CFLCC major subordinate units made use of this terrain model for rehearsals of operations.

Lieutenant General David McKiernan opened the rehearsal with a discussion of the operational level scheme of maneuver. Major General Spider Marks, the J2, followed McKiernan with a detailed discussion of how the Iraqis would oppose the operation all the way to Baghdad. He also mentioned the effect of weather and the expected sand storm which would affect operations although when this might occur was not yet known. Marks truly presented an insightful understanding of how the full range of Iraqi forces would contest the advance.

Marks presented a coordinated assessment of the effect of air operations on the command and control of Iraqi forces. He outlined the three potential areas where the Iraqis could use chemical weapons: near An Nasiriyah; the Karbala area; and finally in and around Baghdad itself. The concentration of US forces near the first two sites presented a lucrative target for chemical fires as well as the greatest po-

tential to disrupt operations. Use of chemicals in and around Baghdad was seen as a last act of desperation. Marks' assessment was the actual use of chemical weapons would confirm US, UN and coalition statements that in fact Saddam did possess weapons of mass destruction, thus he concluded there was a greater potential for use of these weapons when the desperation point was reached.

Marks went into detail on how individual units would rely on existing orders and execute them in accordance with defense plans. There would not be much freedom of action on the Iraqis part. Marks' final assessment was the Iraqis would take every measure, conventional and unconventional, to contest the advance and delay the arrival of US forces in Baghdad. He termed the expected Iraqi strategy as "Control-Delay-Attrit."

The CFLCC J3, Major General J.D. Thurman followed Marks. Thurman presented a more detailed explanation of the concept of the operations. This was a straightforward presentation of the corps and MEF zones, how fires would be coordinated and allocated, how the Coalition air forces would support the advance to Baghdad, and what CFLCC level decisions there were and when McKiernan anticipated they might be taken. The J4, Major General Chris Christianson, followed Thurman and delivered another straightforward presentation on the flow of logistics in support of the advance. The major subordinate commanders followed these CFLCC staff presentations.

Figure 13.1 Lieutenant General Scott Wallace at the CFLCC Rehearsal of Concept (ROC) drill. Photo courtesy of the US Army.

Lieutenant General Scott Wallace delivered the V Corps concept of the operation and how it was nested in the overall CFLCC concept. Wallace discussed how the corps would apply fire and maneuver to reach Baghdad with the major combat elements of the 3d Infantry Division. He described the first major operation which would support the I MEF crossing of the Euphrates River to the west of An Nasiriyah and how the corps would expand the bridgehead line then handover the area to I MEF. Wallace placed the main effort of the corps would be west of the river but in order to maintain contact with the MEF forces in its zone he placed the cavalry squadron of the 3d Infantry Division on the east bank of

the river. Wallace described actions expected in the Karbala Gap where terrain favored an Iraqi defense in some depth as well as a possible use of chemical weapons to disrupt the advance. Wallace concluded with his appreciation of how he would control operations in and around Baghdad in accordance with the plan as it existed at the time.

The commonly shared feeling among planners and commanders alike was that the Central Command would take measures to avoid street by street fighting which would be costly, time consuming and indecisive. Lieutenant General James Conway, commanding general I MEF, followed Wallace.

Decision Set One:

Karbala Gap: Redirect the efforts of the corps to attack in multiple directions

Significant decisions made at the Corps level are few. They are normally not urgent. You have time to think them through in detail. However, when opportunities are presented by the enemy or battlefield conditions, they need to be acted on quickly and with resolve. It takes time for an entire Corps to react to changes in direction afforded by battlefield opportunity.

– General Scott Wallace

It was clearly understood that the overarching purpose of the operation was the removal of the regime of Saddam Hussein. Since the regime's center of gravity was Baghdad, Baghdad had to be the focus of the corps' effort. The original V Corps course of action had the corps attacking up highway 1, the most direct route to Baghdad. The decision to attack through the Karbala Gap was not lightly taken. Discussions and dialogue relative to the gap and its efficacy as an avenue of approach were the subject of multiple planning sessions and wargaming efforts. The conventional wisdom was that the gap was too narrow to force an entire US Army corps through. The supposed advantage of attacking through the gap was the argument that the Iraqis would not be expecting such a move, thus achieving surprise and making it a viable course of action.

Not insignificant in the selection of the V Corps course of action was the subject of Iraqi use of chemical weapons. The V Corps planners and leaders expected their opponents had a chemical capability. They assumed Saddam would not hesitate to employ his chemical arsenal if his regime was threatened (which, of course, was the overall aim of the operation – making the "pucker factor" that much higher). There were several logical locations for the employment of chemical weapons: 1) before the attack, while coalition forces were still in their assembly areas; 2) upon coalition forces crossing the Euphrates River, thus giving Saddam a strong indication the attack would continue north; 3) in the area west of An Najaf where the V Corps would build its logistic base for future operations – most notably the push to Baghdad; 4) The constricted terrain vicinity of the Karbala Gap, where V Corps forces would be concentrated as they carried the attack toward Baghdad; and 5) any concentration of coalition forces around Baghdad which might present a lucrative target and create mass casualties. The question of if, when, and where chemical weapons might be used was on the mind of every Coalition Soldier regardless of rank.

Two events solidified the V Corps decision to conduct its main effort via the Karbala Gap. The first was a rehearsal – code named Victory Scrimmage – of the V Corps plan which took place at Grafenwoehr, Germany, concluding on 5 February 2003. Grafenwoehr was chosen as the rehearsal site for both security and infrastructure support considerations. This was no simple rehearsal. It was a fully instrumented, computer-assisted rehearsal of the corps base plan and several variations. Victory Scrimmage was conducted by the Army's Battle Command Training Program (now the Mission Command Training Program).

Wallace assembled the commanders and staffs of each of the corps' major subordinate commands for the exercise with the intent of rehearsing the corps' base plan and several vignettes which represented

possible branches and sequels of the base plan. Significantly, since the corps' force list was still a work in progress and the request for forces process was still slowly making its way through the halls of the Pentagon, assumptions had to be made as to who might be available and when. The 3d Infantry Division, 101st Airborne Division, 3d Armored Cavalry Regiment, and the V Corps' organic separate brigades were almost certain to be part of the initial fight. The inclusion of the 4th Infantry, 1st Cavalry, and 1st Armored Divisions and when these forces would be available was much less certain.

In all cases the 3d Infantry Division, commanded by Major General Buff Blount, was the corps main effort. The 3d Infantry Division was the most desert-savvy and best trained heavy unit in the Army due to its multiple brigade rotations in and out of the Kuwaiti desert. Wallace observed the training, talked in detail with division leaders and had great confidence in the level of training and the warfighting savvy of the division's leaders and soldiers. In each case, the corps' supporting effort was the 101st Airborne Division, commanded by Major General Dave Petraeus. The 101st Airborne Division with its infantry strength and the mobility gained from its aviation brigade was ideally suited for holding the complex terrain cleared by the 3d Infantry Division, particularly the urban areas bypassed by 3d Infantry Division. Wallace knew Petraeus and via personal interaction gained an appreciation for the high quality of training and leadership in the division.

The rehearsal had a coalescing effect on the entire command. It was the first time many of the staffs and commanders had worked directly together. The effort established conditions of trust and confidence throughout the entire corps.

Victory Scrimmage led to some important insights into the V Corps plan. Three stood out as most important. First, it showed an attack up Highway 1 was viable, however it also exposed the likely impact the terrain east of the Euphrates River would have on mobility. If the Iraqis intended a defense in depth, their forces and the terrain could significantly slow the V Corps advance. The Highway 1 approach might also demand multiple, potentially complex, gap and river crossings. Second, the rehearsal showed the potential impact a determined defense of the Karbala Gap by the Iraqi Republic Guard Corps could have on the operation. Such a defense, reinforced by chemical weapons south of the gap, would almost certainly have a significant adverse impact on the corps advance. Third, the geometry of the battlefield showed once the battle in the vicinity of the Karbala Gap, and a similar distance along Highway 1 from Baghdad, was joined the corps would be inside the enemy's "red zone" and subject to massed artillery fire. In all cases it was apparent the corps needed to have multiple options as it advanced toward Baghdad to ensure the attack did not bog down at the critical point. Additionally the rehearsal make it clear that, once inside the presumed Iraqi "red zone," it would be a continuous attack all the way to Baghdad. Ultimately as the result of a 3ID internal rehearsal Blount recommended, and Wallace accepted, the Karbala Gap approach.

Wallace stated the required conditions for the attack to proceed through the gap and on to Baghdad. It was essential that all leaders have a common understanding of these conditions. First, the corps needed a reasonably accurate intelligence picture of the enemy, his disposition, and most importantly his intention of contesting the attack through the gap. Second, by virtue of the continuous nature of the attack through the gap and on to Baghdad, sufficient logistics assets, primarily fuel and ammunition, had to be available in the corps logistics support area west of An Najaf to carry the fight to the capital. Wallace did not want his long and tenuous lines of communication to dictate the nature or the tempo of the attack. Wallace turned to his corps Support Command Commander, Brigadier General Charlie Fletcher, and directed the attack would not take place until five days of supply was stockpiled. Provisioning for the forces in the field, and simultaneous logistics preparation for future operations became the task of Fletcher and the COSCOM. In spite of the threat to the lines of communication and deplorable weather conditions (dominated by the sand storm Marks had predicted during the rehearsal in Doha), Fletcher and his troops delivered.

Soon after what the corps staff came to know as the "mother of all sandstorms" abated, commanders at all levels took stock in their situation. V Corps combat power was centered east and northeast of An Najaf with lines of communication that extended south along the west side of the Euphrates River, past Tallil airbase and all the way back to Kuwait. For the corps to be postured for the assault through the gap and on to Baghdad the enemy situation had to be stabilized and several changes in mission and orientation had to take place.

A significant improvement to the post of the corps came with operational control of the 82d Airborne Division (commanded by Major General Chuck Swannack). General McKiernan held the 82d in CFLCC reserve in case of "catastrophic success" during the campaign's opening phase. Wallace, early in the planning of the operation, asked for the 82d as soon as there was no longer need to hold them in CFLCC reserve; that was now the case. The arrival of the 82d outside of As Samawah was significant in two regards. First, it gave the corps another senior level command and commander who could be given complex missions in what was proving to be a very fluid battlefield situation. Second, it allowed V Corps a greater degree of security along its extended lines of communication while allowing concentration of its assault forces for the final push on Baghdad.

The arrival of the 82d allowed 3d Brigade of 3d Infantry Division to disengage from As Samawah and the lines of communications extending from there to Tallil. 3d Brigade, 3d Infantry Division quickly began the trek north as did 2d Brigade, 3d Infantry Division and 3-7 Cavalry who were relieved of responsibility in the An Najaf area by elements of the 101st. Simultaneous with this movement was the continued replenishment of fuel, ammunition, food and water to forward corps elements and the stockpiling of supplies in preparation for the attack on Baghdad. During what was deliberately planned as a strategic pause, arrival of additional combat power, the improved weather and the improving supply situation had a stabilizing effect. In contrast to the rapid movement and maneuver to their current positions, frequently contested by irregular forces of the Saddam Fedayeen or Baath Party Militia, a period of relative calm descended on the battlefield.

Wallace and his leaders knew both instinctively and from experience nothing good happens during a combat pause. Either you lose your momentum, the enemy has a chance to regroup, or both. Neither is good. Although the corps was not yet postured to begin the assault on Baghdad, and had certainly not lost the initiative, something had to be done to regain the momentum of the attack. A call and subsequent huddle with the commander and staff of the 3d Infantry Division presented the opportunity to reestablish the momentum while simultaneously addressing some of the risk issues associated with the attack thru the gap at Karbala.

Blount, his staff and commanders were leaning forward to assault through the Karbala Gap. They were concerned their lack of recent forward movement might provide the enemy with opportunities to reposition forces, artillery in particular, which might be able to range the division as it prepared for its attack. Blount proposed a limited objective brigade attack which would accomplish several objectives. First, it would get the division back on the offensive. Second, as Colonel Dave Perkin's 2d Brigade attacked across the Euphrates River to Al Hindiyah (Objective Murray), it would get 2d Brigade "out of the way" of the division's other two brigades which were to lead the assault through the gap. Finally, it allowed for Lieutenant Colonel Terry Ferrell's 3-7 Cavalry to clear the zone leading to the gap of any possible enemy forces. Upon completion of the attack, the 3ID would have its forces postured to resume the attack through the Karbala gap and on to Baghdad.

Colonel Steve Hicks, the V Corps G3, was in constant contact with the operations officers of the corps and knew each of the corps' combat formations shared the same concerns about loss of momentum. He also knew each was looking for opportunities to get back on the attack now that the weather had cleared and resupply had been accomplished. Hicks proposed the 101st and 82d be ordered back on

the offensive simultaneous with the 3d Infantry Division actions in and around Karbala. What resulted from this quick appraisal was a fragmentary order (FRAGO) to the corps which, upon completion of the operations, would: 1) posture 3d Infantry Division for the attack through the Karbala Gap; 2) provide additional security to the corps' lines of communications and the logistics base established west of An Najaf; and 3) provide information about and clear enemy forces from alternative avenues of approach which Wallace would have to consider should the attack through the Karbala Gap fail. In addition to the specific intent of the attacks, and since the focus of the action in most cases was from west to east across the Euphrates River, it was hoped the action across the corps area of operations might deceive the Iraqis as to the corps intentions for future operations.[1]

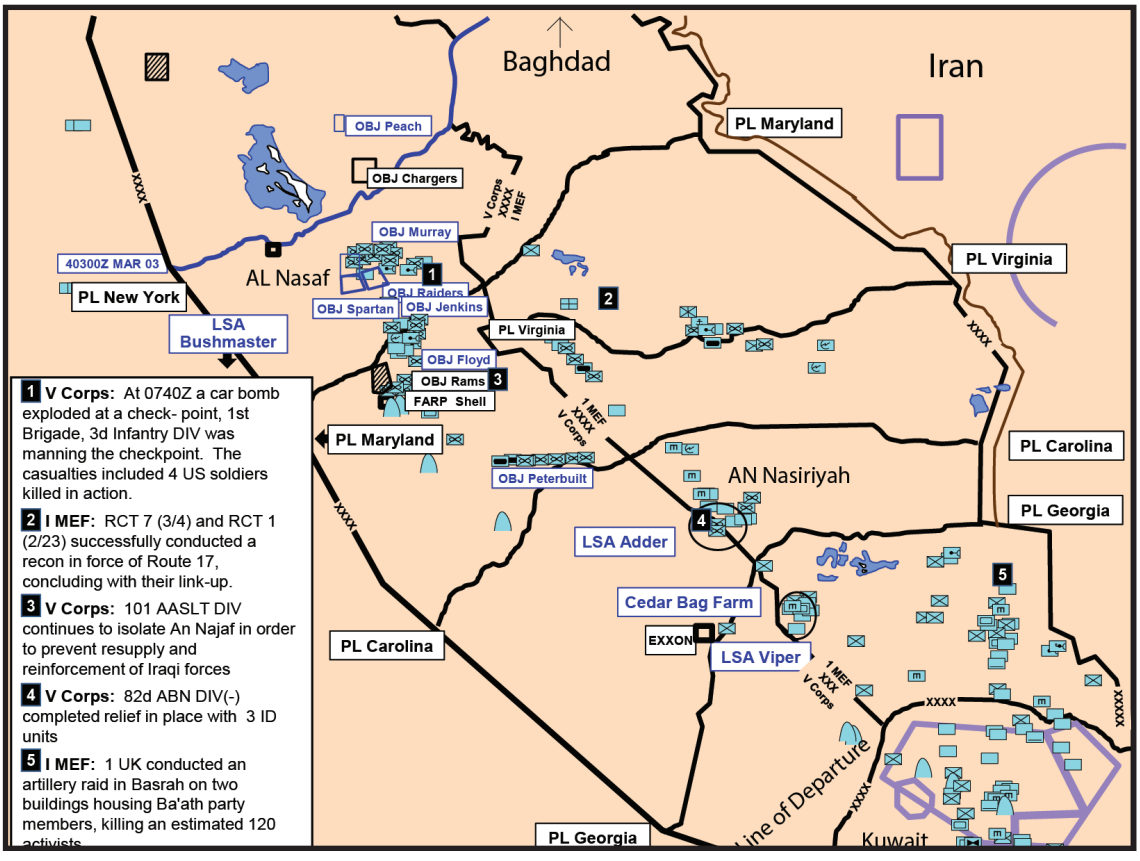

Figure 13.2 Activities 29 March 2003 D+11. Map created by CAC History for the authors.

The corps began rapid preparations to conduct five simultaneous attacks the morning of 31 March. Each of the corps' subordinate divisions was given their task and purpose in resuming the offensive. The 3ID would attack toward northeast to Hindiyah while conducting a reconnaissance in zone toward the Karbala Gap. The 101st Airborne Division would attack to contain enemy forces in and around An Najaf, conduct a feint north and east toward Al Hillah, and conduct an armed reconnaissance with its aviation brigade to the north and west of Bahr al-Milh Lake. The 82d Airborne Division's 2d Brigade would attack east to contain enemy forces in and around As Samawah. The desired end state saw the 3d Infantry Division positioned to attack through the Karbala Gap with its flanks secured and the corps lines of communications open and secure. The attacks had the additional benefit of providing tangible information about alternative axes of attack and courses of action should there be a need to deviate from the corps base plan.

It is a tribute to the Soldiers and leaders of the corps that they were able to adjust rapidly and effectively to changes in their battlefield circumstance. The attacks took place starting at 0600 the morning

of 31 March, although initial movements occurred the previous day and into the evening. As the sun rose on April Fool's Day it was apparent that the attacks had their desired effect.

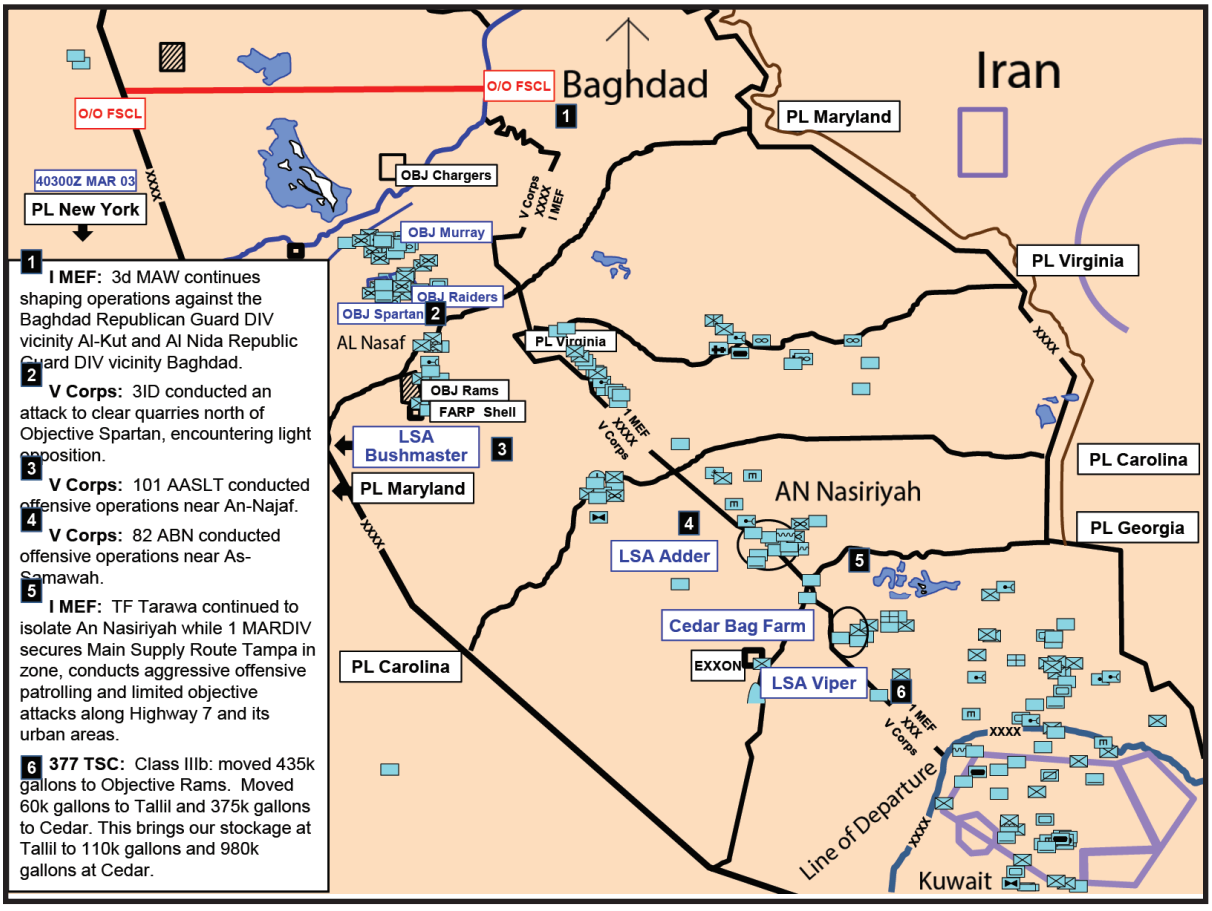

Figure 13.3 Activities 30 March 2003, D+12. Map created by CAC History for the authors.

In the south, Colonel Arnold Bray's soldiers of the 2d Brigade, 82d Airborne Division advanced steadily into the outskirts of As Samawah, effectively securing the corps lines of communication that previously had been so tenuous. Although met with steady but normally uncoordinated enemy resistance, Bray's troops continued the pressure on Iraqi forces and over the course of the next several days were not only able to clear the town of opposition, but to also provide reconnaissance along Highway 8 toward Al Diwaniyah to confirm no threat existed in that area.

The 101st Airborne Division with the attached tanks of 2-70 Armor performed its mission to perfection. Armed reconnaissance by the division's aviation brigade moved generally uncontested to the northwest to Bahr al-Milh Lake, confirming no threat existed on the corps' western flank. Absence of enemy contact also suggested that although not desirable, this avenue of approach toward Baghdad could be used if circumstances dictated. Meanwhile, Colonel Ben Hodges and his troops cleared the area between An Najaf and the corps' lines of communication in that vicinity. Similar to the experience of the 82d Airborne Division in As Samawah, Hodges, his leaders and his soldiers not only accomplished the mission intended by the corps, perhaps more significantly, they set conditions for the subsequent clearing of An Najaf in the days to come. Colonel Joe Anderson's 2d Brigade (with 2-70 Armor attached) probably had the toughest fight of those in the 101st's area of operations. As they moved along the highway connecting An Najaf with Al Hillah they made significant contact with Iraqi

forces. Heavy-light operations practiced by many of the unit's soldiers and leaders at the Army's combat training centers paid off as their move toward Al Hillah destroyed large amounts of Iraqi artillery, resulted in significant Iraqi casualties, served to eliminate any enemy offensive capability in the area, and further isolated An Najaf.

In the 3d Infantry Division's area of operations, the results were equally as successful. 3-7 Cavalry was able to clear the zone toward the Karbala Gap with no significant opposition, while the division's 1st and 3d Brigades repositioned for the assault through the gap. 2d Brigade's attack toward Al Hindiyah found the enemy concentrated in the town and approaches to the bridge over the Euphrates River. The brigade's attack, supported by close air support and artillery, lasted the better part of the day. The attack yielded significant enemy casualties, while enemy indirect fire systems were routinely destroyed by friendly counterfire. Importantly, the 2d Brigade's attack secured the eastern flank of the 3d Infantry Division and facilitated the positioning of forces for the assault through the gap and on to Baghdad.

There is much to be understood and appreciated about the forgoing set of decisions; the value of deliberate planning augmented by detailed rehearsals, the willingness to adjust as circumstances dictate, the need to retain options and think through the conditions which might call those options into play, the significant value of determined leaders and well-trained units and Soldiers were (and are) the fabric of successful battlefield outcomes.

Decision Two

Baghdad: Allow 2BCT, 3ID to attack into the city and remain

In combat, although actions themselves are frequently unpredictable, there are predictable decision cycles normally centered on action – reaction – counteraction. He who initiates an action needs to be prepared to see and understand the enemy's reaction in time and space. This makes planning and executing reasonable (and sometimes decisive) counter action much easier.

– General Scott Wallace

The success of the attack through the Karbala Gap exceeded all expectations as the 3d Infantry Division led corps attack dealt with disorganized, yet determined, enemy resistance in and around Karbala. Leaving Colonel Dan Allyn's 3d Brigade behind to isolate Karbala, the 3d Infantry Division's 1st Brigade seized a crossing over the Euphrates River northeast of Karbala (Objective Peach). On the objective they seized a four-lane bridge over the river that was rigged for demolition, but not destroyed. This hastened the corps movement in zone as the brigades of the 3d Infantry Division attacked to their assigned objectives, effectively isolating Baghdad west of the Euphrates River (which split the city roughly in half). Isolation of the eastern portion, east of the Euphrates River, was the task of the Marines of I MEF who continued their attack in zone along the eastern approaches to Baghdad.

As the corps approached Baghdad, 1st Brigade, 3d Infantry Division seized Saddam (now Baghdad) International Airport (Objective Lions) on the west side of the city. 2d Brigade, 3d Infantry Division seized the area where Highways 1 and 8 intersect south of the city (Objective Saints). Dan Allyn's 3d Brigade, 3d Infantry Division was relieved of responsibility in and around Karbala by 2d Brigade, 101st Airborne Division and attacked to seize the northwestern approaches to Baghdad (Objective Titans). During the assault, 3-7 Cavalry of the 3d Infantry Division took up positions in and around the road network which leads into Baghdad from the west, destroying a significant number of repositioning T72s (tanks) and armored personnel carriers which were apparently unaware of corps' the rapid advance on Baghdad.

The isolation of Baghdad was taking shape in accordance with the corps' plan. Meanwhile, the 101st Airborne Divison (from An Najaf north) and 82d Airborne Division with 2d Cavalry Regiment

attached (vicinity of As Samawah) continued to secure the corps lines of communications, clear the urban areas in the south of remaining forces loyal to the regime, and began actions to understand the civil and security environment left in the wake of regime retreat from the southern portion of the country, executing what could best be described as stability and wide area security operations.

The plan for the reduction of Baghdad was based on facts and assumptions developed early in the V Corps planning process. Given the enormity of the task, the corps' planning cell was augmented by a small group of students from the School of Advanced Military Studies (SAMS) who studied the problem of Baghdad in detail. There was one dominant thought which permeated the planning. Nobody in V Corps was the least bit interested in a block-by-block, house to house clearing of Baghdad, a city roughly the size of Boston, Massachusetts. Wallace and his planners were influenced by the recent bloody and indecisive Russian urban operations experience in Chechnya and the analysis of lessons which might be learned from the Russian experience.

The plan which evolved was simple in description but anything but simple in its execution. The first task was to isolate the city. The second task was to determine those forces, locations and facilities (both real and symbolic) within the city from which the regime drew its power. Finally, rather than clearing the city from the outside in and house to house, the corps would conduct armored raids into the city, effectively collapsing the regime and its base of power from the inside out. Two activities were designed to aid in this effort.

As the plan for Baghdad evolved, V Corps was in the midst of a major deployment into its forward operating bases in Kuwait, setting up its headquarters and conducting opportunity training on tasks vital to the upcoming attack. Everyone was busy with the urgency of getting set for what was assumed to be a major land operation, although its timing was anything but certain. Although they were not part of the invasion force, the 1st Armored Division headquartered in Wiesbaden, Germany could still contribute to the effort. Wallace and his team of planners explained the concept for the reduction of Baghdad to Major General Ric Sanchez and directed he and his leaders investigate what tactics might be employed to enable the concept.

The task fell to one of Sanchez's brigade commanders, Colonel J.D. Johnson. Johnson and his team deployed to Grafenwoehr, Germany and experimented first via simulation and then by small groups with how best to the conduct the raids that the Baghdad reduction concept demanded. Once convinced they understood a range of tactics which might work, Johnson flew to Kuwait and at Wallace's direction, briefed the assembled V Corps leaders and select members of I MEF on what they had found and answered questions. While not definitive, Johnson's efforts exposed combat leaders to the tactics they might choose to employ in the reduction of Baghdad. Most importantly, his analysis suggested: 1) the raid concept was viable, given the intelligence needed to direct the action; 2) the attacking force needed to be dominated by, if not fully equipped with, armored vehicles. Unarmored trucks did not survive well and the need to protect them drew attention away for the raid force task and purpose; 3) as the raiding force advances in urban terrain, and if it expected to withdraw along the same or similar routes, the key road junctions along the route need to be secured for the duration of the raid, essentially telescoping in to the objective and telescoping out again; 4) fuel and ammunition are at a premium. The force needs to conserve what it can since resupply along contested routes is tenuous at best; and 5) medical evacuation is unlikely to occur by aerial medevac, and must be accomplished via armored vehicles. Non-standard medical evacuation vehicles needed to be planned for and readily available.

The second Baghdad-related activity proved to be useful in providing a general understanding of conditions in Baghdad, but lacking in specificity. Prior to the invasion, the CFLCC intelligence staff established a "fusion cell" in Doha, Kuwait. The focus of this cell was to gain the information necessary for the detailed tactical planning that the reduction of Baghdad would require. Marks staffed the

cell with some of his most capable intelligence analysts and leaders. The V Corps intelligence analysts frequently collaborated with the fusion cell, and Wallace was a frequent visitor to the cell in the days leading up to the invasion. In spite of the effort, as 3d Infantry Division closed on Baghdad there was very little firm information about the forces in Baghdad (assumed to be the Special Republican Guards), their disposition, or their tactical intent. From a doctrinal perspective therefore, the reduction of Baghdad would have to be more of a movement to contact than a deliberate attack. The combat elements of V Corps had essentially been in that posture since the start of the ground campaign and would prove to be exceptionally agile in the execution of this phase as well. (It should be noted that the idea of intelligence fusion is not without merit. Under the command of then Lieutenant General Stan McChrystal the Joint Special Operations Task Force, JSOTF, perfected the concept of operations/intelligence fusion to significant positive effect in its counter-terrorism campaign).

As with the lessons learned in and around Karbala, the leaders of V Corps were anxious to continue to put pressure on the Iraqi Army, and hence the regime. They were also very concerned with the lack of definitive information about enemy capabilities and posture in and around Baghdad. Blount fully appreciated that although his staff was working hard to develop an intelligence picture of Baghdad, it was unwise to wait for information. He and Wallace both knew sometimes you have to fight for information, thus 3d Infantry Division developed plans to conduct an armed reconnaissance into the heart of Baghdad.

A major highway (Highway 8) enters Baghdad from the south in the vicinity of Objective Saints – now controlled by Colonel Perkins' 2d Brigade. The highway extends due north to a major intersection, then turns almost due west exiting the urban sprawl of Baghdad in the vicinity of Baghdad International Airport – Objective Lions – controlled by Colonel Will Grimsley's 1st Brigade. A plan was developed to take advantage of 3d Infantry Division's dominant positions south and west of Baghdad. Blount recommended, and Wallace approved a plan to conduct an armed reconnaissance from Objective Saints along Highway 8 to Objective Lions, the purpose of which was to stir things up a bit and to determine Iraqi response. The task fell to Perkins' 2d Brigade. Perkins assigned the mission to 1st Battalion, 64th Armor commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Rick Schwartz. Wallace ensured the 2d Brigade operation would be the V Corps' priority effort for 5 April, and directed that the corps' only unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) asset be assigned to the mission to both support 3d Infantry Division and to gain information on Iraqi reaction which would be used to inform future operations in Baghdad.

Task Force (TF) 1-64 Armor crossed its assigned line of departure at 0630 on 5 April, becoming the first US or coalition unit to enter the city with the mission "to conduct a movement to contact north along Highway 8 to determine the enemy's disposition, strength, and will to fight." Schwartz understood it to be a limited duration attack of about 20 kilometers which would cross back into the friendly lines of 1st Brigade at the airport. Accordingly, he organized his force using only armored vehicles. Perkins elected to accompany TF 1-64 Armor on the operation.

The bold attack apparently surprised the Iraqi defenders and civilians alike. The task force initially encountered sporadic small arms and rocket-propelled grenade fire which became more intense as the force moved along its route of advance. Iraqi forces, both Special Republican Guard and irregular fighters, soon responded violently to the Baghdad incursion. Iraqi fighters arrived in assorted vehicles in an uncoordinated effort to halt the advance and destroy the US invaders. The Iraqis took up positions in "every nook and cranny" and took particular advantage of highway overpasses which crossed Highway 8 at several locations. The supporting fires and overwhelming firepower of TF 1-64 took an exacting toll on responding Iraqi forces. In spite of Iraqi reaction, and the violent fight in which it had just been involved in, TF 1-64 crossed back into the friendly lines of the 1st Brigade at Baghdad airport in good order, and with minimal casualties given the violence of the contact. The Soldiers of TF 1-64 had run

the gauntlet of Highway 8 into Baghdad under the watchful eye of the V Corps UAV which observed Iraqi defenders placing obstacles along the route of march behind the task force as it moved north and then west, apparently expecting to be able to ambush the force as it returned along the same route.

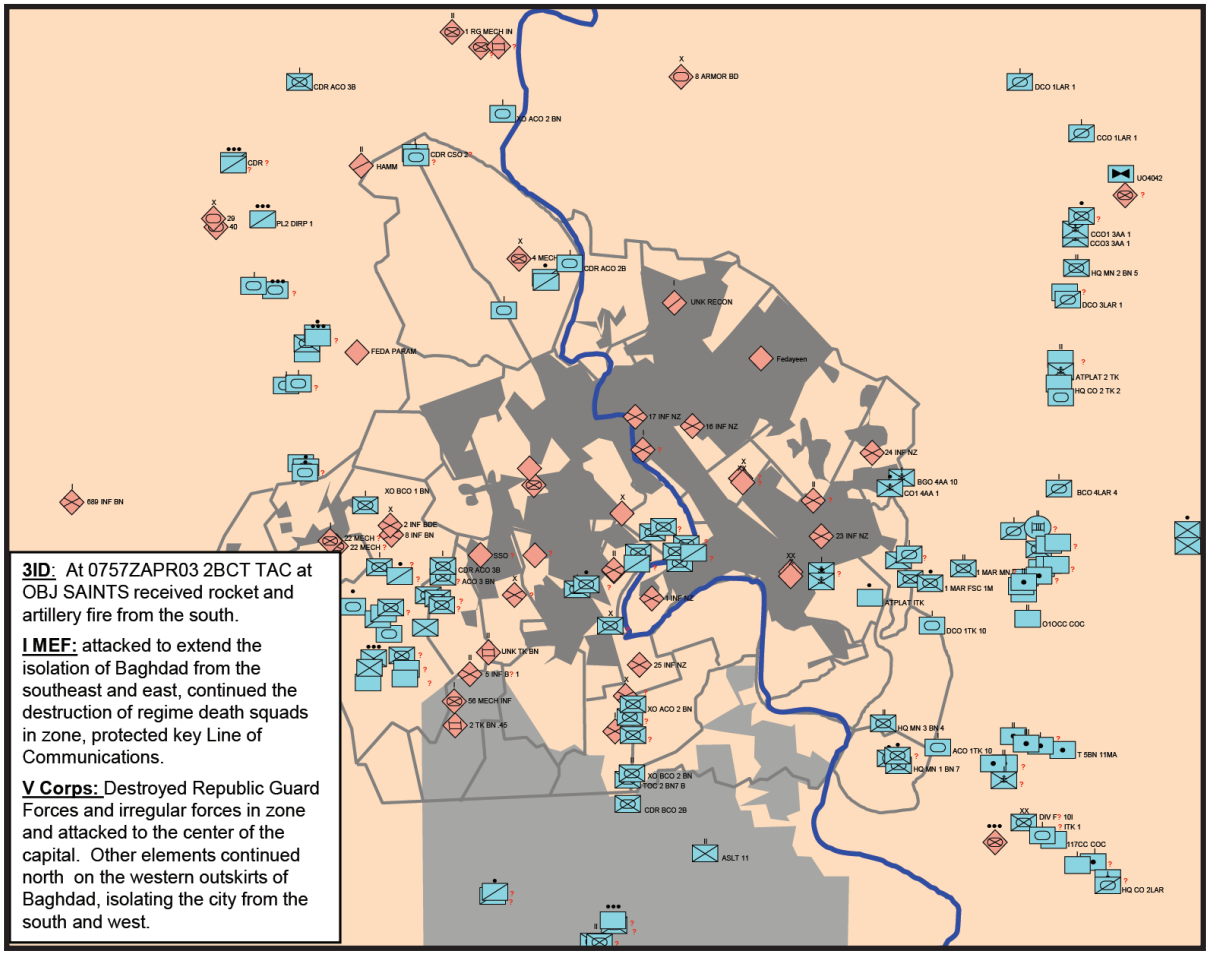

Figure 13.4 Activities 7 April 2003 D+20. Map created by CAC History for the authors.

The armed reconnaissance by TF 1-64 was a significant tactical success. It gave leaders and soldiers a much needed view of the Baghdad defensive scheme and how the defenders might react to coalition advances into the city. It proved the viability of the Baghdad raid concept. It showed the overwhelming superiority of US Soldiers, leaders, training, equipment, fires and close air support even in an urban environment. It showed not only the viability but the absolute requirement for armored vehicles in an urban fight. Perhaps most importantly, it demonstrated that what V Corps and I MEF would face in the reduction of Baghdad was not the sophisticated and integrated urban defense they had feared might take a significant amount of time and manpower to overcome. Armed with information about the defender and his defenses, planning began immediately for the next foray into the city that was scheduled for 7 April and would again be led by Perkins and his 2d Brigade Combat Team.

Generals Blount and Wallace discussed the next attack to be conducted by 2d Brigade and agreed rather than following Highway 8 through to the airport a different tactic would be used. Specifically, they discussed the option of attacking into the city then withdrawing along the same route while maintaining security at key intersections along the route of advance to prevent surprise upon egress. As Perkins and his team prepared for the attack, and typical of GI humor, the key intersections were

given the names of Curley, Larry and Moe, the Three Stooges. Objective Moe was the assumed limit of advance and the main highway intersection where the road turned to the west toward the airport or east into downtown Baghdad.

Perkins and his staff had the foresight to plan beyond Objective Moe so the mission could be expanded should the opportunity arise. He had good reason to do so. The Soldiers of V Corps had exceeded every expectation held by their commanders, and had proven themselves to be decisive in every engagement since crossing the line of departure on 21 March, a mere 17 days earlier.

At 0530 on 7 April, 2d Brigade initiated its attack from Objective Saints north toward Objective Moe with Rick Schwartz's TF 1-64 Armor again leading the attack given its familiarity with Iraqi tactics gained from the armed reconnaissance on 5 April. The fighting was intense from first contact as the brigade moved rapidly along its line of march engaging various forms of opposition along the way. The brigade reported engaging and destroying numerous T72 tanks, armored personnel carriers, artillery pieces and large numbers of dismounted forces. Whether due to the overwhelming firepower available to the US forces, the rapid advance of US forces or the nature of the Iraqi defensive scheme, while intense and requiring heroic actions on the part of American soldiers, the actions of the Iraqi defenders were generally uncoordinated and normally piecemeal. Significantly, the brigade encountered no complex obstacles integrated into any of the Iraqi defenses.

Wallace watched the brigade's advance on a live video feed from CNN and observed the steady movement of blue 2d Brigade icons on his Blue Force Tracking (GPS) system while "eavesdropping" on the 3d Infantry Division's command net from the corps assault command post. Wallace's first indication that Perkins and his troops had seen the opportunity to extend their mission beyond Objective Moe was around 0700 when the blue icons turned east at Objective Moe and headed toward the heart of Baghdad. The brigade's eastward movement was confirmed by a live CNN video feed showing US forces at one of Saddam's palaces in downtown Baghdad.

As Wallace monitored the discussion among 3d Infantry Division leaders, the opportunity that 2d Brigade had created seemed both exciting and problematic. It was clear the initial intent for all concerned was to conduct the raid as designed and then to withdraw back to Objective Saints. However, as the morning wore on and the fighting continued, Perkins, then others, began to see the real possibility of establishing a sustained US combat presence in the heart of Baghdad.

In the mind of Lieutenant General Wallace, the question was not "should we stay?" 2d Brigade had essentially executed the corps' campaign plan and the intent (albeit on a *significantly* accelerated timeline). Staying in Baghdad was inevitable if the execution of the campaign design was to result in the reduction of regime power centered in the city. All of the senior leaders of 3d Infantry Division and V Corps trusted and accepted Perkins' assessment that he had the forces available to achieve the lofty goal of staying in the city and that his positions the heart of the city were not only defensible, but they actually gave him better fields of fire than those his forces enjoyed at Objective Saints.

The question turned from "should we stay in Baghdad" to "could we stay in Baghdad" – was it tactically and logistically possible to maintain a highly contested line of communication from Objective Saints into the heart of the enemy capital? The answer to that question would be decided by the heroic efforts of the Soldiers and leaders who had responsibility for maintaining security along the route, especially those at Objectives Curley and Moe, and the incredible fortitude of resupply convoys which would eventually resupply the force along the route and in the city's heart while under enemy fire.

Throughout the afternoon Wallace monitored, but did not participate in the conversations among 3d Infantry Division leaders. In his mind, they were asking and answering the same questions he wanted to ask. Those questions centered on four issues; logistics, security, fires and forces. Specifically, what

was the tactical situation along the route? Was it secure enough to get fuel and ammunition into the city and to get casualties out to definitive treatment? Did 2d Brigade have the forces and fires to maintain its positions and repel the inevitable enemy counter-attacks? As the operation continued the answers to these questions became clearer (but, never absolutely clear). Late in the afternoon, Blount called Wallace with his assessment of the situation of 3d Infantry Division and specifically his 2d Brigade. It was clear and concise. Blount recommended, and Wallace approved, staying in Baghdad.

As with the first set of decisions, there is much to be understood about the decisions taken to attack into and then stay in Baghdad. Within an abundant group of lessons, two stand out. First, supremely well-trained Soldiers and units can make the difficult seem routine and mitigate risk. And second, collaboration and earned trust among commanders and leaders leads to the ability to turn opportunity into positive battlefield outcomes.

Major operations in and around Baghdad continued for the next several days as forces of V Corps continued to clear regime elements from the city. Simultaneously, the Marines of I MEF entered the city from the east and began clearing that portion of the city. The toppling of Saddam's statue in Al Firdos square by Marines from 1st Marine Division on the morning of 9 April was the symbolic end to Saddam's regime and its hold on the Iraqi capital and its people.

Conclusion

We have used the operational environment, the conditions, the thoughts, and the personal relationships which enabled decision making at the corps level in Operation COBRA II. We leave it to the readers to determine the utility of our efforts in their study of Mission Command and preparation for their assumption of positions of similar responsibility. One thing is abundantly clear: on this battlefield, under these circumstances, and against this enemy, US forces and their coalition partners were successful in their mission of removing the regime of Saddam Hussein, and providing the Iraqi people an opportunity for democracy and self-determination.

Questions as to what happened next in Iraq and why are inevitable, they are beyond the scope of this writing, yet are worthy of thoughtful analysis, study and discussion. The question our experience poses for senior military leaders is, "What happens when the combat operations you have planned, rehearsed and trained for in excruciating detail are 'catastrophically successful'?" It is their responsibility to be ready to deal with the aftermath of their success.

Notes

1. COBRA II was the name of the CFLCC major operations plan.

2. A fragmentary order, FRAGO, is an abbreviated order issued by a higher headquarters to subordinate units directing action based upon the initial order which started an ongoing operation.

Chapter 14
Economy of Force: Building a Headquarters for Afghanistan, 2003-2005

Lieutenant General (Ret) David W. Barno, US Army

Leadership at the senior level in war comes with many challenges. Commanders face all manner of difficulties imposed by the enemy, climate and terrain, shortcomings in friendly forces and management of the complexities of interpersonal relationships, often among a diverse set of actors. Command of the Afghanistan theater in 2003 included all of those problems, but was complicated further by its changing status from a top US defense priority in the wake of the September 2001 terrorist attacks to its new-found status as the economy of force, or secondary theater priority, after the March 2003 invasion of Iraq. This competition for resources and attention of all types within the DOD and US government writ large made command in this environment particularly demanding, as illustrated here by the problematic evolution of senior US headquarters in Afghanistan.

The myriad transitions of US headquarters overseeing the long course of the Afghan war is a case study in ineffectiveness of military command structures. From 2001 onwards, the United States stood up and stood down and otherwise employed six theater-level headquarters to provide overall command of the ever-changing war in the Hindu Kush, and over a dozen other subordinate operational headquarters to provide operational direction to fight the ever-shifting campaign.[1] My portion of that kaleidoscopic journey is the evolution of those headquarters from 2003 to 2005 from the perspective of 19 months as the overall commander of the Afghan theater of war. My conclusion is stark: that the United States military of that period was not organized, trained, or equipped to rapidly field theater strategic nor operational warfighting joint headquarters in wartime, and no entity of the US military had assigned responsibility to provide that vital function in war. Of even greater concern, however, is that despite two major wars and 16 years of ongoing fighting, this deep institutional problem of the US military has not improved substantially since 2001.

The war in Afghanistan began with the sudden shock of the September 2001 terrorist attacks on New York, Washington, DC, and an abortive attack that ended in Pennsylvania. The United States government rapidly traced the source of those attacks to al Qaeda elements based in Afghanistan and began a series of limited offensive operations there in mid-September 2001 to defeat al Qaeda and ultimately eject their Taliban confederates from power. By the end of the year, these primarily unconventional actions utilizing US airpower, special operations forces, intelligence operatives and local officials were largely successful. The capital of Kabul fell by 14 November, and Taliban forces quickly melted away into the remainder of the countryside. Substantial elements of both al Qaeda and the Taliban retreated into Pakistan, a winter sojourn that would repeat annually for much of the war.

With the arrival of 2002, US forces were faced with the inevitable "and now what?" question in the aftermath of a rapid military success. After much policy debate, the Bush administration decided to deploy a limited military force inside Afghanistan primarily oriented on continuing to hunt down al Qaeda remnants and possibly find and kill fugitive al Qaeda leader Usama bin Laden. This force was directed to avoid nation building efforts given its limited size and narrow mission, and in light of Bush policies eschewing the concept of nation building in principle. The United States simultaneously supported the creation of an International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), led by a UK three-star general with multi-national participation. Tasked by the December 2001 Bonn Agreement to provide security for the capital region, this brigade-sized force deployed in January 2002 and was based in Kabul.

The United States' contribution to the ongoing Afghanistan mission was originally built upon the headquarters of the Army's 10th Mountain Division which had been based in Uzbekistan during ini-

tial Afghan operations in 2001. The 10th Mountain de facto served as both the tactical warfighting headquarters and the theater operational command, reporting directly to US Central Command.[2] The 10th Mountain's combat forces consisted of elements from both the 101st Airborne Division and 10th Mountain Division, beginning a potpourri of disparate tactical units assembled under diverse division headquarters that would prevail throughout the Afghan and Iraq wars.[3]

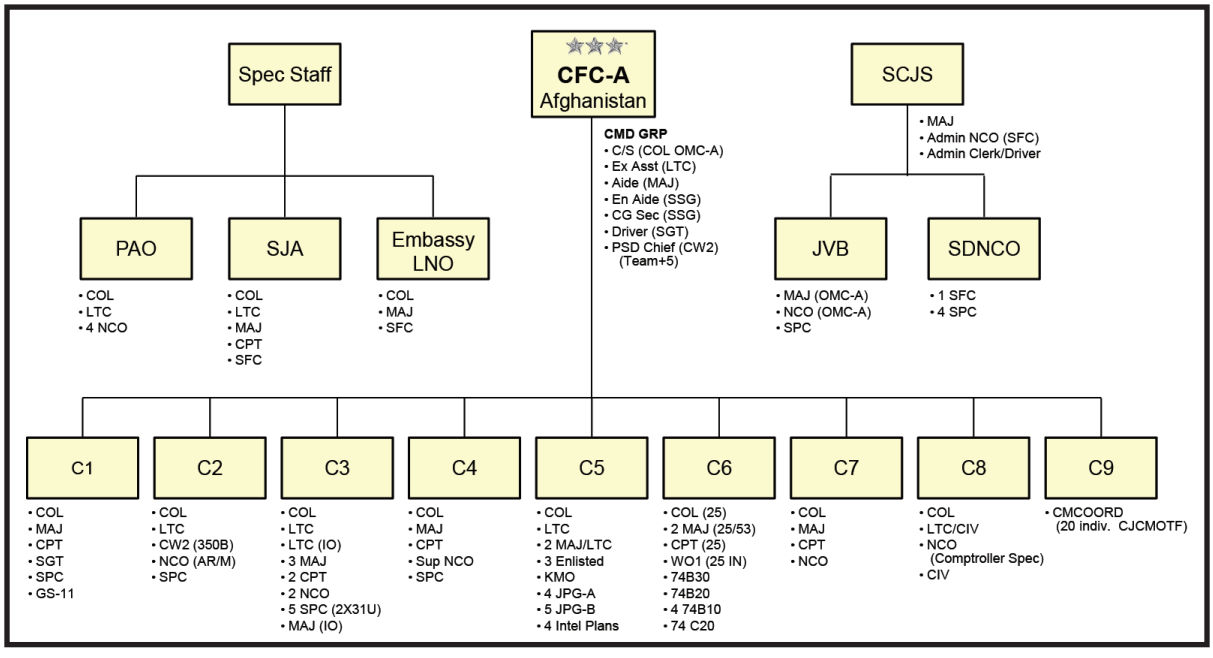

Figure 14.1 Combined Forces Command - Afghanistan (Tier II: 130 Positions) JMD 1. Graphic created by CAC History for the authors.

Expecting a sustained commitment to follow-on operations in Afghanistan, the Army deployed its XVIII Airborne Corps configured as a joint task force in February 2002 for a nominal one year rotation. The corps headquarters was augmented with a sizable number of joint (and a handful of international) officers to become Combined Joint Task Force-180 (CJTF-180), a naming convention long associated with the XVIII Airborne Corps in its joint configuration. In fact, along with the II Marine Expeditionary Force (MEF), these two three-star level operational headquarters were the only US operational headquarters that had regularly trained and exercised in the late 1990s to perform as joint task forces for conventional land-centric operations.[4]

The arrival of CJTF-180 relieved US Central Command (CENTCOM) from day-to-day operational oversight of the follow-on Afghan campaign, a fortuitous development given CENTCOM's shift to intense war-planning for Iraq in 2002. In Afghanistan, the headquarters of the 10th Mountain Division rotated back to the US following a sharp battle with al Qaeda elements at Tora Bora in December 2001, and was replaced by the headquarters of the 82d Airborne Division. The 3d Brigade of the 10th Mountain soon replaced its 2d Brigade which also rotated back to the States. The echelonment of commands thus stabilized in Afghanistan for 2002 and early 2003 with CENTCOM providing theater strategic direction, CJTF-180 providing operational level direction, and HQ 82d Airborne providing tactical command (albeit of fewer than 8000 total forces). Both CJTF-180 and headquarters (HQ) 82d Airborne Division were co-located 40 kilometers north of Kabul in Bagram at an abandoned Soviet-era airbase.

This division of labor worked: it allowed clean and effective division of operational and tactical tasks. Where it fell short was in its ability to fully manage the Afghan theater strategic level – the complex political-military dimension centered on the capital of Kabul, where ISAF was based and where

all manner of international and Afghan actors were now maneuvering for power and influence in a post-Taliban Afghanistan. That role was largely delegated to the newly formed US Office of Military Cooperation, led by a US two-star who was assigned responsibility to interface daily with the newly reconstituted US embassy, Afghan military, and interim Afghan government. Forces and commanders based in Bagram concentrated on continuing to pursue al Qaeda and Taliban remnants, leading to a major battle in the Shahi-kot valley in March 2002, and numerous smaller combat operations throughout 2002 and into 2003.

The echelonment of command and deployed forces was a relatively effective military fit for the Afghan theater in 2002 even if not fully optimal to manage the burgeoning political-military demands centered in Kabul. A US Army corps headquarters augmented by joint staff officers served ably as a combined joint task force command element, and an Army division headquarters could readily oversee tactical operations that were less than brigade-sized in strength. Unfortunately, the growing requirements of a looming war in Iraq soon began to strip the Afghan theater of resources. Troop levels were capped, ISR assets flowed to the new potential fight, and efforts to shrink requirements to sustain operations in Afghanistan were quickly evident to commanders there. On 1 May 2003, Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld declared major combat operations in Afghanistan to be over and further noted that US involvement would now shift to a period of stabilization and reconstruction. Soon thereafter, XVIII Airborne Corps redeployed to the US together with the headquarters of the 82d Airborne Division. Both theater and operational/tactical headquarters were returned to the United States at the same time, to be replaced by a single headquarters to perform all command functions.

Given the now ongoing large-scale commitment of US forces in Iraq following the March 2003 invasion, Afghanistan now officially became the "economy of force" theater, with the minimum of assets allocated to sustain operations and avoid failure. In this light, rather than replace a augmented corps and division headquarters with equivalent units, an *ad hoc* mixed arrangement was reached: the headquarters of 10th Mountain Division would return to Afghanistan in June 2003, but now be elevated to become CJTF-180 with responsibility to perform as both corps and division headquarters. Both the operational level tasks previously done by the corps headquarters *and* the tactical level of command for ongoing combat operations previously done by the division headquarters became 10th Mountain Division's responsibility across the country. Moreover, during the summer of 2003, the division headquarters was led by a one star assistant division commander for nearly five months, with more senior commanders rotated in from the United States on brief temporary duty periods. This arrangement inevitably caused a substantial loss of momentum and drift in the overall direction of the campaign. Both CENTCOM and the US military at large focused intently on preparing forces for a large and sustained US occupation of Iraq, a daunting prospect that dwarfed any ongoing concerns about Afghanistan.

With a change in CENTCOM commander in June 2003, Afghanistan began to receive greater attention once more. Moreover, Secretary Rumsfeld's declared focus on stability and reconstruction also shifting thinking about the direction of the conflict. By mid-summer, it was clear to newly appointed-CENTCOM commander General John Abizaid that the new single-headquarters command structure was not working well, and that political-military requirements centered in Kabul were receiving inadequate command attention.[5] Having division level headquarters provide tactical and, in effect, theater strategic and operational direction for the war was clearly an ineffective distribution of massive and growing command responsibilities. Compared to the large and senior staff with a wide range of skills that an augmented three-star Army Corps headquarters could bring to bear on Afghanistan's complex demands, an Army division headquarters had strikingly little comparable capability. Not only was the 10th Mountain division headquarters significantly smaller, but unlike XVIII Airborne Corps that looked primarily to operational level tasks, 10th Mountain leaders also had to plan and direct day-to-day combat operations across the country at the tactical level. Simultaneously, the division had

to juggle burgeoning political-military requirements from the Afghan government and military, the United Nations mission, NATO's ISAF headquarters, the US and other active embassies, and a myriad of NGOs performing relief and development across the country. This diverse and ever-growing set of demands in a complex post-conflict environment still harboring active enemy forces understandably exceeded the capacity of the 10th Mountain Division headquarters.

Recognizing the changing nature of the conflict and the inadequacy of a division headquarters-based model, the US CENTCOM commander decided to establish an entirely new theater/operational level headquarters in Kabul, and shift overall direction of the war to the capital. This decision was also specifically intended to prioritize the efforts of the senior-most commander toward the political-military dimension. As a two-star general commanding the Army's largest basic training post at Fort Jackson, I was sent to Afghanistan on an assessment visit at the behest of the CENTCOM commander in early September 2003. Soon after my return, and on very short notice, I returned to Afghanistan on indefinite temporary duty orders to take charge of the effort. My role was unofficial but clear: as the senior officer in country, I was to assume command of the effort until further orders. Those orders presumably would include my nomination to three-star rank and Senate confirmation as overall Afghan theater commander – a title and rank with explicit command authority. But upon my arrival in early October, those outcomes seemed distant possibilities in the face of looming immediate problems. As I unofficially assumed command, I found only three other US generals in country: a promotable-one star who had just arrived as division commander, and two other one star generals in supporting roles. At the time, there were at least ten US generals in Iraq.[6]

CENTCOM commander Abizaid's principal guidance to me upon my arrival included a diverse range of tasks: Build and lead a "big Pol- little Mil" command that can assist the new US ambassador. Your commander in Bagram should fight the tactical fight. Work with the interagency and internationals to integrate all existing campaign plans among the players. Actively engage with key players in Pakistan and Afghanistan, and others in the central Asia region. Expand Provincial Reconstruction Teams. Set conditions for the fall 2004 Afghan national elections. Raise US public awareness of Operation Ensuring Freedom (OEF) effort. Tactically, territory is not important; continue to hunt al Qaeda, but seek to re-integrate lower-level former Taliban. Work closely with the CENTCOM staff, especially the J-5. Be frugal, but tell me what you need.[7]

Building an effective headquarters to oversee such an effort would prove an immense challenge when nothing remotely similar existed in country. DOD had two principal options available to create a new joint three-star command in Afghanistan: build the headquarters around a "core" of an existing corps- or division-level headquarters augmented with joint officers to form a joint force command; or simply directly assign large numbers of individual augmentees from all services to the new headquarters in Kabul and form the joint force command structure from whole cloth. At the same time that this new headquarters was being formed, the escalating insurgency in Iraq was placing similar and growing demands on DOD for headquarters there. In the summer of 2003, the Pentagon was confronted with the necessity of replacing the warfighting headquarters of Third Army/CFLCC that oversaw the massive land operation to seize Iraq with a "post-war" occupation headquarters. CJTF-7, a joint task force quickly built around the core of the Army's VII Corps filled this requirement, led by newly promoted Lieutenant General Ricardo Sanchez. Rotating augmented US Army corps headquarters would continue to fill Iraq command and control requirements for the remainder of the war there.

Given the simultaneous demand from both theaters, DOD initially chose to meet the headquarters requirement in Afghanistan using absolutely minimal resources. Upon my arrival in Afghanistan in early October, my staff consisted of only six people, all but one borrowed from other organizations already present in the country. I was immensely fortunate that by sheer chance, four of us had worked together

in my battalion at Fort Bragg ten years earlier.[8] Our close personal relationships from that era allowed us to be amazingly effective working through complex issues with little deference to rank or position. We trusted one another and would not let ego or rank stand in the way of good ideas or blunt criticism. This combination was priceless in an extraordinarily fraught environment with nearly no traditional staff support. And our responsibilities to cobble together a very disparate effort into a cohesive whole were nearly unlimited. As I remarked to one of my tired Fort Bragg veterans late one evening, like it or not, "we own it all."

I viewed my responsibility as commander as wide-ranging: to do whatever I could do to ensure overall US policy objectives in Afghanistan were successful. As I often phrased it later in my command tenure. "to get all of the players, no matter what jersey they wore, onto the playing field, playing the same sport and moving toward the same goal line." This philosophy was to dominate my time in command, and undergirded nearly every decision I made. My objective was not simply to ensure that the US military effort was successful, it was to do everything in my power to ensure every part of the US government's mission in Afghanistan – diplomatic, political, reconstruction, governance – was successful as well. This philosophy was at odds with the prevailing military viewpoint at the time that military missions need to be carefully defined and limited. Yet it was clear from my first days in Afghanistan that the US military was far better resourced than any other elements of the US government. In the end, I wrote my own mission statement (later approved by CENTCOM) and crafted it to be as expansive and open-ended as possible to afford me maximum freedom of action as commander. In an economy of force theater with austere resources, taking an approach that guided the military toward underwriting the efforts of all other actors was an even more daunting task. At times, that meant trading off military capabilities I needed to buttress other parts of the US effort.[9]

The need to quickly deploy a new commander-designate to take charge of the mission while the headquarters arrangements were worked out was highly unusual, and unprecedented during the remainder of the Iraq or Afghan wars. It overrode what would normally constitute the extensive military planning and preparation set in motion for such a significant command responsibility. This problematic decision was heavily driven by severe resource constraints given a burgeoning set of potentially open-ended commitments posed by Iraq. Simply put, the idea of sending a corps headquarters back to Afghanistan given the open-ended requirements for similar headquarters in Iraq was a non-starter. I recognized that as the economy-of-force theater, our job would be to make do with whatever we could get –within reason. We still had a significant and dynamically shifting mission in Afghanistan, and were operating in an environment where the tumultuous political factions were as great a danger to stability as the largely quiescent Taliban.

The concept for the newly-forming command in Kabul was made with several flawed assumptions. The original concept was premised on the command having almost no actual staff whatsoever in Kabul. Our newly formed "Big Pol and little Mil" headquarters would be built upon a "pocket" staff consisting of perhaps 10-12 senior colonels serving as the new command's staff principals forward-based in the capital, tapping for all support the already busy division headquarters-based staff at CJTF-180 in Bagram. This unusual concept would have created the clearly unworkable challenge of having one staff reporting to two different commanders – one in Kabul and one in Bagram – with entirely different responsibilities. Unsurprisingly, this unique concept for an operational headquarters proved entirely impractical and was soon discarded. But finding an adequate replacement for the idea and getting it place proved devilishly difficult and ultimately consumed more than a year.

Faced with an immediate staff of only six people upon my arrival in Kabul, I sought to create a staff from other resources already available in country. In reality, this meant from Office of Military Cooperation – Afghanistan (OMC-A) and CJTF-180, the only other sizable US military entities un-

der my command.[10] The CJTF-180/10th Mountain division commander (then-Brigadier General Lloyd Austin) and I quickly quick reached agreement on re-assigning some elements of his staff to me in Kabul. I gained three new staff principals who were full colonels that had been augmentees to his headquarters, and acquired his entire CJ-5 section led by a British colonel which became the core of my planning staff. I requisitioned other US and allied officers from the OMC-A staff to add more capability. The creation of our *ad hoc* overall headquarters with personnel pulled from every conceivable corner of Afghanistan was now underway. By late November, I had assembled a staff of about 40 officers and troops to help pave the way for those that would follow while we slowly assumed greater responsibility for ongoing efforts across the country. At the same time, we crafted an entirely new strategy for the war that focused on population-centric counter insurgency principles that we planned to implement beginning in January 2004.[11]

I also made several key decisions that were to significantly influence the overall direction of our effort for the next nineteen moths. I chose to locate my primary office at the US embassy two doors down from the ambassador's office, and actually live on the embassy compound in a half trailer to better effect constant coordination. I would start my day there, attend country team and security core group meetings with the ambassador and his staff, and travel to my official military headquarters (displaced from OMC-A's former offices), a few minutes' drive away at Kabul Compound (later renamed Camp Eggers). Finally, I would return to the embassy compound at the end of the day once more to work in my embassy office, frequently interacting again with the ambassador and his staff in the evenings. I chose these unorthodox arrangements in order to best fulfill my strategic guidance to heavily focus on the political-military level in Afghanistan.

My split-based approach to command came with pros and cons. It separated me physically from most of my staff from dusk until dawn each day, and it removed me from constant availability for face-to-face meetings or quick decisions. It also took me out of the setting where everything held a military focus all the time, and put me for several hours a day in a diverse interagency setting with a different set of issues and problems when considering US policy in Afghanistan. The overall advantages proved overwhelming. I took my morning staff briefs by VTC rather than face-to-face before the daily embassy country team meeting. But my daily location and patterns put me at the center of the emerging and rapidly shifting interagency and international dynamics in Kabul. They started my day with a comprehensive update from the ambassador, chief of station, USAID lead, and several other key players with deep insights into the Afghan political and security environment. I also emphasized building unified civ-mil teamwork with a diverse set of outside actors to my staff, establishing recurrent meetings with the United Nations (UN) Mission's leadership, ISAF and NGOs and a range of other stakeholders. Much of my time was spent building connections across this community in support of our goals.

My daily interagency picture gave me a much different outlook to bring to the rest of my day spent at my military headquarters looking at the most effective development of military plans and actions through this much different lens. To this end, I also deliberately chose not to take part in the twice-daily Battlefield Update Assessments (BUA) run by CJTF-180 from Bagram so as to avoid immersion in minute tactical details that I found only obscured the bigger picture in the country.[12] Reaching out to non-military actors, we set up bi-weekly update meetings with the US ambassador and his staff, and often included other invitees as well.[13] And to keep my staff informed on my ever-shifting thinking about the war, I began to hold regular informal Friday "whiteboard sessions" to walk my key staff through trends I was seeing and engage them in discussions that would help shape their staff efforts in the coming week.

After several weeks of acting as the officer-in-charge of Afghanistan and *de facto* overall commander, I called Abizaid and observed "this operation needs to be big Pol, big Mil, and big everything else – and I will need a real staff in order to do that." I explained that the concept of a "pocket staff" that

would be place senior staff principals in Kabul with staff members in Bagram was unworkable. I also noted the obvious impossibility of having the same staff work simultaneously for two different commanders – Brigadier General Austin at CJTF-180 in Bagram and me with a nascent command in Kabul, both of whom had different missions and priorities. Abizaid listened carefully, and quickly agreed. We brought to this debate a long and warm personal friendship that dated to our time together as captains commanding companies in the 1st Ranger battalion during the 1983 Grenada invasion, and many close contacts in the ensuing years. Throughout my time in Afghanistan, we maintained a close and open relationship that made my command experience immeasurably easier. Our personal connection helped ensure easy and open communications, and was imbued with deep trust that was priceless as we navigated the gamut of wartime difficulties – from Afghan election politics to disarming tribal warlords to strikes on al Qaeda operatives to friendly fire incidents. Abizaid regularly ran interference for our command with the always prickly Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, and he went out of his way to energize his staff and the Pentagon to do everything possible to support our mission. He asked that I design an austere staff that included only what I truly needed, given the many other demands for people across the CENTCOM region.

After our conversation, he began to set the wheels in motion to begin what would be a long and inordinately difficult process to create a theater-level staff "on the fly" while fighting a war – perhaps the only time in either theater the United States attempted such an endeavor while actually in the midst of a conflict. The full completion of that process would take over 18 months to achieve, and be marked by bureaucratic delays and service stone-walling throughout the process. The prolonged period required to build a fully-manned staff in Kabul in support of a senior commander at war reflected the US military's lack of effective processes to generate a combat headquarters in the midst of a war. This poor performance was as much a reflection of service parochialism and bureaucratic defenses as a lack of US military capacity.

After serving my initial three months in a tumultuous environment, the new year of 2004 arrived. At this point, I had been confirmed as "Commander Military Operations, Afghanistan," an invented title that reflected the lack of any actual named command with which an actual commander's position could be associated.[14] My headquarters was still entirely *ad hoc*, consisting of approximately four dozen borrowed officers and troops from other organizations in country. With our meager staff, we had built and promulgated an entirely new strategy for the coming year, shifting from an enemy-focused counter-terrorism approach to one built around a population-centric counter-insurgency plan.[15] With CENTCOM support, we began to build a Joint Manning Document (JMD) that would define our staff requirements and interject them into DOD for service comment, validation, and eventually, mandatory allocation of the required staff fills from each service. In the meantime, we began to get a smattering of individual augmentees to provide additional capability for the nascent headquarters, now provisionally named "Combined Forces-Afghanistan (CFC-A)."[16]

As a joint and combined headquarters, we now had a bureaucratic problem: none of the four US military services had ownership of our success or failure, and our ability to garner their full support to fill our manning requirements was therefore extremely problematic. Put bluntly, if CFC-A had been built upon an existing Army or Marine headquarters with a highly visible service identity such as "III US Corps" or "II MEF" rather than an *ad hoc* collection of all-service augmentees, the parent service would have ensured "their" headquarters was resourced adequately. A failure by one of those headquarters would reflect badly upon its parent service, and would have been unthinkable. Yet in the Pentagon, the services derogatorily called the necessity of meeting these seemingly unending CENTCOM requirements for individuals and units "feeding the monster."[17] We were simply just one more demand ranked against an ever-growing series of demands upon finite service manpower; our success or failure, ability to have adequate people or not, would not reflect upon their individual services whatsoever. This

was (and is) a highly problematic institutional conundrum because it bureaucratically places our senior joint warfighting headquarters near the bottom of every service priority list in importance. Filling any "orphan" joint headquarters with high quality individuals at a rapid pace, even in the midst of a war, simply was not a service priority. And CFC-A, as the "economy of force" effort behind Iraq, was clearly at the bottom of the pecking order.

Our individual augmentees who began to arrive in dribs and drabs in the winter of 2003-2004 were a mixed lot, almost entirely from the reserve component, and with many involuntarily recalled from the Individual Ready Reserve (IRR). Most were Army, with a smattering from other services. The majority of these staff augmentees arrived in Kabul to serve four- to six-month tours. Fewer than a dozen members of my staff in 2004 were on one-year orders; all others were on far shorter assignments, which deeply affected our institutional continuity in a headquarters already being formed "in stride." Moreover, our IRR fills were often individuals long-separated from active service, many well beyond normal ages for active duty troops and often in their fifties and sixties. The headquarters soon developed a widely-shared joke: "When the commander shows up in the operations center, the average age in the room drops ten years!"[18] Middle age and beyond was by no means a disqualifier for service in a tumultuous senior headquarters working under constraints to grow quickly, and a great deal of the experience of these very dedicated and patriotic men and women brought to CFC-A was hugely valuable. But at the same time, I was concerned enough about the sustained effectiveness of some of my earliest arrivals that I sent personal messages back to the chief of the Army Reserve and chief of the Army National Guard expressing reservations about the stamina, energy and skills of the reserve component staff members arriving in Kabul. One senior master sergeant I encountered one day in our mess hall expressed to me how lucky he was to be in Kabul, having just recovered from triple bypass surgery. As he noted: "if I had needed a quadruple bypass, they wouldn't have let me come!" To their credit, the reserve chiefs made sure that I began to receive a more predictable flow of well-qualified and fit individuals to join our team, and we found fewer involuntarily recalled from the IRR.

Our JMD eventually grew to just over 400 staff positions that we ascertained were necessary to flesh out the full headquarters in order to sustain a long-term operation in Afghanistan. But even after agreeing to designate nearly one-third of these staff billets as positions to be sourced by coalition officers, the services balked at the final numbers.[19] Coordinating through the Joint Staff to find staffing for these positions from each of the services resulted in uniform objections across all four services. The bureaucratic war was on. No service supported sending any people to fill CFC-A's JMD. All argued that the numbers and positions in the JMD were excessive, and thus should be invalid based in large part upon all the other emerging JMDs from Iraq. To deal with this impasse, the Joint Staff commissioned a survey team to visit Afghanistan to establish whether the numbers we were requesting for CFC-A were valid or not, and report back. Needless to say, this widespread service resistance and subsequent survey team effort delayed filling our headquarters positions for many more months negatively impacting the overall Afghan mission.

In the meantime, the war in Afghanistan continued. CJTF-180, built upon the headquarters of the 10th Mountain Division was about to rotate home, and be replaced by the 25th Infantry Division from Hawaii. Recognizing that a significant portion of the division would be left home given the cap on forces that limited how many troops the division was allowed to deploy, I sent one of my senior staff officers to the division headquarters in Hawaii. He made the case to the division commander that he should deploy several dozen of his more senior stay-behinds to augment my still tiny staff. Major General Rick Olson, 25th Division commander, generously provided me over forty officers and troops for a one-year tour. This long-term loan of his air defense battalion commander with many of his people helped provide much of my operations section, and filled other key yet still vacant headquarters billets. This unofficial generosity was a godsend in helping organize and oversee our growing operations across the country in

the face of little to no official support from the services. It also helped backstop the continuous losses due to constant rotations back to the United States. With no approved headquarters JMD in place, I had no reliable pipeline to replace the regular losses I was absorbing.

Finding highly qualified senior staff compounded this problem. CENTCOM Commander Abizaid cautioned all of his subordinate commanders not to "cut side deals" with the services to alleviate the theater requirements levied on them by CENTCOM. This missive was specifically designed to ensure tactical formations flowed into theater with the levels of manning, equipment and training required, as also arrived at the required times. This created immense pressure on especially the Army as the largest force generator, and the service with by far the most requirements to fill. Between the rapidly growing troop requirements coming from Iraq and the modest increases we were requesting in Afghanistan, the Army was struggling to devise a force rotation model that could support both theaters and not break the Army. This created great friction between the service and the commanders in theater, which often overflowed into other interactions.

My search in late 2004 for a qualified replacement for my departing CJ-3 operations officer exemplified this bureaucratic struggle. I had deliberately chosen to staff my headquarters with colonels (O-6 level officers) filling principal staff billets such as CJ-2, CJ-3, and CJ-5 in order to keep our headquarters relatively small and not draw unnecessary flag officers and their supporting manpower from Iraq.[20] Comparable staff positions in CJTF-7 and later Multi-National Forces- Iraq were typically filled by one- or two- star generals. As I sought to find a CJ-3 replacement, two highly qualified Army officers with whom I had worked previously contacted me and volunteered for the job. I simply would have to get the Army – and their bosses – to release them to come to Afghanistan. One worked deep within the staff of an Army four-star commander in a non-deployable headquarters in the US I personally called this general and was flatly turned down because the officer was "too valuable."[21] The second colonel indicated he was available and I hired him over the phone, asking him to work the details with his personnel managers. Several days later, he called and advised he would have to withdraw from the job. Suspecting a family or health problem, I was surprised to learn that his personnel managers had turned down the request because serving as CJ-3 in three-star headquarters at war was not an approved post-brigade command Army assignment. Although I could have personally intervened to get more senior Army leaders to reverse this bureaucratic decision, in frustration I chose to use my energy elsewhere. These examples suggest the amount of extraordinary effort even routine personnel actions required to garner support for even validated requirements in a wartime joint headquarters.

By late July 2004, the Joint Staff survey team finally arrived to visit Afghanistan and assess the needs for our CFC-A headquarters against the JMD request. After a week-long visit and extensive interviews with the overloaded staff of less than 200, the survey team reported that all 400-plus staff positions were in fact valid. Moreover, they noted we actually needed more people than we had originally asked for on the JMD to perform all the headquarters' growing duties. While welcome news, this conclusion did not release an immediate flood of military manpower. The bureaucratic process churned onward in Washington, and appropriately qualified officers – now mostly active component, and assigned on one year orders – did not begin to arrive until early 2005. By the date of my departure in May 2005, CFC-A was fully staffed at just over 400 officers and troops.[22] The majority were sourced from the US Army on one-year tours, with other services mostly still assigned on four to six month rotations. Coalition officers formed less than 10 percent of the staff, with many coalition billets on the JMD remaining perpetually unfilled. From May 2005 until its inactivation in late 2006, CFC-A was staffed on an individual augmentee model largely built upon the original requirements of the 2004 JMD, with slight modifications. In January 2007, NATO's ISAF headquarters assumed the overall mission in Afghanistan, absorbing all theater strategic and operational level tasks for the effort. The origins of this decision and its far-reaching ramifications go far beyond the scope of this piece, but by 2009, the

United States reached a decision to once again form a combined joint headquarters in Afghanistan to prosecute the operational fight. The creation and sustainment of the ISAF Joint Command (IJC) under then-LTG David Rodriguez surfaced many of the same difficult problems faced by CFC-A, with few apparent lessons actually learned.

The broader message of the fraught experience standing up CFC-Afghanistan is an important one as the United States contemplates both ongoing and future military operations. The United States commands its combat missions overseas through joint, and often combined, military headquarters. Yet below the level of unified combatant commands, such headquarters rarely if ever exist in our peacetime military establishment. When the nation goes to war, our least capable warfighting headquarters will continue to be the one with arguably the most important operational responsibilities. Despite the fact that US military doctrine demands that our armed forces "train as we will fight," we simply don't constitute or train effective joint warfighting headquarters until a crisis erupts. No service nor other permanent US military institution has long-term responsibility for command at this level of war. This model keeps US forces perpetually on their back foot when entering combat operations at both the theater strategic and operational level. Even our current nominal approach to this challenge – building *ad hoc* JTFs atop existing three-star service headquarters – falls short under the pressure of rapid combat operations. Some commitment to a handful of standing joint headquarters seems a modest yet important investment in peacetime to ensure the United States is ready to fight at the operational level in a joint environment from day one. Alternatively, existing service headquarters such as XVIII Airborne Corps or II Marine Expeditionary Force could be made permanent JTFs by the standing addition of joint billets to the staff. This would accurately reflect how their headquarters will go to war, and measurably increase their joint warfare skills in peacetime. Such an outcome would not only prevent a recurrence of the painful CFC-A headquarters building experiment, but also hone US joint warfighting skills at a level only encountered today when the nation goes to war. It is long past time to fix this institutional problem.

Leadership of joint and combined organizations created in *ad hoc* fashion to execute complex political-military tasks requires a diversity of skills that may be well beyond those for which our senior combat leaders have been prepared by education or experience. When tasked with command of the first peace-keeping forces into Bosnia in 1995, General Ric Shinseki observed "It's the most difficult leadership experience I have ever had. Nothing quite prepares you for this."[23] Similar conundrums are likely to face future US wartime commanders in today's multi-faceted global environment as well. Moreover, these commanders may find themselves leading a headquarters that has been cobbled together at short notice in the face of a crisis, and that has few of the requisite skills of processes to dominate their unexpected operating environment. Lucky commanders will join a formed and functioning staff, perhaps one with whom they have recently worked. But others will have to form a headquarters in much the way CFC-A formed in 2003-2004. Doing this in an economy of force environment is even more problematic. And, as noted above, given that the US military has done little to address its institutional shortcomings in building wartime joint headquarters, the lessons and problems of CFC-A are quite likely to challenge future commanders once again. Preparing for those challenges will require leaders of broad background with an ability to communicate and build relationships with stakeholders far beyond the military domain. Broadening assignments and civilian graduate education can greatly help develop those future leaders, as can a lifetime of reading the experiences of others facing similar challenges. But ultimately, the ability and willingness to adapt to the unexpected and choose unconventional paths may be of more import still. We can only hope we are developing adequate numbers of these broad-minded, adaptive leaders today to meet the needs of our senior ranks of tomorrow.

Notes

1. Theater: Army Force Central 2001-2, CJTF-180/XVIII Airborne Corps 2002-3, CFC-A 2003-7, ISAF 2007-11, ISAF Joint Command 2011-14 and ISAF 2014-present. Operational/Tactical: 10th Mtn Div 2001-2; 82d Abn Div 2002-3; TF 82 2002-3; CJTF 180/10th Mtn Div 2003-4; CJTF 76/25th Inf Div 2004-5; CJTF 76 SETAF 2005-6; CJTF 82 2006-2007.

2. Until the arrival of the XVIII Airborne Corps headquarters in early 2002, US CENTCOM provided all theater-wide command as well as strategic direction for the Afghan campaign.

3. Only rarely would Army divisions ever fight in either theater with their habitually assigned brigades or battalions. Most often, leaders met on the battlefield in each theater of war; not an ideal situation.

4. Both headquarters routinely exercised with joint augmentation as JTFs in US Atlantic (later Joint Forces) Command's Unified Endeavor exercise programs from 1995-2014.

5. General John P. Abizaid assumed command of US CENTCOM in June 2003. These insights are drawn from his conversations with the author.

6. Donald P. Wright and Timothy R. Reese, *On Point II: Transition to a New Campaign, The United States Army in Operation Iraqi Freedom, May 2003-January 2005* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Combat Studies Institute Press, 2008), 176-179.

7. Paraphrased notes from my chief of staff, Colonel Tom Snukis, at 11 October 2003 VTC with CENTCOM commander.

8. Colonel Tom Snukis; Lieutenant Colonel Tucker Mansager; Major Mark Stammer. I also brought to Afghanistan my aide from Ft Jackson, Captain Glen Blumhardt.

9. For example, when Ambassador Khalilzad arrived in November 2003, I provided him a full colonel and five very strong staff officers to form an embassy interagency planning group to support our overall efforts. These officers came from my bare-bones staff of fewer than thirty.

10. Office of Military Cooperation – Afghanistan, the modest two-star organization based in Kabul responsible for security assistance functions in support of the nascent Afghan military forces. OMC-A was led by then-Major General Karl Eikenberry from summer 2002 until September 2003, shortly before my arrival.

11. The US Army at this time had no counter-insurgency doctrine beyond what existed at the end of the Vietnam War. I drew the basics of our new strategy from my studies at West Point and career-long professional reading. I also brought my 1975 West Point history department special textbooks on "Revolutionary Warfare" to Kabul, and kept them close at hand in my embassy office.

12. My daily hard copy briefs which mirrored the BUA contained daily tactical activities in Afghanistan down to platoon level. The daily significant activities (SIGACTS) produced by our tactical units across the country were also notably lacking in any political, economic or cultural context for our ongoing military operations – context vital to my thinking about the overall conflict.

13. Further, I often met one or more times a week with Afghan President Karzai, the Defense and Interior Ministers, and a range of foreign ambassadors. Weekly, I also breakfasted one-on-one with the Senior Representative of the UN Secretary General and head of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), with whom I eventually built a close relationship.

14. Such as "Multi-National Forces-Iraq," CJTF-7 or CJTF-180.

15. See: David W. Barno, "Fighting the Other War: Counter-insurgency Operations in Afghanistan 2003-2005," *Military Review* (September-October 2007).

16. We originally proposed the title of "Combined Forces- Central Asia" reflective of our assigned four country combined joint operating area of Afghanistan, Pakistan (less Jammu-Kashmir), and the southern portions of Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. This was rejected as seemingly too expansive given US limited aims and commensurate desired less visible public optics in the region.

17. A term I heard regularly in 2005-2006 when I served on the Army Staff in the Pentagon after leaving Afghanistan.

18. When I arrived in Afghanistan, I was 49 years old.

19. The coalition of nations under my command included as many as 2,100 troops from over 20 countries. The small number of coalition officers on our staff came heavily from the UK, Canada, France, Turkey, and Italy.

20. My chief of staff was similarly an O-6, Colonel Tom Snukis followed by Colonel Dave Lamm, both of whom were remarkable officers effectively performing at general officer levels. Only my deputy commander position was also a general officer. I had specifically asked for this billet to be filled by the UK in order to leverage their military's long counter-insurgency experience. My British deputies were Major General John Cooper followed by Major General Peter Gilchrist, both exceptionally talented leaders to whom I delegated great authority.

21. I successfully persuaded another Army general to give up his Command Sergeant Major, enabling me to recruit CSM Cindy Pritchett, who served brilliantly as my first senior enlisted advisor.

22. By May 2005, the overall US headquarters in Iraq was Multi-National Forces – Iraq. It was led by a four-star general, included about 10 general officers in the headquarters, and consisted of over 1200 staff members.

23. Howard Olsen and John Davis, Special Report, *Training US Army Officers for Peace Operations: Lessons from Bosnia*, (Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace, 1 October 1999), accessed 16 May 2017, https://www.usip.org/publications/1999/10/training-us-army-officers-peace-operations-lessons-bosnia.

Book III

Army/Theater Army/
Army Service Component Command

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Chapter 15

Echelons Above Reality: Armies, Army Groups, and Theater Armies/ Army Service Component Commands (ASCCs)

Colonel John Bonin, Ph.D.

Army organization above corps, with its links to the joint and combined environment, is less easily described and understood than the structure at corps and below.[1]

–Lieutenant Geneneral John J. Yeosock,
commanding general, Third US Army

The senior headquarters of the US Army above corps in the 20th century have been Armies, Army Groups and Theater Armies/Army Service Component Commands (ASCCs). For most of its early years, the US Army employed geographically-based higher commands normally designated as departments. While these commands performed primarily administrative and logistical functions, they also provided the next higher headquarters (HQs) for any operational units, divisions, brigades, or regiments, located therein. During the Civil War, as the scale of operations increased, named armies and numbered corps became part of the operational echelons of command under departments. After the Civil War, the Army reverted back to territorial departments as higher HQs directly over regiments until the Spanish-American War exposed command problems. For World War I, the American Expeditionary Force General HQs served as both the senior Army HQs overseas and as the eventual HQs of a group of armies. In World War II, the US Army employed theater (army) HQs as its highest administrative and operational HQs providing mission command over the various army groups, field armies, Army Air Forces, and services of supply located in six major theaters of operations. Since then, theater armies or ASCCs have continued to serve as extensions of the US Army into overseas or domestic areas of responsibility and provide valuable command capabilities to joint and multinational commanders.

Revolutionary War to the Spanish American

Early in the War for Independence, Congress, in 1776, created the basic framework for larger US Army unit headquarters that still exist. Due to the immense distances involved and the span of complexity entailed, Congress created higher commands, geographically based, under congressionally appointed general officers. The Eastern, Northern, Middle, Southern and later Western Departments were primarily administrative commands with flexible boundaries, that also provided the next higher command for any operational units, divisions, brigades, or regiments, both Continental Army and militia, located therein (see Figure 15.1). General George Washington retained command of the Main Army as well as the department within which it was located. For example, Major General Horatio Gates fought and won the Battle of Saratoga while in command of both the Northern Department and the reinforced "Northern Army." Later, General Washington reinforced Major General Nathaniel Greene's Southern Department with most his "Main Army" for the decisive Battle of Yorktown in 1781.[2]

For much of the early Republic, the US Army continued use of the geographic department or district as its primary higher HQs. For the War of 1812, the Army initially operated in nine separate geographic districts. But a wartime improvement created two larger divisions (later departments); a Northern and a Southern, over the various districts. For example, Major General Andrew Jackson at the Battle of New Orleans in 1815 commanded the 7th Military District; and later the entire Southern Department. In the 1820s as the nation expanded, Eastern and Western Departments replaced the previous Northern and Southern Departments.[3] During the Mexican War, Brigadier General Zachery Taylor's small "Army of Occupation" that won the Battles of Palo Alto and Resaca de la Palma in 1846 was

officially the "field army" of the Western Department at New Orleans.[4] General Winfield Scott, as the Commanding General of the US Army, assumed direct control of the larger "Army of Invasion" for the decisive operation against Mexico City through Vera Cruz while Brig Gen Stephen Kearney's smaller "Army of the West" invaded New Mexico.

Initially in the Civil War the Union Army employed the pre-war department structure to administer forces, control terrain, and raise field forces. But sixteen Union "field armies," named generally for either their departments or for rivers, developed. These armies, such as the Army of the Potomac, the Army of the Cumberland, and the Army of the Ohio, initially consisted of only divisions and brigades. But as the size of Union Armies grew, Roman numeral designated corps became intermediate tactical commands.[5] Consequently, these armies conducted local operations loosely coordinated by the various Generals-in-Chief in Washington. In October 1863, after the defeat of Major General Rosecrans and the Army of the Cumberland at Chickamauga, Major General U.S. Grant would be placed in command of the Military Division of the Mississippi, which had command over several of the departments west of the Appalachian Mountains and their associated field armies.[6]

As professor Russell Weigley commented, "Certainly, the appointment of Grant to theater command, making him in effect the leader of what in the twentieth century would be called an army group, was a step toward creating an operational rather than a simply tactical command."[7] For the 1864 campaign, Lieutenant General Grant served both as overall Commanding General of the US Army and the de facto eastern theater army group commander over the separate Armies of the Potomac, the James, and later the Shenandoah. Simultaneously, Major General William Sherman replaced Grant as the *de facto* Western army group commander in the Military Division of the Mississippi for the Atlanta campaign with the Armies of the Cumberland, Tennessee, and Ohio.[8]

After the Civil War, the Army abolished all higher operational commands: armies, corps, divisions, and brigades. During the Indian Wars geographic departments and subordinate districts remained as the only higher commands to regiments. By 1879 eleven districts and eight departments existed under the headquarters of the major territorial divisions: Atlantic, Pacific, and Missouri. The Division of the Missouri, first under Sherman and subsequently under Major General Phillip Sheridan, gave a modicum of coordination to the Indian campaigns.[9]

The success of the German forces during the Franco-Prussian War resulted in some renewed interest in higher organizations by some officers in the US Army. The Prussians with well-organized and staffed peacetime field armies composed of several corps each with several divisions proved decidedly superior in combat to a more experienced French Army with larger levels of command organized only after declaration of war.[10] Colonel Emory Upton, having served as an official observer of foreign armies in 1875-1876, strongly recommended adopting most of the German innovations in his 1880 draft of The *Military Policy of the United States.* However, after his death in 1881, his ideas would remain unpublished until 1904.[11]

The Spanish-American War caught the US Army unprepared for overseas duty. On 22 April 1898, Congress authorized expansion of the Regular Army from 28,000 to 64,000 and the call-up of 125,000 volunteers. Since the Army lacked any operational HQs above regiment, Congress authorized the formation of brigades, divisions and eight corps; but no army level commands.[12] For the Cuban Expeditionary Force, the Army employed V Corps containing the bulk of Regular Army; but with a totally inadequate and inexperienced staff.[13] Widely publicized problems of the Army's operations, especially in matters of rations, medical support and the V Corps deployment and sustainment in Cuba, challenged the US as an emerging global power. In addition, VIII Corps deployed to the Philippines defeating the Spanish and later the insurgents during extended operations.

Massive internal Army problems and the "lack of directing brain" resulted the presidential Dodge Commission and ultimately in the appointment of Elihu Root on 1 August 1899 as Secretary of War.

His subsequent organizational and doctrinal reforms are famous.[14] The Army's first keystone doctrinal publication, *Field Service Regulations (FSR)*, emerged in 1905 as an early product of the Army's new general staff.[15] Replaced by a new version in 1914, this manual provided doctrine both for the employment of European style field armies, and lines of communication in an overseas "theater of operations" under an overall commander.[16] In 1913 the War Department reorganized the continental Army into four geographic departments as well as placing its overseas garrisons on a more permanent basis by creating the Hawaiian Department in 1911, the Philippine Department in 1913, and the Canal Zone in 1917.[17]

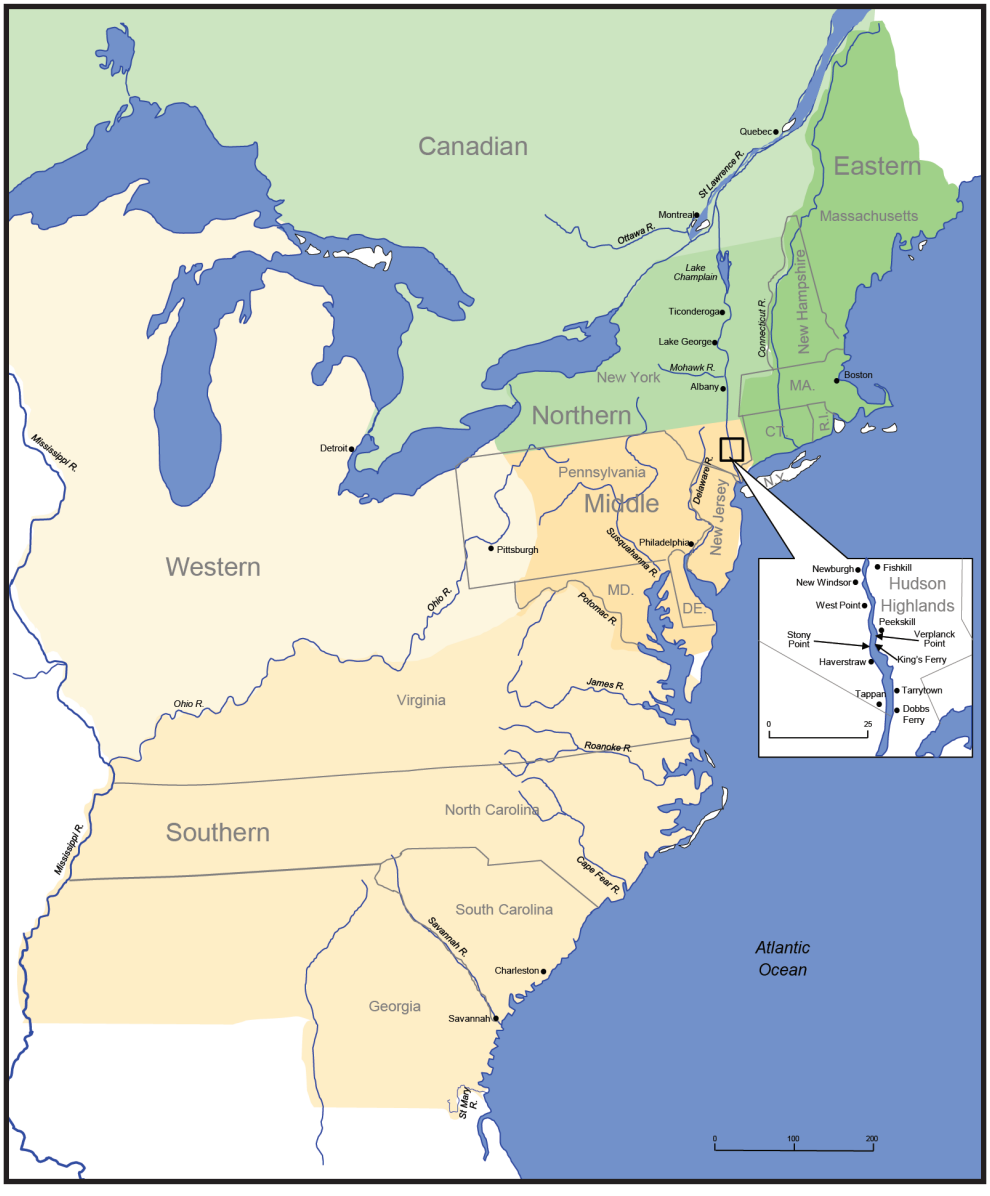

Figure 15.1 Territorial Departments during the American Revolution. Map created by CAC History for the authors.

The World Wars

On 26 May 1917 Major General John J. Pershing, commander Southern Department, assumed command of what would become the American Expeditionary Force (AEF) in the primary overseas

area of France. In accordance with the FSR he organized a general headquarters (GHQ) as his senior command.[18] Having learned the necessity for an adequate command structure for expeditionary operations the War Department gave AEF direct command of everything including the Line of Communications, later designated the Services of Supply (SOS), and the growing Air Service. The SOS grew to over 600,000 in nine base sections, an intermediate section, and an advanced section, all commanded by general officers reporting to the SOS.[19] Because of its size, the War Department in the summer of 1918 considered appointing a separate commander for the SOS co-equal with Pershing. But General Pershing refused diminution of his authority as the theater commander to control support operations. He consequently placed Major General James Harbord, his chief of staff, to command the SOS with increased authority.[20]

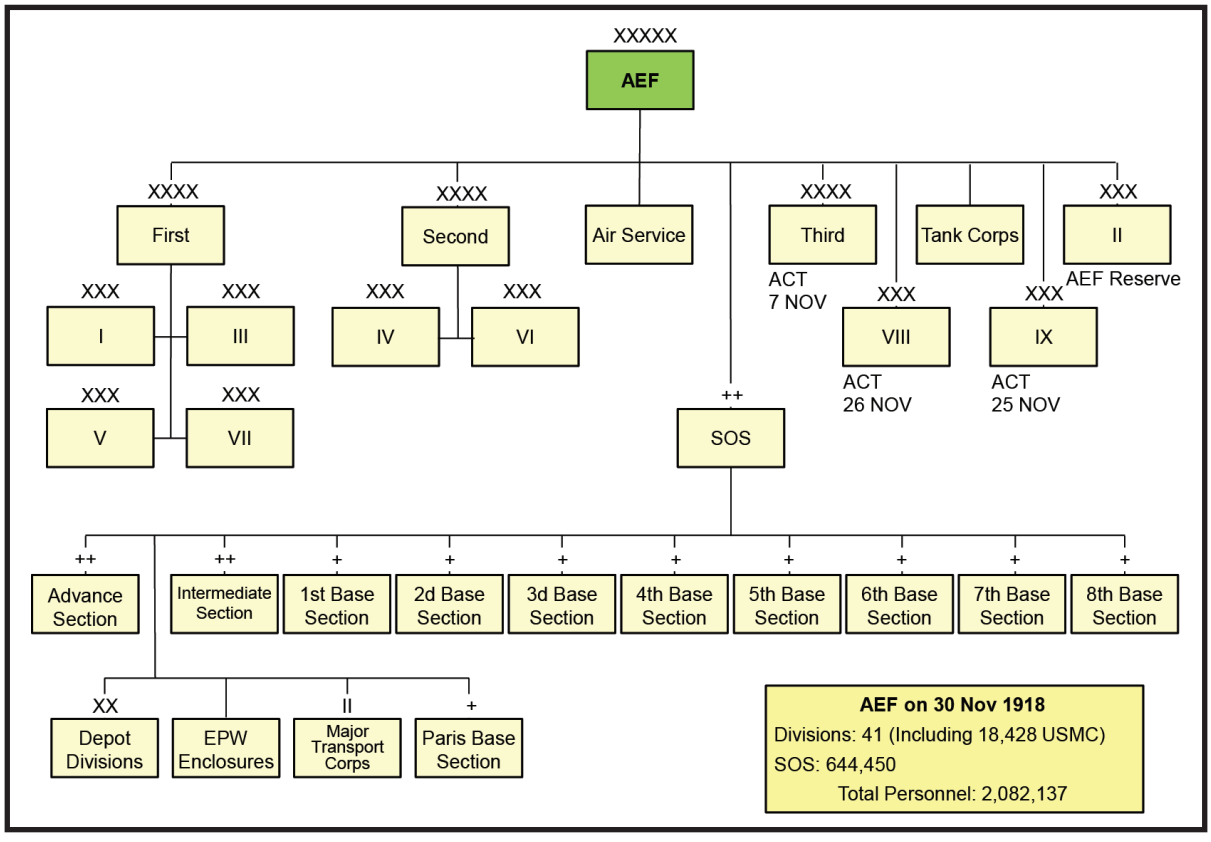

Figure 15.2 American Expeditionary Force 11 November 1918. Graphic created by CAC History for the author

As numbers of divisions grew, AEF formed appropriate higher headquarters, corps and armies. General Pershing established First Army on 10 August 1918 to focus on operational supervision of corps and divisions, while GHQ focused on reception of new units, in-theater training, sustainment and other enabling functions. First Army entered combat at Saint-Mihiel on 12 September 1918 with 550,000 Americans in three corps and 14 divisions plus 110,000 French. First Army HQs alone eventually grew to some 600 officers and 1,500 enlisted personnel to accomplish its tasks while GHQ was authorized 4,271 personnel.[21] Pershing initially commanded both First Army and the AEF, but during the difficult fighting in the Meuse-Argonne on 12 October 1918 he relinquished direct command of 1st Army to Lieutenant General Hunter Liggett and formed Second Army under Lieutenant General Robert L. Bullard.[22] While he retained overall command of the AEF, this removed Pershing from receiving orders through French Marshall Petain as a part of his "group of armies" into being co-equal with British

Field Marshall Haig and Marshall Petain as a group of armies commander. By 7 November the AEF had grown to some 2,000,000 in three armies, seven corps, and 41 divisions (see Figure 15.2).[23]

In the interwar period the Army revised its organization and doctrine. On 20 August 1920 War Department General Order #50 reorganized the previous six geographic departments into nine corps areas in the Continental United States. The Army charged each of these corps with responsibility not only for administrative and logistical activities in their areas, but also for the supervision of training for all active and reserve component units located therein. GO #50 retained the previous overseas departmental structure for the Philippine Islands, the Territory of Hawaii, and the Panama Canal Zone which remained responsible for preparation of defense plans and joint operations with the US Navy. Except for the Army chief of staff, commanding corps areas and departments became the Army's most important interwar positions and were filled by senior major generals. [24] Post-war plans in 1921 determined that for mobilization the Army would need six field armies each structured with 325,000 personnel, however none of the field army HQs were to be on active duty.[25] General Pershing's desire to harvest lessons from the AEF ensured that the new *FSR* of 1923 emphasized doctrine for large units in a "theater of land operations" from groups of armies to corps.[26] Pershing also approved a recommendation that Leavenworth instruct through the corps echelon, while the Army War College be responsible for field army and the army in the theater of operations.[27]

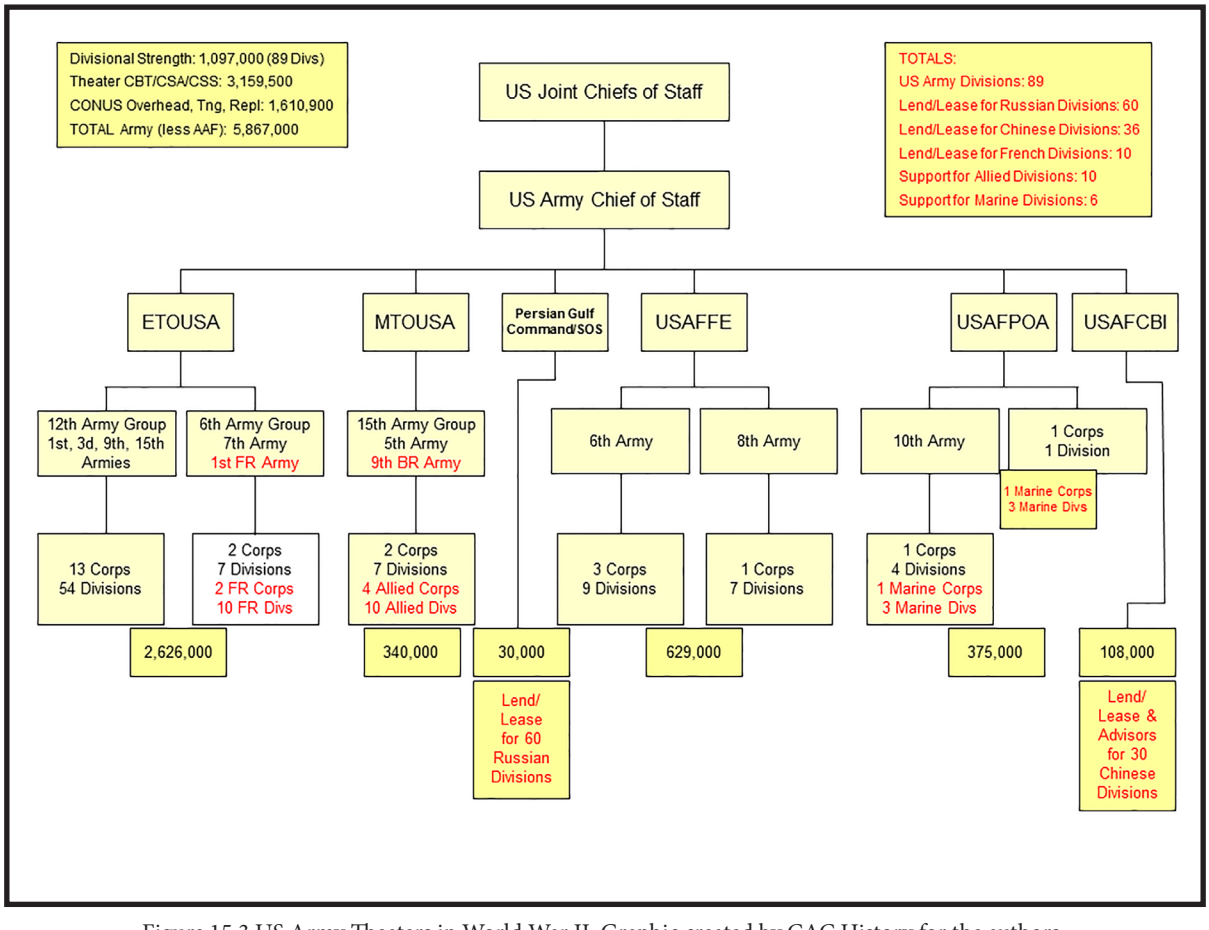

Figure 15.3 US Army Theaters in World War II. Graphic created by CAC History for the authors.

In 1932 General Douglas McArthur as the Chief of Staff of the Army (CSA), concerned that mobilization needed to be supervised by active duty army HQs, directed the establishment of four field

army HQs. Commanded as an additional duty by the senior corps commander these army HQs provided control over the nine corps, provided mobilization planning staffs, and supervised all training activities in their areas of jurisdiction. In 1941, Second and Third Armies conducted the influential prewar large-scale Louisiana Maneuvers. Later in 1942 these army HQs became designated as defense commands for the security of the homeland. Second and Fourth Armies retained this role for the duration, while First and Third Army HQs later deployed as field armies to Europe.[28]

By 1942 the Army had also updated its operational doctrine. In 1939 General George Marshall, as the new CSA, approved an expanded 1939 *FSR* as tentative doctrine. It included separate field manuals for operations, administration, and large units. Slightly revised versions followed early in the war. General Marshall had become concerned about multiple large scale "theaters of operation" requiring joint land, air, and sea operations. *FM 100-15, Larger Units* did not use the term "theater army," but did describe theaters of operations with US Army commanders directly responsible for both administration and combat within their assigned theaters. *FM 100-15* also described the functions and operations of army groups and armies. It defined the role of the army as the fundamental unit of strategic maneuver and as the basis for planning and executing operations. Army HQs served as the main administrative and logistical echelon in the combat zone. Army groups, formed to supervise multiple armies, were to be tactical only relying on a co-equal services of supply (SOS) for administration.[29] *FM 100-10, Administration,* described administration as all military operations not involved in tactics and strategy and covered of a wide gamut of non-combat but essential functions. FM 100-10 also described the geography of a theater with a Combat Zone where the armies, corps and divisions had areas of operation, and a Communications Zone (COMMZ) with the SOS (see Figure 15.3).[30]

Following the doctrine in *FMs 100-10* and *100-15*, the Army established a command system that encompassed theaters of operation in every part of the world. By late 1944, these theater [army] headquarters included: European Theater of Operations, US Army (ETOUSA), Mediterranean Theater of Operations, US Army (MTOUSA); previously the North African Theater of Operations, US Army-(NATOUSA); the Persian Gulf Command; US Army Forces Far East (USAFFE); US Army, Pacific Ocean Areas (USAFPOA); and US Army Forces in the Chinese Theater of Operations, Burma, and India (USAFCBI) (Figure 15.4).[31]

These theater headquarters were superior to and provided service command over all of the operational ground force HQs above division (army group, field army, and corps) as well as the SOS and Army Air Forces established in each theater. However, actual control was often vested in a "supreme allied commander." General Dwight Eisenhower, first commanding NATOUSA and then ETOUSA after January 1944, and General McArthur, commander USAFFE, both served as supreme allied commanders. Theater army staffs varied in size based on functions. ETOUSA and USAFFE staffs, functioning primarily as administrative and logistical staffs, were extremely large with thousands of headquarters personnel.[32] They also planned sequels to current operations, such as the occupation of Axis countries, far removed from the tyranny and confusion of current operations.[33]

Under theater armies with significant ground combat requirements, the Army employed army groups and field armies. Based on World War I experience, field armies became the fundamental unit of strategic maneuver capable of independent operation, with a flexible structure, and expected to serve as senior tactical and logistical HQs. Army groups, if formed to supervise multiple armies, were to be tactical only and the primary link with air forces but relying on a co-equal SOS commander for administration. Ultimately, the US Army staffed three army group HQs, and nine field army HQs. While field armies had standardized tables of organization, Lieutenant General Leslie McNair attempted to constrain their growth. The approved Table of Organization No. 200-1 for a field army HQs, of 1 July 1942, authorized 258 officers and warrant officers and 508 enlisted.[34] Army group HQs varied in size. For

example, when 12th Army Group under Lieutenant General Omar Bradley activated on 1 August 1944, the Army authorized it 1,870 personnel.[35] When Lieutenant General Mark Clark assumed command of allied land forces in Italy on 16 December 1944, he established 15th Army Group with an enlarged and predominately US Army staff. [36]

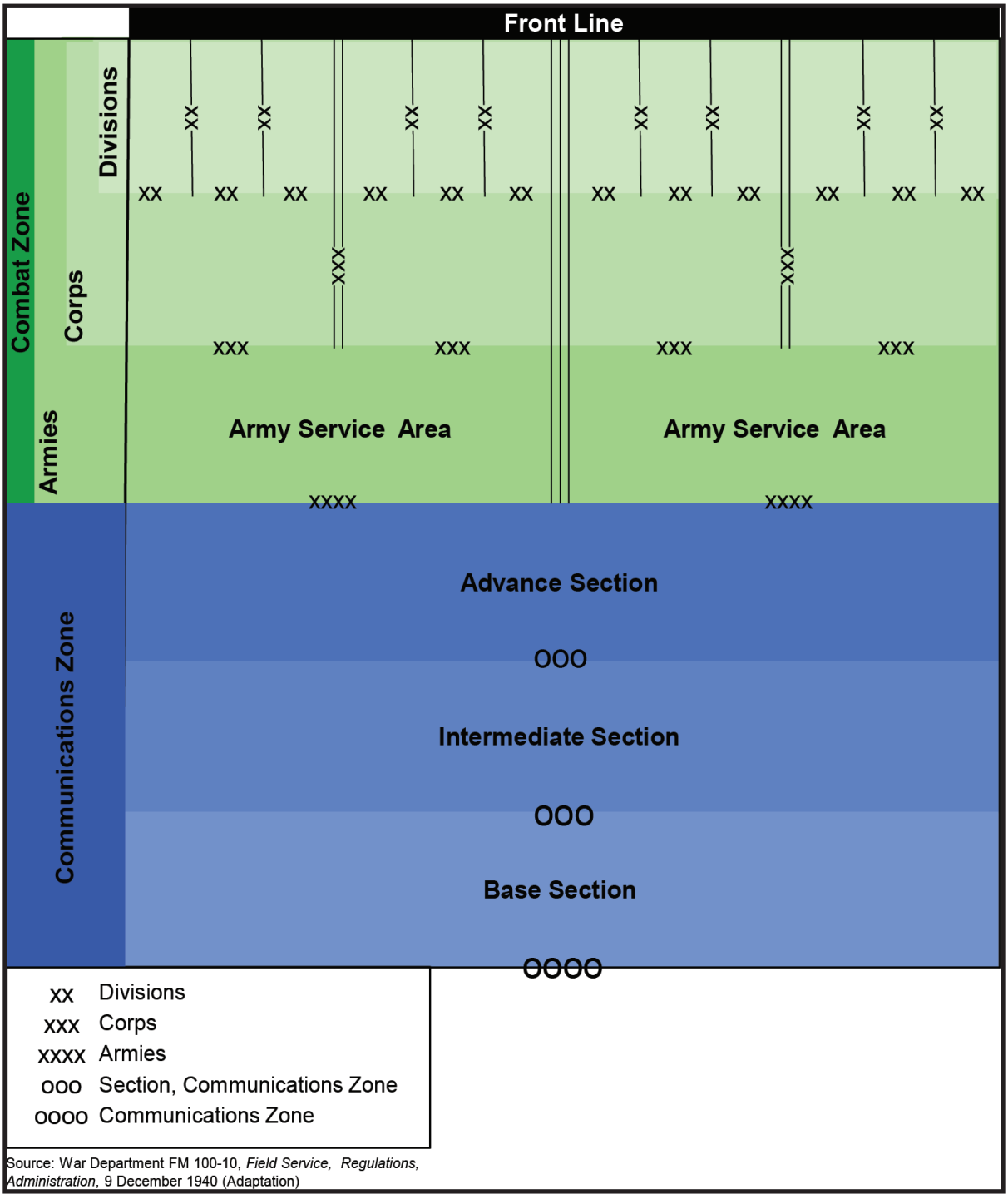

Figure 15.4 United States Army Forces China, Burma, India Theater of Operations, Burma, and India (USAFCBI). Graphic created by CAC History for the authors.

The US Army set and maintained multiple theaters of operations through its theater armies and their SOS. These globally deployed service forces, totaling almost 1,700,000 by June 1945, in many cases were responsible for not only Army logistical support, but also logistical and combat support to substantial numbers of Allied or Marine Divisions. These included ten French divisions in the 6th Army Group, several British Commonwealth, the Brazilian and Polish divisions in Italy, and six Marine Divisions in the Central Pacific. Even theaters without significant ground combat forces, the Persian Gulf Command and USAFCBI, had large numbers of Army Service Forces. Lend-Lease, conducted primarily through theater armies, supported 60 Russian Divisions, 36 Nationalist Chinese Divisions, the ten French divisions, and one Brazilian Division. As the war continued, the Army in theater became responsible for major overseas infrastructure, base and road construction such as across France and Italy, the Ledo (Burma) Road, the Alaskan Highway, and bases on Pacific Islands. The Theater Army was responsible as well for evacuation and detention for hundreds of thousands of Axis soldiers and for the evacuation and hospitalization of hundreds of thousands of American casualties.[37]

The Cold War

The press of the postwar occupation duties in Japan, Korea, Germany, Austria, and Italy required large numbers of US Army forces to remain deployed overseas after 1945. The Army modified its existing theater HQs to command and control these overseas forces and to execute occupation duties. The first Unified Command Plan, approved 14 December 1946, established initial boundaries and defined command relations among US forces deployed overseas. These included the US Caribbean Command replacing the Panama Canal Department and assuming responsibility for the defense of Panama and the Antilles in 1947 with the Army serving as executive agent. After 1948 these theater commanders-in-chief (CINCs) reported through Service channels to a Service chief or Service secretary who served as "executive agent" for a theater.[38] This institutional relationship essentially made selective theaters the domain of a Service which appointed the CINC (often dual-hatted as the service component commander), provided most members of the staff, and directed the staff procedures to be used. As the post-World War II commands evolved the Army established or designated a table of distribution and allowances (TDA) "theater army" HQs and commander for each combatant command in which it had deployed forces.[39]

The end of World War II also resulted in reorganization inside the continental United States. War Department Circular 138, 14 May 1946, established six army areas (later termed Continental United States Armies-CONUSAs) and the Military District of Washington under Army Ground Forces to replace the nine Service Commands. In 1955 the Army designated Army Ground Forces as the Continental Army Command (CONARC). In 1961 it became the Army component of US Strike Command.[40]

During the immediate post-World War II occupation of Germany the Army served as executive agent for US Forces, European Theater (USFET) and provided its HQs primarily from SHAEF. Although designated as US European Command (USEUCOM), a unified command, by the Joint Chiefs of Staff in 1947, the Army almost exclusively manned the headquarters. After the outbreak of the Korean War the United States expanded Army forces in Europe to a five-division, two-corps, over 250,000 man force. The USEUCOM commander, General Thomas Handy, requested authority from the Department of the Army to activate a field army headquarters within the command because the early experiences of US forces in Korea indicated the need for a command and control element at that level. The Army activated Seventh Army on 24 November 1950 as an operational field army HQs under the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) command structure.[41] As the Cold War escalated in 1951, General Eisenhower assumed the additional North Atlantic Treaty Organization responsibility as Supreme Allied Commander, Europe. Because of this expansion of forces and military responsibilities in Europe the Secretary of Defense divided US European Command's (USEUCOM's) responsibilities, activating the

US Army, Europe (USAREUR), an Army major command which assumed most of the theater logistical and administrative responsibilities formerly exercised directly by USEUCOM.[42]

Following Japan's defeat in World War II the US Far East Command (USFEC), based on General MacArthur's USAFFE, assumed responsibilities for the occupation of Japan and its former territories. Eighth US Army (EUSA) served as the initial HQs to supervise the occupation of Japan. In addition the Army in 1947 organized US Army Pacific (USARPAC) to provide administrative command of the various Army units in the Pacific and Asia (outside of USFEC) and support the Navy as executive agent for US Pacific Command (USPACOM).[43]

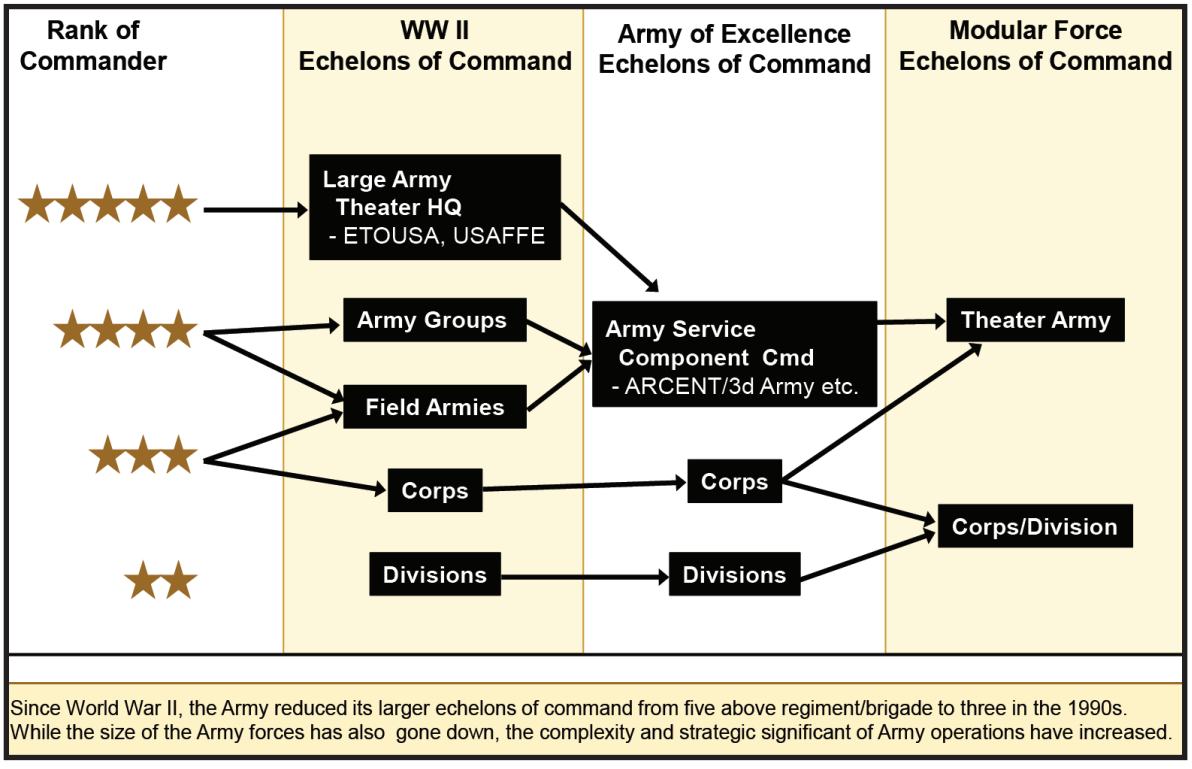

Figure 15.5 Reductions of Army Echelons since World War II. Graphic created by CAC History for the authors.

EUSA deployed to South Korea in July 1950 as the US Army component and UN theater ground commander. By 1953, EUSA had over 800,000 troops in six US Armies, one US Marine Corps (USMC), one Commonwealth, and ten South Korean divisions. Its HQs totaled 1,843 personnel compared to the standard field army allotted 1,062 personnel.[44] After the Korean Armistice EUSA remained in Korea. In 1954 the Army consolidated EUSA with the USAFFE which, since 1952, had served as the theater army for USFEC.

The mounting tensions of the Cold War led the Secretary of Defense to modify theater boundaries, forces, and missions. Consequently, during the Korean War, the other Services began to establish separate Service component commands within each theater to affect administrative command over forces from that Service. As with USEUCOM, the Army served as executive agent for the USFEC until its disestablishment in 1957 when its area of responsibility merged with that of the USPACOM. Also in 1957, US Forces Korea was formed as a sub-unified command under USPACOM with EUSA as its Army component. In 1963, the Unified Command Plan transferred Caribbean Command responsibilities to the US Southern Command (USSOUTHCOM) again with the Army as executive agent. At the same time the Army re-designated the Army component as US Army Forces, Southern Command (USARSO).[45]

During the Vietnam War, General William Westmoreland, commander US Military Assistance Command-Vietnam (USMACV), a sub-unified command of USPACOM, resisted forming a field army as his Army component.[46] Accordingly, he retained direct operational command of several corps-sized US Army forces as well as the III Marine Amphibious Force directly under USMACV. USARPAC did establish US Army Vietnam (USARV), also commanded by Westmoreland, as the subordinate Army component for some 360,000 Army personnel at peak strength. USARV consequently served as a *de facto* theater army but with direct command of only some 175,000 theater troops.[47]

Seeking HQs savings during the Vietnam War, the Army on 1 December 1966 merged USAREUR and Seventh Army under the same commander. Simultaneously, the European COMMZ HQs moved out of France into Germany and NATO moved toward multinational army groups composed of national corps. Reflecting this change, the Army re-designated the new unit as "USAREUR and Seventh Army." The CG USAREUR remained NATO Central Army Group (CENTAG) commander until the NATO reorganization post-cold war.[48]

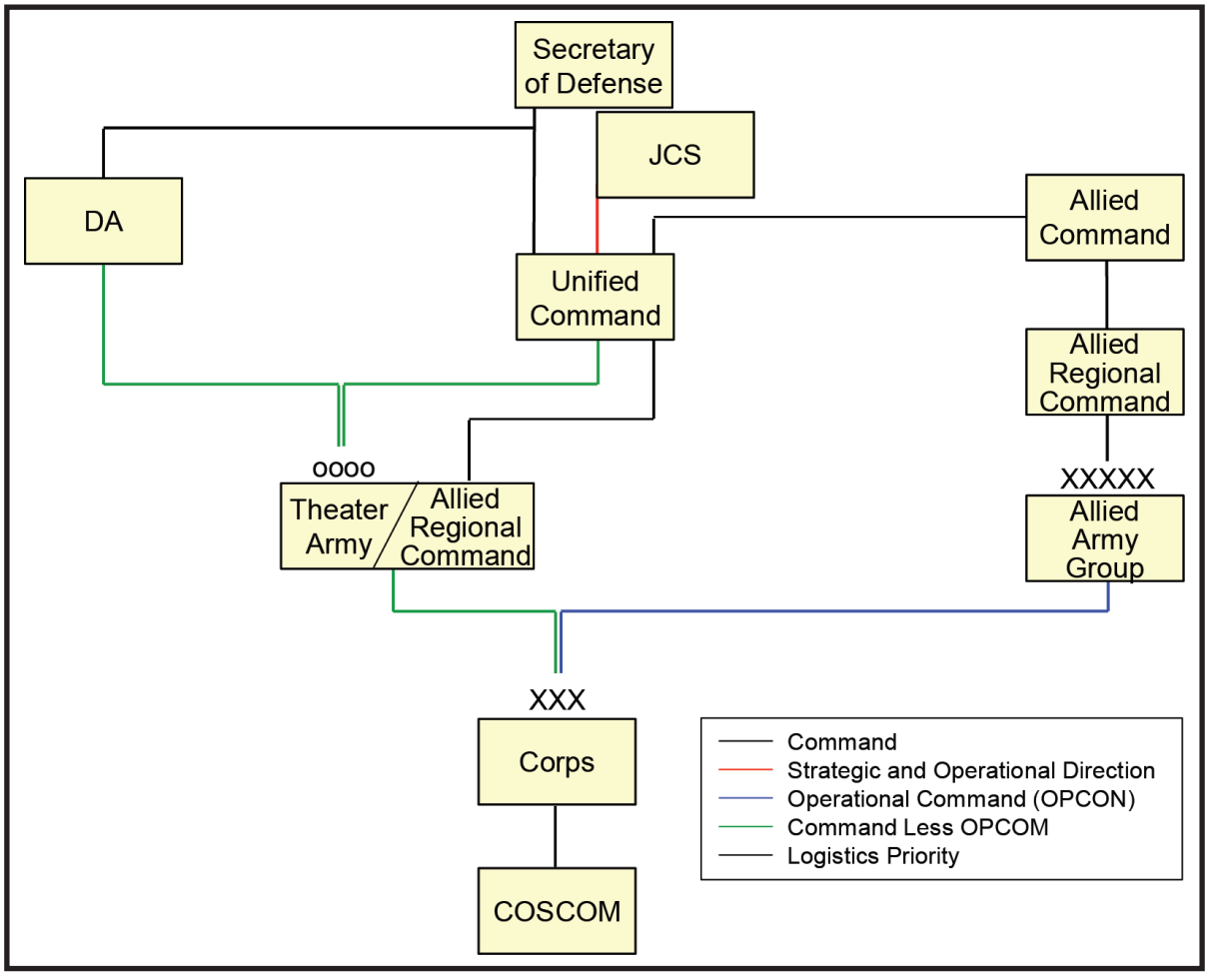

Figure 15.6 US Army Doctrinal Command Relationships, FM 100-16, *Support Operations: Echelons Above Corps*, 1985. Graphic created by CAC History for the authors.

With the end of the Vietnam War the Army once again reorganized in 1973. The Army split CONARC into US Army Forces Command (FORSCOM) and US Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC). It also disestablished USARPAC and USARSO, assigning FORSCOM the responsibility for providing Army support to both USPACOM and US Southern Command. During this reor-

ganization USARPAC's subordinate US Army, Japan (USARJ) and EUSA in Korea became separate major Army commands. In addition, the Army merged the European theater army support command with USAREUR HQs.[49] In 1974, due to combined considerations in NATO, Korea, and Vietnam, the Army eliminated in doctrine both the field army and the army group. It elevated the corps as the Army's principal combat unit intended to work directly and independently for a unified or combined HQs. When unusual circumstances required, a numbered army could be formed as an intermediate echelon above corps. Theater armies, while retained as Army components to unified commands, were relegated to primarily non-maneuver functions to include a logistics priority of supervising the COMMZ (see Figure 15.6).[50]

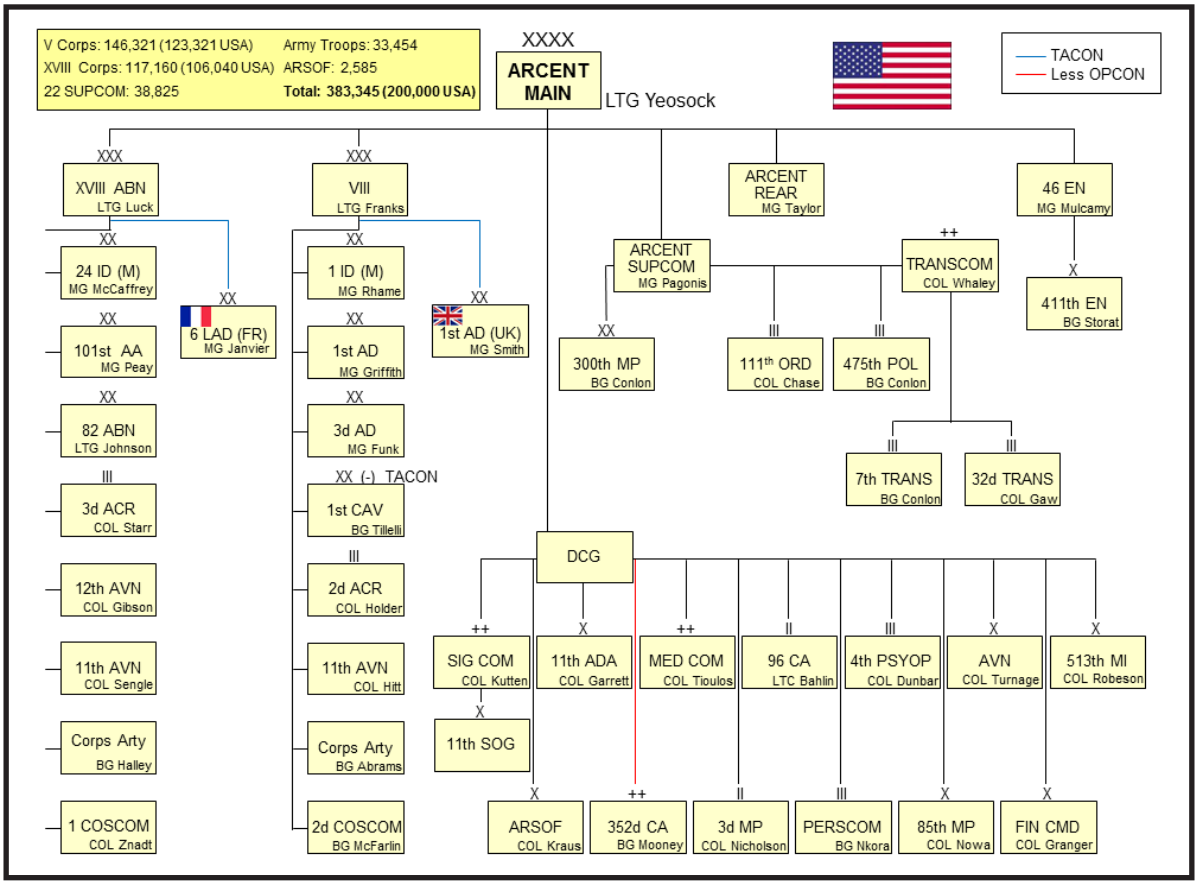

Figure 15.7 Third Army/USARCENT February 1991. Graphic created by CAC History for the authors.

Because FORSCOM had difficulty supporting USPACOM and USSOUTHCOM, the Army had to reactivate service components. The Army activated US Army Western Command in 1979 as the service component for PACOM, and placed USARJ and Army units in Alaska under it in 1989. The next year the Army re-designated it as USARPAC.[51] Similarly, criticisms of the lack of responsiveness to USSOUTHCOM led the Army to reestablish USARSO as a major command in 1986.[52] As the unified command system evolved, a number of geographic combatant commanders argued that Service component commanders exercised excessive authority over forces from their Service within the theater. The 1986 Goldwater-Nichols Defense Reorganization Act addressed many of these concerns, buttressing the combatant commander's (CCDR's) authority over assigned Service component commanders; separated most CCDR's from being their own service component commander; required operational forces to be assigned to a CCDR; and provided authority for use of functional components such as joint force

land component commander (JFLCC), which provided for a single land commander over US Army and USMC units, or joint force air component commander (JFACC).

The President established the US Central Command (USCENTCOM) as a unified command in 1982 with geographic responsibility for the Middle East. The Army reactivated Third US Army as US Army Central Command (USARCENT) and co-located it with FORSCOM headquarters at Fort McPherson, Georgia. The Third Army commander initially also served as FORSCOM's deputy commander. In 1990 Third Army comprised a reduced strength HQs deriving peacetime support from FORSCOM.[53]

1989 to Present

During Operations DESERT SHIELD/STORM Lieutenant General John Yeosock, the USARCENT commander, exercised command over some 300,000 assigned Army forces (less specified special operations forces) and advised General Norman Schwarzkopf, USCENTCOM commander, on Army matters (see Figure 15.7). Third Army also functioned as the theater army, the major Department of the Army headquarters in theater. The theater army developed an echeloned force structure to support army and theater requirements for various technical capabilities in accordance with Department of Defense (DOD) directives and General Schwarzkopf's guidance. Among these were intelligence, communications, transportation, air defense, logistics, civil affairs, military police, and engineering. The theater army also provided the linkage between Army units in the field, other Army commands, and the Department of the Army. In addition, the Third Army headquarters assumed the role of a historic, but currently non-doctrinal, field army. As a field army Third Army planned operations, allocated combat power and sustainment resources, synchronized theater-level troops, and directed the combat execution of its two corps within the operational mission assigned by the theater commander.[54]

Post conflict DOD recognized the value of the Service component commands, observing that "the US military command structure was unambiguous, letting CINCENT exercise full command over all forces in theater, maximizing the unique Service capabilities of all forces, while ensuring unity of command."[55] However, *FM 100-7, Decisive Force: The Army in Theater Operations*, May 1995, officially changed the designation "previously known as the theater army commander" to "Army service component commander [ASCC]" and retained the option to form a numbered army HQs for large (multi-corps) operations.[56]

Post-Cold War structural changes for NATO accelerated in June of 1993 when NATO deactivated HQ Central Army Group (CENTAG) at Heidelberg, Germany and Northern Army Group (NORTHAG) at Monchengladbach, Germany. NATO replaced CENTAG with Headquarters Allied Land Forces Central Europe (LANDCENT) activated in Heidelberg on 1 July 1993. The CG USAREUR rotated with other NATO officers as dual hatted commanders of this NATO echelon above corps organization.[57]

After the terror attacks of 11 September 2001 Lieutenant General P.T. Mikolashek, CG USARCENT, assumed control of land operations in the Afghanistan Joint Operations Area (JOA) in November 2001 for the conduct of Operation ENDURING FREEDOM when designated as the coalition forces land component commander (CFLCC).[58] As such Mikolashek controlled a unique combination of Army, Marines, Special Forces, and Northern Alliance allies during the defeat of the Taliban and their Al-Qaeda allies.[59] In September 2002 Lieutenant General David McKiernan replaced General Mikolashek as the CFLCC. Beginning 20 March 2003 McKiernan conducted Operation IRAQI FREEDOM and supervised two large corps-sized forces (V Corps and I MEF) during the defeat of Saddam Hussein.[60] With the fall of Saddam's regime in May, McKiernan assumed duties as the commander of coalition joint task force (CJTF)-Iraq, initially responsible for conducting stabilization and reconstruction operations country-wide until turning those responsibilities over to Lt Gen Ricardo Sanchez as commander V Corps and CJTF-7. [61]

From June 2003 to the present, USARCENT operated split based from Kuwait and CONUS to serve as the theater-CFLCC coordinating sustainment, intelligence, land planning, protection, and security cooperation for simultaneous operations in Iraq, Afghanistan, and the rest of the USCENTCOM AOR. Because of the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS), ARCENT in 2014 initially formed CJFLCC-Iraq and later became the CJTF HQs for Operation INHERENT RESOLVE (OIR) to support the Government of Iraq against ISIS while also supporting operations in Afghanistan. In September 2015, with USARCENT HQs reduced to only some 60 percent of its previous size; a rotating corps assumed the role of JTF-OIR and occupied much of USARCENT's previous facilities in Kuwait.[62]

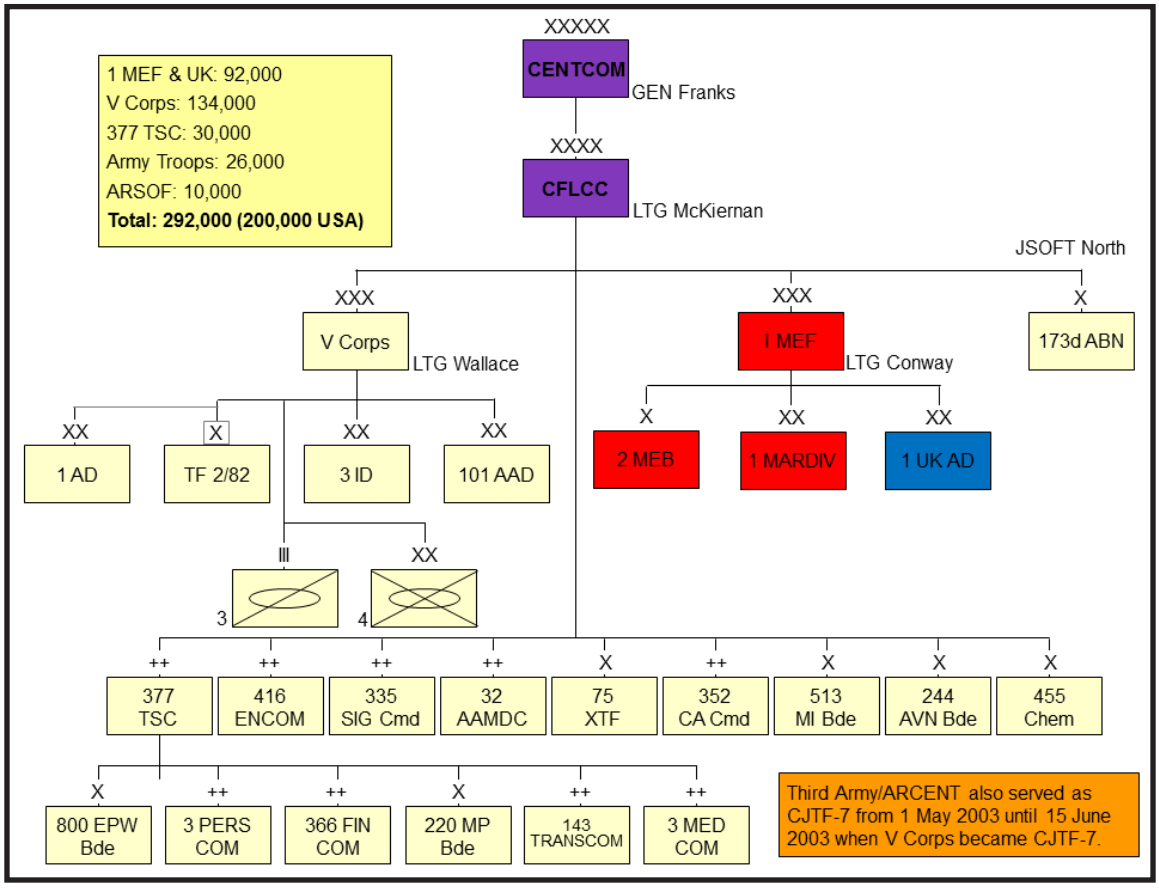

Figure 15.8 Third Army/ARCENT as CFLCC May 2003. Graphic created by CAC History for the authors.

After General Peter Schoomaker became CSA in September 2003, he established Task Force Modularity to redesign the Army (see Figure 15.9). He approved a redesigned TOE theater army headquarters that, while retaining administrative functions, restored some operational functions previously found in field armies/army groups. Army Regulation 10-87, *Army Commands, Army Service Component Commands, and Direct Reporting Units,* September 2007 and FM 3-0, *Operations,* February 2008, officially re-employed the term theater army specifically for the ASCC of all geographic unified commanders and charged them with being capable of serving as an operational HQs to include serving as a JTF and JFLCC.[63]

From 2001 to present the Army has reorganized its theater armies to meet national strategy. With the establishment of US Northern Command (USNORTHCOM) and US African Command the Army formed new theater armies from existing HQs. US Army North (USARNORTH) was created from Fifth Army, a former CONUSA responsible for training oversight of reserve components under FORSCOM.

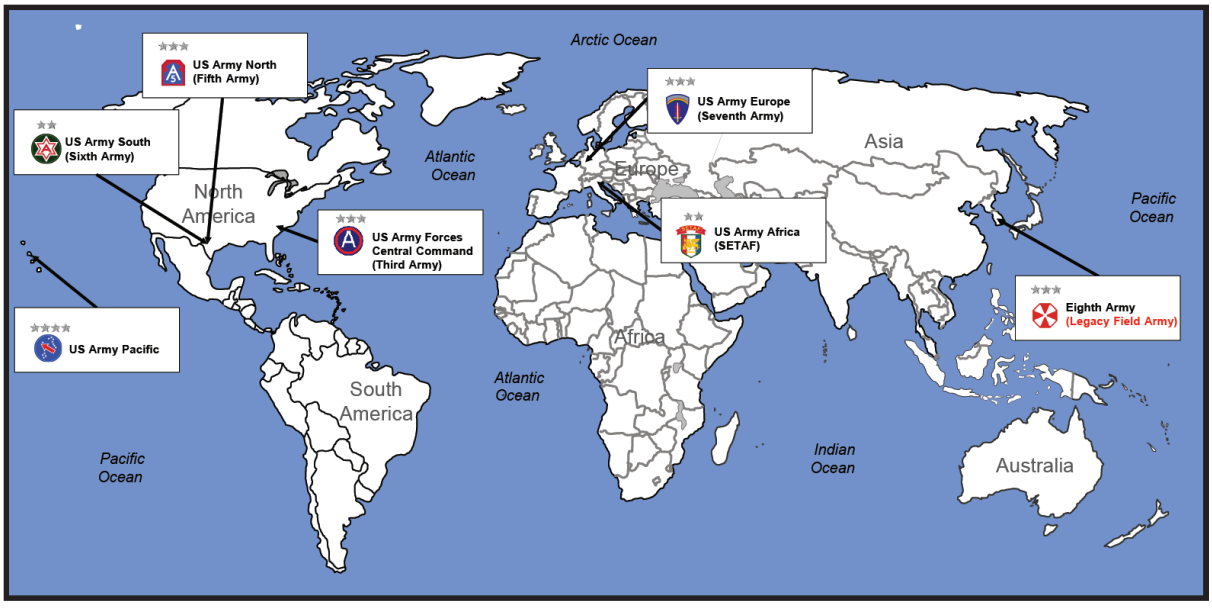

Figure 15.9 Army Geographic Service Component Commands. Map created by CAC History for the authors.

USARNORTH has been designated by USNORTHCOM as its standing JFLCC responsible for supervising joint task force civil support. ARNORTH supervises federal responses to natural disasters such as Hurricane Sandy. Likewise, the Army created US Army Africa using the former Southern European Task Force (SETAF) in Vicenza, Italy. Since its activation, US Army Africa has been involved in numerous operations, most recently as the headquarters in Liberia for Operation Unified Assistance.[64] On 1 October 2011 the Army reunited all forces in the Pacific under USARPAC for the first time since 1974. EUSA was re-designated Eighth Army, a legacy "Field Army" under the administrative control of USARPAC as its theater army. In 2013 General Vince Brooks became the first four-star commanding general for USARPAC since 1974 as the US "pivoted to the Pacific." (See Figure 15.9).

Theater armies, as the successor of geographic departments, now serve as the essential single echelon above corps and must perform both as enabling extensions of the Army into a theater as well as providing valuable mission command capabilities to CCDRs. A joint headquarters cannot perform the functions of a theater army, it is neither organized nor structured to do so, and lacks the internal Army authorities. Theater armies remain responsible for executing a variety of statutory Army Service functions, to include long range or sequel planning. The theater army commander also executes DOD directed joint functions as well as CCDR directed lead-service functions to include setting the AOR or theater. In addition, in accordance with Goldwater-Nichols, theater armies have successfully provided a Service component or joint HQs for advising the CCDR, planning for employment of Army forces, and providing mission command of joint land operations when required. During DESERT STORM, and subsequently as the CJFLCC during Iraq and Afghanistan, USARCENT succeeded in these tasks. Recently USPACOM designated its theater army as a "theater-JFLCC" for advising, coordinating, and supporting joint land operations during shaping and preventing. During these and other operations, theater armies/ASCCs have successfully ensured proper coordination with DA and other components, supervised Army theater forces, performed mandatory functions, conducted security force assistance, reduced the joint force commander's span of complexity, and allowed the CCDR to focus strategically. Over the past half-century plus, the Army has designated its theater armies by different designations, some reflecting theater identifications and some operational force designations. FM 3-94, Theater Army, Corps, and Divisions Operations now provides doctrinal guidance to all of these headquarters,

but specifies that the “theater army is not designed, organized, or equipped to function as a . . . field army in major combat operations” with multiple corps sized formations.

Notes

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3. Russell F. Weigley, *History of the United States Army, Enlarged Edition* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1984), 119, 138, 170, and 189.

4. K. Jack Bauer, "The Battles on the Rio Grande: Palo Alto and Resaca de la Palma, 8-9 May,1846," in *America's First Battles: 1776-1965*, edited by Charles E. Heller and William A. Stofft (Lawrence, KS: University of Kansas Press, 1986), 57.

5. Weigley, *United States Army,* 227-228.

6. Russell F. Weigley, *A Great Civil War: A Military and Political History, 1861-1865* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press*,* 2000), 278

7. Weigley, *A Great Civil War*, 284.

8. Weigley, *A Great Civil War*, 325-327, 360

9. Weigley, *United States Army*, 267.

10. Theodore Ropp, *War in the Modern World*, New and Revised Edition (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000), 171.

11. Stephen E. Ambrose, *Upton and the Army* (Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana State University Press, 1962), 85, 94, 121, 134, 155-156.

12. Weigley, *United States Army*, 296-306.

13. Weigley, *United States Army*, 306. See also, Graham A. Cosmas, "San Juan Hill and El Caney," in *America's First Battles: 1776-1965*, edited by Charles E. Heller and William A. Stofft (Lawrence, KS: University of Kansas Press, 1986), 116, and 376

14. Weigley, *United States Army*, 305, 313-327,594.

15. Walter E. Kretchik, *US Army Doctrine: From the American Revolution to the War on Terror* (Lawrence, KS: University of Kansas Press, 2011), 108-114.

16. War Department, Office of the Chief of Staff, *Field Service Regulations, United States Army, 1914*, corrected to January 15, 1918 (changes 1-8) (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1918), 10, 123, 130.

17. Stephen E. Clay, *US Army Order of Battle, 1919-1941, Volume I, The Arms: Major Commands and Infantry Organizations* (Ft. Leavenworth, KS: Combat Studies Institute, 2010), 7. See also Brian McAllister Linn, *Guardians of Empire: The US Army and the Pacific, 1902-1940* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1997), 257; and US Army Pacific and US Army South official websites, "History," accessed 27 January 2017.

18. *United States Army in the World War, 1917-1919*, Vol I Organization of the American Expeditionary Forces (Washington, DC: US Army Center of Military History, 1988), 11.

19. *United States Army in the World War*, 30.

20. Weigley, *United States Army*, 358-384.

21. David A. Hogan, *A Command Post at War: First Army Headquarters in Europe, 1943-1945* (Washington, DC: US Army Center of Military History, 2000), 6; and *United States Army in the World War*, Vol I, 139-141.

22. David F. Trask, introduction to *United States Army in the World War, 1917-1919*, Vol I Organization of the American Expeditionary Forces (Washington, DC: US Army Center of Military History, 1988), xxiii.

23. Weigley, *United States Army*, 385. On page 390, Weigley believes that because Pershing had too many things to do that First Army performed better after Pershing relinquished its direct command to Liggett.

24. Clay, *US Army Order of Battle, 1919-1941*, 9 and 12; and Jean R. Moenck, *A History of Command and Control of Army Forces in the Continental United States, 1919-1972* (Ft Monroe, VA: Continental Army Command, 1972), 3-4.

25. Clay*, US Army Order of Battle, 1919-1941*, 95, 98-100.

26. Chief of Staff of the Army, *Field Service Regulations, United States Army, 1923* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1924), iii, 1-3, 121. See also Kretchik, *US Army Doctrine,* 133-134.

27. The issue of whether Leavenworth or Carlisle should teach echelons above corps would remain a perennial issue.

Harry P. Ball. *Of Responsible Command: A History of the US Army War College*, revised edition (Carlisle Barracks, PA: The Alumni Association of the United States Army War College, 1994), 185, 462.

28. Moenck, *A History of Command and Control*, 4; and Clay*, US Army Order of Battle, 1919-1941*, 100-104.

29. War Department, *Field Service Regulations Field Manual 100-15, Larger Units* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 29 June 1942), 4-6, 49-51. See also Hogan, *A Command Post at War,* 13. *Field Service Regulations, Field Manual 100-5*, *Operations* was the third manual.

30. War Department, *Field Service Regulations Field Manual 100-10, Administration* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 9 December 1940), 1-9. Services of Supply included all Quartermaster, Ordnance, Medical, Signal, Chemical, Engineer, and other emerging capabilities such as Military Police, Transportation, and Civil Affairs.

31. Ray S. Cline, *Washington Command Post: The Operations Division* (Washington, DC: US Army Center of Military History, 1951), 290.

32. To simplify American administration, on 17 January 1944, General Eisenhower ordered the consolidation of HQs, ETOUSA and his Services of Supply HQs under Lieutenant General John C. H. Lee. This enlarged staff operated as ETOUSA with General Eisenhower as the commander and Lieutenant General Lee as the deputy but the officer in actual control. When Lieutenant General Lee moved the ETOUSA staff to Paris in September 1944, it had some 8,000 officers and 21,000 enlisted. These were in addition to General Eisenhower's more operational SHAEF staff which by 1 February 1945, was authorized over 16,000 personnel in its HQs and special troops of which almost 10,000 were Americans. See Forrest C. Pogue, *The Supreme Command* (Washington, DC: US Army Center of Military History, 1954), 322 and App B, Table 5.

33. Robert H. Berlin, "European Theater of Operations United States Army, World War II, Echelons Above Corps," in Combat Studies Institute Report No. 6, *Larger Units: Theater Army, Army Group, Field Army* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Combat Studies Institute, January 1985), 3-9.

34. Hogan, *A Command Post at War,* App A. However by 1945, based on actual operations, the Army authorized field army HQs some 1,070 personnel. The post war European General Board, Study No 24 recommended 1416 personnel including the headquarters company.

35. US Army, *12th Army Group Report of Operations-Final after Action Report,* vol 2, G1 Section, Annex 5, page 65. However, the 6th Army Group HQs activated on 15 September 1944 to command US Seventh and French 1st Armies under General Jacob Devers in South France was authorized only 918 personnel. See James Scott Wheeler, *Jacob L. Devers: A General's Life*, (Lexington, KY: The University Press of Kentucky, 2015), 331.

36. US Army, *15th Army Group History, 16 December-2 May 1945*, written by Reginald L. Williams, command historian, 1946.

37. The information in this paragraph is compiled primarily from the series of histories of the US Army in World War II, the "Green Books." Specifically, Robert W. Coakley and Richard M. Leighton, *Global Logistics and Strategy*, *1943-1945* (Washington, DC: US Army Center of Military History, 1968), Appendix E; Marcel Vigneras, *Rearming the French*, (Washington, DC: Office of the Chief of Military History, 1957); T.H. Vail Matter, *The Persian Corridor and the Aid to Russia* (Washington, DC: Office of the Chief of Military History,1952); Charles Romanus and Riley Sunderland, *Stillwell's Mission to China* (Washington, DC: Office of the Chief of Military History,1953); idem, *Stillwell's Command Problems* (Washington, DC: Office of the Chief of Military History,1956); and idem, *Time Runs Out in CBI* (Washington, DC: US Army Center of Military History, 1959).

38. Weigley, *United States Army*, 512.

39. Department of the Army, *Field Service Regulations: Field Manual 100-10, Administration* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, August 1949), 22. The Report of the General Board, Study No 2, Organization of the European Theater of Operations, United States Forces, European Theater, concluded on page 84 that a "serious shortage of experienced administrative personnel had an adverse effect on operations both before and after D-Day, and on the organization for such operations." On page 86, it recommended that

"Theater organization problems and their solution be stressed in the education and training of senior officers, particularly for duty as general staff officers."

40. Moenck, *A History of Command and Control,* 25-42.

41. Donald A. Carter, *Forging the Shield: The US Army in Europe, 1951-1962* (Washington, DC: US Army Center of Military History, 2015), 7, 14.

42. US Army Europe official website, "History," accessed 27 January 2017, http://www.eur.army.mil/organization/history.htm.

43. US Army Pacific official website, "History," accessed 27 January 2017, http://www.usarpac.army.mil/history.asp.

44. Scott R. McMichael, "Organization of Large Units during the Korean War," in Combat Studies Institute Report No. 6, *Larger Units: Theater Army, Army Group, Field Army* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Combat Studies Institute, January 1985), 5-15.

45. US Army Pacific official website, "History," accessed 27 January 2017, http://www.usarpac.army.mil/history.asp, and US Army South official website, "History," accessed 27 January 2017, https://www.arsouth.army.mil/arsouth-history.html.

46. In January 1968, General Harold K. Johnson, Chief of Staff, directed a study of command and control structures in Vietnam. The report found that "eliminating the Army component from the operational control channel . . . may create a difficult and awkward situation. … A better solution might be to use the Army component headquarters as the senior Army tactical headquarters having responsibility for both tactical and administrative support." Department of the Army, *Final Report, Review and Analysis of the Army Command and Control Structure in Vietnam*, Management Review Team, 15 May 1968, 14.

47. George S. Eckhardt, *Command and Control, 1950-1969, Vietnam Studies* (Washington, DC: Department of the Army, 1974), 50-52; and Bruce Palmer, *The 25-Year War: America's Military Role in Vietnam* (Lexington, KY: University of Kentucky Press, 1984), 49, 67-68.

48. US Army Europe official website, "History," accessed 27 January 2017. With the end of the Cold War, the NATO Army Groups were eliminated. For some twenty years thereafter, the USAREUR commander rotated with other NATO officers in serving as the NATO CG of the land focused Joint Force Command-Heidelberg. In 2011, as US Army strength in Europe fell below 30,000, USAREUR received its first lieutenant general as commander and was relived of the NATO additional duty.

49. James G. Kalergis, "New Look in 'Spaces and Faces,' *Army* (October 1974), 61-64. A total of seven headquarters were eliminated: USARPAC, USARSO, US Army Alaska, US Army Intelligence Command, US Army Air Defense Command, Theater Army Support Command Europe, and Engineer Command, Europe. All of these HQs would be restored, some in new forms, by the mid-1980s.

50. Department of the Army, *Field Manual 100-15, Larger Unit Operations (Test)* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, March 1974), 3-1, 3-9, 3-10, 4-1. The next actual version of FM 100-15 in 1982 would be entitled *Corps Operations*. Theater army would remain discussed primarily in *FM 100-16, Army Operational Support,* 16 April 1985, and *FM 100-10, Combat Service Support*, 18 February 1988.

51. US Army Pacific official website, "History," accessed 27 January 2017, http://www.usarpac.army.mil/history.asp.

52. US Army South official website, "History," accessed 27 January 2017, https://www.arsouth.army.mil/arsouth-history.html. USARSO provided the HQs for JTF Panama defending Panama prior to Operation JUST CAUSE, and during that operation USARSO was subordinated to XVIII Corps. USARSO moved from Panama to Puerto Rico in 1999 and again to San Antonio in 2002. During the last phase of Operation UNITED RESPONSE in 2010, USARSO provided the staff and commander for JTF Haiti.

53. Richard M. Swain, "*Lucky War:" Third Army in Desert Storm* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: US Army Command and General Staff College Press, 1994), 43-44. In early October 1990, Third Army had only 346 personnel assigned of the 825 required on the TOE of a field army. Only 222 of those were full time active duty.

54. Yeosock, "Army Operations in the Gulf," 2-15.

55. The *Final Report to Congress: Conduct of the Persian Gulf War,* 46. Between 1991 and 2001, ARCENT HQs was reduced to 60 percent of the authorized strength of an army under TOE 51-100.

56. Department of the Army. *Field Manual 100-7 Decisive Force: The Army in Theater Operations* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, May 1995), Preface iii; and 2-24 to 2-26, and App A. As part of this change, EUSA became an ASCC for the sub unified command USFK in 1995.

57. GlobalSecurity.com (accessed 13 March 2017).

58. The concept for Joint Force Land Component Commander (JFLCC) had been developed primarily at the US Army War College from 1996 to 2001 by the author. A *Joint Force Land Component Commander Handbook* had been developed by HQ TRADOC and was available in draft form in July 2001 and officially published as FM 3-31 and MCRP 3-40.7 in December 2001. Joint doctrine in *JP 3-31, Command and Control for Joint Land Operations* was not published until March 2003.

59. John A. Bonin, *US Army Forces Central Command in Afghanistan and the Arabian Gulf during Operation Enduring Freedom, 11 September 2001-11 March 2003* (Carlisle, PA: Army Heritage and Education Center Foundation, March 2003), 10; and Donald P. Wright, *A Different Kind of War: The United States Army in Operation Enduring Freedom, October 2001–September 2005* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Combat Studies Institute Press, 2010), 82, 127, and 189.

60. Gregory Fontenot, E.J. Degen, and David Tohn, *On Point: The United States Army in Operation Iraqi Freedom* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Combat Studies Institute Press, 2004), 32, 42-52, and CFLCC Order of Battle, 441-496. For OIF, the Army filled ARCENT to over full TOE strength with more than 1,000 Army, 70 Marines, and some 150 other joint and coalition personnel. By 1 February 2006, ARCENT was authorized 1160 Army personnel. See Department of the Army, G37, MTOE Approval Brief to Director, Force Management, 2 February 2006, slide 6.

61. Donald P. Wright and Timothy R. Reese, *On Point II: Transition to a New Campaign, The United States Army in Operation Iraqi Freedom, May 2003-January 2005* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Combat Studies Institute Press, 2008), 25-30.

62. James Terry, "Curtain's Always Rising for Theater Army," *Army* (February 2016), 49-51. Beginning in December 2016, a National Guard Division HQs will rotate into Kuwait to serve as USARCENT's forward operational HQs.

63. Department of the Army, Army Regulation 10-87, *Army Commands, Army Service Component Commands, and Direct Reporting Units* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 4 September 2007), i. See also Department of the Army, Field Manual 3-0, *Operations* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 27 February 2008), C-2. The modular draft TOE 51100G in 2008 authorized a theater army HQs of 1164 personnel at full strength including a multi-corps capable operational command post.

64. United States Africa official website. "History," accessed 27 January 2017, http://www.usaraf.army.mil/about/history.

Chapter 16

Omar Bradley and the Problem of Information in the Closing of the Falaise Pocket

Dr. David W. Hogan, Jr.

The great wave of the American breakout in Normandy was just cresting on noon, 1 August 1944, when Lieutenant General Omar N. Bradley assumed command of the 12th Army Group, consisting of the First and Third US Armies. It was Bradley who, as commander of the First Army, had planned Operation COBRA, the massive attack by the VII Corps, supported by heavy bombers, which had blown a hole in the western flank of the German Seventh Army's front in Normandy on 25 and 26 July. After a month of measuring daily progress by yards through the difficult hedgerow country, American spearheads had advanced 35 miles in a week. The fall of Avranches – the coastal town where Normandy and Brittany came together – on 1 August opened the way into Brittany, with its ports of Saint-Malo, Brest, Lorient, and Saint-Nazaire. Allied planners had deemed those ports critical to support the expansion of their lodgment to the Seine and Loire Rivers, and beyond. The capture of Avranches also left the Seventh Army's western flank dangling, opening the way to the kind of mobile warfare that the Allies had sought since D-Day. This mobile warfare would present Bradley and the 12th Army Group with great opportunities, but the rapid pace of operations and the limitations of command, control, and communications over widely separated units would eventually catch up with Bradley's ability to discern and respond to changing circumstances.[1]

Omar Bradley was riding high on 1 August. A lieutenant colonel at the start of World War II, he had risen within just over two years to three-star rank. He had served with distinction as a corps commander in North Africa and Sicily and as an army commander in the buildup to D-Day and the battle of Normandy. Like many other US Army leaders in Europe, he owed much of his status to General George C. Marshall's patronage since they met at the Infantry School in the early 1930s. Yet, Bradley was not a mere creation of the Army Chief of Staff. He had made a name for himself as an infantry officer, instructor at West Point, and, not least, a sportsman in the interwar Army. He had earned effusive praise for his work as a battalion commander in Hawaii during the 1920s and had unofficially finished first in his class at the Command and General Service School at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. Erect, oft bespectacled, and fit at six feet tall, speaking with the soft twang of his native Missouri, Bradley's genial, modest manner and concern for the average Soldier led correspondent Ernie Pyle to dub him the GI General. Yet, beneath the amiable, soft spoken exterior lay a fierce ambition and the cool, calculating intelligence of a former mathematics teacher. While not brilliant, he possessed a calm assurance and balance that made superiors and subordinates alike comfortable with him and confident in his leadership.[2]

With the 12th Army Group's emergence on the stage, the Supreme Commander of the Allied Expeditionary Force, General Dwight D. Eisenhower, was supposed to take overall command of Bradley's army group and the 21st Army Group under General Sir Bernard L. Montgomery, who had been directing the Normandy campaign to this point. Yet the Allied forces had not yet uncovered a suitable location to house Eisenhower's sprawling Supreme Headquarters, Allied Expeditionary Force (SHAEF), encompassing over 6,000 men. From Great Britain, Eisenhower's overall command depended on communications across the English Channel, and bad weather could not only disrupt those, but also prevent Eisenhower from flying to France to lend his personal direction. For the moment, Eisenhower told Montgomery to act as his agent and exercise temporary control over the 12th Army Group. The trim, confident, sometimes abrasive Montgomery did not mind continuing to exercise that control, since he believed Eisenhower needed an overall ground commander in any case. That control, however, was limited primarily to coordinating the advances and setting boundaries between the army groups.

Montgomery had always allowed Bradley ample discretion while he had commanded the First Army, but the added ambiguity in the new command structure contributed to the complications that arose later.[3]

The 12th Army Group was going by an intelligence estimate prepared three days before the command change by the 12th Army Group's intelligence chief or G-2, a former artilleryman and West Pointer named Brigadier General Edwin L. Sibert. By now, Sibert believed the Germans had figured out that Normandy, not the Pas de Calais region, represented the Allies' main effort in the West, and they would start moving some of their 18 divisions from the Pas de Calais, as well as from the rest of France. Already, the 2d Panzer Division had arrived on the First Army's front from the British sector; the 265th and 343d Infantry Divisions were on their way from Brittany, and the 2d Parachute Division should reach the front in a few days. Yet he pointed out that the enemy movements were slowed by lack of motor transportation and fuel at all echelons as well as the need to move almost entirely at night because of Allied air superiority. At this point, the Americans calculated that they still faced about six and a half divisions, including three and a half infantry, one parachute, and two panzer divisions, as opposed to nine divisions believed to be on the 21st Army Group's front. About 70,000 troops, mostly naval coast artillery, antiaircraft, and artillery, garrisoned the Brittany ports. Sibert felt that the Germans would probably fight a series of delaying actions with some counterattacks, but he believed the enemy had probably held his former line too long and would now have difficulty restoring any organized line against the fast-moving American spearheads.[4]

Consequently, directives prepared in late July called for an exploitation by the 12th Army Group into Brittany. Montgomery wanted a big wheel by the Allied forces to clear Brittany, pin the Germans back behind the Orne River, and swing the Americans toward Paris. To hold German forces on the British front, he planned an attack by the British Second Army in the Caumont area, near the Allied center. The 12th Army Group guidance on 29 July, however, said nothing about Paris, instead directing the First Army, and the Third – when it was activated, initially with the VIII and XV Corps – to occupy the entire Cotentin Peninsula and drive into Brittany to secure Saint-Malo, just beyond Avranches, and Brest, at the peninsula tip, as soon as possible, adding other Breton ports as necessary. Of particular interest to the Allied high command was Quiberon Bay on the southern Breton coast, where Eisenhower, anticipating that the main Breton ports would be blocked by demolitions after their capture, planned to build a port to make up the logistical shortfall. The First Army's initial objective was the area northeast of St. Hilaire du Harcouret, 15 miles east and a little south of Avranches, while the Third Army's initial objective lay between Fougeres, about 30 miles south of Avranches, and the major German supply center of Rennes, over 50 miles to the southwest, with Saint-Malo, Quiberon Bay, and Brest set as further objectives in that order of priority.[5]

Departing the First Army command post on 1 August, Bradley said his farewells to his staff, many of whom had served with him in North Africa and Sicily. Beyond his personal aides, Bradley brought few individuals with him from the First Army to the 12th Army Group; of the major staff officers, only Brigadier General Joseph J. "Red" O'Hare, the personnel chief or G-1 on the general staff, accompanied him to his new post. Bradley and his aides went to their new headquarters at Saint-Sauveur-Lendelin, a tent city on a large Cotentin estate a few miles north of the crossroads town of Coutances and 30 miles north of Avranches. The European theater originally designated the headquarters as the 1st US Army Group when it formed the staff in London in late 1943 but had initially used it as part of a deception plan, placing it in charge of a collection of dummy tanks and fake message traffic in southeast England to fool the enemy into thinking the invasion would come at the Pas de Calais. To keep up what remained of the deception plan, it changed the designation to 12th Army Group at the time of the activation.[6]

The center of activity at the headquarters was the situation room, or "war room." At various times over the course of the campaign, the war room consisted of a restricted access room, a trailer, and two

storage tents, placed end to end and raised four feet off the ground on a skeletal wooden framework. Staff officers scurried around the war room, maintaining a set of official situation maps in the appropriate scale, showing the status of the tactical situation on the entire Allied front, along with other significant data. Graphic layouts of plans, projections, and other information was available on separate plexiglass or acetate overlays, which a briefer could superimpose on the master map as required. This room remained open around the clock. The duty officer was also responsible for the personal situation maps in the offices of General Bradley; his chief of staff, the friendly and informal Major General Leven C. Allen; and the operations chief or G-3, Brigadier General A. Franklin Kibler. All briefings took place in the war room.[7]

Information on the enemy came from Sibert's G-2 section. Within the intelligence branch, an order of battle group maintained the German order of battle and posted it on the situation room map. It also supplied material for the daily briefings, kept a list of personality profiles on key enemy officers, and prepared reports on the organization and identification of enemy divisions. Another group took care of escapers and evaders, the document teams, and the collation of technical intelligence and also evaluated and processed prisoner of war reports. The supply and transportation group collected data on enemy supply installations and communications and recommended targets for either reconnaissance or attack through the G-2 (Air) and G-3 (Air) subsections. The terrain and defense group gathered information on terrain features and enemy land and water defenses, while maintaining a generalized terrain and defenses map. This group provided the VIII Corps with information on Brest and G-3 with prints of the Saint-Malo defenses. Later, it flew terrain details of the Argentan area to the XV Corps. The collection and dissemination group supervised the distribution of all branch reports and studies and intelligence data within the headquarters. Among the other G-2 branches, the G-2 (Air) branch at the 9th Air Force command post adjacent to the army group headquarters handled aerial and photographic reconnaissance but was hampered by a lack of direct contact with aerial reconnaissance units and with the G-2 (Air) branches at army level. The G-2 section also included an administrative branch, counterintelligence branch, and a branch for liaison with the French mission and other foreign officials.[8]

The 12th Army Group drew its intelligence from a variety of sources – prisoners of war and captured documents, aerial reconnaissance, data from other staffs, above, adjacent, and below – but one source deserves special mention. In 1974, a British officer disclosed that the Allies, for much of the war, had been deciphering intercepts of German military radio messages, a project known as ULTRA. The information came from Britain's Bletchley Park to special liaison officers at the major headquarters, including 12th Army Group, and only a select few within the headquarters could see it. ULTRA became more valuable after COBRA, when the collapse of the German landline communications network forced the Germans to rely more heavily on radio. In the 1980s, many historians claimed that the history of World War II would have to be rewritten to account for ULTRA's contributions, but while ULTRA certainly had an impact, its influence has been somewhat overblown by historians, especially with regard to precisely the type of rapidly-developing situation facing the Allies in August.[9]

Kibler's G-3 section monitored the status of friendly forces. The section contained administrative, organization and equipment, G-3 (Air), liaison, and training branches, but its heart was the plans branch and the operations branch. The small plans branch handled operational planning and the preparation of letters of instruction, operational orders, and messages. It also supervised a special plans sub-branch – which took care of strategic and tactical cover and deception – and Special Forces Detachment 12, which coordinated the activities of the French resistance with Allied operations. The operations branch informed General Bradley and the rest of the staff on the current tactical situation and future operations, maintained liaison with higher adjacent and subordinate units, published reports, and manned the war room around the clock.[10]

The increasing pace of operations would strain communications for these organizations to the utmost. Early planning assumed the use of extensive wire phone and teletype services, with radio and messengers secondary. However, the 12th Army Group found the French open-wire communication system largely destroyed, and the extensive underground cable network suffered severely from sabotage, combat damage, and enemy demolitions; very little of it was of use. On 3 August, the signal officer actually asked G-3 to limit the amount of intentional damage by sabotage and bombing behind enemy lines. When the Germans left a town, they would usually throw an incendiary grenade into the relay station and destroy all the phone lines. It was necessary to run new phone lines and put in new relay equipment. During August, signalmen constructed over 150 miles of open wire and 500 miles of cable between Cherbourg and Le Mans. Even these temporary lines were often cut by trucks and low flying aircraft hitting phone poles and wires.

Although generally adequate, communications suffered glitches – particularly with the Third Army headquarters – in early August, and by the time the 12th Army Group headquarters moved forward two weeks into August, it found that practically its entire signal traffic load fell on secondary means. Army group signal units lacked Very High Frequency (VHF) radios, which had more range and could be integrated with telephone and teletype circuits, and the high frequency radio communications available could handle only a fraction of the traffic. Too many radio personnel lacked team and unit training, requiring rigorous crash training programs. The signal section added more radio personnel and assigned two officers to take control of transportable radio communications. The army group command post also turned to greater use of air and motor messenger service, which, along with taking the bulk of written priority messages, also carried considerable other high precedence traffic. About thirty messenger vehicles were stationed with each headquarters echelon, and they made five to eight runs daily to each of the armies and the tactical echelon. The distances became considerable, many of the runs going as far as 250 miles, and involving as much as 18 to 20 hours of constant driving, resulting in several accidents.[11]

Through these various means of communication, the 12th Army Group staff received and disseminated the information on which to base decisions. Situation reports down to the division level came to the headquarters twice daily – the situation at noon was due by 2000, and the situation at midnight by 0800. Based on these documents, the reports of liaison officers and aerial reconnaissance, and intermittent phone conversations, the sections prepared summaries. The G-2 section issued several reports on enemy activities and dispositions. It sent out the daily intelligence summary, or ISUM, in teletype at noon for Eisenhower's Supreme Headquarters, Allied Expeditionary Force (SHAEF), with information copies to adjacent and subordinate units. The G-2 periodic report came out about midnight, and the section also issued a weekly summary. The G-3 periodic report with an attached situation map showing the tactical situation originally went just to the headquarters in the late evening with the status of the Allied front as of noon, but the distribution expanded to include many other headquarters in the theater and in the United States. Both the G-2 and G-3 sections contributed data on the tactical situation to the Combined Situation and Intelligence Report (COSINTREP), which was gathered by the G-3 reports subsection and delivered to SHAEF, the British Admiralty and War Office, and the War and Navy Departments by 0700 daily. Given the pace of coming operations, these reports could only go so far in keeping the 12th Army Group up to date with the situation. Nothing could replace visits to forward headquarters, which General Bradley did on almost a daily basis. Indeed, Lieutenant Colonel Ralph Ingersoll, a former journalist assigned to the G-2 section, later claimed that Bradley used his staff "probably less than any other important general in Europe," dealing directly with army commanders through personal visits by liaison plane."[12]

Liaison officers performed a major role in communications between headquarters but they also had their limitations. The Liaison Branch of the G-3 section exchanged liaison officers with the headquarters of the assigned armies and army groups. When the headquarters divided into echelons, each maintained

liaison with the corresponding echelon in the other headquarters. Every day on schedule, liaison officers sped between the 12th Army Group command post and other headquarters by jeep or liaison plane. They obtained tactical information, but their main function was to communicate the intentions, atmosphere, and other factors that might not be apparent in a message. Unfortunately, as was the case with reports, the information they brought could be dated by the time they returned to the 12th Army Group.

For more timely tactical information, the headquarters relied on a detachment from the British General Headquarters Liaison Regiment (Phantom). This detachment assigned small, specially trained jeep patrols to army, corps, and division headquarters to obtain up-to-date, accurate tactical information of the positions of forward troops, the progress of current operations, and enemy intelligence and transmit it by radio, using unbreakable one-time codes. Intervening headquarters monitored the transmissions and thus kept up with the situation. By August, the merits of this concept had become so obvious that 12th Army Group had recommended to the theater establishing a similar liaison company for the group, using spare headquarters troops.[13]

The difficulties for command and control of mobile forces in a pursuit were compounded by a lack of specific doctrine. Throughout the interwar period, the US Army had looked to open warfare (as opposed to stabilized trench warfare) to achieve a decision. The idea was to achieve a breakthrough or turn the enemy position and force him into withdrawal, where an opportunity for a crushing blow against his exposed formations in motion might present itself. Certainly commanders knew to seek an encirclement where they could get one. But how exactly should they conduct an encirclement – to what depth, for example? Existing doctrine was vague as to details, although it did warn that "the possibility always exists that the turning forces will turn too soon or too close to the main hostile forces, find themselves confronted by a defended enemy front, and be forced into a frontal attack or a change in direction of movement with the probable resulting delay."[14] Yet, by organization – with its armored divisions and relatively large number of motorized vehicles – and inclination, the US Army was quite comfortable with the concept of highly mobile pursuit operations, although the number of vehicles required the continuous flow of enormous quantities of gasoline.

Naturally, the personalities of the army commanders under General Bradley would have a lot to do with how the armies would execute those mobile operations. In temperament and style, the soft-spoken, modest Georgian, Lieutenant General Courtney H. Hodges, who succeeded Bradley as commander of the First Army, would have seemed too methodical and controlling to feel comfortable with mobile warfare. He relied heavily, though, on the aggressive, confident commander of the VII Corps, Major General J. Lawton Collins, who could be relied on to seize an opportunity, just as he had in committing his armor on the first evening of COBRA. In command of the Third Army was the premier practitioner of mobile warfare in the US Army, the flamboyant, intuitive, and profane cavalryman, Lieutenant General George S. Patton, Jr. In the days preceding the introduction of the 12th Army Group and the Third Army, Bradley had told Patton to oversee the VIII and XV Corps, ensuring that the transition would be seamless. It was Patton's task to push into Brittany with the Third Army and take Brest if possible, then turn east, around the German flank. The sports-minded Bradley thought in terms of a football analogy, with Hodges blocking on the inside, while Patton carried the ball around the end.[15]

During the first two days of August, Patton raced through the narrow Avranches corridor into Brittany with little regard for his flanks or rear. While the VIII Corps' 4th Armored Division and 5th Infantry Division drove southwest for the key road junction of Rennes, the 6th Armored Division, followed by the 79th Infantry Division turned west to Pontorson on the road to Saint-Malo. Behind these spearheads lay the Avranches corridor, barely ten miles wide, through which corps headquarters, divisions, and supply troops jostled on the few roads available. Without Allied air supremacy, the corridor would have been a shooting gallery for the Luftwaffe. As it was, the First Army's advancing VII Corps found

its own rear echelons tangled with those of the Third Army in the confined space, leading to an outburst from the volatile Patton. During each of those two days, Bradley visited the Third Army command post. Although his intelligence officers had not yet detected a major shift from the Pas de Calais and the British sector to the 12th Army Group's front, they anticipated one, and Bradley was concerned that Patton was rampaging without proper regard for his exposed flank and rear. Muttering to the VIII Corps commander, Major General Troy H. Middleton, that some people were more concerned with headlines than sound tactics, he held the 79th Division northeast of Rennes, near Fougeres, to secure the advance into Brittany.[16]

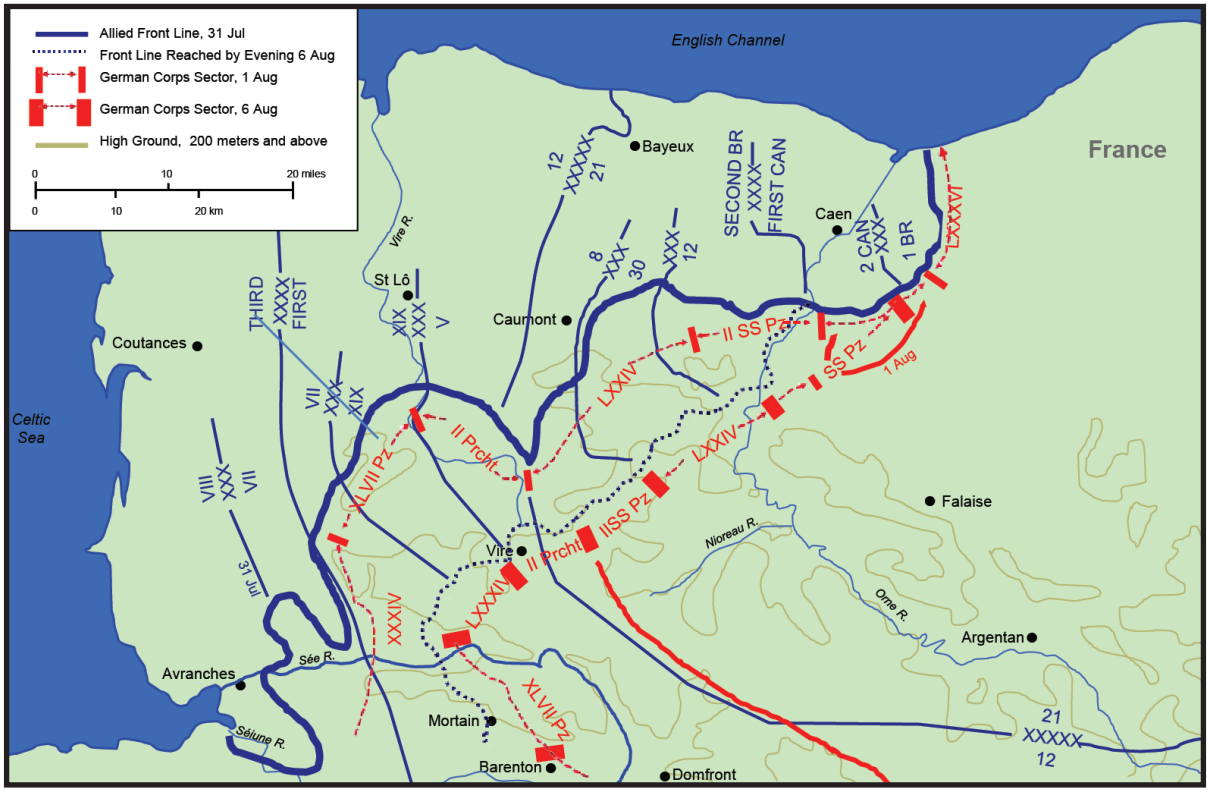

Figure 16.1 Regrouping of the German forces, 1-6 August 1944. Map created by CAC History for the authors.

Still, the lack of resistance in Brittany as German forces withdrew into the Breton ports, combined with the obvious opportunity from the dangling German flank southeast of Avranches, led Bradley on 3 August, with backing from Eisenhower and Montgomery, to change the design of the campaign. One corps would suffice to invest the ports, which would probably be damaged beyond use by their garrisons anyway once they finally surrendered. Roughly following a concept known as Operation LUCKY STRIKE (after the cigarette), Bradley wanted to throw the bulk of First and Third Armies to the east toward Chartres and Paris, using the Loire River to cover the southern flank. In the process, they could outflank the bulk of the German forces opposing the Allied advance. Montgomery, who seems to have been thinking along the same lines, quickly agreed and moved to launch an attack by the First Canadian Army from the Caen area toward Falaise while Bradley drove the enemy back against the Seine. Montgomery also laid plans for an airborne drop to close the Orleans Gap in advance of the American columns.[17]

For the next three days, the 12th Army Group exploited its advantage, despite breakdowns in communications with the Third Army command post. While the XIX and V Corps of the First Army made steady advances, the VII Corps, spearheaded by the 1st Infantry Division, drove around the enemy left flank, liberating Mortain, 20 miles east of Avranches, and then advancing to Mayenne, 40 more miles to

the southeast, by 6 August. There, it linked up with the Third Army's XV Corps, which had entered the fray to the south. In Brittany, the VIII Corps' 6th Armored Division had exploded across the peninsula to the outskirts of Brest by 6 August, while the 4th Armored Division raced toward Saint-Nazaire and Quiberon Bay. At this point, Bradley's ambitions were still fairly conservative. His letter of instructions to his armies on 6 August envisioned the First Army capturing Vire with the VII Corps advancing with the main effort to the south toward Domfront and Ambieres, securing the crossings of the Sarthe River at Alencon, forty-five miles east of Mayenne. While occupying Brittany with the VIII Corps, the Third Army would have the XV Corps seize the crossings of the Mayenne River at Laval, twenty miles south of Mayenne, then advance fifty miles to the Sarthe at Le Mans and prepare for further action with his armor toward the Orleans-Paris gap. The 12th Army Group commander envisioned a pause at the Sarthe to stockpile supplies before resuming the advance in September.[18]

The major question was, what would the Germans do? Montgomery professed himself mystified about German intentions. As far as he could see, the only logical action the Germans could take was a staged withdrawal to the Seine, but Hitler could well choose differently. By evening of 6 August, the 12th Army Group's G-2 section foresaw the possibility that the enemy could launch a counterattack to reestablish his line to Avranches. Sibert also believed the Germans could either try to anchor their new flank on the Loire or put mobile armored forces on that flank to help guard their retreat. On the First Army front, where the enemy had more cohesion, the G-2 section counted four panzer, one parachute, and four infantry divisions plus elements of other divisions. The estimate was a fairly close surmise of the overall German order of battle on that front. The enemy's intentions, however, were not yet clear.

The answer came in the early morning hours of 7 August when four panzer divisions – the 2d Panzer, 1st and 2d SS Panzer, and 116th Panzer – and the 17th SS Panzer Grenadier Division, supported by two fresh infantry divisions, counterattacked in the Mortain area with the intention of driving to Avranches, restoring the line across Normandy, and trapping the Third Army and the VII Corps. Except for the 1st SS Panzer Division, the G-2 section had identified all those divisions on the First Army front but had not located them with precision, and Sibert had mentioned the possibility of an attack toward Avranches in his reports during the previous few days. The strength and timing of the attack did catch the Americans off guard, however, and while its partisans crowed that ULTRA had sounded the alarm, it actually had alerted the Allies only an hour before the attack began. Yet, even if ULTRA had not provided much advance notice, the rapid decrypting of the orders for air support and the follow up enabled Montgomery and Bradley to assess the scale of the offensive and identify divisions with alacrity.[19]

Bradley sensed quickly that the Mortain counterattack, thrusting the seven enemy divisions into an exposed salient, presented him with a tremendous opportunity, but he waited a day before making a move. Based on the divisions and commanders that he had in the area – Collins, Major General Manton S. Eddy of the 9th Infantry Division, Major General Raymond O. Barton of the 4th Infantry Division, and his old football teammate, Major General Leland S. Hobbs of the 30th Infantry Division – he was confident that he could hold, but he wanted to be sure. To cover his bets, he told Patton to be ready to support with the arriving XX Corps and diverted the 35th Infantry Division to the area. He also wanted to get a long-range weather forecast to ensure that close air support would be available to help hold the attack. During the day, he visited the First Army headquarters and found Hodges and Collins unruffled by the offensive. The Germans were making little headway and taking a pounding from artillery and air, losing an estimated 109 tanks in the VII Corps sector alone. Meanwhile, to the south, the XV Corps was forging ahead toward Laval on the road to Le Mans. To the north that evening, the First Canadian Army had launched its offensive toward Falaise.[20]

Bradley was now ready to make his move. He told the visiting US Secretary of the Treasury, Henry Morgenthau, that this was the sort of opportunity that comes to a commander only once in a century.

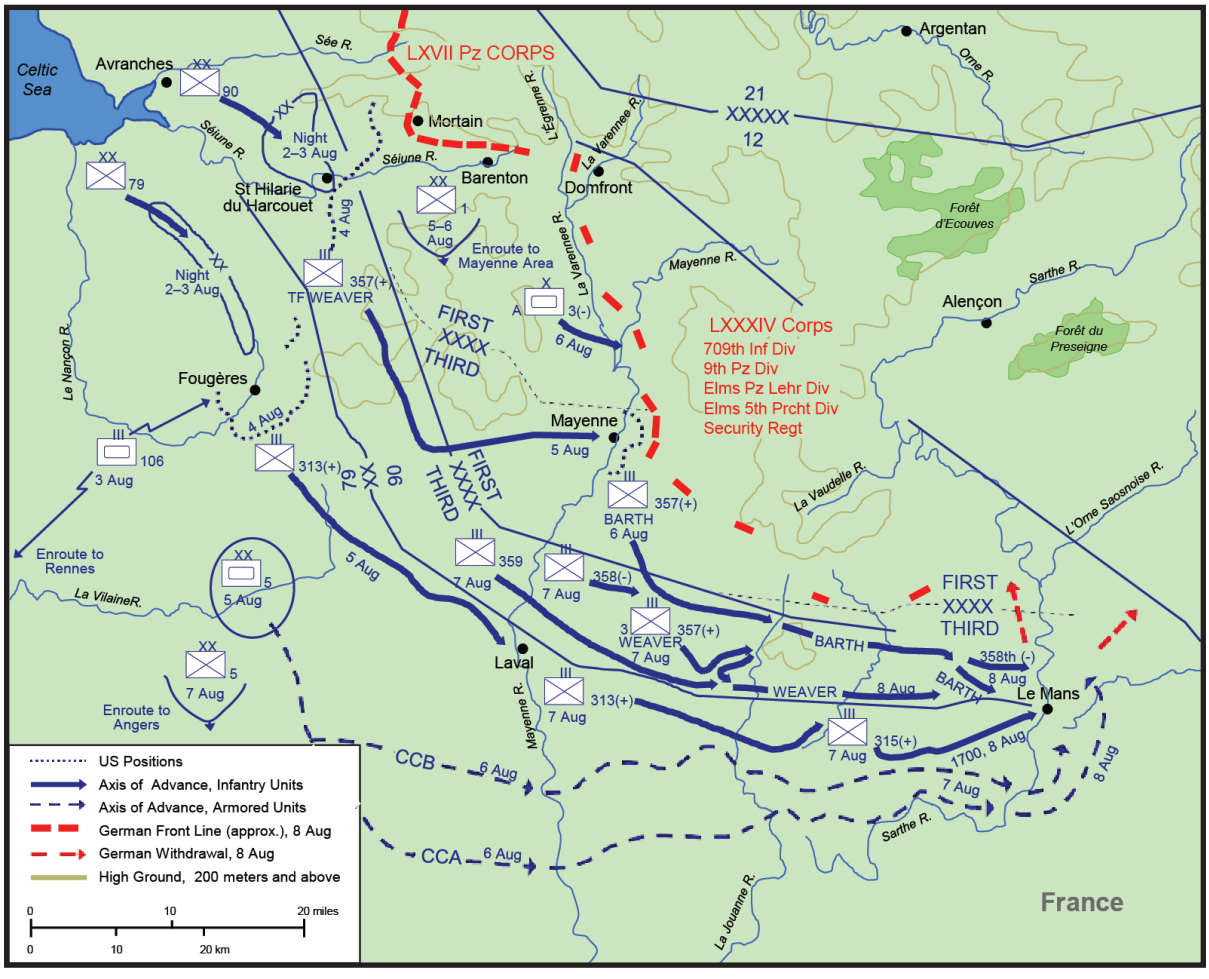

Figure 16.2 XV Corps, 2-8 August 1944. Map created by CAC History for the authors.

Eisenhower was visiting Bradley's headquarters when Bradley called Montgomery to present his plan for a short hook east to Le Mans and then north toward Falaise to meet the Canadians and trap the German Seventh Army. Montgomery still favored a wide envelopment to the east that would permit Patton to close the Orleans Gap, then swing north to the Seine and the Channel against little opposition. But Bradley favored the shorter hook, and Major General Sir Francis De Guingand, Montgomery's chief of staff, and Brigadier Sir Edgar T. "Bill" Williams, the 21st Army Group intelligence chief sided with Bradley. In the noon intelligence summary, some American patrols on the First Army front at Mortain suggested that the Germans might be withdrawing from their attack, and Bradley wanted to strike while the iron was hot. He told Montgomery that the Air Transport Service could deliver up to 2,000 tons per day to cut off units, should that be necessary. With Montgomery's and Eisenhower's blessing, the 12th Army Group issued orders for the First Army to continue to reduce the enemy salient, pivoting on Mortain, and advancing 15 miles to the line between Domfront and Barenton, prepared for further action to the east. The Third Army, which was just in the process of capturing Le Mans, would turn north 30 miles through Alencon to Sees, where it would prepare to move further north toward the key cross-roads town of Argentan, twelve miles north of the boundary between the army groups.[21]

To the mutual amazement of Bradley and Montgomery, the Germans persisted in their desperate attacks in the Mortain area, even as Patton drove toward Argentan. On 9 and 10 August came reports of the 9th Panzer Division near Mayenne and Le Mans, indicating the enemy might be sliding southeast

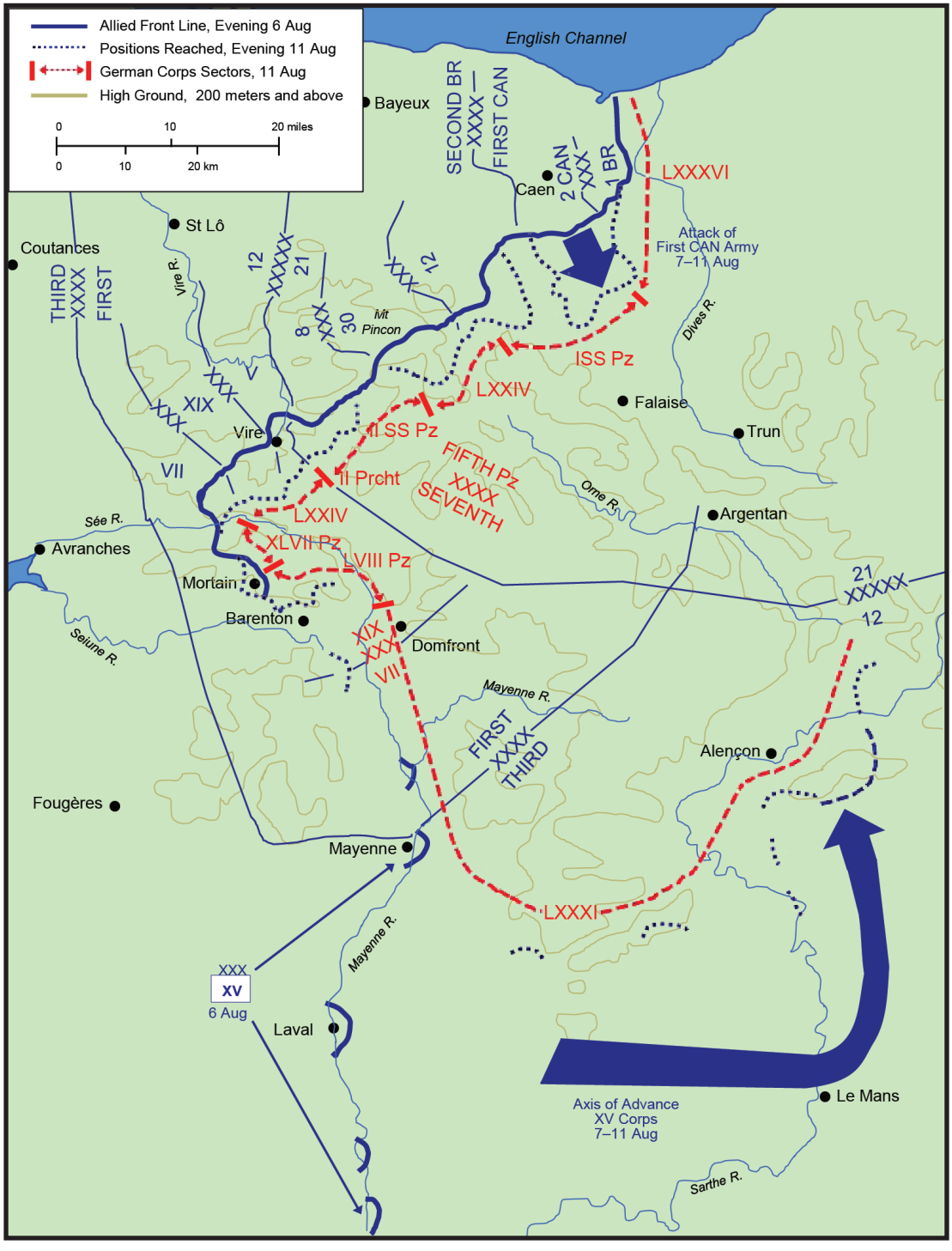

Figure 16.3 Normandy Front, 7-11 August 1944. Map created by CAC History for the authors.

to block Patton and the 80th Infantry Division, backstopped by the 7th Armored Division, moved into the gap just in case. But ULTRA intercepts showed that the Germans were still pushing at Mortain even though the VII Corps had fought them to a standstill. Montgomery possessed some intelligence showing a general trend of enemy movement to the east, and he remained nervous about missing his opportunity for a wider envelopment. Bradley was confident that the bulk of the enemy forces remained

in the pocket, but, in response to Montgomery's guidance, he had Patton position the new XX and XII Corps in the Le Mans area for a drive east. The Canadians were encountering fierce opposition in their bid just to get to Falaise. Finally, on 12 August, came reports of slackening resistance on the VII Corps front, indicating the Germans were giving up their offensive. By that evening, Patton claimed to have troops of the XV Corps' 5th Armored Division in Argentan, and 12th Army Group intelligence figured the closing pocket encompassed about seven infantry and five panzer divisions, with ten more divisions outside the loop or near escape.[22]

At this point, without consulting Montgomery, Bradley directed Patton to stop at Argentan. The exultant Third Army commander dramatically pleaded with his superior to allow him to proceed to Falaise and, as he put it, "drive the British into the sea for another Dunkirk."[23] But Bradley was not ready to take that risk. Falaise lay well within the British zone, and he was fearful of a head-on collision with the Canadians, not to mention the probability of mistaken identity and bombings by British close air support. He did not want to overextend himself. With enemy attacks at Mortain slackening, Sibert concluded that the Germans had begun a pullout from the pocket, and Bradley did not want the overstretched XV Corps exposed to a stampede, especially given the seventy-five mile gap between the XV and VII Corps. Patton called Allen again after midnight and again asked for permission to continue the operation, but Allen stood firm. Patton told Maj. General Wade H. Haislip, his XV Corps commander, to withdraw elements of his command that had ventured toward Falaise, assemble in the Argentan area, and prepare for a move to the east.[24]

The recriminations for the decision came later. At the time, it still seemed that the Canadians would soon take Falaise and close the gap from the north. Bradley had genuine concerns about overextension; he knew the Germans had just begun their withdrawal, and he calculated the enemy strength in the pocket at as many as 19 German divisions, which Patton would have to stop with the four divisions of the XV Corps. If Haislip had advanced to Falaise, he would have had to cover 40 miles of front against an entire desperate army, trying to escape. With rare eloquence, Bradley later said he would settle for a solid shoulder at Argentan over a broken neck at Falaise. As it turned out, Patton had not taken Argentan, nor would he over the ensuing days.

When the Canadians did not reach Falaise in the next few days, seemingly allowing German divisions to escape, the controversy erupted over the missed chance to trap the cream of the Wehrmacht. Bradley later blamed Montgomery for the failure to close the gap on time, and within both 12th Army Group and Third Army headquarters, staff officers muttered that Montgomery had wanted the Canadians to have the prestige of capturing Falaise. One staff officer even accused Montgomery of cancelling an airborne drop that would have blocked the gap. Patton, of course, claimed that he could easily have gone to Falaise and blocked all of the German escape routes. Some wondered why Montgomery did not tell Bradley to close the gap. Eisenhower seemed to allude to this when he blamed the lack of hourly coordination in a highly fluid situation. While this comment seems a little specious – closing the gap looks better in retrospect than it did at the time, with an overextended XV Corps – it does point to the ambiguous command situation, where Montgomery was theoretically directing operations, but in fact mostly coordinating and setting boundaries. In the end, the debate over the missed chance at Falaise ended up being one of the major controversies of the war.[25]

On the morning of 13 August, Bradley flew to Montgomery's headquarters for a conference to coordinate the encirclement. The assembled commanders agreed that, the next day, the Canadians would launch another full-scale attack, supported by heavy bombers, toward Trun, ten miles east of Falaise. The British Second Army would take responsibility for capturing Falaise, while the First US Army compressed the pocket by driving east toward Argentan. The First Army advance would permit Patton, who Montgomery mistakenly assumed already had Argentan, to bring another corps east and north to

L'Aigle, 34 miles east of Argentan to head off any Germans who had made it through the Falaise Gap. Montgomery agreed that, as long as the Third Army met little opposition, it could disregard boundaries to plug the German escape route. In his evening dispatch to the Chief of the Imperial General Staff, Field Marshal Sir Alan Brooke, stated that he was confident his forces could cover the remaining two miles to Falaise by evening, 14 August. The 21st Army Group commander believed that, except for a few administrative echelons, the bulk of the enemy forces still lay inside the ring.

But despite fierce fighting on 13 and 14 August, the ring still did not close. The VII Corps, fighting rear guard elements, advanced quickly. The XV Corps closed on Argentan but was now encountering fiercer resistance as the Germans fought to keep the exit open. By noon of 13 August, the XV Corps noted it was taking prisoners from three panzer divisions, one panzer grenadier division, one parachute division, and one infantry division, and it contacted elements of the 116th and 9th Panzer Divisions south of Argentan. The number of unit identifications made it appear that the Germans were making their breakout, and frustrations bubbled over at 12th Army Group headquarters that the Anglo-Canadians could not close the gap faster. It seemed to the staff that they were taking on most of the enemy forces, and they could not grasp why Montgomery was taking so long.[26]

To further confuse the picture of the battle, the 12th Army Group moved its command post on 14 August to the St. James area, halfway between Avranches and Fougeres. Bradley wanted a small forward, or tactical, echelon that could keep up with the rapidly-advancing front, leaving the main and rear echelons behind in the Saint-Sauveur-Lendelin and Périers area. The new group consisted of small G-2, G-3, G-4 or supply and engineering contingents as well as the necessary signal and housekeeping elements – about 200 personnel in all – mostly mounted in vans for mobility. The new organization was necessary to keep Bradley in touch with the battle, but the forward move unavoidably disrupted the information flow at a critical time.[27]

At this point on 14 August, Bradley was making another critical operational decision. The fog of war had settled on the battle, to the point that it was hard to discern how many enemy divisions remained in the pocket. The 12th Army Group situation map at noon showed four infantry, one parachute, and two panzer divisions on the First Army front, inside the pocket, while elements of a parachute division and four panzer divisions were in the Argentan area. Elements of the 10th SS Panzer Division appeared near Trun. In the confusion, however, German units were becoming scattered, adding to the problem of pinpointing locations, and many divisions had withdrawn their support units to safety outside the pocket. ULTRA's usefulness was declining, partly due to the time needed to decrypt messages in a rapidly-evolving situation, and partly because the Germans were trying to transmit so many messages that several were dated by the time they finally went on the airwaves. The Canadians resumed their attack at noon. Montgomery, however, was among those suspecting that the Germans were making their escape, and he was ready to return to his first preference, the long envelopment. He wanted to keep the XV Corps moving north to link up with his army group and also send the XX Corps northeast to Dreux, just over half of the 120 miles from Argentan to Paris, to cut off any enemy who might have escaped through the Falaise gap.[28]

But the restless Bradley had already made his decision. By his calculations, the 12th Army Group could either stay in place, send the XV Corps ten miles northeast to Chambois to block one of the remaining exit roads from the pocket, or leave part of the XV Corps in the Argentan area and race east with the rest of the Third Army to seize a bridgehead over the Seine River, compromising any German plans for a defense at that river barrier. Late on 14 August, Patton showed up at Bradley's new tactical echelon command post and asked that two of the XV Corps' four divisions head east to the Seine. He shared with Bradley his Third Army intelligence reports that showed most of the Germans had escaped the pocket. Already frustrated with Montgomery's alleged slowness and lack of communication with

him, Bradley agreed. Patton would send the XII Corps to Orleans, the XX Corps in the center on Chartres, and two XV Corps divisions to Dreux, after which they would turn northeast to Mantes Gassicourt, 35 miles downstream of Paris on the Seine, and seize a bridgehead. It was an almost complete abandonment of the long envelopment. When Montgomery called later to propose extending the XV Corps pincers northeast to Chambois, he found that Bradley had already issued his orders. For the first and only time in the war, Bradley later recalled, he went to bed worrying about a decision he had made.[29]

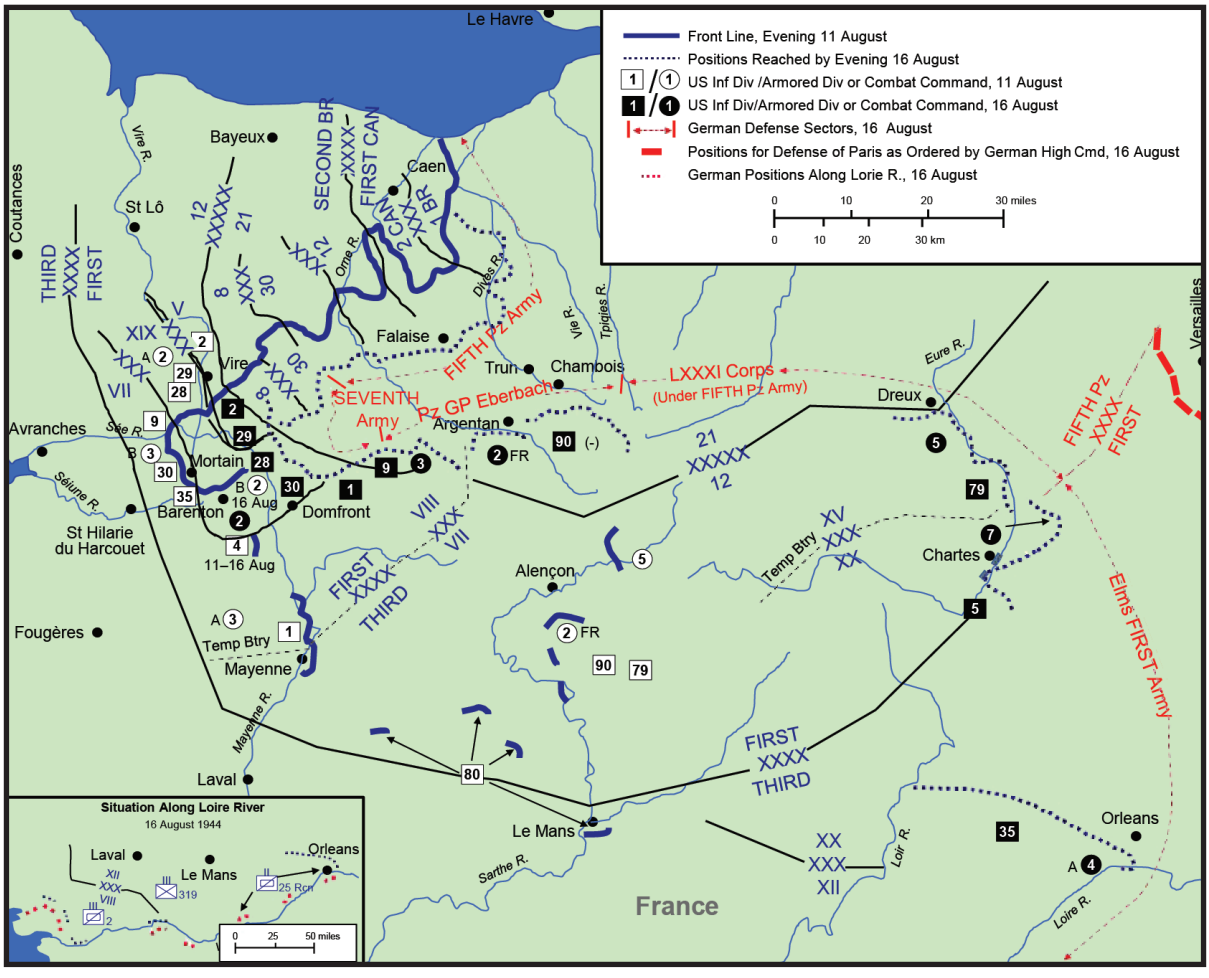

Figure 16.4 Argentan-Falaise Pocket, 12-16 August 1944. Map created by CAC History for the authors.

Actually, elements of quite a few German divisions remained in the pocket west of Argentan, and much hard fighting would be required to close the ring completely. From Falaise around the salient to Argentan, the Germans still had at least eight infantry divisions, one parachute division, four panzer divisions, and elements of at least three other divisions. In the Sens area, the former XV Corps front near Argentan, the 90th Infantry Division relieved the 5th Armored Division, which was heading east to Dreux. It would be joined by the 2d French Armored Division and 80th Infantry Division in a drive north toward Trun link up with the Canadians. To command them, on 16 August, Patton established a provisional corps under his chief of staff, Major General Hugh J. Gaffey. A comic opera ensued when the commander of the 2d French Armored, Major General Jacques Philippe LeClerc, initially demanded that he and his French tankers join the drive on Paris. Patton faced down the incipient mutiny, telling LeClerc, "in my best French," that he was a baby, would obey orders, and furthermore had been placed

in the most dangerous place of the front.[30] Meanwhile, Patton's other legions raced east. Communications problems, exacerbated by the Third Army's lack of signal supplies to cover its huge area of control, made it hard for the 12th Army Group to keep a handle on the situation, but messengers and liaison officers filled the gap to an extent.[31]

On 17 August, Bradley acted to finish the closure of the Falaise Pocket and simultaneously free Patton's attention for the drive east. As the Falaise Pocket shrank under the battering from both sides and fighter bombers had a field day hunting down fleeing German columns, various corps and divisions along the First Army front found themselves pinched out of their sectors. In a new directive, Bradley turned over the Argentan area to the First Army and Major General Leonard T. Gerow's V Corps, which had found itself without a front on the pocket's north shoulder. The V Corps would drive north from the Argentan area to contact the 21st Army Group near Trun, close the ring, and complete the destruction of the Germans caught in the pocket. Two pinched-out infantry divisions and two Ranger battalions went

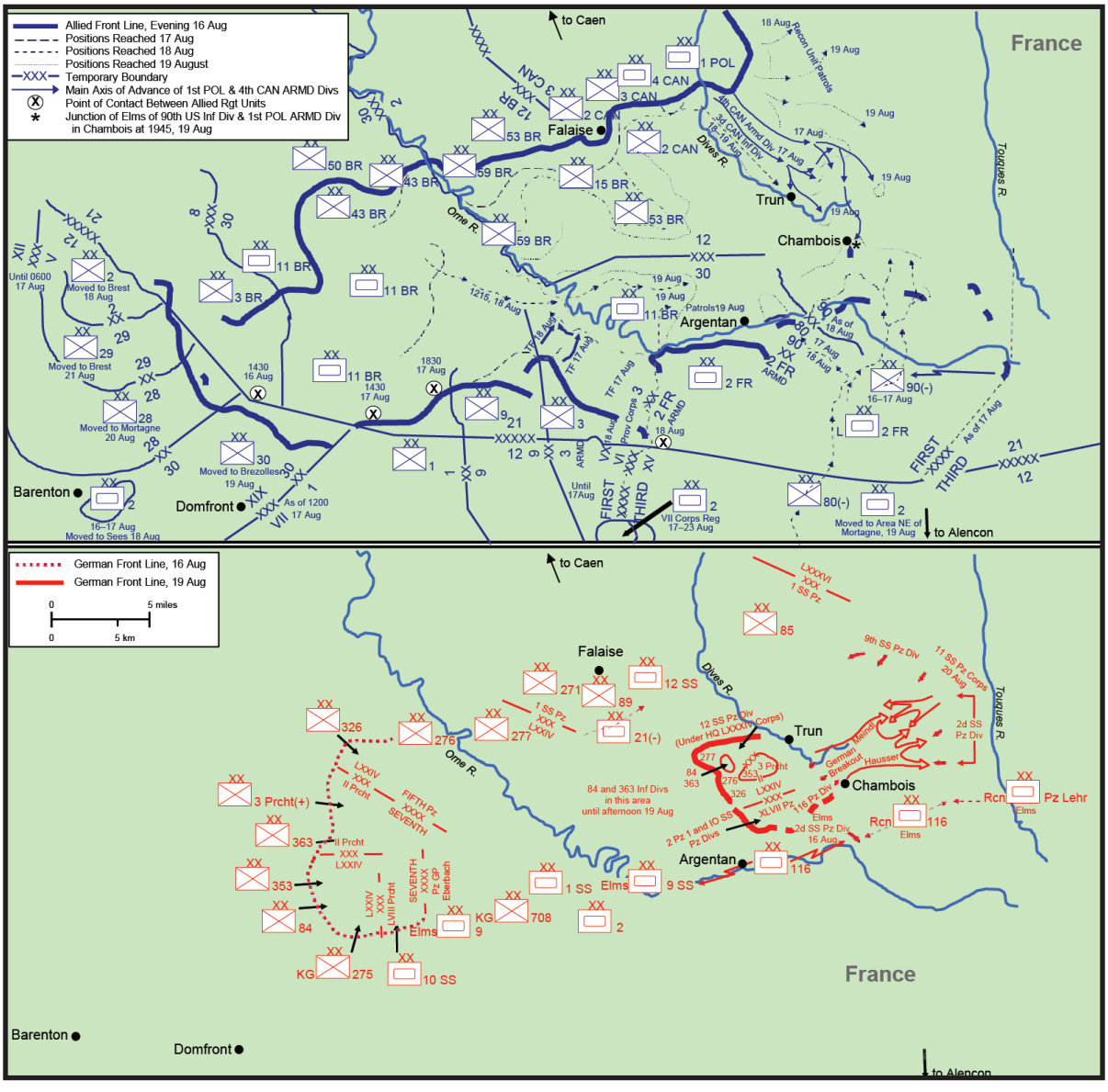

Figure 16.5 Allied and German situations, closing the Argentan-Falaise Pocket, 17-19 August 1944. Map created by CAC History for the authors.

to Brittany, where the VIII Corps had confined the enemy to his enclaves of Saint-Malo, Brest, Lorient, and Saint-Nazaire. Armored divisions released by the reinforcements for Brittany went east to join Patton's advance. As the contracting frontage of the pocket freed the XIX Corps for service to the east, the 12th Army Group shifted its divisions to fill the emerging gap between the V Corps at Argentan and the Third Army approaching Dreux. If any German troops escaped the cauldron west of Trun, Bradley hoped to catch them with a drive north by the XIX Corps to the Seine.[32]

The final act was at hand. As the Third Army swept east to Dreux, Chartres, and Orleans on 17 August, intelligence reports now indicated that a considerable number of German formations – as many as six panzer divisions and six infantry divisions – remained in the closing pocket. That day, the 1st Polish Armored Division of the First Canadian Army reached Trun and started down the road to Chambois. Falaise finally fell, and units of the British Second Army and the VII Corps linked up within the pocket. Montgomery noted that the Allies had now cut every major road east but had not had time to establish blocks. The Germans were definitely rushing for the exits, their road discipline and camouflage discarded in the haste to escape. Before Gaffey could launch his attack that day, however, he was superseded by Gerow, who decided, in view of the lateness of the hour, to suspend the attack until the next day, thus losing more time in the race to close the trap. Already, the thoughts of Montgomery, Eisenhower, and Bradley were turning to strategy beyond the Seine, a debate between Montgomery's single thrust concept across northern Germany and Eisenhower's broad front strategy to the Rhine. While they debated these matters, on 19 August, the 90th Infantry Division of the V Corps finally contacted the Poles in the Chambois area, officially closing the ring on elements of as many as twelve German divisions. The cordon was not tight, however, and many units managed to break out over the next two days, despite the best efforts of the Poles and the Americans.[33]

In the end, the Allies captured perhaps 50,000 prisoners from the battle of the Falaise Pocket and estimated another 10,000 enemy dead.[34] The Germans also had lost considerable vehicles and heavy equipment; the roads through the Falaise Gap were littered with destroyed trucks, tanks, and wagons, and dead soldiers and horses, victims of both ground and air action. Still, although the Seventh and Fifth Panzer Armies ceased to exist as organized units, several German formations had escaped to fight another day – admittedly many of them support units who had left the pocket even before it began to close – and the Allied frustration was palpable. One could point to the ambiguous command structure. Although Eisenhower had theoretically delegated control of the battle to Montgomery, the latter's role was more as a coordinator, dealing with Bradley much more as a quasi-independent equal than had been the case earlier. That, plus the problems of communications in a rapidly-evolving situation, undoubtedly contributed to Montgomery not exercising closer coordination of the closing jaws of the trap. To be sure, Montgomery was never completely sold on the short envelopment and was sensitive to the possibility that most Germans might already have escaped.

That factor points to perceptions in the minds of both Bradley and Montgomery. Thanks largely to ULTRA, Bradley's information on the enemy seems to have been pretty solid to 14 August. But after the shift of his command post, the headquarters had to rely more than ever on radio – which was often faulty – couriers, and liaison officers to keep track of developments. Communications to the Third Army headquarters, which commanded at the critical points, were particularly problematic and made it hard to control a headstrong subordinate who really wanted to drive to the Seine at the expense of an envelopment. As the intelligence picture became murkier, by 14 August, Bradley and Montgomery were having a hard time believing that the enemy still chose to stay within the pocket. Rational commanders themselves, they assumed the dire German situation must be obvious to their counterparts. They kept expecting a German retreat and could not believe, as late as 16 August, that the bulk of the German combat force still remained in the pocket. Over four crucial days, from 14 August to 17 August, the 12th

Army Group made little move to link up with the 21st Army Group near Falaise. By the time the Allies established a cordon on 19 August, it was too weak to hold the stampeding Germans.

In the end, it appears Bradley's mistake may well have been not the order to halt the XV Corps at Argentan on 12 August, but the decision to send the Third Army to the Seine on 14 August. By then, Bradley's increasing frustration with Montgomery's slow advance to Falaise and his growing suspicions, reinforced by Patton's persuasiveness and conflicting intelligence data, that most of the Germans had already escaped might have led him to give up on the trap and ensure instead that the Allies at least grabbed a bridgehead on the Seine. When Bradley finally did direct the V Corps north to Chambois on 17 August, it was too little too late, as the Allies could not hold the cordon. Even the XIX Corps' advance north to the Seine in the days after the closure of the pocket could not markedly improve the prisoner haul. At the Falaise Gap on 14 August, conflicting and faulty information added to the frustrations and personal tensions of human beings, contributed to a lost opportunity, if not to end World War II in Europe, at least to increase the damage to the Wehrmacht in the West.

Notes

1. Martin Blumenson, *Breakout and Pursuit: European Theater of Operations, The United States Army in World War II* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1961), Part 3.

2. The best existing work on Bradley is Clay Blair and Omar N. Bradley, *A General's Life* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1983). See also Omar N. Bradley, *A Soldier's Story* (New York: Holt, 1951).

3. Bradley, *A Soldier's Story,* 350-352.

4. Annex 2 to 12th Army Group, Letter of Instructions 1: Intelligence Estimate of the Enemy Situation, 99/12-3.11 G-3 Letters of Instruction G-3, 12th Army Group, 29 July – 29 August 1944, Box 1343, US Army, 12th Army Group, World War II Operations Reports, 1940-1948, RG 407, National Archives and Records Administration, College Park, Md. (hereafter cited as NACP).

5. Nigel Hamilton, *Master of the Battlefield: Monty's War Years, 1942-1944* (New York: McGraw Hill, 1983), 771; Tac HQ, 21st Army Group, M515, 27 July 1944, LOI from Field Marshal Montgomery, 21 Jul – 3 Sep 1944, Box 70, US Army, HQ, 12th Army Group, General Staff, G-3 Section, Admin Branch, Subject Correspondence File, 1944-1945, RG 331, NACP; HQ, 12th Army Group, Letter of Instructions Number (LOI) 1, 29 July 1944, Annex D to G-3 Section, 12th Army Group, Report of Operations, Final After Action Report, (AAR) 5: 64-67; CMH Library.

6. Bradley, *A Soldier's Story,* 359-360.

7. Bradley, *A Soldier's Story*, 180; 12th Army Group AAR, 5:14, 19.

8. 12th Army Group G-2, Activities Report for August, 9 Sep 1944, 99/12-1.2 G-2 A/A Reports 12th AG, Aug 44, Box 1319, 12th Army Group Operations Reports, RG 407, NACP.

9. See Ralph Bennett, *Ultra in the West: The Normandy Campaign, 1944-1945* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1979).

10. 12th Army Group AAR, 5: 10-32.

11. 12th Army Group AAR, 11: 180-183, 186-189, 190-193; Interv with General Omar Bradley, 31 Dec 1964, 13-14, Omar N. Bradley Papers, MHI; Colonel Garland C. Black, Signal Officer, 12th Army Group to Adjutant General, 6 Aug 1944, sub: Report for August 1944, 12th Army Group World War II Operations Reports, RG 407, NACP; Black to Kibler, 3 Aug 1944, Signal Communications, Box 76, US Army 12th Army Group, General Staff G-3 Section, Admin Branch, Subject Correspondence File, 1944-1945, RG 331, NACP. My thanks to Rebecca Robbins Raines, author of *Getting the Message Through: A Branch History of the US Army Signal Corps*, and Stephen J. Rauch, the Signal Corps command historian, for information on VHF radios.

12. Ralph Ingersoll, *Top Secret* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, and Company, 1946), 311; see also 12th Army Group AAR, 5: 17-18; G-2, Activities Report for August, 9 Sep 1944.

13. 12th Army Group AAR, 5: 15-16, 54-57; Memo, Lieutenant Colonel B T Watt, Chief, Liaison Branch, for Lieutenant Colonel Chase, Major Beckwith, and Major Perry, 13 Aug 1944, sub: Liaison Service, Liaison, Box 70, US Army, Headquarters, 12th Army Group, General Staff, G-3 Section, Administrative Branch, Subject Correspondence File, 1944-1945, RG 331, NACP.

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Chapter 17

Mission Command *In Extremis*: Lieutenant General Walton Walker's "Stand or Die" Order

Dr. Thomas Hanson

We are fighting a battle against time. There will be no more retreating, withdrawal or readjustment of the lines or any other term you choose. There is no line behind us to which we can retreat. Every unit must counterattack to keep the enemy in a state of confusion and off-balance. There will be no Dunkirk, there will be no Bataan. A retreat to Pusan would be one of the greatest butcheries in history. We must fight until the end. Capture by these people is worse than death itself. We will fight as a team. If some of us must die, we will die fighting together. Any man who gives ground may be personally responsible for the death of thousands of his comrades . . . I want everybody to understand we are going to hold this line. We are going to win.[1]

Figure 17.1 Lieutenant General Walton H. Walker, Commander, Eighth US Army, confers with Maj. Gen. William F. Dean, Commander, 24th Infantry Division, July 1950. Photo courtesy of US Army Photo.

"Desperation" is not a word Americans normally associate with their army in the 20th century. Commanders of units in dire situations, such as Major Charles Whittlesey of the "Lost Battalion" in 1918, Brigadier General Anthony McAuliffe in 1944, and Lieutenant Colonel Hal Moore in 1965 became legends by boldly meeting the dangers they faced. But in the summer of 1950, the Eighth

US Army faced a truly desperate situation. Beginning with Task Force Smith on 5 July 1950, understrength regiments of the 24th and 25th Infantry Divisions and the 1st Cavalry Division (along with five Republic of Korea [ROK] Army divisions) repeatedly found themselves fixed and then defeated in pitched battles by communist Korean Peoples' Army (KPA) units. Not quite five years after V-J Day, a substantial portion of the US Army seemed poised to endure its own Dunkirk on the shores of the Sea of Japan. To forestall that possibility and to metaphorically stiffen the spines of his subordinate commanders, on 29 July 1950, Lieutenant General Walton H. Walker issued unambiguous guidance to all United Nations forces under his command. Journalists accompanying Walker immediately dubbed his words the "Stand or Die" order.[2]

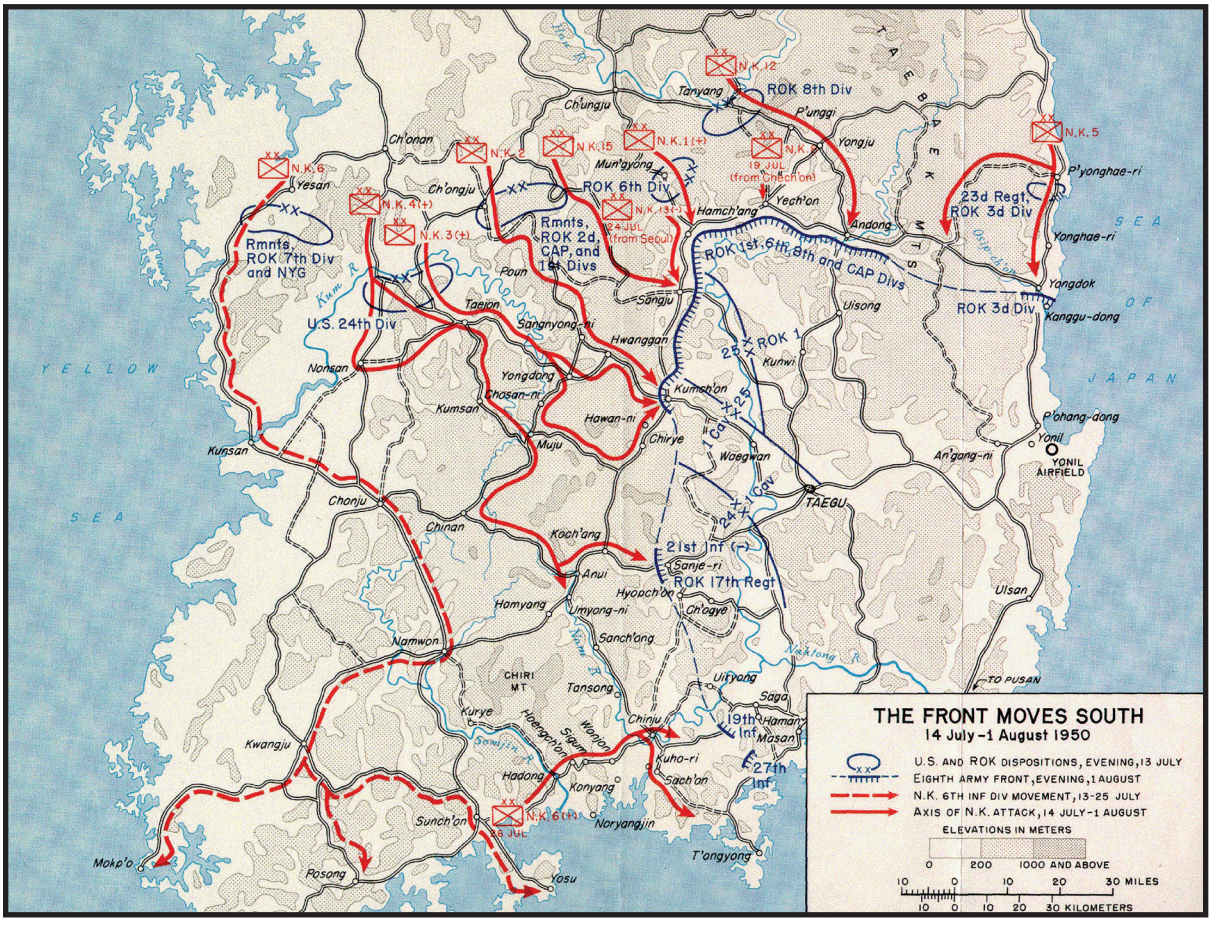

Figure 17.2 US and ROK forces fall back to the Pusan Perimeter. Map courtesy of US Army Center of Military History.

By the end of July, defeatism and "bugout fever" ran rampant in Eighth Army.[3] Having arrived in Korea with expectations of a quick and effortless campaign, the reality of combat overwhelmed the men in the infantry regiments, of whom fewer than one in six had seen action in World War II.

"I saw young Americans turn and bolt in battle, or throw down their arms, cursing their government for what they thought was embroilment in a hopeless cause," wrote Marguerite Higgins of the *New York Herald Tribune*.[4] Even hardened World War II combat veterans fell victim to defeatism, disoriented by having to fight without flank support or an identifiable front line. Lieutenant Colonel Harold "Red" Ayres, commanding 1st Battalion 34th Infantry, said wistfully to a *Life* magazine reporter that he "wonder[ed] if there was any more American army coming in here and we were kind of hoping…it would come soon enough for us to live to see it."[5] The pre-war training plan in Japan had given everyone in

Eighth Army an "overconfidence that bordered on arrogance."[6] In Tokyo in June 1950, then-Captain Fred Ladd, an aide to Major General Edward M. Almond and who later distinguished himself as an advisor in Vietnam, described the hubris he saw: "those generals: they really thought that they were going to go over there and 'stop the gooks.'"[7] When confronted by the reality of a disciplined enemy fighting with modern weaponry, and using tactics that deliberately blurred the distinction between "front" and rear" (to say nothing of "soldier" and "noncombatant"), the Americans belatedly acknowledged the shortcomings of their pre-battle preparations.[8] Some men ran away rather than face Soviet-made tanks with inadequate munitions. At least one field grade officer in an infantry regiment faked a heart attack in order to return to Japan and safety. Although not occurring frequently enough to constitute an epidemic, reports of such incidents helped convince Walker that forceful measures, perhaps even including exemplary executions *a la* Private Eddie Slovik, would be needed to forestall a complete collapse of Eighth Army's spirit.[9]

Once authorized to employ American ground troops in Korea, General Douglas MacArthur ordered Walker to "hold the N[orth] K[orean] advance as far from Pusan as possible" to allow reinforcements to be sent from the United States and other United Nations "sending states." On paper, Walton Walker's available forces appeared to be more than up to the task.[10] Composed of three infantry divisions (Eighth Army's fourth infantry division, the 7th, remained in Japan as theater reserve), Eighth Army should easily have been able to blunt the KPA attack. A series of personnel and procurement decisions made in Washington, DC between 1945 and 1950, however, had left Eighth Army unprepared for expeditionary campaigning. The infantry regiments in every division lacked a third maneuver battalion as well as the organic tank company called for by the Army's equipment allocation plan. They were supported by artillery battalions with only two firing batteries instead of three. Worse, logistics units often lacked any personnel to do the vital work of requisitioning, receiving, sorting, and distributing supplies, since those functions had been contracted out to Japanese nationals during the Occupation. The Japanese workforce understandably refused to leave Japan when the crisis broke in Korea.[11] Compounding these shortfalls was the fact that no one at Headquarters, Department of the Army, had thought to modify tactical doctrine to account for these reduced formations. As a result, regiments were expected to operate in accordance with field manuals written in 1944, when the Army alone numbered more than eight million men.

The late summer of 1950 saw the divisions of Eighth Army make peripatetic attempts at stopping the KPA drive south. In the west, Major General William F. Dean threw the regiments of the 24th Infantry Division into the fight in piecemeal fashion. The 21st Infantry Regiment lost nearly 1,500 men in the week following TF Smith's action at Osan on 5 July.[12] A defensive line organized by the 19th Infantry Regiment to stop two divisions of the KPA at the Kum River failed its first test by the enemy, and subsequent attempts to throw back the KPA rendered the 19th combat-ineffective.[13] The division's third regiment, the 34th, had been similarly ground down fighting a series of delaying actions above the Kum River line near Chonan. As a result, General Dean failed to hold the key city of Taejon, which fell to the communists on 20 July. In the battle preceding its capture, the KPA succeeded in destroying the remnants of the 19th and 34th regiments, and General Dean allowed himself to be captured after abandoning his command post to hunt tanks with a bazooka.[14]

The day before, Walker had ordered the just-arrived 1st Cavalry Division to move west to assist the 24th in the defense of Taejon. Replacing the worn-out 21st Infantry Regiment east of Taejon at Yongdong, the 5th and 8th Cavalry regiments dug in to protect the main east-west ground line of communication in order to pass the remnants of the 24th Division through to safety. The KPA outflanked the Americans, established a blocking position in their rear, and forced them to displace from Yongdong by 25 July. The 1st Cavalry Division suffered nearly 2,000 casualties in the process, leaving the 5th and 8th regiments at approximately half-strength, just ten days after their arrival in the combat zone.[15]

The news was initially somewhat better on the eastern side of the peninsula. On the same day that the 24th Infantry Division ceased to exist as an organized combat unit, the 25th Infantry Division scored a tactical victory in its first encounter with the KPA. Elements of the 24th Infantry Regiment recaptured the town of Yechon on 20 July and turned it over to the ROK Capital Division – the first such handover of the Korean War.[16] The other two regiments of the division (27th and 35th) both moved with alacrity to bolster ROK units near Sangju, opposing a KPA advance on Walker's command post in Taegu.[17] In this, they were ultimately unsuccessful, but the delay of the KPA advance by ROK troops prevented the loss of Pusan. Although the ROK 3d and Capital divisions fought with unsurpassed courage and skill, the weight of the enemy attack proved too much, and the 25th Division's Major General Bill Kean oversaw a southward withdrawal of nearly 30 miles by his division, toward the Naktong River.[18]

Adding to Walker's (and MacArthur's) headaches, the KPA successfully ambushed the first reinforcements sent to Korea. On 25 July, the communists massacred the 3d Battalion 29th Infantry Regiment at Hadong Pass just hours after it had arrived from occupation duties on Okinawa. Having been left out of the Eighth Army's pre-war training plan in Japan, the regiment was originally promised six weeks' training before it would be called upon to fight. The gravity of the tactical situation in Korea, however, rendered that promise worthless. With almost no preparation, 3-29 marched to destruction with unzeroed rifles. Over 300 men died (including the battalion commander and three of five company commanders); an additional 100 were captured. Another of Walton Walker's precious infantry battalions ceased to exist.[19]

Walker's frustration at what he perceived to be a lack of resolve in his subordinate division commanders resulted in part from the less-than-stellar performance of his ROK allies. ROK Army units had been in near-continuous contact since the North Korean invasion began on 25 June, and had suffered significant casualties. The South Korean government responded by filling out the ranks of those divisions with forcibly-conscripted young men with only the vaguest idea of how to survive on a modern battlefield. When confronted by the well-trained and disciplined communists, ROK units repeatedly broke and the soldiers ran away (many never to return). US units sent to backstop ROK units found their flanks in the air; often their first knowledge of a ROK withdrawal came when KPA units fired on them from their own rear.[20]

That his ROK allies lacked the equipment, training, and leadership materially to aid in the defense of their own state dismayed Walker, but the ROK army's condition was not unknown within MacArthur's headquarters. The ROK Army in 1950 was not, in fact, an army at all. Given the appellation "ROK Constabulary" and mentored by some 480 Americans serving in the Korean Military Assistance Group (KMAG), the ROK Army had been explicitly built as a counter-insurgency force. In this role it excelled. Despite a proliferation of attacks in 1948 and 1949, including the infiltration of KPA "special operations" units to aid guerrillas in the South, and sleeper agents within the Constabulary itself, by early 1950 the insurgency had been hobbled.[21] Just days before the KPA invasion, Colonel Sterling Wright (acting commander of KMAG) described the ROK army in glowing terms to visiting newspaperman Bill Mathews of the *Arizona Star*. Confident that the ROKs could keep the Communists at bay, Wright did not disclose that confidential KMAG reports to MacArthur in Tokyo rated the ROKs as, at best, able to perform at one-half of their potential against the KPA in open warfare.[22] Doubtless Wright and others expected that KPA provocations would continue on the same scale and intensity as before and hence did not vigorously protest decisions made in Washington to withhold "offensive" weapons such as tanks, fighter aircraft, and heavy artillery. As Wright and many others would shortly discover, such weapons were exactly what the ROKs most needed to counter the KPA invasion in June 1950.

In retrospect, it is difficult to separate cause from effect to determine whether ROK withdrawals forced the hands of the US commanders or vice versa. It is certain, however, that in the west the ROK

Capital Division was forced to withdraw from Chinchon on 11 July because of the 24th Infantry Division's failure to retain Chonan and Chonui. On the east coast, the ROK 8th Division fought valiantly to fix the KPA at Yongdok. The ROKs lost the town on 17 July, but counterattacked the next day, beginning a nearly three-week battle that fixed the KPA in place, preventing it from driving unimpeded all the way to Pusan. Meanwhile, the ROK 17th Infantry Regiment had to rescue the US 24th Infantry Regiment west of Sangju on 22 July, when the latter unit's cohesion melted away under fire. The only US unit on the Sangju front at the time, the 24th's repeated missteps forced General Kean to divert combat power from other 25th Infantry Division efforts, and Sangju itself was abandoned on the night of 31 July to 1 August.[23]

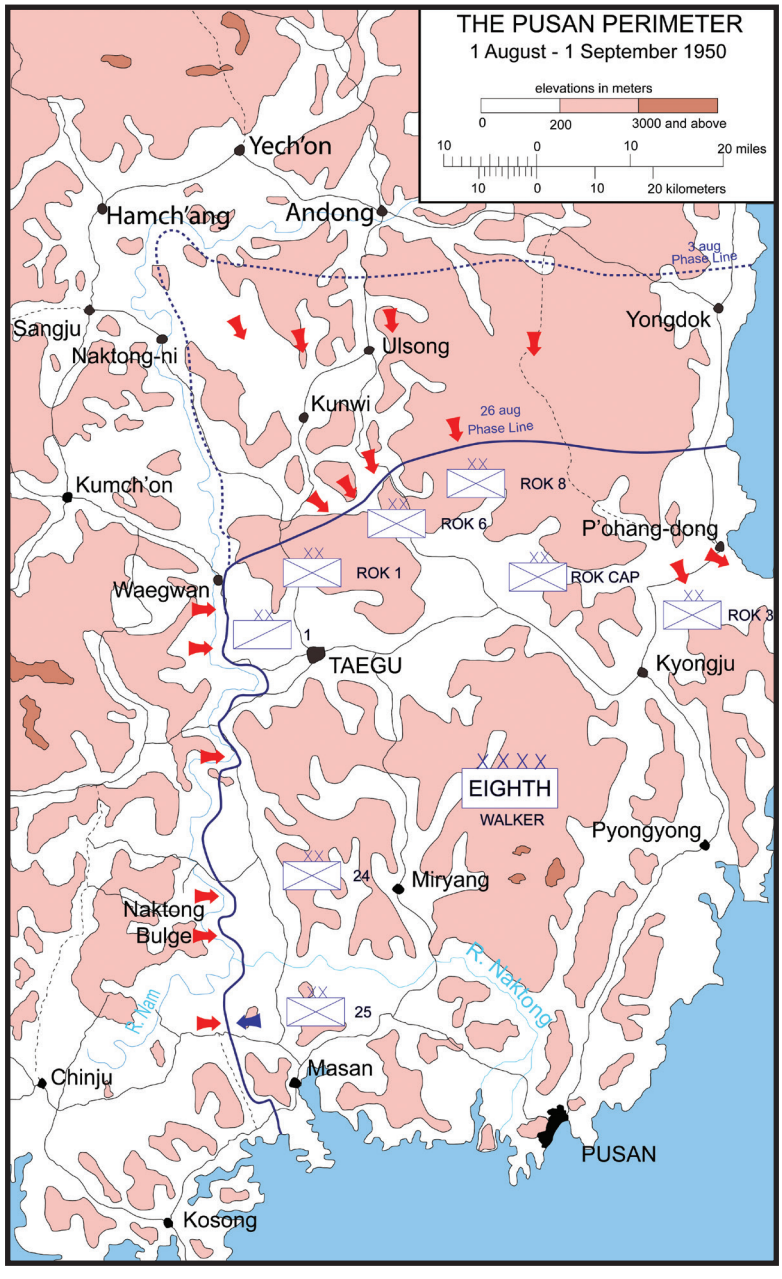

Figure 17.3 The Pusan Perimeter. Map courtesy of US Army Center of Military History.

Faced with impending collapse in the west, center, and east coast sectors, Walker knew that he had to force a change in mindset onto his command. By July 26 he understood that continued attempts at forward defense by his depleted formations were doomed to failure. That night, he issued a warning order to his division commanders to be ready to fall back to a new defensive position. He knew that in ordering a further withdrawal he risked creating panic among his own Soldiers, demoralizing his ROK allies, or both. But with no alternative, Walker embraced necessity. With heavy heart he telephoned MacArthur's headquarters in Tokyo to outline his plan and secure approval of a general withdrawal back to a line anchored on the Naktong River. Major General Almond, MacArthur's chief of staff and bitter antagonist of Walker, questioned Walker's assessment as well as his nerve. At Almond's urging, MacArthur flew to Korea the following day to confer with Walker in person.

The meeting did not turn out as Walker had hoped. Brushing aside Walker's assessment, MacArthur emphasized the imperative of Eighth Army's holding on long enough for Operation BLUEHEARTS (later CHROMITE, the amphibious assault at Inchon) to be executed. His plans thwarted by MacArthur and Almond, Walker did not issue a withdrawal order. Even so, he acquiesced in subsequent retrograde movements by both 1st Cavalry and 25th Infantry divisions to the more defensible terrain above the Naktong River.[24]

Why did Walton Walker issue such a starkly-worded order, so uncharacteristic of the US Army? Walker's death in a motor vehicle accident in December 1950 means that we have no memoir from which to glean an insight into his thinking on the matter. However, a deeper examination of available sources indicates that several factors contributed to it.

First, the Eighth US Army had not trained for expeditionary warfare. General Walker's training guidance for 1949 and 1950 had, indeed, anticipated major combat operations, but focused on the defense of Japan. Thus, although many of the tasks on which the battalions and regiments trained (e.g., "battalion in the defense;" "withdrawal under pressure") could be directly applied to combat in Korea, tactical commanders appeared unable to translate training into performance under fire. Moreover, at the division and regimental level, Eighth Army's monthly command post exercise program had focused almost exclusively on terrain defense, with little thought paid to maneuver warfare of any kind. Under such a scenario, any withdrawals would have been on internal lines of operation and would bring the disengaging US unit closer to its logistics base. Thus, there were few, if any, training experiences on which commanders or staffs could draw that offered any solutions to the tactical problems presented by the KPA.

Second, and related to the first, the training program in Japan focused individual units on specific pieces of terrain. As a result, units and especially company grade officers and their Soldiers became complacent about how they might maneuver locally or plan defensive fires in order to defeat a thinking enemy. Moreover, the shortage of adequate training areas that would have allowed units to practice according to doctrine meant that most units trained the same tasks on the same ground month after month. This situation prevented commanders from practicing essential combat skills such as cross-country navigation, maintaining command and control while moving, and use of terrain to enhance defensive measures against air attack. In the end, it appears that many leaders at the battalion level and below could not make the leap required by the change of geography to translate their training experience into combat effectiveness.

Third, the training program under Walker had been centrally planned but given to division commanders for decentralized execution. Although all four division commanders had seen extensive operational service in World War II, in many cases their subordinate regimental commanders lacked that experience. Many of those men owed their positions to seniority alone, and some had not seen combat since the Great War. They were physically and psychologically unprepared to fight the Communists. It

was necessary, but not surprising, that Walker or his division commanders replaced 11 of 12 original regimental commanders soon after hostilities broke out in Korea.

Fourth, Walker faced tremendous psychological pressure from Tokyo to perform. There is some evidence that Walker's blue rhetoric was a façade, a deliberate amplification in a public forum of the guidance he had received from MacArthur to mask his intention to disobey. In truth, Walker had almost no flexibility to adjust his mission based on updated information. Knowing he lacked MacArthur's trust and that Ned Almond desperately wished to succeed Walker in command, Walker's words and tone suggest a man caught between a rock and a hard place. From both tone and content, Walker appears to be a leader who needs to vent his frustrations in order to clear his head, without compromising the loyalty owed to MacArthur.

This idea is reinforced by the fact that Walker's untrue declaration that no defensible line existed on which to fall back. Moreover, Walker would have known this was false when he said it. His discussion with Almond on the night of 26 July specifically included talk of creating a defensive line on the Naktong River. The Naktong constituted the first properly defensible terrain feature available to Walker's forces since the abortive stand on the Kum River two weeks earlier. Moreover, because he was falling back into a more constrained geographical space, Walker could hope to concentrate greater force than had heretofore been possible and even reconstitute a mobile reserve. Thus concentrated, he could then capitalize on the interior lines of communication to move reinforcements to areas threatened with a KPA breakthrough while taking advantage of the short transit time required for supplies reaching Pusan from Japan and the United States. In fact this is exactly what transpired, securing immortality for Walker as the man who saved Korea only to have MacArthur steal the glory from him.

Finally, two other factors almost certainly influenced both Walker's tone and choice of words. The first resulted from the extraordinarily strained relationship between Walker and MacArthur, a relationship predicated upon MacArthur's inability to be open and honest with his subordinates. MacArthur viewed Walker and most other senior officers from the European Theater with a jaundiced eye and kept them at arm's length – Almond being perhaps the lone exception. MacArthur suspected Walker had been sent by General J. Lawton Collins, the Army Chief of Staff, to undermine his prerogatives as Supreme Commander, Allied Powers Far East. MacArthur dealt with Walker exclusively through his chief of staff, Almond, who actively undermined Walker at every turn. In such an environment it was impossible for Walker to make a positive impression on MacArthur. The latter's pique with Walker and Eighth Army (fanned by the ambitious Almond) must have been intense by the end of July, since the still-fluid situation in southern Korean threatened to require the injection of MacArthur's strategic reserve (7th Infantry Division and the Provisional Marine Brigade) not at Inchon as planned but into the Pusan Perimeter. Hence, fear of the humiliation of being fired on the grounds of battlefield incompetence may have driven Walker not only to parrot MacArthur's "no Dunkirk" line but to make very public declarations of adhering to this guidance even while privately accepting tactical retreats to the Naktong River.

Finally, Walker most likely was genuinely frustrated with the hand he had been dealt, and may even have felt he lacked the support of his division commanders. With the 24th's Bill Dean out of the picture, Walker could only vent his feelings on Bill Kean and Hobart M. "Hap" Gay of the 25th and 1st Cavalry divisions. That he, the theater army commander, had also to function as his own corps commander, surely took its toll on Walker despite his familiarity with the role. In addition to orchestrating the shooting war, Walker battled the press as well as MacArthur's headquarters. The former, amply represented in Korea, filed story after story describing tactical failures in lurid terms to readers back home who looked in vain for some justification for the cost in blood and treasure. The latter, embodied by his nemesis Almond, never ceased looking over Walker's shoulder to second-guess his decisions.

As the US Army's very first experience with expeditionary "come as you are" warfare, the first 90 days of combat in Korea offer good lessons to commanders at all levels facing their own no-notice calls in the 21st Century. Hard, realistic training of platoons, companies, battalions, and staffs at all echelons will be critical to success. At the strategic level, proper setting of the theater will be vital to the execution of sustained operations. Most of all, however, commanders must both inspire and practice professional trust in their organizations. Trust is the glue that keeps us bonded together as individuals and as organizations and will see us through any ordeal.

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22. Allan R. Millett, *The War for Korea, 1950-1951: They Came From the North* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 2010), 21-22.

23. Appleman, *South of the Naktong*, 102,184ff.

24. Blair, *The Forgotten War*, 168.

Chapter 18
"Hard is not Hopeless:" Coalition Command and the Surge

Scott C. Farquhar

There are no easy choices. The way ahead will be very hard. Progress will require determination and difficult US and Iraqi actions, especially the latter, as ultimately the outcome will be determined by the Iraqis. But hard is not hopeless, and if confirmed, I pledge to do my utmost to lead our wonderful men and women in uniform and those of our coalition partners in Iraq as we endeavor to help the Iraqis make the most of the opportunity our soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines have given to them.

–Lieutenant General Petraeus[1]

Kelvin Crow, a historian and former Army officer, was appalled: He was visiting Washington, DC in the fall of 2006 for archival research and was overwhelmed by the feeling of despair and defeatism. Casualties were increasing and there was a drumbeat of negative reports from Iraq where a nascent civil war erupted that spring. Eavesdropping on discussions while riding the Metro or talking with residents of the capital, the overall feeling reflected that Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) was a costly failure. This perception was nationally manifested in the November 2006 mid-term elections when dissatisfaction with the war in Iraq overturned both houses of Congress. President Bush responded by replacing the man most identified with the conduct of OIF, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, with former CIA Director Robert Gates. Gates had been a member of one of several military and interagency reviews conducted throughout 2006; all were critical of the progress, and in some cases, the direction of the campaign. After further review and consultation with National Security Advisor Steven Hadley, the commander-in-chief decided to replace his field commander, General George Casey, as well. His replacement would be Lieutenant General David Petraeus, the Commanding General at Fort Leavenworth, for whom Mr. Crow was conducting his research.

Lieutenant General Petraeus had watched with dismay the collapse of security and political progress in Iraq. He had developed a series of plans, the "big ideas" as he called them, knowing that he would eventually return to Iraq. He had thought through the moves necessary for a theater army to conduct a population-centric, rather than insurgent-focused, series of operations. He planned on securing the population by moving troops amongst them, rather than commuting from remote bases. He wanted to hand off the fighting to the Iraqi Security Force (ISF), but only after getting the conditions right before transitioning security to them. He was going to promote across-the-board-reconciliation starting with insurgents in the detention facilities, working through the tribal sheiks, and mediating the daggers-drawn factions of the Iraqi national government. Lastly, he plotted out how he would communicate these plans throughout his command and to the governments of Iraq and the US. This latter operation would require an energetic campaign of strategic engagement and publicity.

Pending his confirmation and promotion, Petraeus' new assignment was Multi-National Force-Iraq (MNF-I), an *ad hoc* four-star headquarters created in a spring 2004 reorganization to provide theater-level strategic and operational-level command and control for all coalition forces.[2] MNF-I's mission was to coordinate, synchronize, and deliver security, economic, and information operations in concert with the US Embassy as part of the country team to directly support national policy in Iraq. Under MNF-I were a series of two and three-star headquarters: Multi-National Corps-Iraq (MNC-I), a rotational US corps that was responsible for tactical combat operations and employment of divisions and brigades; Multi-National Security Training Command-Iraq (MNSTC-I), another *ad hoc* three star

command responsible to organize, train, and equip the Iraqi Security Forces (Army, National Police, and Border Police) as well as rebuilding the Ministry of Defense and its training, education, and logistical infrastructure; an *ad hoc* two-star Detainee Operations Task Force (TF 143); and operational control of US Army Corps of Engineers Gulf Region Division (USACE-GRD), a one-star headquarters built around a US Army Reserve Engineer Command that was responsible for the reconstruction effort. MNF-I would share its area of operations together with a three-star Combined Joint Special Operations Task Force whose "share of the task" was killing or capturing terrorists as part of the Global War on Terrorism.[3]

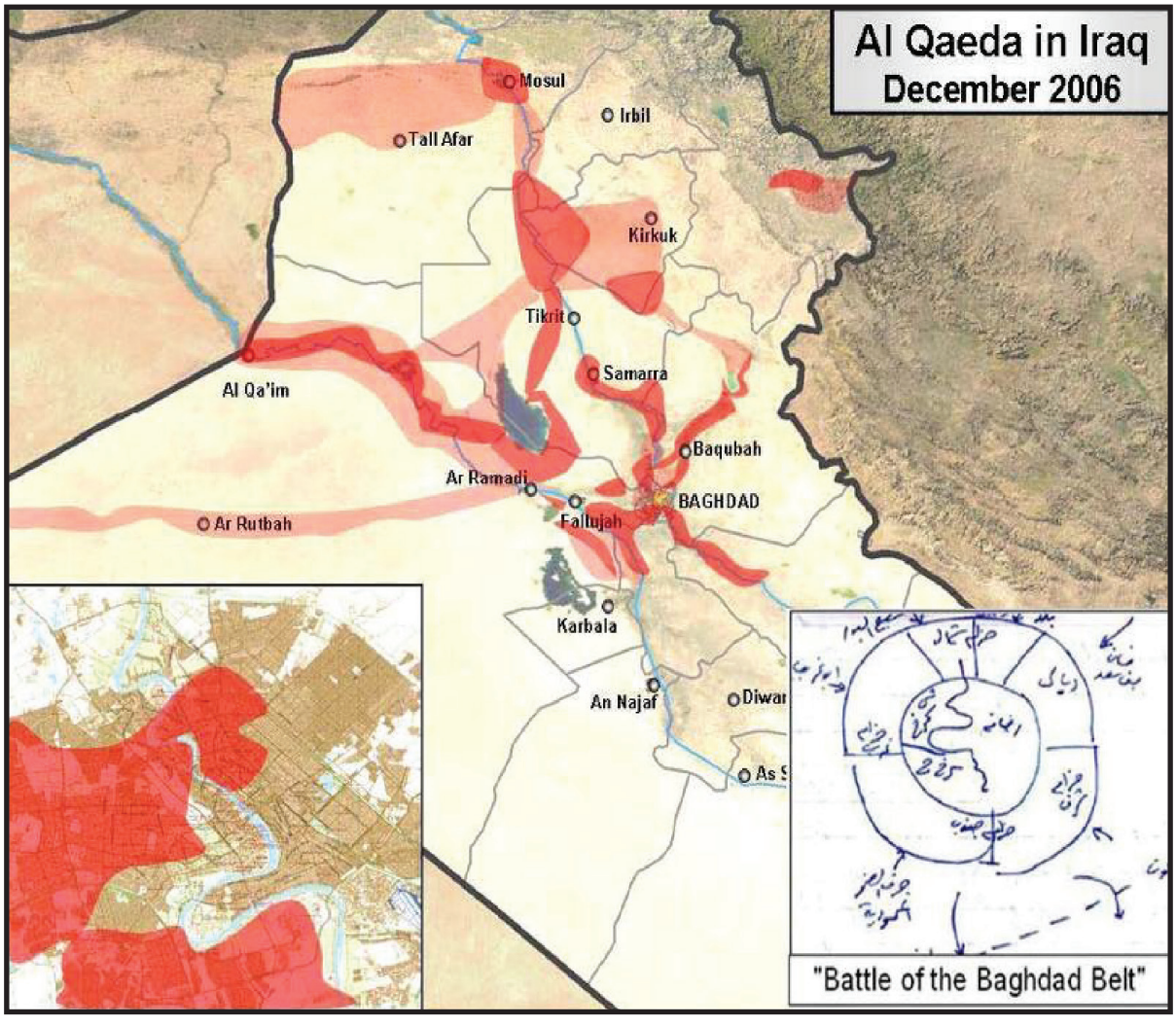

Figure 18.1 Al Qaeda in Iraq, December 2006. Map courtesy of the US Army.

General Petraeus returned to Iraq and assumed command of MNF-I in February 2007. There was no one in the US Army more prepared than the intense, ambitious, and hard-driving 54 year-old infantry officer. During a fast rise through the ranks, he developed a deep interest in counter-insurgency operations, beginning as a young lieutenant, and devoted years of study on the subject, from tactics through policy, culminating in a Master's and PhD in international relations from Princeton. He had served in Haiti and Bosnia in various command and staff positions, as well as military assistant to the US Army Chief of Staff, the Supreme Allied Commander in Europe, and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. He had commanded the 101st Airborne Division in the drive to Baghdad and for the year after

in the volatile northern province of Nineveh, a territory encompassing Iraq's second city, Mosul, and bordering on Syria, Turkey, and the breakaway Kurdish Regional Government. He had delved deeply into the province's mix of religious factions, tribal, ethnic, and national identities, and began a process of reconciliation and political governance. Within months after his return to the US he was promoted to a third star and sent back to Iraq to take over command of the flailing and inadequate military and police advisory and training mission, now renamed MNSTC-I.[4] Petraeus spent the next 15 months turning around the vital effort to recruit, train, equip, organize, and employ over 100,000 Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) while engaged with the enemy.

After leading the largest, most rapid, and most expensive train-and-equip mission since the Second World War lend-lease, Lieutenant General Petraeus was posted to command the US Army Combined Arms Center at Fort Leavenworth to oversee its mission as "a major subordinate headquarters of the US Army Training and Doctrine Command, often referred to as the 'Intellectual Center of the Army' [and]…'home base' for field grade Army officers…engaged in the primary mission of preparing the Army and its leaders for war."[5] For the next 15 months, he would "reflect on those experiences, think deep thoughts…write the Counter-Insurgency field manual, [and] overhaul the entire process of the Army system for preparing forces, leaders, staffs, and individuals to deploy to Iraq or Afghanistan… every aspect of that road to combat." He established a joint Army/Marine Counter Insurgency (COIN) Center and began the process of re-writing those services' counter-insurgency field manual, adeptly inviting his contacts from academia, think tanks, media, various practitioners, and, especially, critics in a series of reviews and seminars. The writing and creating buy-in of the manual, normally an arcane and dry endeavor, became a minor public sensation, furthering Petraeus' reputation for creating favorable personal publicity, a trait not universally admired in the Army's kibbutz-like sub-culture.[6]

After his unanimous, yet windy, confirmation by the Senate, General Petraeus assembled a small, elite team as his "front office" before deploying. Starting with his personal chief of staff, Colonel Peter Mansoor, whom he had earlier selected to establish and lead the COIN Center at Fort Leavenworth, he worked outward through his aforementioned network to gather highly intelligent and educated veterans of the Iraq campaign, in some cases recalling retired officers to active duty. Many of these officers were considered dissidents or insurgents within the Army for their criticism of its preparation and conduct of the war to date.[7] This cadre was only the new MNF-I commander's inner sanctum; he did not plan or execute any large-scale replacements of the staff on hand in Baghdad.[8]

Based on his experiences of previous tours, a lifetime of study, and a tour at Fort Leavenworth to reflect and develop upon all of those, when General Petraeus took command of MNF-I he did not force the staff to go through the process of studying the problem and recommend the solution. He knew what those were, "the big ideas." He had determined the direction that the command was going to take and set about accomplishing four tasks associated with the "big ideas." The first was to secure the center of gravity, in this case the population of Iraq, starting with the neighborhoods of Baghdad. This could only be done by reversing the previous practice of consolidating US troops on big bases. Petraeus also halted the process of perfunctorily handing off the fighting to the ISF on a publically-announced timetable regardless of their readiness. Secondly, he planned to aggressively promote reconciliation between the coalition and the insurgency, between Iraq's warring ethno-sectarian groups, and between the factions of Iraq's national government. These moves would require increasing amounts of US diplomatic and Iraqi political involvement to succeed. Thirdly, General Petraeus set out to communicate his "big ideas" effectively throughout the breadth and depth of MNF-I. Beginning with his change of command speech, he echoed his testimony before the Senate to change the azimuth and path of the organization. Lastly, he began to oversee the implementation of the plan and began a series systematic reviews to refine, change, or augment it using various metrics and his own feel for progress. He also knew he only had about six months to demonstrate it due to mounting political pressure in the US to abandon Iraq.[9]

In pursuit of getting an understanding of the situation, on his first day in command, General Petraeus went on a patrol through Baghdad. Despite following the war in Iraq through every public, military, and personal forum he could, he was shocked and demoralized at the level of violence and resultant damage to the city and its people.[10] He ordered the process of establishing a series of Combat Outposts (COPs) and Joint Security Stations; the former small redoubts of a platoon (35-50) of US Soldiers in a neighborhood and the latter a sometimes larger, company-sized unit co-located with a similar-sized ISF unit in a police station or other government facility. This maneuver, executed by MNC-I and, initially Multi-National Division-Baghdad, required an increase in US troops and Iraqi government cooperation, setting the stage for General Petraeus having to fight in two directions.

When President Bush decided to go "all in" after the electoral rebuke, he replaced the Secretary of Defense, the MNF-I commander, and the US Ambassador to Iraq. He had ordered a "surge" through the deployment of five additional combat brigades and the extension of the tours of troops in Iraq from 12 to 15 months. He had made clear to the new chain of command that his plan was to defeat the insurgency and reinforce the new Iraqi government, not manage a transition of coalition forces out of the country. As MNF-I commander, Petraeus led a sub-unified command that reported to the president. His supporting chain was somewhat less clear as he found out the geographic combatant commander, Central Command CG General John Abizaid, opposed the deployment of more troops and was delaying their arrival. This discrepancy was quickly cleared up and the five combat brigades began staging throughout Kuwait as rapidly as possible, about one per month. General Abizaid's replacement, Admiral William Fallon, attempted a similar delay of vital aviation and engineer brigades the following summer, resulting in another contentious series of conversations to get resolution. The Iraqi government was not unique in suffering from factionalism.[11]

General Petraeus's other fight was to gain and maintain approval of his plan by the Iraqi government. In this battle, he was joined by the diplomatic half of the country team, Ambassador Ryan Crocker, to overcome resistance by the Iraqi Prime Minister, the enigmatic Nouri al-Maliki. PM Maliki had been levered into power by various factions of Shia political parties combined with Crocker's predecessor and the CIA.[12] The plans of the US country team often directly threatened Maliki's sectarian power base and resulted in his corresponding refusal, resistance, and, occasionally, their subversion. The Americans never fully gained his trust or cooperation and enormous amounts of energy were required of Crocker and Petraeus to tamp down Maliki's sectarianism and make progress towards reconciliation.[13]

There had been several previous attempts at reconciliation by the coalition; Major General Petraeus had achieved some success in Mosul in 2003-04, the Marines had also briefly done so in rural al Anbar province in 2004-2005, and Colonel H.R. McMaster had cleared and held Tal Afar in 2005-06. Unfortunately, in each case these attempts had died out because the Iraqi government in Baghdad refused to support the movement and US troops had simply been re-deployed and the progress was abandoned.[14] Now there was a nascent revolt ("the Awakening"), again in al Anbar, this time in the city of Ramadi, beginning in late 2006.[15] General Petraeus seized upon this and traveled there on his first trip outside Baghdad on his fourth day in command to meet with Sheik Abdul Sittar Abu Risha al-Rishawi and the local US Army brigade commander, Col. Sean MacFarland. Petraeus planned to build on that movement to achieve a critical mass of consensus and promote it so others could replicate it. "The Awakening" – when Sunni tribes turned against *Salifist* terrorism and began a wary reconciliation with US troops, and eventually, their estranged Iraqi government – started in the Euphrates River Valley. Over a violent spring and summer it spread down the Tigris River Valley and then into Baghdad.[16]

The first two combat brigades arriving as part of the surge were allocated to the 1st Cavalry Division operating as Multi-National Division-Baghdad (MND-B). This reinforcement allowed MND-B

to go back into the city's downtown and create 77 additional COPs and JCCs. In some cases the US units had to fight their way in accompanied by the newly-energized ISF. Petraeus had also requested and received an additional division headquarters, the 3rd Infantry Division, which allowed the MNC-I staff to adjust their internal boundaries and create greater density of troops. Just as in the city, these brigades fought their way into some of the toughest, most violent regions surrounding it, the "Baghdad belts," where the al-Qaeda, Ba'ath Party loyalists, and Shia terror units had carved out, defended, and established their respective support zones to contest control of the capital. The CJSOTF was also reinforced with additional squadrons and intelligence capabilities and began a "feeding frenzy" cycle of raids against the Iranian-led "Special Groups" and al-Qaeda *jihadists* to target and eliminate the "accelerants" fueling the sectarian conflict.[17]

Figure 18.2 Commander of Multi-National Force - Iraq General David H. Petraeus, US Army, jokes with an Iraqi man over a cup of chai at a small cafe near the Al Saray book market in Baghdad, Iraq, on 14 June 2007. Petraeus walked to the market to view the reconstruction progress after it was hit by a car bomb on 5 March. DoD photo by Staff Sgt. Lorie Jewell, US Army.

It was difficult for General Petraeus to implement his third "big idea" of communicating his intent over the clamor of Iraq's daily violence. Scores of bodies of abducted, tortured, and murdered Iraqi civilians were dumped daily in Baghdad by the various factional death squads. Terror groups like al-Qaeda struck back at the surge with their signature weapon, the massive truck-bomb, sometimes several simultaneously. These spectacular attacks were always filmed and immediately posted on the Internet to counter the coalition narrative of the "big ideas." Petraeus had delivered his intent face-to-face with assembled subordinate commanders of MNC-I upon his change-of-command in February. In the following months Petraeus used every opportunity to leverage his substantial contacts in the US and foreign media through press conference, intimate interviews, and flamboyant photo opportunities where he walked through Baghdad's markets or streets wearing a soft cap rather than the ubiquitous Kevlar helmet and wrap-around goggles. He did these risky walk-abouts often accompanied by US,

Iraqi, or coalition politicians. These patrols were more than publicity stunts; they were a vital part of Petraeus's feedback loop to see how well his "big ideas" were understood and being implemented by the lieutenants and sergeants throughout MNF-I.[18]

These continual and targeted series of visits informed the coalition commander as the bottom-up portion of his 360-degree information flow that, in turn, was part of a General Petraeus's personal battle rhythm. This methodology was laid out on a huge matrix of the events that he conducted daily, bi-weekly, monthly, and culminated in a quarterly civil-military campaign plan review conducted jointly with Ambassador Crocker. This series of events was scheduled to communicate on a daily basis, by how he spent his time in overseeing the implementation of the big ideas, what was important to the coalition CG. The long days began with a battlefield update and analysis (BUA) briefing. Petraeus used this communication opportunity to both receive and transmit throughout the echelons of MNF-I's organization via video teleconference. These daily updates lasted for an hour and General Petraeus's comments were then transcribed and distributed by e-mail down to the brigade commander level. This infusion of his personal techniques with information-age technology flattened the flow, increased the velocity, and greatly reduced ambiguity in accomplishing the MNC-I commander's third "big idea" of communicating his strategic direction.[19]

The "big ideas" were a combination of philosophies and broad intent rather than dogma. As he had done with the writing of the COIN field manual, General Petraeus set up a systemic series of formal reviews to determine how and where to refine the "big ideas" and drive progress. He had borrowed a lot of talent to create his commander's initiative group (CIG – an in-house "think-tank" on the personal staff of higher commands) and staff the Joint Strategic Assessment Team (JSAT – almost the opposite of the CIG); serving as a "red team" to skeptically examine operations). Petraeus added their input to MNF-I's cadre of Operational Research and Systems Analysis (ORSA – the proverbial "number-crunchers") to how the "big ideas" need to be adapted, changed, or adjusted. The formal process was important to Petraeus in order to promote a culture of learning which was living and enforcing it throughout the command. In his monthly command sessions, part of the battle rhythm, he required subordinate commanders to present at least two "big ideas" of their own. He also expected them share one or two lessons they had learned and thought were applicable to the group.[20] Supporting this fourth task were the military's formal assessment organizations, the Center for Army Lessons Learned, the Joint Center for Lesson Learned, the Marine Corps Lessons Learned group, the Asymmetric Warfare Group, the Counterinsurgency Center he had created at Fort Leavenworth, and its in-theater counterpart, the Phoenix Academy.[21] These all came together and went through the formal review process and ultimately presented to Petraeus, for an hour once a month, their consolidated recommendations for how MNF-I should change the overall campaign plan. In those first few months of his command, amidst a massive spike in violence and subsequent increase in US casualties resulting from their deployment into Baghdad's neighborhoods and its lethal "belts," Petraeus and Crocker had to look hard for progress.[22]

In an operation planned prior to the Surge, but now greatly facilitated by the change in strategic direction as well as reinforced with what would grow to 28 battalions, MND-Baghdad began clearing and holding the ethnically-cleansed districts in the city. General Petraeus ordered an ancient tactic employed in an attempt to hold those areas that had been cleared by erecting walls. Day and night, US troops began placing enormous, ugly concrete slabs, called T-walls or Texas Barriers, to separate the communities and control access. Despite outrage from some quarters, opposition from parts of Maliki's government, and comparisons to the Berlin Wall or similar barricades used in the West Bank, violent incidents amongst the population quickly decreased as the roaming death squads or suicide truck-bombers could not leave their enclaves nor gain access to their targets. Attacks against US troops, however, increased in number and lethality. Political support in the US was slipping away and in April the Senate Majority Leader declared the surge had failed and that "this war is lost."[23]

General Petraeus and Ambassador Crocker had done their best to create and lead a campaign to change the strategy and direction of the coalition efforts in Iraq. The national policy of regime change was only half completed; the replacement of the dictatorship by a consensual government friendly to US interests had not yet occurred. Public support for the war was lost in Britain and ebbing away in the US; the former was withdrawing its troops and resolutions were being adopted in Congress to leave. The window of opportunity, often referred to as "breathing room," for Iraqi political reconciliation was closing despite extraordinary attempts to secure the population and precisely targeted raids on the terror-masters.

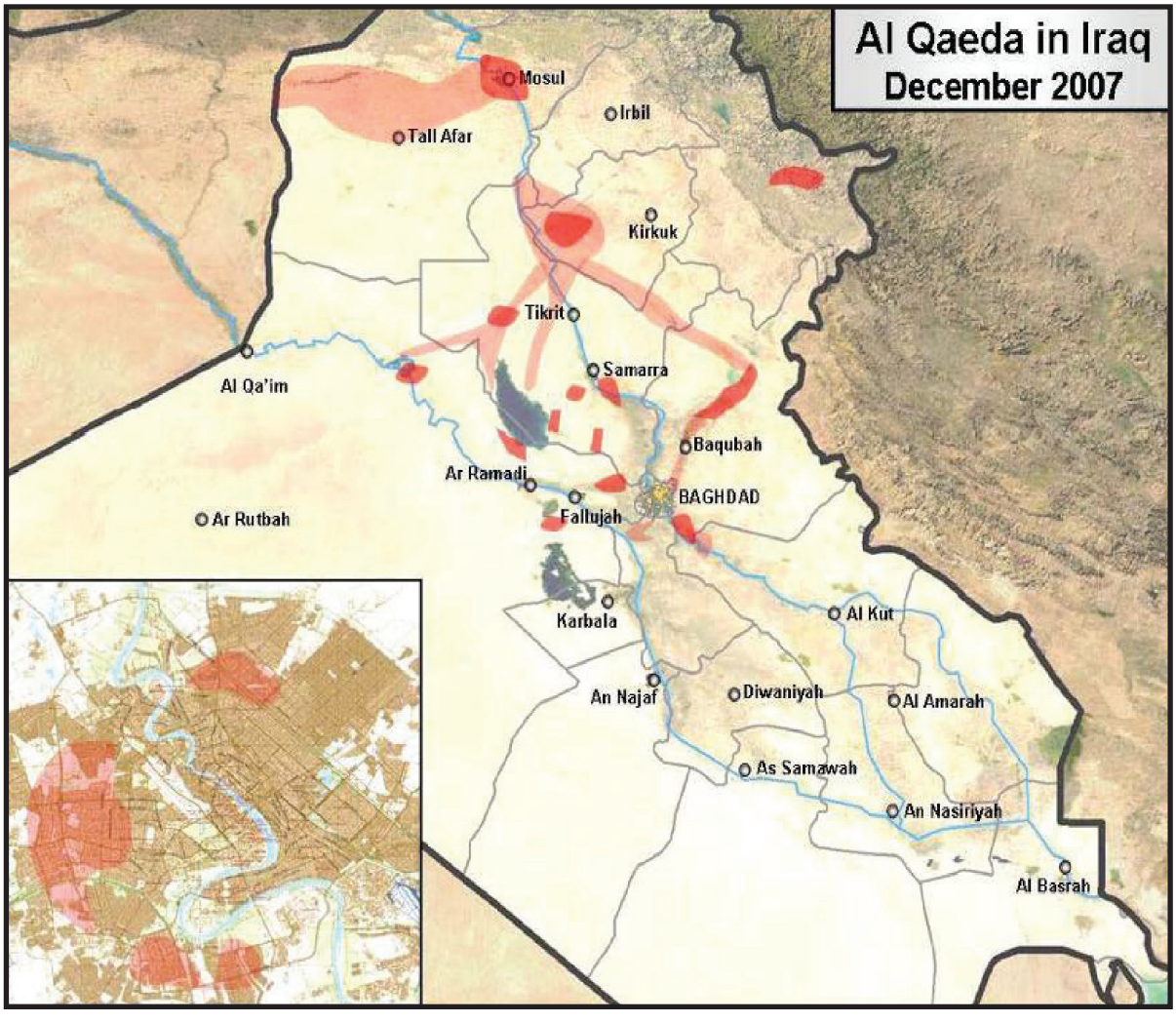

Figure 18.3 Al Qaeda in Iraq, December 2007. Map courtesy of the US Army.

In conventional combat, a small unit or a disjointed group of individual Soldiers can swing the "pendulum of battle" by stoutly defending Little Round Top or clawing their way over the Atlantic Wall.[24] In an insurgency it is not as dramatic but no less risky when a group of citizens, a tribe, or a leader has had enough and changes sides. Just as the charismatic Sheik in Al Anbar decided his lot was better with the infidel Americans and the Shia-dominated Baghdad government than the sociopaths of Al Qaeda; in late May 2007, a Sheik in the Ameriyah district made a midnight cellphone call to the local US battalion commander. The Awakening had begun in Baghdad.[25]

Throughout Baghdad in June a startling turn-about began as various Sheiks and community leaders who had led clandestine groups fighting the coalition approached US leaders to parley. In some cases, they requested assistance of the very troops they had been combating to now fight against the same group of irreconcilables that had vexed every attempt at reconciliation. The national government had begun paying the Anbar tribe's militia and locally-recruited police and the province had become quiescent. US leaders in Baghdad scrambled to gain approval of the same scheme for their new allies. Maliki's government deftly named these local units "Sons of Iraq" and began a process of federalizing them into the ISF, beginning in Sunni al Anbar.[26]

The progress in clearing what had been the most violent province in Iraq now shifted to holding it against the enemy. Ambassador Crocker was able to mediate a plan to release and disburse funds from the Iraqi treasury to begin rebuilding the damage to Ramadi and Fallujah. Violent acts in Iraq dropped by half in the period between July Fourth and Labor Day. Time was up and the surge forces were committed; General Petraeus and Ambassador Crocker were scheduled to testify before Congress in the last week of September. No one was waiting to hear from the soft-spoken diplomat; Americans wanted a report from the general whose face had relentlessly been on television, front pages, and magazine covers since Christmas. The question now was whether the coalition commander could convince Congress and the public that the violent and costly change of strategic direction he'd led was successful.

General Petraeus huddled with his closest aides in Baghdad and crafted a long and detailed briefing for the testimony. His hand-picked group of Rhodes' Scholars and PhDs tried to shorten and shape it but this was going to be a solo performance. The tight group of his staff eliminated leaks or speculation as skeptical journalists, chastened by the weapons of mass destruction (WMD) debacle at the war's beginning, examined the sudden drop in violence from every possible angle looking for deceit or spin. Not since the Iran-Contra hearings 20 years previously had there been such a build-up to a congressional hearing. The defeat and despair of the previous autumn gave way to a combination of hopeful anticipation and hysterical opposition. On the morning of the testimony, the *New York Times* printed a full-page ad scurrilously attacking General Petraeus's integrity and character. In the manner of the over-the-top violence of Al Qaeda that had alienated the tribal sheiks in Al Anbar and Baghdad, the ad backfired badly and politicians in opposition to the war had to distance themselves from it and the partisans behind it.[27]

In contrast to his confirmation hearings, the Coalition commander was not required to give any promises of candor or resolution towards the president; the lawmakers wanted straight answers from him. In response, he spoke steadily before House committees for almost 45 minutes in a carefully researched and rehearsed recitation of the rapid progress made in the previous six weeks. This was followed by a marathon six hours of questioning where General Petraeus was able to explain and expound on the military advances and assist Ambassador Crocker about political reconciliation and diplomatic initiatives in the region. Afterwards the general appeared on a cable television network for over an hour and was able to have a less contentious and more collegial discussion. The next day he repeated his performance before two Senate committees, several of whose members were posturing for their parties' presidential nomination. At one point, in response to an incisive question on counterinsurgency strategy, he was able to expound on how he was implementing the "big ideas" he'd thought about, wrote, and now practiced as coalition commander. He repeated the process of appearing on network news shows to continue communicating through them to the public.

The commander of a combat theater, Multi-National Force-Iraq, is the strategic leader who, within the confines of the policy that is approved by the President of the United States, is developing the direction that the organization is going to go. The first [task] is to get the big ideas right.[28]

The testimony, like the Surge, was successful in that it placed the fate of the war back in the hands of the elected governments of the US and Iraq. General Petraeus had requested, been allocated, and

employed the resources of troops, money, and time. Congress, despite being in opposition to President Bush's gamble, decided against using its enumerated power to end the US involvement as it had in 1973. The fragile Iraqi government, new and unused to its role, unique in the Arab world, would continue on the path to reconciliation. The coalition commander had accomplished the first task, deciding on the big ideas, and successfully followed through on the rest by inculcating, communicating, and continually assessing their strategic effects.

General Petraeus had overcome the despair felt by those in Washington, he had been able to provide security for the Iraqi population, set the conditions for political reconciliation, and could begin the replacement of US troops with reliable Iraqi forces. Ambassador Crocker and his fellow diplomats were less successful in engaging (or countering) Iraq's neighbors, especially Iran. In the end, perhaps Petraeus and the surge were *too* successful and by late 2008, Iraq was so quiescent that it no longer held Americans' notoriously short attention. Subsequently, the final crisis of 2008 pushed Iraq and the Global War on Terror (GWOT) further from the national debate and Barack Obama was elected on a platform of, among other things, total withdrawal of US troops from Iraq. What had been Iraqi bargaining positions in 2008 were accepted as obligations, to their astonishment, by the new US administration and all US units left Iraq in 2011. Bereft of any tangible leverage, the US could no longer influence Maliki's worst sectarian instincts and the Iraqi government rapidly lost control of the country's security to a nightmarish mutation of the Caliphate.[29] As of this writing, a smaller US-led coalition is assisting the Iraqi government to survive and regain control of its lost territory.

Notes

1. SASC Confirmation hearing record. Alternate title: "Getting the Big Ideas Right" and quote: The commander of a combat theater—Multi-National Force-Iraq,—is the strategic leader who, within the confines of the policy that is approved by the President of the United States, is developing the direction that the organization is going to go. *The first [task] is to get the big ideas right.*

2. *Ad hoc* in this case means a purpose-built headquarters with staffed by personnel dragooned from across the services on six or 12 month tours based on a Joint Manning Document (JMD) rather than an established Tables of Organization & Equipment (TO&E) unit such as a theater army, fleet, corps or division headquarters.

3. Donald P. Wright and Timothy R. Reese, *On Point II: Transition to the New Campaign* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Combat Studies Institute Press, 2008), 139-165, 176-182; Smith, Jodi, et al, *CALL Special Study 16-01: USACE Overseas Contingency Operations Playbook* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Center for Army Lessons Learned, 2015), 23-39, 57-76; Stanley McChrystal, *My Share of the Task: A Memoir* (New York: Portfolio/Penguin, 2013).

4. Steven Clay, *Iroquois Warriors in Iraq* (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Combat Studies Institute Press, 2008), 34-36, 86-87.

5. US Army Combined Arms Center website, accessed 9 May 2017, http://usacac.army.mil/.

6. Author interview with Gen. (Ret) Petraeus, February 2017; Author attended the final two-day review of FM 3-24 Counterinsurgency in 2006; David Cloud and Greg Jaffe, *The Fourth Star: Four Generals and the Epic Struggle for the Future of the United States Army* (New York: Crown, 2009), 172; Daniel Bolger, Why We Lost: A General's Inside Account of the Iraq and Afghanistan Wars (New York: HoughtonMifflinHarcourt, 2014), 211, 236; Robinson, 80-81.

7. Fred Kaplan, *The Insurgents: David Petraeus and the Plot to Change the American Way of War* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2013).

8. Peter Mansoor, *Surge: My Journey with General David Petraeus and the Remaking of the Iraq War* (New Haven, CT: Yale Library of Military History, 2013), 57-64.

9. Author interview with General (Ret) Petraeus, February 2017; Cloud and Jaffe, *The Fourth Star*, 251-259.

10. Linda Robinson, *Tell Me How This Ends: General David Petraeus and the Search for a Way Out of Iraq* (New York: PublicAffairs, 2008), 88; Mansoor, *Surge*, 1-3.

11. Petraeus interview; Cloud and Jaffe, *The Fourth Star*, 258; Mansoor, 64, 93-94, 114-116, 178-179.

12. "What We Left Behind" *The New Yorker*, 28 April 2014, Dexter Filkins; "Our Man in Iraq" *The Atlantic*, 1 July 2014, David Rohde, Warren Strobel, Missy Ryan, and Ned Parker.

13. Mansoor, *Surge*, 76-79,

14. Trudy Rubin, "A Textbook Case in Rebuilding Iraq" *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, October 2003; McChrystal, 186-187; Ricardo A. Herrera, "Brave Rifles at Tall 'Afar, September 2005" in *Case Studies from the Long War, Volume I*, William G. Robertson (Gen. Ed.) (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Combat Studies Institute Press, 2008), 125-152.

15. Anthony E. Deane, *Ramadi Declassified: A Roadmap to Peace in the Most Dangerous City in Iraq* (New York: Praetorian Books, 2016), 204-222; McChrystal, *My Share of the Task*, 240-242.

16. Petraeus interview. *Salifism* is a fundamentalist movement within Sunni Islam that strives to adhere to the traditions and practices of the religion's founders ("devout ancestors"- *Salaf al-Salih*). It can take on a radical and violent form and in modern times has combined with anti-western rejectionist themes.

17. Kimberly Kagan, *The Surge: A Military History* (New York: Encounter Broadsides, 2009), 27-59; Sean Naylor, *Relentless Strike: The Secret History of Joint Special Operations Command* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2015), 297-310; Robinson, *Tell Me How This Ends*, 104-106, 163-168.

18. Mansoor, *Surge*, 116-118; Robinson, *Tell Me How This Ends*, 90-94, 178-180.

19. Petraeus interview; Mansoor, *Surge*, 92-95, 98-102, 108-112; Cloud and Jaffe, *The Fourth Star*, 259-262.

20. Petraeus interview; Robinson, *Tell Me How This Ends*, 110-117.

21. The Phoenix Academy was an in-theater COIN training center based in Taji, Iraq by General Casey to overcome a lack of preparation for Counter-Insurgency in MNF-I. George W. Casey, Jr. *Strategic Reflections:*

Operation Iraqi Freedom July 2004 - February 2007 (Washington, DC, National Defense University Press, 2012), 61-62, 165.

22. Robinson, *Tell Me How This Ends*, 169-180.

23. Joel Roberts, "Senator Reid on Iraq: This War is Lost," *CBS News*, 20 April 2007, accessed 9 May 2017, http://www.cbsnews.com/news/senator-reid-on-iraq-this-war-is-lost/.

24. This analogy of "grabbing the pendulum of battle" is promulgated by historian and writer, retired British Army Brig. Christopher Dunphie.

25. David Kilcullen, "Anatomy of a Tribal Revolt," *Small Wars Journal*, 29 August 2007, accessed 9 May 2017, http://smallwarsjournal.com/blog/anatomy-of-a-tribal-revolt.

26. Robinson, *Tell Me How This Ends*, 217-270; Cloud and Jaffe, *The Fourth Star*, 263-268; Mansoor, *Surge*, 120-176.

27. Mansoor, *Surge*, 185-188; Robinson, *Tell Me How This Ends*, 297-300; Cloud and Jaffe, *The Fourth Star*, 276.

28. Petraeus interview.

29. Graeme Wood, "What ISIS Really Wants" *The Atlantic*, March 2015; Adam Chandler, "What Is an Islamic Caliphate and Why Did ISIS Make One?" *The Atlantic*, 30 June 2014, accessed 9 May 2017, https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2014/06/what-is-an-islamic-caliphate-and-why-did-isis-make-one/373693/.

Chapter 19
Europe on Twenty-Five Dollars a Day

Dr. Kathleen Nawyn

After the Cold War between the United States and Soviet Union ended in the early 1990s, the United States established a more cooperative relationship with the Soviet Union's successor, the new Russian Federation, and, in view of this, steadily reduced the US Army's footprint in Europe. In early 2014, however, the aggressive actions of Russia in Ukraine forced another recalibration of American thinking, with the administration of President Barack Obama introducing a new strategy for Europe that sought to deter further Russian aggression and reassure America's allies in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). US Army Europe (USAREUR) was still adapting to these changes when Lieutenant General Frederick B. "Ben" Hodges assumed command on 4 November 2014. Assessing the situation, Hodges decided that, to implement a strategic shift in Europe, he would need to reorient the command's culture to again focus on readiness for combat on the continent. Considering the constraints imposed by the Army's shrinking budget and the small number of personnel in theater, and taking into account his own experiences, General Hodges developed the idea that USAREUR would have to make "30,000 Soldiers look and feel like 300,000." This would require a new mindset as well as practical measures. The latter included making the US presence in Europe visible and active through exercises both large and small, seeking help from and encouraging cooperation with allies and partners, leaning on support from the National Guard and Reserves, and relying on leadership from junior and noncommissioned officers. It also meant welcoming and working to enlarge the role played by units deployed to Europe from the United States on short-term rotations. Rather than bemoaning USAREUR's empty cupboards, Hodges sought to use the resources the command did have to achieve its mission.[1]

During the two decades following the end of the Cold War, the United States dramatically reduced its military presence in Europe. For 40 years, it had maintained several hundred thousand service personnel in Western Europe to serve as a deterrent and first line of defense against the Soviet Union and its Warsaw Pact allies in Eastern Europe. In the late 1980s, some 340,000 members of the US armed forces, including more than 200,000 Soldiers, were permanently stationed on the continent, concentrated especially in West Germany. At the time, the Army's force structure in Europe consisted of two corps, each comprising an armored division, infantry division, and armored cavalry brigade; three independent combat brigades; and a variety of support units. Beyond this, thousands of additional American troops regularly descended on West Germany to participate in annual exercises with NATO allies. Traveling light, but drawing on large stocks of vehicles and equipment prepositioned in Western Europe, they offered tangible evidence of the US military's ability to rapidly reinforce its existing formations. This situation, however, changed quickly late in the 20th century. The fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, subsequent collapse of the Warsaw Pact, and dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991 triggered both a substantial reduction in Army end strength and a significant contraction of its European presence.[2] With the Cold War over, the United States began pursuing a more friendly relationship with Russia.

The country also soon turned its attention elsewhere. After Al Qaeda's attack on the World Trade Center towers and Pentagon in 2001, the Army's main focus became US Central Command's area of responsibility and, in particular, wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. Confirming Europe's status as a lower priority for both the country and the service, the war on terrorism redirected USAREUR's own operations as well. In fact, the defense of European territory was no longer even NATO's primary concern. American units based in Germany and Italy joined stateside personnel in deploying to Iraq and Afghanistan. The command also helped to prepare East European military contingents for their International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) missions in Afghanistan, in addition to offering them other kinds of

training. Between 2007 and 2011, the United States trained more than 42,000 allied military personnel at facilities in Europe.[3] In 2011, with the last US combat forces leaving Iraq, a drawdown of American troops beginning in Afghanistan, and an increasingly assertive China worrying its neighbors, the Obama administration announced a strategic "pivot" toward the Asia-Pacific region.

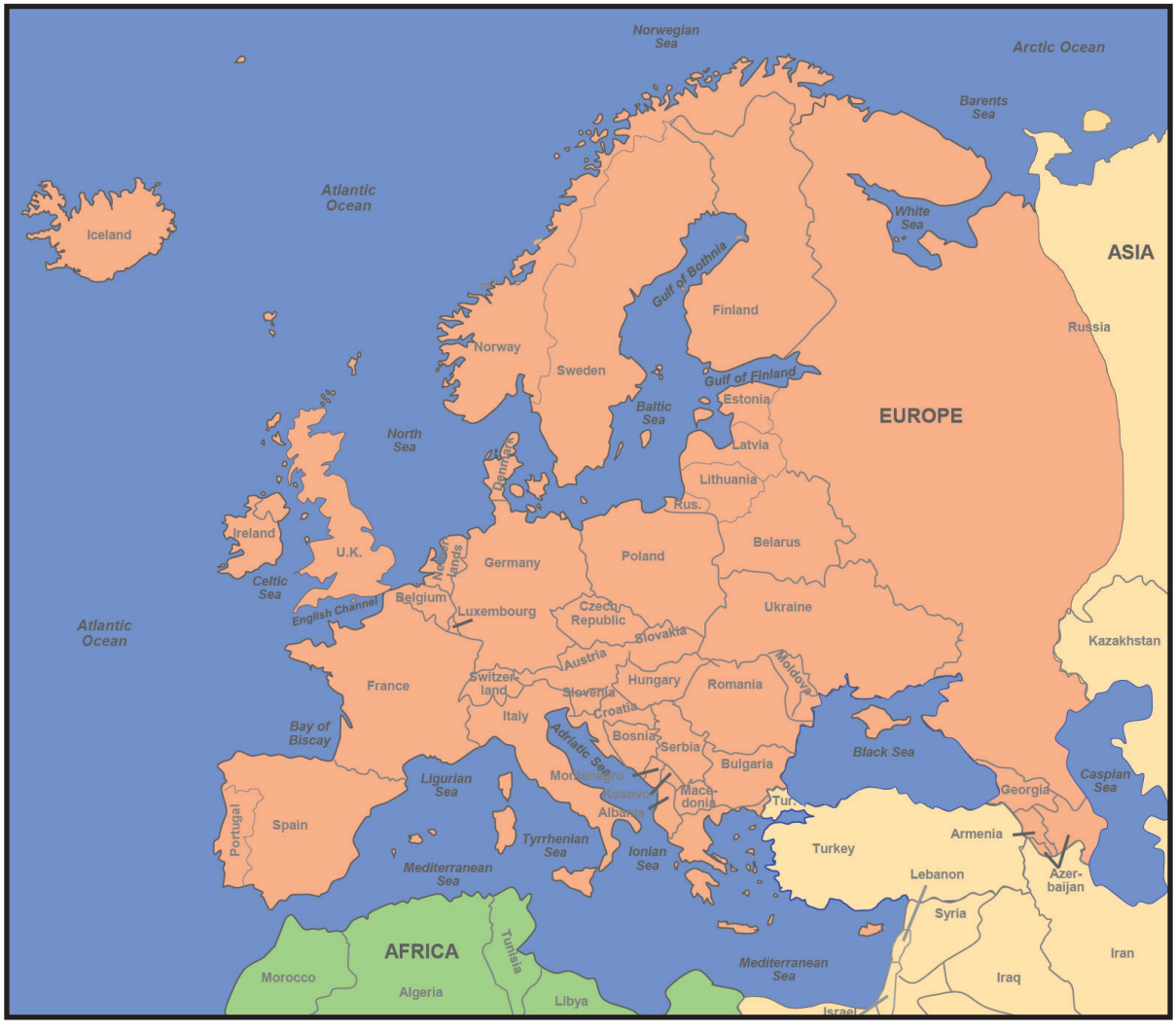

Figure 19.1 Europe, present day. Map created by CAC History for the authors.

That shift, along with federal budget decisions promising substantial cuts in defense spending starting in 2013, compelled the US Department of Defense to follow through on a long-discussed plan to remove two heavy brigades from Europe. On 31 May 2013, a ceremony in Grafenwöhr, Germany, marked the end of an era as the sole US Army heavy brigade still left in Europe, the 172d Infantry Brigade, cased its colors and inactivated. The brigade had shipped the last of its Abrams tanks to the United States in late March, leaving the continent devoid of American tanks for the first time since World War II. With the brigade's departure, followed shortly thereafter by the inactivation of V Corps, fewer than 30,000 US Soldiers remained stationed in Europe, most consolidated in just a pocketful of locations.[4]

By 2014, the US Army in Europe was a shell of what it had been 25 years before. The only maneuver forces under USAREUR's control were the 12th Combat Aviation Brigade based in Ansbach, Germany, and two brigade combat teams: the 2d Cavalry Regiment, a Stryker brigade based in Vilseck,

Germany, and the 173d Airborne Brigade, based in Vicenza, Italy, and Grafenwöhr, Germany. Most of the remaining Army personnel in theater were either assigned to USAREUR or US European Command headquarters or distributed among an assortment of enabler and support units, among them the 10th Air and Missile Defense Command, 21st Theater Sustainment Command, 5th Signal Command, 7th Army Joint Multinational Training Command, and 66th Military Intelligence Brigade. Army downsizing had also left USAREUR without a division-level headquarters to provide command and control of its maneuver brigades.[5]

Russia's actions in Ukraine that year rather suddenly changed everything in Europe yet again, upending 15 years of relative peace and stability. In November 2013, the pro-Russian actions of Ukraine's president had ignited several months of popular protests, intermittent violence, and government upheaval. Amidst the unrest, Russia worked with local supporters to take over Ukraine's Crimean peninsula. In mid-March 2014, following an affirmative referendum that western observers dismissed as invalid, it annexed Crimea. By mid-April, fighting had also broken out in eastern Ukraine between Russian-backed separatists and Ukrainian military forces now controlled by a pro-western government. More ominously, Russia had amassed thousands of troops just across the border.

The situation was not one the United States and its European allies could ignore. They regarded the use of force to change a national border in Europe as unacceptable. Moreover, although Ukraine was not a member of either the European Union or NATO, it had established close ties with both. As importantly, Russia's other western neighbors included several countries who were NATO members, who already viewed Russia with suspicion, and whose apprehensions about their own national security were not mere theoretical musings but concerns based on lived experience. Following World War II, the Baltic states had been forcibly incorporated into the Soviet Union and, similar to Crimea and the rest of Ukraine, still had populations that included a significant percentage of ethnic Russians: six percent in Lithuania, 25 percent in Estonia, and 27 percent in Latvia.[6] Poland, meanwhile, had retained its independence after the war, but not its freedom. Like many of the other East European countries that had joined NATO after 1991, it was a former Warsaw Pact member and had escaped Soviet-backed communist oppression only after more than forty years of subjugation.

In addition to imposing economic sanctions on Russia and launching diplomatic efforts to defuse the crisis in Ukraine, the United States therefore used what means it could to immediately reassure its allies. According to an Army officer who was at USAREUR at the time, Russia's actions had "surprised everyone." Nevertheless, responding to a request for options from US European Command, its staff quickly came up with a plan to demonstrate American commitment that could be executed immediately. On 22 April, the Defense Department announced that a company of Soldiers from the 173d Airborne Brigade would be arriving in Poland the next day to participate in training exercises with the Polish army. Three other companies of the brigade arrived in the Baltic states shortly thereafter, bringing the total number of US Soldiers in Eastern Europe to about 600. The paratroopers not only took part in bilateral exercises, they also began laying the groundwork for a continuing American presence. This involved forming relationships with their host nations and dealing with practical challenges ranging from identifying facilities to serve as maintenance bays and motor pools to figuring out how to get mail delivered to working out training support agreements.[7]

At the same time, USAREUR was developing plans for the eventual replacement of these troops and for the future. Using only the few Europe-based units for a presence mission was not sustainable in the long term, so the Army turned to another source. In order to assuage concerns about its removal of the Army's last armored forces from Europe, the Defense Department had indicated in 2012 that it would eventually begin rotating battalion-sized units from US-based heavy brigades through Europe. This plan meshed with the concept of Regionally Aligned Forces (RAF) introduced by Chief of Staff

of the Army General Raymond T. Odierno that same year, according to which units based in the United States would be aligned with specific geographic combatant commands and therefore able to build regional awareness and train for specific missions. The Army had designated the 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, as the first European Rotational Force, and in late spring 2014, the brigade had supplied troops for an exercise in Germany who were equipped largely by means of the European Activity Set (EAS) – a group of tanks, Bradley fighting vehicles, and other equipment the Army had recently prepositioned at Grafenwöhr to support rotational forces. The service now tapped the armored brigade's second rotation to replace the 173d Airborne Brigade paratroopers in Eastern Europe. In September, some 800 Soldiers arrived in Europe, this time with their tanks, vehicles, and other equipment in tow, for several months of supporting an effort that now bore the name Operation Atlantic Resolve.[8]

Figure 19.2 Accompanied by officers from the 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, Lieutenant General Ben Hodges talks with Major General Almantas Leika, commanding general, Lithuanian Land Forces, in November 2014 in Rukla, Lithuania. Photo courtesy of US Army.

While US Soldiers were reassuring NATO allies on the ground, the Obama administration was signaling American support in other ways. Reiterating the commitment of the United States to the security and "territorial integrity" of its allies and avowing that it would "continue to take actions that increase the capability, readiness, and responsiveness of NATO forces to address any threat and that aid in deterring further destabilizing activities," the White House in June announced that it would ask Congress to fund a European Reassurance Initiative (ERI) of up to $1 billion as part of the Defense Department's Fiscal Year 2015 Overseas Contingency Operations funding request. The ERI money would finance exercises, training, and a rotational presence for US military forces, as well as other efforts to support American allies and non-NATO partners such as Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine.[9] Additional evidence that the security environment had changed came in early September. Although NATO had already been

planning for the end of the alliance's ISAF mission in Afghanistan in 2014, Russia's actions in Ukraine further altered its calculus. At a summit in Wales, the leaders of NATO nations strongly reaffirmed the alliance's original commitment to collective defense.

The change of command at US Army Europe in early November 2014 thus occurred at something of an inflection point for the United States in Europe. Lieutenant General Donald M. Campbell, Jr. had guided the Army's immediate response to Russia's moves in Ukraine. But it was becoming clear as he departed USAREUR that the threat from Russia was not going away, and this initial response had been only the beginning of an effort that would continue for the foreseeable future. The strategic environment had changed, as had the goals of the United States. The Obama administration had made that clear in its firm response to Russia's actions.

The command General Hodges took over was therefore one in transition, and he was very aware of this. For the previous two years, he had served in Izmir, Turkey, as commander of NATO's Allied Land Command (LANDCOM), an organization charged with land force planning whose responsibilities included ensuring the readiness and interoperability of all NATO forces. Hodges knew that USAREUR had been "shrinking as fast as possible." His position also had given him a front row seat to Russia's annexation of Crimea and invasion of Ukraine and to the changing climate in Europe. Moreover, he already had been in regular contact with his new superior, the commander of US European Command, General Philip M. Breedlove, who had also been his boss at LANDCOM, although in his capacity as Supreme Allied Commander Europe.[10]

General Hodges laid out his assessment of the situation in Europe and his understanding of his mission at USAREUR as soon as he arrived. In his initial remarks upon taking command, Hodges stressed support for the NATO alliance, cited the danger posed by "a resurgent Russia that has illegally annexed Crimea and which threatens our friends and allies," and pointed to the command's important role in reassuring US allies and deterring Russia from further aggression. He also immediately added an addendum to the Army's current "Army Strong" slogan, so that "Army Strong, Strong Europe" became USAREUR's guiding principle.[11]

The next step was adapting the command to its new mission. Ultimately, Hodges decided that a strategic shift back to deterrence would require a renewed emphasis on readiness, both a mindset to be ready to "fight tonight" in Europe and the capability to respond effectively to counter any future Russian aggression. He concluded, further, that despite the fact that USAREUR was "disappearing," he would find a way to accomplish his mission using the resources he had. He eventually distilled his approach into the idea that USAREUR would "make 30,000 Soldiers look and feel like 300,000" and identified five major "pillars" that would help him do this: America's allies and partners, the National Guard and Reserves, the RAF contingents and prepositioned stocks, the leadership of young officers and NCOs, and – drawing on and linking all of these elements – something Hodges called "dynamic presence," that is, the Army would be "super active everywhere."[12]

In reaching this decision, Hodges was influenced by his own experiences and priorities, as well as by his understanding of the Army's capabilities in Europe and its budget realities. He arrived at USAREUR with a deep appreciation for NATO. As the commander of LANDCOM, he had built relationships with most of the foreign military leaders and other individuals he would need to interact with in his new position. He understood NATO's command structure and its force structure. In addition, he had thought about the US Army's relationship to NATO and believed the United States had a crucial role to play in the alliance. "While I was at LANDCOM, and when I realized I was coming [to USAREUR]," he later remembered, "I said, 'The United States Army has got to be in the *fabric* of NATO, not just watching them, hoping that they do well.' Because, if there's ever a crisis, we're going to be in the middle of it, even before it gets to Article 5" – that is, a political decision by its members as to how

they would respond to an attack on an ally. Like the militaries of most alliance members, American Soldiers tended to view NATO as an entity separate and distinct from their own armed forces. Hodges thought this should change.[13]

His views on NATO, as well as his understanding of political-military relations and ideas on senior-level leadership, could be traced back in part to his service from 1995 to 1997 as aide-de-camp to GEN George A. Joulwan, who was then commander of US European Command and Supreme Allied Commander Europe. In mid-1995, a peace agreement ending the war that had ravaged Bosnia-Herzogovina laid the groundwork for the deployment of a multinational Implementation Force (IFOR), led by General Joulwan, to help maintain the peace. Comprising nearly 50,000 troops, the force included contingents from both NATO and non-NATO countries, including Russia – an historic development so soon after the Cold War. This composition necessitated a special command and control structure, and Joulwan was personally involved in arranging for a Russian general to serve as his Deputy for Russian Forces in IFOR. In addition, an IFOR coordination center facilitated the integration of all non-NATO countries into the peacekeeping operation. "It was an incredible experience being there with General Joulwan," Hodges said later. Hodges had been a careful observer – watching who did what, how things happened, and how Joulwan handled relationships. "He had served a lot in Europe as a junior and senior officer and understood the full range of what was required," Hodges noted in 2017. "I imagine I do something every single day that is a direct or indirect result of my time with him."[14]

Hodges' memories of time spent in Germany in the 1980s as a young Soldier straight out of West Point also shaped his thinking. "I remembered from when I was a lieutenant, what it was like in Germany when the focus was on deterrence . . . the large Canadian units, huge British units, huge German units, and a gigantic American presence here," he recalled. "And we trained all the time, we focused on camouflage, we focused on readiness tests. And so I thought, all right, we're going to have to do all that stuff again. We're going to have to bring back those things that were essential to deterrence. Even more so maybe than in the past because we only had 30,000 people, and we had ten times more space in which to operate."[15]

Indeed, the challenge for USAREUR was not just the need to again contend with Russia, but to do more with less. The amount of territory and length of the border the command would have to help defend had increased considerably since 1991, due to NATO's expansion. That border had also moved hundreds of miles east. Both it and the Russian forces just across it were far from where US troops were clustered in central Europe.

As he considered how to accomplish his mission to "deter Russia, assure allies, and protect US interests," Hodges knew he could count on support from RAF contingents for a portion of each year. Furthermore, during the summer of 2014, the staff at USAREUR headquarters had responded to a quick turnaround tasker from US European Command to produce a plan for using ERI funds in FY 2015. US Army Europe would likely have money to spend. Yet the fact remained that the Army's presence in Europe was a fraction of what it had been during the Cold War. American combat forces permanently stationed in Europe included only the 2d Cavalry Regiment, 173d Airborne Brigade, and 12th Combat Aviation Brigade. Hodges knew, moreover, that his aviation brigade was about to become a victim of the Aviation Restructuring Initiative the Army had developed to cope with budget cuts. Although General Campbell had fought the decision tenaciously, the Army would announce in April 2015 that the brigade was to be restructured, eliminating about 1,900 military positions and shrinking the size of its helicopter fleet. Anticipated cuts would leave just 800 Soldiers stationed in Europe, along with 64 helicopters, among them 24 Apaches, ten UH-60 Black Hawks, and eight CH-47 Chinooks. The service planned to compensate for the reduction by providing a persistent rotational presence consisting of an aviation battalion task force, two medical evacuation teams, and an air traffic service company rotated

to Europe on nine-month deployments. Hodges later noted that it was not until he got to USAREUR that he really started to appreciate "how little we actually had" compared to the "scope and scale of what we were doing." But he was also very cognizant of Campbell's experience in trying to resist the Army's plans for the 12th Combat Aviation Brigade. There had been no give. Aviation was expensive, and the service needed to cut its budget. "So I internalized that," he said.[16]

The slogan that USAREUR would have to "make 30,000 Soldiers look and feel like 300,000," then, was partly an effort to provide guidance for those serving under him. Even more, however, it was a message for the Pentagon. "I didn't want to be seen as us over here crying and whining, and 'We don't have enough stuff,'" Hodges said. "I knew the Chief of Staff of the Army was going to give us everything he possibly could within what he had, but whether I had it or not, we were still going to be expected to accomplish our mission. So 'making 30,000 look and feel like 300,000' was, in effect, us saying to the Army, 'This is how we're going to heal ourself.'" As long as the Army would enable him to lean on the "five pillars," Hodges tried to make clear, he believed the command could succeed.[17]

Figure 19.3 Sergeant Jose Depaz, 615th Military Policy Company, speaks to the Polish media in Warsaw, Poland in March 2015. The 615th Military Police Company was escorting the 2d Cavalry Regiment during Operation Dragoon Ride. Photo courtesy of the US Army.

Central to the concept of "making 30,000 Soldiers look and feel like 300,000" was the idea of "dynamic presence." Hodges wanted to ensure that the American flag was everywhere. One of the most visible examples of this approach occurred early in Hodges' tenure. When the USAREUR staff was discussing how to return some 500 Soldiers from the 2d Cavalry Regiment and their wheeled Stryker vehicles back to Vilseck after they completed a three-month rotation in Eastern Europe in late March 2015, Hodges decided they should drive. The plan was for convoys originating in Estonia, Lithuania, and Poland to converge in the Czech Republic and then head home to Germany. They would be supported

by helicopters from the 12th Combat Aviation Brigade and other NATO air assets. Making the US presence palpable to its allies, the operation would also demonstrate Army capabilities and hence serve as a counterpoise to large-scale training exercises the Russian armed forces had been conducting in western Russia. Described by the *New York Times* as "part public relations event, part training exercise, part shot across the Russian bow," the 1,100-mile road march dubbed Operation Dragoon Ride had its risks, even apart from the challenge of moving 60 Strykers and a few dozen other vehicles such a distance. If any of the vehicles broke down or Soldier discipline was poor, the operation would have the opposite effect of that intended, namely, it would suggest the Army was not ready. Hodges had also been warned that although people in the Baltic states and Poland would be happy to see US troops, the Czech Republic would not be as welcoming. Not all Czechs preferred NATO to Russia.[18]

Hodges, however, deemed the operation a success. The Soldiers "crushed it," he said. And in Eastern Europe, families, school children, and pensioners all turned out to greet the Americans and examine their equipment. Despite a smattering of protests, this was true even in the Czech Republic. The Army's message was apparent to at least some East Europeans. "It gives us all comfort to see these American Soldiers and to know they are here for us," one Polish woman told a reporter. Overall, Hodges felt Operation Dragoon Ride had achieved its goals. "Nobody would have seen Strykers on a train moving through the night," he pointed out. "You would have never known they were there. But when you count the hundreds of little towns and villages that they went through, from Estonia all the way through, that presence" – that made a difference.[19]

On the whole, there was an uptick in the number of Army exercises in Europe. A commitment to maintaining a dynamic presence, Hodges explained, meant that he never refused an exercise opportunity, "even if it's a platoon of M[ilitary] P[olice] rolling down into Macedonia for an exercise, or a Patriot battery commanded by a captain that goes twelve hundred kilometers from Baumholder, [Germany], up to Warsaw, [Poland], on a no-notice exercise."[20] Army units participated in exercises ranging from small bilateral events focused on a particular capability, such as fires or communications, to undertakings of great complexity spread across multiple countries and involving more than a dozen nations and including air, naval, and special operations components. In June 2016, for instance, two dozen countries contributed some 31,000 military personnel and thousands of vehicles to a Polish-led joint exercise in northeastern Europe called Anakonda 16. The largest exercise executed to date, it encompassed not only air assault, airborne, air defense, and bridging operations, but a variety of other training activities, among them cyber warfare, chemical decontamination, and medical evacuation exercises. American units involved included elements of virtually all of the Army's European-based maneuver and enabler units, as well as contingents from USAREUR's RAF brigade, the 82d Airborne Division, and multiple US National Guard and Reserve units.[21]

These ongoing activities were, in fact, at the heart of Operation Atlantic Resolve, which Hodges described in October 2015 as "a continuous series of partnership and training exercises along NATO's eastern flank . . . designed to assure allies and improve an already powerful land power network."[22] Although even the Department of Defense regularly referred to the US military's efforts in Eastern Europe as Operation Atlantic Resolve, it was not, officially, a named operation, with the sustained funding, force allocation priorities, and other benefits the designation conferred. General Breedlove and General Hodges pushed for this recognition, which Breedlove explained to the House Armed Services Committee in early 2016 would give Atlantic Resolve "more stability and long term focus," but the Joint Staff and Defense Department resisted the move.[23] The geographic scope of Operation Atlantic Resolve nevertheless gradually increased. While its initial focus had been northeastern Europe, where NATO's most vulnerable members were located, the United States announced in February 2015 that it would soon expand into southeastern Europe. In March, Soldiers from the 173d Airborne Brigade and 2d Cavalry Regiment conducted an early-entry training exercise with the Romanian military, marking the

start of periodic training rotations to Romania and Bulgaria. Later that year, troops from USAREUR's new RAF, the 1st Brigade Combat Team, 3d Infantry Division, arrived in Hungary to initiate periodic training rotations with local forces there.[24] Eventually, USAREUR divided Operation Atlantic Resolve into three geographic components: AR North, AR Central, and AR South.

Figure 19.4 Paratroopers from the 173d Airborne Brigade, as well as Soldiers from the US 3d Infantry Division and the Georgian 1st Infantry Brigade conduct close quarters battle drill training during Exercise Noble Partner on 13 May 2015. Photo courtesy of the US Army.

The changed security environment also shaped the character of USAREUR's exercise program and its training goals. For much of the 2000s, the command had concentrated on pre-deployment training for its East European allies and partners heading to Afghanistan to assist in counterinsurgency operations. Now, it started to train with an eye to Russia and the intelligence the United States and its allies were gleaning from monitoring the conflict in eastern Ukraine. Concerns about what the US military called "hybrid warfare" led to a renewed emphasis on preparing Soldiers for all conflict scenarios, from special operations to fighting a major war with large, massed forces against a near-peer adversary. The command reintegrated tanks and heavy artillery into training plans, while also adding elements such as drones, electronic warfare, and cyber operations. After years of centering its attention elsewhere, USAREUR also again began staging meaningful exercises with its long-time West European NATO allies, whose defense capabilities were deep and diverse, while still assisting and integrating East European forces whose smaller budgets and necessarily limited capabilities restricted what they could contribute to combined operations.[25]

The many multinational exercises reflected the commitment of the United States to its allies and partners, but they also underscored the importance of these allies and partners to USAREUR's ability to accomplish its mission. American troops relied on host nations and other allies to provide barracks,

ranges, and related facilities, as well as trucks, bridges, and other equipment. In short, they supplied critical assistance that helped make US deployments possible and more affordable. Still, this assistance was less consequential than another element of the relationship. To truly build a "strong Europe," the US Army and its allies needed to be able to fight alongside one another. The Army's current strength in Europe clearly prohibited it from carrying the full burden of deterrence by itself, and any future conflict between NATO and Russia would demand that US and European forces function as a team. Strengthening the military capabilities of American allies and partners was therefore in the interests of the United States. Beyond this, a principal objective of all exercises was to improve interoperability. Troops needed to train together in order to assess and bridge differences in doctrine, procedures, and capabilities; to ensure radios and other equipment were compatible; and to identify and overcome other less obvious obstacles to efficient combined operations – impediments that might be as simple but potentially deadly as culturally distinct hand signals. It meant learning to operate as an integrated force and establishing solid relationships that would facilitate any rapid response to a crisis. The many bilateral and multinational exercises thus were designed not only to demonstrate US support for the NATO alliance, but also to help the United States and its allies and partners improve their ability to fight together at all levels.[26]

Strengthening bonds with partners and allies was something General Hodges took seriously and made a priority. In 2017, he estimated that he was spending about 60 percent of his time on this effort. Having arrived at USAREUR from LANDCOM with some relationships already in place, he continued to cultivate personal ties with foreign military officers and routinely traveled throughout Europe to meet with allied leaders and the Army's representatives in other countries in order "to explain, to find out, to understand." Some smaller exercises and components of larger exercises were a direct result of conversations Hodges had with the defense chiefs of other countries. Asking how the Army could help their militaries get better or more interoperable or attain some other goal they thought was desirable, he would promise support, then leave it to his staff to make it happen. Hodges was candid with his staff, telling them he would always say "yes." Responsiveness to allies shortened some exercise planning timelines and set a high bar for a staff shouldering a heavy load due to Pentagon-mandated cuts in the size of headquarters across the Army.[27]

For General Hodges, however, relationship building was not just about reaching out to others. He also tried to build a command headquarters that was transparent and more interconnected with its allies. Although USAREUR had long hosted liaison officers from Germany and Great Britain, Hodges invited Denmark, France, Greece, Italy, and other allies to send representatives to the command. Their full participation in USAREUR activities was circumscribed by certain classification restrictions, but they were given a separate space in its mission control center and integrated into the work there. The arrangement offered the liaison officers insight into what the US Army was thinking and doing, while the command benefitted from the access they could provide and the first-hand knowledge they brought about their home countries. Hodges also asked the Canadian and British armies to provide officers to serve on his personal staff, in his Commanding General's Initiatives Group, to "help us be smarter and understand."[28] This action complemented the Army's earlier decision to invite the German Bundeswehr to supply USAREUR's chief of staff. Brigadier General Markus T. Laubenthal had assumed this position shortly before Hodges arrived, and the arrangement functioned well enough that Brigadier General Kai R. Rohrschneider succeeded him in early 2017.

In building a more multinational headquarters, Hodges was drawing on lessons learned in his previous assignments. He recalled that at LANDCOM, the American contingent had comprised just a small part of a staff that also included Brits, Germans, Turks, and others. He had noticed the difference, and it influenced his thinking. In addition, he believed that given NATO's plans for defending Europe – including efforts underway in early 2017 to build multinational military formations in Eastern Europe – the change was not really optional. "This is not like, 'Hey, wouldn't it be cool to do this,'" he argued. "This is

essential." Part of the cultural change needed, he added, was recognizing that "we really are an alliance, and you've got to change some things about how you do stuff" in order to be able to fight on short notice. He pointed out that when deploying to Afghanistan and Iraq in recent years, people knew well in advance that they would be going and that when they got there, phones would be set up and an entire infrastructure would be waiting. "But if we have a crisis here in Europe," he continued, "we're going to have five to seven days unambiguous warning, and you're not going to be falling in on anything. You're going to have units coming together – multinational formations that literally have to plug and play and be able to operate right away. And, you know, it's been so hard even when you know where you're going. On that kind of notice, it's a little bit extra layer of difficulty. So that's part of this."[29]

If USAEUR realized it could not carry out its mission to assure and deter without the practical assistance of American allies, the command turned to the National Guard and Reserves for the same reason. The National Guard had been active in Eastern Europe for many years. In 1993, shortly after the fall of the Soviet Union, the Defense Department had set up a State Partnership Program that paired US state National Guards with newly independent former Soviet republics to aid them in establishing professional, civilian-controlled militaries. The Baltic states were the first of many countries to sign up and developed strong institutional and personal ties with their state partners. Already in the spring of 2014, Latvia had been quick to reach out to its partner, the Michigan National Guard, for support. With little long-term presence of its own in Eastern Europe, USAREUR benefitted from the Guard's ongoing activities and leveraged their existing relationships when working with allied and partner countries.[30]

The Army's reserve component also supported US Army Europe in other ways. Individual augmentees from the Army Reserves filled positions left vacant by forward-deployed personnel. More importantly, Reserve and Guard Soldiers and units provided both additional manpower and expanded capabilities, the latter due partly to the fact that a large percentage of the Army's engineer, military police, and logistics troops were in the reserve component. In June 2015, for instance, the 194th Engineer Brigade of the Tennessee National Guard shipped hundreds of bulldozers, dump trucks, graders, and other pieces of equipment to southeastern Europe. During the following six months, 1,000 Soldiers from Alabama and Tennessee worked in 22-day rotations on infrastructure projects in Hungary, Bulgaria, and Romania, building roads, ammunition storage areas, and equipment shelters and completing other projects. In 2016, the brigade returned for similar work. That same year, the 365th Expeditionary Sustainment Command based in Maryville, Washington, served as the forward sustainment headquarters for Exercise Anakonda 16, reporting to the 21st Theater Sustainment Command and leading an interwoven mix of Guard, Reserve, and active component units. Some 50 Soldiers from the North Carolina National Guard's 5th Battalion, 113th Field Artillery Regiment (High Mobility Artillery Rocket System), deployed for Exercise Anakonda 16 as well, as did the Missouri National Guard's 3175th Military Police Company, which led convoys and provided convoy security. Later that summer, over 1,100 Soldiers from the 116th Cavalry Brigade Combat Team based in Boise, Idaho, traveled to Romania to participate for two weeks in Exercise Saber Guardian 2016, marking the first time since the Cold War that a substantial part of a National Guard maneuver brigade had deployed to Europe for an exercise.[31]

In addition to meeting USAREUR's immediate needs, the contributions of Guard and Reserve personnel promised longer-term benefits. For the Army's reserve component, exercises in Europe offered overseas deployment training opportunities – largely on USAREUR's dime – that could not be replicated at home. Familiarizing troops with terrain where fighting might actually occur, the exercises also required them to work with the Army's active component and allied forces. The 113th Field Artillery Regiment's commander pointed to another advantage of his unit deploying for Exercise Anakonda 16, noting, "It promotes Army interoperability through interaction with foreign artillery officers, noncommissioned officers and their weapons systems." In the long run, all of this meant that should USAREUR need to call on them on short notice, reserve personnel would be better prepared to contribute.[32]

Overall, reserve component support to USAREUR increased significantly from 2014 to 2017. The number of individuals participating in overseas deployment training in the command's area of operations in Fiscal Year (FY) 2016, for example, was double that of FY 2015. In FY 2016, more than 12,000 Soldiers completed tours in Europe, and USAREUR officials expected the final total for FY 2017 to be higher still.

US Army Europe's ability to bring in such a large quantity of National Guard and Reserve troops ultimately could be traced back to the decision of Congress in 2014 to fund the Obama administration's proposed European Reassurance Initiative. "Without ERI, none of this is happening," General Hodges asserted in early 2017. "ERI is like oxygen. We would be a fish flopping on a dock if we didn't have ERI." The Army's ERI appropriation was $438.9 million in FY 2015 and grew to $504.4 million the following year. Looking ahead to FY 2017, the Obama administration submitted a budget request to Congress in 2016 that asked for an exponential increase in ERI funding, with more than $2.8 billion earmarked for the Army. Hodges was well aware of his dependence on this revenue source, and well aware of who made it possible. Accordingly, he made a point of communicating its importance to every congressional and staff delegation that came through Europe. After impressing them with an introduction to all of the things the command was doing, he would explain their own role. "I say, 'None of that happens without ERI.' Base budget keeps the lights on, lets us go to the range every year . . . that's pretty much it. Without ERI, none of this happens."[33]

Besides financing the growth in reserve component deployments and paying for assorted infrastructure improvements and a portion of the expenses related to training and exercises, ERI funded the Army's ability to steadily expand its use of Regionally Aligned Forces to amplify its presence in Europe.[34] The first RAF Soldiers to deploy in support of Operation Atlantic Resolve had arrived in the fall of 2014 just weeks before General Hodges took command, and he continued to rely on RAF units to supplement the forces at his disposal going forward. Early in 2015, USAREUR called upon the regionally-aligned division-level headquarters for Europe to help it address its need for an intermediate-level headquarters. In February, the 4th Infantry Division deployed a Mission Command Element to Germany composed of about 100 Soldiers to assume command and control responsibility for all US land forces in Operation Atlantic Resolve.[35] Rotations of RAF units also continued to cycle through the Baltic states and Poland, alternating with troops from the 2d Cavalry Regiment and 173d Airborne Brigade. They periodically participated in exercises elsewhere in Europe, too, often using European Activity Set equipment while they were there.[36]

Over time, USAREUR took advantage of ERI funding to broaden its original concept for employing RAF forces. While early rotations involved battalion-sized contingents deploying for just a few months, the Army gradually expanded both the number of troops involved and the duration of their stay until in 2016 most of the 1st Brigade Combat Team, 3d Infantry Division, deployed for six months.[37] In January 2017, the 3d Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, arrived in Europe from Fort Carson, Colorado, for a nine-month deployment with a full complement of some 3,500 Soldiers and all of its tanks, vehicles, and other equipment. The brigade's appearance marked the launch of the Army's new plan for continuous, back-to-back, nine-month rotations of US-based heavy brigades. Henceforth, Europe would be home to three Army combat brigades – infantry, Stryker, and armored – at all times. Shortly thereafter, the 10th Combat Aviation Brigade arrived in Europe from Fort Drum, New York, to begin its own nine-month deployment with about 1,800 personnel and 50 Blackhawk and 10 Chinook helicopters. An aviation battalion from Fort Bliss, Texas, was attached to the brigade as well, contributing 24 Apache helicopters and another 400 Soldiers.[38] Like the 4th Infantry Division's 3d Brigade, the aviation assets were intended to boost American combat power in Eastern Europe, while also rehearsing and demonstrating the Army's ability to rapidly deploy units based in the United States.

The Army also used ERI funds to increase its prepositioned stocks in Europe and thereby enable a more nimble response to a crisis, should it need to deploy a large combat force quickly. Since 2014, USAREUR had expanded the size of its original European Activity Set from roughly a battalion's worth of equipment to enough materiel to equip a brigade. The command had also moved it from Germany to forward locations in Eastern Europe. In September 2016, the Army began shipping additional vehicles, ammunition, and other equipment from the United States to Europe, with the intent of consolidating these with the EAS and positioning them in Belgium, Germany, and the Netherlands. In total, the prepositioned stocks would be sufficient to support a force the size of an armored division.[39]

If shipping this materiel to Europe was an obvious sign of American intentions, other related changes were more subtle. Early in the fall of 2015, USAREUR had started painting its tanks and other vehicles woodland green, a decision that was as much strategic as it was a manifestation of the Army's need to operate in a new environment after years of fighting in the desert. By way of explanation, Hodges recalled showing a briefing video to a Navy friend that depicted brown tanks being unloaded from a ship in a European port. Why, the friend had asked, were the tanks brown? "Nothing says temporary like a brown tank in Europe," he pointed out. Soon after, the command initiated an effort to gradually repaint its vehicles and other equipment.[40]

A common thread running through all of US Army Europe's efforts in Eastern Europe was the vital role played by junior officers. Because USAREUR was deploying a limited number of troops across a vast territory both for specific exercises and as a longer-term reassurance presence, they were necessarily spread thin. The command therefore placed a considerable amount of responsibility on its young officers and NCOs and depended on them to do their jobs well, even as it added a dimension to their skill set that would be impossible to teach in the United States. General Hodges frequently called USAREUR a "leadership lab." Junior leaders sent to Estonia, Poland, and other countries had to learn to coordinate and collaborate with foreign training partners, solve immediate logistical problems, and tackle other real-life challenges like moving convoys across international borders during road marches such as Operation Dragoon Ride. In some countries, captains were the senior American commanders present and became *de facto* diplomats and US Army spokespersons, dealing with the host nation armed forces and government officials, as well as with the local, and sometimes international, press. "You've got junior officers and non-commissioned officers who are put in places where it's not uncommon for the ambassador, prime minister or defense minister of that country to know a captain by his first name," Hodges noted in 2015. "That's how much interaction they have. These young leaders have to understand what's going on around them in terms of the political situation of the host nation. They have to be confidant to explain things to an ambassador."[41]

Messaging from the top became even more important under these conditions. "I believe in over-communicating," Hodges said, adding that he wanted "every lieutenant, every sergeant, every colonel" to be confident that they knew his priorities and objectives. He cited, as well, the influential role played in this regard by the brigade commanders in Europe, who emphasized these themes with their troops. After regularly reading interviews that convinced him his Soldiers were getting the message, Hodges in 2017 also maintained that "most of the time they're saying it better than if I'd written it and said, 'Here, please say this.'"[42]

General Hodges' attention to messaging extended beyond the troops under his command. He recognized that some observers in Washington – members of Congress, national security experts, the press, and sometimes even other Army officers and officials – did not fully understand what was happening in Europe or had outdated notions. This problem was not helped by the multiplicity of organizations on the continent and the Army's usual alphabet soup of acronym designations. The slogans Hodges used – "strong Europe," "fight tonight," and the like – were therefore intended to simplify his message for

outsiders as well to serve as leadership tools. Another example of this effort to enhance understanding was his decision to unify the multiple training organizations located at Grafenwöhr and nearby Hohenfels, Germany, under the historical name 7th Army Training Command.[43]

Although by early 2017 US Army Europe had found ways to compensate for its limited supply of troops and facilities and had made strides in helping to prepare American and allied units to fight as they might need to in an actual conflict, the command's efforts to build a "strong Europe" that went beyond a mindset remained a work in progress. In particular, the many exercises and other training initiatives had revealed a variety of obstacles that continued to inhibit the interoperability of US and allied units and impair the Army's ability to respond quickly to any crisis along NATO's eastern rim. Hodges suggested, for instance, that USAREUR was "still maddeningly far away from where I think we ought to be" with respect to the interoperability of communications systems, though progress had been made in terms of technology. He was also unhappy that classification barriers continued to restrict full access to US information for even selected foreign officers from close allies.[44]

Freedom of movement also remained a challenge. Late in the Cold War, the Army had benefitted from a relatively limited field of vision in Europe. American Soldiers were concentrated mostly in West Germany, governed by a status of forces agreement, and intimately familiar with both the country's road network and the terrain along its border. The service's recent experiences in Iraq and Afghanistan, where it had generally dominated the highways, also had not prepared it for the complications posed by Operation Atlantic Resolve. In Eastern Europe and elsewhere, the Army found itself dealing with an array of sovereign nations. Each country had its own – sometimes frustratingly long – timeline for processing diplomatic clearance requests to move into or transit its territory, as well as unique procedures and requirements for handling matters such as transporting hazardous materials and permitting oversized vehicles. In January 2015, for example, it took just two days to secure diplomatic clearance from Lithuania, but 30 days to obtain the same permission from Poland and Estonia. Comparing the challenge faced by USAREUR during the Cold War, with 300,000 troops based in Western Europe, and the current situation, with 30,000 Soldiers responsible for defending a border hundreds of miles away, Colonel Ameed D. Micko, Chief of the Mobility Operations Division of USAREUR's G-4, recited the command's shorthand assessment: where previously USAREUR had "macro logistics, but micro distances," it now had "micro logistics, but macro distances."[45]

For General Hodges and US Army Europe, dealing with these circumstances was a learning experience. An initial step was simply identifying what the assorted requirements were. Sometimes that involved first determining who had authority over the rules. "I screwed up," Hodges admitted. "I was focused on the ministers of defense, and then I found out it's the other ministries that control the borders." In fact, an ally's military might be just as frustrated by the complications and delays caused by its own national bureaucracy. In some countries, changes required an act of parliament. Once the Army had a clear picture of the specific requirements in each country, it could factor those details into its logistical plans for troops and equipment, while also working to modify regulations and processes that hampered efficient movement. Although USAREUR reached out to NATO for assistance in coordinating allied movements and establishing common requirements and processes (thus finding itself in the unusual position of a service component working directly with NATO), the alliance's long decision timelines and limited staffing in the absence of an imminent threat or actual war meant that the command was also always dealing directly with individual countries. By early 2017, USAREUR had reduced or eliminated some of the problems. But creating a military "Schengen Zone," which would enable free movement throughout Europe like that enjoyed by citizens of the European Union, without border controls, remained one of Hodges' objectives. "Today," he pointed out, "a refugee can move across Europe more easily than a NATO convey."[46]

By then, both NATO and the United States were also speaking of a shift from an emphasis on reassurance to that of deterrence, which made speed of movement even more important. If large numbers of NATO troops were not stationed in Eastern Europe and the alliance could not assemble a significant combat force quickly enough to respond to a Russian threat, deterrence was not a meaningful strategy. This concern was part of the impetus behind USAREUR's increased focus on infrastructure challenges, which, like bureaucratic delays, could impede rapid assembly. The wide turning radius of some Army vehicles, for instance, prevented them from traveling on certain roads. Weight was also an issue, most notably when moving tanks on heavy equipment transports. "When you get into northern Romania, or northern Hungary, or Slovakia, you can imagine what those roads are," said Colonel Micko. "They might have one road that can actually handle that type of weight, when you're talking 80 tons going down a highway." Bridges, too, might not be strong enough – if a country even knew what a bridge's weight-bearing capacity was. Moreover, the railroad gauge in the Baltic states and other countries that formerly had belonged to the Soviet Union differed from that of most of the rest of Europe, requiring time-consuming transloading of materiel. [47]

To construct a better picture of usable transportation routes that could facilitate future planning and operations, the USAREUR staff began compiling information gleaned from units deployed as part of Operation Atlantic Resolve. To assess possibilities, they also sometimes directed these troops to use particular roads or to employ particular forms of transportation when moving equipment. Responsibility for filling in the details, working the issues, and developing mitigation strategies for problems that arose during preparations for exercises fell on a collection of teams that integrated personnel from USAREUR's Engineer Division, Security Cooperation Division, G-2, G-4, and other organizations across the command. By 2017, USAREUR had addressed many of the "hair on fire" issues that the Army's immediate response to the Ukraine crisis had exposed, and it was starting to think more deliberately about long-term needs and planning accordingly.[48]

Solving logistical problems could be taxing and time-consuming for USAREUR, but the silver lining was the relationships the process fostered between the command and the allies and partners of the United States. It was not trying to fix the problems by itself. "I've done more interaction with other countries here than I've done in 23 years of service," Colonel Micko observed. And he believed they were just as intent on achieving results as he was. "It's important to them, for obvious reasons." As an example, he cited Poland. "They're laser-focused on what needs to happen. And so is everybody else. They understand what is at stake."[49]

"We are — the doctrinal phrase — 'economy of force.' I think that would be safe to say," Hodges reflected as he neared the end of his tenure in Europe. "And it's exciting. Professionally, I love it." But, he added, "I have a knot in my stomach all the time that, if deterrence fails, we do not have enough on the ground now – capabilities, munitions. If deterrence fails, it will be a real challenge until the US Army mobilizes and everything starts coming over again. So that's why we're working so hard to make sure deterrence doesn't fail."[50]

To date, Hodges had been largely successful in transforming the culture at USAREUR to refocus on readiness. He also had benefitted from the fact that both General Odierno and his successor as Chief of Staff of the Army, General Mark A. Milley, recognized that Russia was a threat and that the Army could not ignore Europe. The Army, as Hodges put it, "leaned into us."[51] The downsizing in Europe had, for the most part, stopped. And resources, in terms of both funding and forces, were increasing. Overall, in trying to make "30,000 Soldiers look and feel like 300,000," Hodges had put the resources at his disposal to good use. During his watch, USAREUR had overseen a highly visible expansion of American activity in Europe, deepening cooperation with NATO allies and non-NATO partners, and real growth in the quantity of US Soldiers and equipment in Europe. It had also improved the readiness of troops who would need to fight any future war in Europe in lockstep with their allies.

Even with the recent arrival of both an armored brigade and an aviation brigade, however, Army strength in Europe was still a tiny proportion of what it had been at the height of the Cold War. And ongoing troop movements and exercises had made clear that certain obstacles still challenged the ability of the Army and its allies not only to deter, but also to defend against further Russian aggression. Whether the approach to the "deter, assure, and protect" mission adopted by General Hodges – and ultimately by the Army – would be successful in the long run still remained to be seen.

Notes

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Chapter 20

Pacific Pathways: Phase Zero Operations Under a New Four Star Command

Lieutenant Colonel Eric M. Nager

Figure 20.1 PVT Darrell Enger, 2d Platoon, C Company, 2d Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2d Infantry Division, conducts a dismounted patrol with Malaysian Army Soldiers during counter-IED training at Kem Desa Pahlawan, Malaysia, 20 September 2014 during bilateral exercise Keris Strike 14, part of Pacific Pathways. Photo courtesy of Defense Video & Imagery Distribution System.

The United States Army has had a continuous presence in the Pacific for 119 years. Ever since the Spanish-American War of 1898 when Guam and the Philippines came into US possession, the Army has maintained outposts west of the International Date Line. Since that time, the Army has engaged numerous conflicts, including the Chinese Relief Expedition, World War II, the Korean Conflict, and Vietnam War. Today, the US Army engages with 33 countries in the region annually in over 240 training events. Half of the world's population, 3.5 billion people, live within the Pacific Rim boundaries. This area includes 36 nations, some of the world's largest economies, and seven of the ten largest armies in the world. Stretching from the Maldives in the Indian Ocean to Washington State, the Pacific region measures 9,000 miles across and spans 16 time zones.

The theater army for this massive area is US Army Pacific (USARPAC). In 2013, the Army upgraded it to a four-star command. Multiple deployments to the Middle East forced USARPAC to place relations through exercises with allied nations essentially on hold for years. There was a growing need for the US to project power in the region. Combat units in the command had not trained together effectively for an extended period and budget restraints had slashed available resources. In short,

USARPAC faced immense challenges to Phase Zero operations; those characterized by joint and multinational engagements that shape a theater. USARPAC, however, successfully capitalized on the Rebalance to the Pacific and overcame many of these challenges, successfully reestablishing friendly relationships with several allies by elevating its headquarters to the four star-level and by implementing the innovative concept of Pacific Pathways.

Rebalance to the Pacific

No analysis of Pacific Pathways is complete without first placing it in context of the Rebalance to the Pacific. In late 2011 and early 2012, with US Army involvement in the Middle East winding down, the Obama Administration announced that the Asia-Pacific region would have a higher priority. The administration indicated that the Rebalance would involve all branches of the government, including the military. Per Secretary of Defense, Leon Panetta, the Rebalance rested upon four principals: following international rules and order, partnerships with our allied nations, presence in the region, and force projection. Phase Zero operations encompassed all four of these principals. Yet in an environment of shrinking military budgets, what did that mean in practice? For the Army in the Pacific, the first step meant gaining a four-star commanding general for the first time in nearly 40 years.

Lieutenant General Francis Wiercinski, the last three-star Commanding General of USARPAC, relates the roots of this significant development. Soon after taking command in 2011, Wiercinski attended a lunch hosted by Admiral Willard, Pacific Command (PACOM) Commander, in honor of US Senator Daniel Inouye of Hawaii. According to Wiercinski, Senator Inouye told him, "We're going to make you a four-star."[1] Wiercinski understood this to mean the position of USARPAC Commanding General rather than him personally. Such a major decision took courage from the respected senator. Lieutenant General (Ret) Wiercinski also credits the impetus of the Rebalance in creating the perfect storm for the headquarters elevation. General Vincent Brooks, the first four-star commander of USARPAC since 1974, took command in July of 2013. To him, the outcome has been good since "the gravity (of the position) is different." Commanding USARPAC as a four-star opened doors with other nations in the region that were not available to three-star commanders, as most nations in the Pacific have armies that are also commanded by four-star generals. Brooks notes the increased weight the headquarters elevation carries in Washington, DC, the improved relationship with PACOM and the Pentagon as additional advantages.[2]

Brigadier General Robert Ulses, the USARPAC G3, recalled several immediate and noticeable changes to the staff. The elevation to a four-star command had ripple effects throughout the entire command. Among these, the USARPAC Chief of Staff's billet became one for a major general when it had previously been occupied by a colonel. USARPAC also gained a foreign Deputy Commanding General, an Australian major general; and the 8th Theater Support Command commander, a major general, was designated Deputy Commanding General for Sustainment. Ulses became the first brigadier general G3 for the command.[3] Of these changes, General Brooks saw the Chief of Staff's upgrade as most significant because the increased rank gave the chief the ability to "harness competing activities" and focus the staff's attention. Under his direction, USARPAC headquarters personnel communicated daily with Washington in addition to participating in complex conversations with military officials in Japan and South Korea.[4]

USARPAC also grew in size as a four-star command, adding I Corps from Joint Base Lewis-McCord (JBLM), a three-star command that included two Brigade Combat Teams (BCT) as a result of the Rebalance. These units were "fenced off" from further Middle East rotations. USARPAC also acquired the 351st Civil Affairs Command from California, a one-star command with over 2,000 troops. Moreover, the Department of the Army at the time was cutting 25 percent out of the budget for two-star commands and up, but USARPAC only bore half of this brunt. Authorized manning levels increased on the Korean Peninsula.[5]

Phase Zero: Shaping the Theater

General Brooks recognized contradictions in the Pacific region. On the one hand, Pacific nations exhibited general opposition to US basing arrangement in their countries. On the other, strong demand existed for more interaction with the US Army from these nations. Additionally, Brooks felt US forces in the Pacific were misaligned. The legacy of conflict in the Pacific left these forces stationed in the northern Pacific, Japan and Korea, but with no land presence in Southeast Asia. Brooks wanted to change this and be in position to help protect strategic exits to the Indian Ocean through the Malacca Strait and the Sunda Islands.[6]

To remedy these perceived challenges, General Brooks reorganized his headquarters after taking command. Prior to his arrival, USARPAC acted as a tactical headquarters during Army operations in the Middle East. With those operations winding down, a change needed to occur. He also established a Special Effects Directorate (FXD) to focus externally on political and strategic communications.

USARPAC focused on the theater level perspective, thus creating space for I Corps as an operational headquarters. The 25th Infantry Division in Hawaii and Eighth Army in Korea transitioned into tactical headquarters, with the 25th Infantry Division being responsible for tactical operations outside of Japan and Korea. Brooks also designated two deputy commanding generals to focus outside the command, with each focusing on countries in the northern and southern regions of the theater respectively.[7]

Pacific Pathways

Other leaders within USARPAC thought about ways in which they could make Army forces in the Pacific more responsive, including Lieutenant General Robert Brown, the I Corps Commander. According to Brown, he held a brainstorming session with his staff after returning from Afghanistan in July 2012. They wanted to determine any gaps in their training, and identified a weakness with respect to Southeast Asia. In their view, not enough exercises occurred in that part of the theater and they wanted to increase that number.[8] To fill the void, a reservist on Brown's I Corps staff, Colonel William Steinkirchner, envisioned the Southeast Asia Theater Engagement Program (SEATEP). His idea called for shipping equipment and flying troops to perform two or three exercises in succession before returning. While in the area, these troops could respond to a crisis or contingency in another country, if necessary. Brown briefed the concept to Admiral Locklear, the PACOM Commander, and Lieutenant General Wiercinski. Both men liked the idea, but did not think the timing was right.[9]

Robinson was the USARPAC G5 Assistant Chief of Staff for Security Cooperation and Policy for the Indo Asia-Pacific. As such, he advised the commanding general on all aspects of engagements and outcomes with other countries in the theater. According to Robinson, on the day of the Brooks assumed command, he held eight bilateral meetings with representatives of regional armies in an attempt to establish better relationships.[10] According to Brooks, the most influential factor as he assumed command was his study of history. He realized that the "tyranny of distance" in the vast Pacific Ocean remained unchanged from 1898 when the Army first entered the region. In his previous command, Brooks had moved equipment by ship to the Middle East and had witnessed deck landing training where Army helicopters landed on ships.[11] The question Brooks asked himself when thinking about training and supporting exercises in the Pacific was how he could project power without creating new demands for funds or new activities, yet demonstrate Army commitment to the region as part of the Rebalance. Soon after taking command, he spoke with Colonels Matthew Kelley and James Robinson from his staff about creating a pattern of exercises and tying them together to have more "persistence." After posing the idea, he asked both men if it was possible.[12]

Exercises with many of these nations had been going on for years, but according to Colonel Kelley, the G7 in charge of the Exercise Division within USARPAC, these exercises were merely task oriented,

had no contingency capacity, and had small footprint. A unit flew to the host nation, performed the exercise, then it flew home. General Brooks wanted to use these exercises more effectively to respond to demands from US allies for increased involvement. He saw the exercises as being larger in scale.[13] Brooks brought an entirely different mindset to the exercises. He saw them, "not as just another recurring event, but rather an agreement between two countries to have foreign troops on sovereign soil."[14] The policy and diplomatic implications of this changed approach elevated the effectiveness of Phase Zero operations.

Kelley also recalled being summoned by General Brooks who laid out a vision for a new pattern of exercises where active units could be placed west of the International Date Line for an extended period. According to Kelley, Brooks said he wanted "to see a Pacific Pathways like a deployment" for as long as a six-month period.[15] This idea, in tandem with the thinking of Lieutenant General Brown, gave birth to the Pacific Pathways concept. Pacific Pathways would "operationalize" exercises in response to pent up demand from our allies for more interaction. Army involvement in Afghanistan and Iraq began in 2003 and continued nearly a decade. During this time, USARPAC simply maintained its scheduled exercises with allied nations, frequently drawing upon the guard and reserve when active units were deployed. According to Ulses, the guidance from General Brooks was to "put more faces in more places without bases. It [Pacific Pathways] is not an initiative. It's an innovation" to shape the theater.[16]

Implementing Pacific Pathways, however, did not come without challenges for General Brooks and USARPAC. Even before the wars in the Middle East, readiness challenged the command. Active brigades periodically rotated through one of the nation's Combat Training Centers (CTC) but had no way of maintaining their readiness if they were not deploying. But what if this freshly trained unit deployed for a series of existing exercises with their own equipment, over a period of several months? Then CTC readiness would be maximized.[17] With the conclusion of military operations in Iraq, active duty forces were again available to the USARPAC Commanding General. How could Soldiers be returned to the theater in such a way to take advantage of their growing skills and keep them sharp for longer periods? One way was to engage allied countries to enhance specific capabilities such as jungle warfare, artillery, aviation, peace keeping, and more. Robinson regarded Pacific Pathways as a way to sustain such relationships, "one of the most unique ways to use the Army outside of war."[18]

USARPAC also confronted fiscal challenges implementing Pacific Pathways. There was only time and funding to conduct one Pacific Pathways for Fiscal Year 2014 and the question became which exercises to participate in and which units to use. The USARPAC staff performed their analysis and arrived at two courses of action. The first course of action linked exercises Cobra Gold in Thailand, Foal Eagle in Korea, and Balikatan in the Philippine Islands. The second course of action chose exercises Garuda Shield in Indonesia, Keris Strike in Malaysia, and Orient Shield in Japan. USARPAC chose the latter three exercises because they could be executed later in the year and allow more time for planning.[19] General Brooks chose Orient Shield for a strategic reason as well. The previous year, a US government shutdown forced the cancellation of an exercise with the Japanese Ground Self-Defense Force. Brooks wanted to send the signal the Japanese that that the United States Army was not turning away from their commitment to that alliance. In this case he used a tactical exercise to help shape the theater.[20] To put this plan in motion and conduct the necessary planning, Brooks leaned heavily on the USARPAC G3 Operations, the G7 Exercises, G8 Contingency, and the FXD. Time was short so Major General Pasquarette, USARPAC Chief of Staff, jump started planning by "force feeding" meetings. The plan was to fund the first Pacific Pathways internally, and USARPAC caught a break from the Bipartisan Budget Act that sent a few billion extra dollars to the Army for FY 14, about $144 million of which made its way to the Pacific.[21]

Working the Four-Star Staff

Before Pacific Pathways, certain echelons in the command regularly missed multi-echelon training because of numerous deployments to the Middle East.[22] Even with all echelons present, a theater army needs large events like Pacific Pathways to ensure realistic training for all. As a new four-star command, USARPAC took advantage of its new organizational structure and Pacific Pathways to train its staff. I Corps, as the theater's operational headquarters, selected which brigade to deploy. Because of the CTC training schedule and the need for a fourth quarter exercise, the choice became obvious and I Corps selected 2d Stryker Combat Brigade from Joint Base Lewis-McCord.[23]

For the first Pacific Pathways, I Corps served as the operational headquarters and the 25th Infantry Division from Schofield Barracks and Eighth Army served as tactical headquarters. The interaction among the commands greatly improved readiness. Additionally, the command saw port deployments as another opportunity to improve readiness as no units had ever experienced the unique circumstances of these ports in each host nation.[24] Such knowledge of foreign ports and experience operating in them greatly contributed to theater shaping operations.

The implementation of Pacific Pathways entailed challenges, not the least of which was communicating its concept to other agencies within the US Government, sister services, and allied nations – key Phase Zero considerations. Fortunately, however, a communications team helped solve these issues. From 2010-2014 Colonel Arthur Tulak served as the USARPAC Assistant Chief of Staff for G3-9, which later became part of the FXD. He also co-chaired the Strategic Communications Working Group, along with the Public Affairs Officer, Colonel Michael Donnelly. Tulak noticed a reduction in some smaller exercises called Subject Matter Expert Exchanges with allied nations as a result of budget cutbacks. Soon after Washington announced the Rebalance, Tulak liked the idea and thought it signaled increased interaction to our allies despite budget cuts, although he did not know exactly what form those interactions would take.[25] With such a short timeline to plan and develop the first Pacific Pathways, an even shorter amount of time existed to communicate it.[26] Planning started in late 2013 for the exercise that commenced in August 2014. The timing of an initiative at Pacific Command helped the Army work on its need for strategic logistics. Admiral Locklear set up his new Army four-star, General Brooks, as head of Joint Forces Land Component Command with coordinating responsibility among USARPAC, Marine Forces Pacific, and Special Operations Command Pacific. This was a first for an Army four-star and also worked in favor of Pacific Pathways.

Colonel Jack Pritchard, the Executive Officer to Brooks and a former USARPAC Chief of Staff noted an article written by a Marine lieutenant colonel at the Brookings Institute that challenged Pacific Pathways. The Marines expressed concern about the Army infringing on their mission, but further clarification about Pacific Pathways emerged when the Marines saw the concept in action. The Marines also saw that the Army was not acting in an amphibious capacity, an expeditionary role traditionally confined to their realm. However, under Pacific Pathways, the ships were to unload at docks, as opposed to conducting amphibious landings.[27] General John Paxton, the Assistant Commandant of the Marine Corps, spoke at a conference and welcomed the Army's Pacific Pathways concept, stating that the Pacific is big enough for everyone.[28] His comments drew a grateful phone call from General Brooks and affirmed the growing recognition that Pacific Pathways was an innovation on what the Army had been doing in the Pacific for years. Brooks' interaction with a fellow four-star soothed inter-service concerns. What remained were larger inter-agency issues.

While inter-service concerns gradually disappeared, interagency concerns about Pacific Pathways persisted. Robert Ralston, USARPAC's Washington, DC liaison with the Department of the Army, recalled some of these inter-agency concerns. Around Thanksgiving of 2013, an officer in FXD from USARPAC e-mailed contacts at the State Department and the Office for the Secretary of Defense (OSD)

about USARPAC's objectives with Pacific Pathways. According to Ralston, State Department officials asked OSD what they knew about this. Because of the compressed time frame, however, USARPAC was just then communicating the Pacific Pathways concept to OSD.[29] The Department of State felt that the Army was changing the relationship with our Pacific allies and that such issues should be communicated through them. USARPAC, however, argued that they had been conducting exercises with Pacific allies for years and that the only thing changing was how they deployed to those nations. All of this was going on within the context of China claiming that the whole Rebalance idea was a fraud – that it was all talk and no concrete action.[30] The allied nations needed to be in the loop as well as part of Phase Zero.

Perhaps no one was in a better position to observe the communication issues surrounding Pacific Pathways than Colonel Russell Bailey, who from 2010-2014 was the Senior Defense Official and Defense Attaché to Indonesia, the country with the first exercise within the first Pacific Pathways. As an aside, there used to be two Army colonels assigned to embassies, but that changed under Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld in the Bush Administration. He wanted one person to be the "belly button" for the Secretary of Defense, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Combatant Commander, and the Ambassador.[31] For Pacific Pathways, Colonel Bailey was that single point of contact. Bailey witnessed unsuccessful communication before. About two years prior as part of the Rebalance, the Marines announced that they would have a presence in Darwin, Australia only three days before the President came there for a conference. The embassy there did not know the announcement was coming and it took them by surprise.[32] Colonel Bailey did not want to see the same mistake made with Pacific Pathways but he was similarly dealing with very short lead times.

In late 2013, Colonel Robinson contacted Colonel Bailey on a Friday and told him that an article on Pacific Pathways was coming out on Monday. Bailey wanted to share the Pacific Pathways idea with the Indonesian defense chief as well as their ministry of defense, but how should it be done? Was it better to ask each agency for their approval, or to run it past each as just an idea? He elected to try the second course of action.[33] Bailey succeeded in getting a three-minute conversation with the defense chief as he was walking out the door. Then he explained the concept to a one-star general in the defense ministry who simply thanked him. As it turned out, the Pacific Pathways article was delayed, yet Bailey was asked if Indonesia could support the concept. Bailey's answer was that it would be best if someone from USARPAC stated to their counterparts in Indonesia that we want to do this with you.[34] About eight months before Pacific Pathways kicked off, the US Ambassador to Indonesia wrote a letter to the Assistant Secretary of State for East Asia-Pacific. From there, Bailey observed that the Pentagon started asking questions at PACOM and thereafter USARPAC coordination improved. In his opinion, Pacific Pathways was never in jeopardy of not happening since once the Indonesians learned more about it, they were very happy and enthusiastic to take part.[35] The same would prove true with the other selected Pacific nations – all of them wanted more interaction with the US Army, a boon to Phase Zero operations.

A significant turning point in the communication battle took place after Pacific Pathways 14 had already begun. The annual AUSA Conference in Washington, DC took place in October 2014 and USARPAC used it as a platform for the first public event to promote Pacific Pathways. General Brooks participated in a panel discussion, and pulled in individual soldiers from Orient Shield as part of the Pacific Pathways to discuss what they were doing in the exercise.[36] There were higher levels of support as well. According to Colonel Joel Clark, Chief of the Effects Directorate, the Chief of Staff of the Army and the Secretary of the Army also spoke at the AUSA Conference, thus giving the Department of the Army stamp of approval. By then, the third leg of the first Pacific Pathways was taking place and positive reports had been flowing in from Indonesia and Malaysia. Clark's recollection is that General Brooks said "we'll do it [Pacific Pathways], and afterward people will see the utility in it."[37] Part of the

advantage of implementing Pacific Pathways when USARPAC was a four-star command instead of a three-star is that there was more impetus to move it forward.

Major General Pasquarette admits that the communications for Pacific Pathways happened out of order and it was a lesson learned. General Brooks personally pushed it behind the scenes, and as a four-star he had the ability to keep the momentum going until the exercise started and all involved could see its value. The valuable legwork done by the staff helped to create interest in the project.[38]

Mr. Ralston thinks that Pacific Pathways might have happened if USARPAC was commanded by a three-star general, but it would not have happened as fast. In his opinion, a four-star general can begin to move out on his own and keep others informed while trying to gain critical mass for a project like Pacific Pathways. As a four-star, General Brooks had direct access to other four-stars in Washington and in other countries. It also helped having a two-star Chief of Staff at USARPAC to help align subordinate units.[39] Thus the milestone of USARPAC again becoming a four-star command went hand in hand with successful and rapid implementation of Pacific Pathways from concept to execution.

Figure 20.2 A helicopter is lifted out of a cargo ship on 23 August 2014, at Banyuwangi Port for delivery to the Garuda Shield exercise. The sling holding the helicopter was a new design for Pacific Pathways, and unlike old versions the new slings can be used indefinitely. Photo courtesy of the US Army.

Colonel Clark took many trips to Washington to help the Pacific Pathways communications process, but critically he was always accompanied by Major General Mike Dana, USMC, and the PACOM J5. This sent the clear signal that USARPAC was not acting on its own. On his first visit, Clark recalled being bombarded with many questions. He recalled such questioning about Pacific Pathways in DC

ending in October of 2014, around the time of the AUSA Conference. Later, when he went to Washington to discuss Pacific Pathways, the conversations took five minutes.[40] Clearly Pacific Pathways is now embraced.

Colonel Tulak called Pacific Pathways "the most difficult project he ever did at USARPAC" because of budget and resource challenges. Drawing upon his experience as the former Public Affairs Chief, General Brooks never got upset. He remained patient and continued to explain the nature of the innovation. According to Tulak, Brooks felt that the first problem is always communication.[41] If that is done properly, all else falls into place. For his part, Brooks kept the high goal he had in mind all along, continuously articulating it to achieve the desired result: having a dynamic versus a static posture in the Pacific at a marginal cost increase to better shape the theater.[42]

Figure 20.3 An AH-64E Apache helicopter with the 1st Attack Helicopter Battalion, 25th Combat Aviation Brigade, 25th Infantry Division leads an Indonesian army MI-35 during flight instructions for attack operations training at Ahmad Yani Army Aviation Base, Semarang, Indonesia. Photo courtesy of the US Army.

Mr. Joe Peck, Traffic Manager in the G4 (logistics) Mobility staff section for USARPAC, worked on lining up the transportation. According to him, General Brooks wanted a non-US military descriptive vessel for the first Pacific Pathways: a commercial boat for "proof of principle." The Jones Act, which is US law, requires use of commercial ships, but they are not always capable of the operational requirements. For Pacific Pathways 14, Military Sealift Command assigned the *USS Obregon* , a 500-foot ship, lift-on only, and capable of holding 220 pieces of equipment. Because it was not heavily used at the time, the Pacific Pathways exercise was an excellent means to maintain the ship's readiness as well.[43] Such inter-agency coordination is another aspect of Phase Zero operations.

For Pacific Pathways 15-1, USARPAC chose the three exercises that were not chosen for Pacific Pathways 14 because they occur earlier in the year, from February through April. These were Co-

bra Gold, Foal Eagle, and Balikatan, and USARPAC selected the 2d Brigade, 25th Infantry Division (Stryker) to participate. For Pacific Pathways 15-2, the exercises were Talisman Sabre in Australia, Garuda Shield and Keris Strike, and the executing unit was 3d Brigade, 25 IBCT. For Pacific Pathways 15-3 the exercises were Khan Quest in Mongolia, Orient Shield, and ROK Hoguk in Korea, and the unit was the 1st Stryker of the 25th Infantry Division out of US Army Alaska.[44] In the first full year, Pacific Pathways touched, and therefore helped shape, virtually the entire Pacific Theater. Of course the training benefits extend beyond the Army, and joint operations are part of Phase Zero. According to Mr. Peck, the vessel slated for Pacific Pathways 15-1 carried 826 pieces of equipment, but only 387 of those belonged to the Army. The Marine Corps placed 399 pieces of equipment along with 22 maintenance personnel, the Air Force had 22 pieces, and Special Forces 18 pieces.[45]

Pacific Pathways quickly became the centerpiece of USARPAC training, readiness, and shaping the theater. Not only did Pacific Pathways allow for more equipment, but also more personnel. Historically, about 350 troops participated for the three exercises conducted prior to Pacific Pathways. For Pacific Pathways, there were more than 1,000. The equipment, included various helicopters, Strykers, howitzers, and mortars, which allowed for air assault training and live fire exercises. Of course, it is very expensive to move and sustain troops. For example, budgeted costs for Pacific Pathways 15-1 were $5.5 million for airfare and $4 million for life support.[46] These numbers were included in the total budget for Pacific Pathways quoted before and indicated the scale of this new training program.

Shaping Effects

A great example of Phase Zero operations coming from Pacific Pathways 14 was the Indonesian Armed Forces Day parade. It was very important for the first leg of the first Pacific Pathways to go smoothly, and one key to successful implementation after the communication hiccups was moving the Indonesian exercise from its regularly scheduled time of July to October. This timing coincided with the parade and the Indonesian military committed to buy Apache helicopters from the United States to the tune of $632 million.[47] They wanted AH-64 helicopters to participate in the parade. In fact, the Indonesians wanted Apaches to fly in the parade the previous year when USARPAC was under the command of Lieutenant General Wiercinski. In their minds, Wiercinski promised they would participate in 2014, but the cost just to get two Apaches to Indonesia was prohibitive. According to one estimate, it would have cost somewhere between $6.5-7 million to deploy them in a C-17 from the East Coast.[48] As seen in the previously revealed numbers, it was far more cost effective to get an entire BCT to Indonesia, with equipment. It turned out that the helicopters joined the total of 181 aircraft which flew in the parade on 7 October in Surabaya. Those who were there saw the symbolism in the parade as a strategic message to the region that the Rebalance was real.[49]

Perhaps the greatest training value of the deployment was that in each country, each US Soldier had a counterpart. They lived together, ate together, did PT together, and everything else that soldiers do, creating a stronger bond among allies. Powers recalls that in Malaysia, his troops performed a demonstration of a drone. In so doing, the Malaysian soldiers realized how empowered US troops are at the lowest levels and what a difference that can make. They also learned that the NCO is the backbone of the Army.[50] And, according to former Command Sergeant Major of USARPAC, Frank Leota, USARPAC had invested heavily in NCO development programs throughout the region. As of today, seven graduates of the United States Sergeants Major Academy are either the defense force sergeant major or sergeant major of the army for their respective Pacific nation.[51]

The contributing nations which conducted Pacific Pathways feel like most favored nations. They want the US Army to come to them and relish the opportunity to train together. Now that Pacific Pathways has met with initial success, one of the next steps is to pre-position material in some of the allied nations for use in future Pacific Pathways and for contingencies. USARPAC is working on getting

concurrence from the desired nations to do so.[52] General Brooks called this prepositioning setting the theater, or setting the conditions for future operations. His view was that sea and air power show interest on the part of the United States, but land power shows commitment. He noted we do have to be careful about placing equipment in other countries because of the potential of sending the wrong signal to other nations, but he wanted to continue to demonstrate why it is important. The great value of such posturing is ultimately twofold for Phase Zero: deterrence to potential enemies and reassurance to our friends in the region.[53]

Before he became USARPAC Chief of Staff, Colonel Pritchard commanded the 196th Training Support Brigade. There he initiated the concept of the brigade as an operations group at the national Combat Training Centers (CTC) with observer/controllers to evaluate the units going through the training. One plan for future Pacific Pathways is to have evaluation units like this to fall in on participating Pacific Pathways units and provide them a CTC-like experience in the field while deployed.[54] This can easily be done with the portable instrumentation equipment and will elevate the training value of Pacific Pathways even higher.

Although it became challenging to maintain the success of Pacific Pathways, the results made the challenges worthwhile. Aside from the increased length of time US Soldiers could spend with allied soldiers during the exercises, one distinct advantage of Pacific Pathways was the ability to deploy large equipment like the Strykers and helicopters. Lieutenant Colonel Marshall argued that the use of aviation assets in Pacific Pathways exhibited US commitment to the Rebalance and saw "enormous gains" in the relationship with the Indonesian army.[55]

Lessons Learned

The implementation of Pacific Pathways revealed several things. One is that new ideas germinate, but are not always ready for immediate implementation. Another is that in time, resources, policy, and a motivated leader can bring such ideas to fruition. If that four-star leader is willing to take risks for an idea with merit, the payoff can be great for the organization and the Army as a whole.

Aside from needing more time to plan all aspects of the exercises, Pacific Pathways 14 provided numerous insights for improving future exercises. One was the logistical complexity of having to go to other countries and off-load and on-load at the ports. Another was learning the capabilities of our allies and realizing the importance of our troops being on center stage. At a social event at the conclusion of Garuda Shield, an Indonesian captain approached Colonel Hawley, telling him that it was an honor to work with the best troops in the world. Hawley realized that the American Soldiers have to be at their best at all times when abroad because others are looking up to the US as a model military. In turn, Hawley, an aviation brigade commander, gained respect for the Indonesians. He expected their competency in flying to be lower than it was. In reality, Indonesian pilots were on par with US allies in Western Europe.[56] Shaping the theater involves firsthand knowledge of our allies' capabilities and USARPAC's implementation of Pacific Pathways certainly provided such knowledge.

USARPAC also learned to establish clearer command relationships before deploying. This became clear during Garuda Shield when a reserve unit, assigned as a forward surgical team misunderstood the nature of their mission. Rather than viewing it as an extended, real world operation, this unit simply viewed their participation in the exercise as training under the model that once existed for USARPAC. As a result, they failed to bring the proper amount of equipment, leading to a shortfall that was only solved by some last minute scrambling.[57]

Major Joshua Powers recalled that General Brooks stressed three "Rs:" Relationships, Rehearsals, and Reconnaissance in order to successfully complete a given mission. All three were practiced in Pacific Pathways, but Powers felt that of the three, deploying is the ultimate form of rehearsal and that he

can now go to an immature theater anywhere in the world.[58] Brooks added a fourth "R" to the list, and that is Readiness. Because of the longer deployment times, soldiers, for example, get more time piloting Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAV) in a three month tour than they would during an entire year at home station.[59] Such readiness increases the effectiveness of Phase Zero preparations.

Conclusion

Phase Zero operations are challenging in any theater army, especially in one as large and diverse as the Pacific. Troop obligations in the Middle East complicated these operations in 2013, drawing away resources badly needed in the Pacific and necessitating that exercises with traditional allied be placed on hold. The Obama Administration's announced Rebalance to the Pacific and USARPAC's upgrade to a four-star command created both the need and the opportunity for an innovative approach to Phase Zero operations in the Pacific. USARPAC's incoming commander, General Vincent Brooks, answered these challenges with the implementation of Pacific Pathways. Pacific Pathways focused on many Phase Zero concerns, not only engaging the sister services and interagency partners, but also US allies throughout the Pacific. Moreover, by tying exercises together, the Army placed more Soldiers in theater for a longer period, thus creating more allied demands for US Army interaction and increasing the value and effectiveness to the training to US Soldiers.

This would have been more difficult, perhaps impossible, without a four-star commander. The power of rank behind the scenes influenced Washington to support Pacific Pathways. The elevation also bolstered the USARPAC staff, most notably at the Chief of Staff and G3 levels where it significantly improved communications and coordination regarding Pacific Pathways. Significantly, Pacific Pathways reestablished effective Phase Zero operations across the Pacific theater and even exceeded the expectations of General Brooks. Describing his reaction to the first Pacific Pathways, he remarked,

> We want to be prepared to do three operations in a given year, which would give us nine months of presence west of the International Date Line without adding a single base. Three different units would be getting the benefit of these operations with three times the opportunity to develop division, corps, Army, and enterprise leaders. So we cubed it in that case, and now we're facing everybody wanting us to come back. Other countries that we didn't stop in wanted us to come there the next year. So now we had more demands than we had supply.[60]

For those reasons, according to Brooks, Pacific Pathways encountered "catastrophic success." The Administration was looking for what the Rebalance to the Pacific means aside from elevating USARPAC to a four-star command and assigning more troops to the Pacific. Pacific Pathways made an immediate impact in the region, providing a concrete example of what the Rebalance means.[61] By demonstrating the Army's historical roots in the region, Pacific Pathways is a high profile illustration of what the Army does.[62]

Notes

1.Interview with Lieutenant General (Ret) Francis Wiercinski, 15 July 2014.
2. Interview with General Vincent Brooks, 1 May 2015.
3. Interview with Brigadier General Robert Ulses, 19 February 2015.
4. Interview with General Vincent Brooks by Dr. Joe Bailey, 16-18 March, 2016.
5. Ulses interview.
6. Brooks interview.
7. Brooks interview.
8. Interview with Lieutenant General Robert Brown, 9 March 2015
9. Brown interview.
10. Interview with Colonel (Ret) James Robinson, 13 March 2015.
11. Brooks interview.
12. Brooks interview.
13. Interview with Colonel (Ret) Matthew Kelley, 6 March 2015.
14. Brooks – Bailey interviews.
15. Kelley interview.
16. Ulses interview.
17. Interview with Lieutenant Colonel Mathew Bunch, 21 January 2015
18. Robinson interview.
19. Bunch interview.
20. Brooks-Bailey interviews.
21. Interview with Major General James Pasquarette, 11 March 2015
22. Kelley interview.
23. Pasquarette interview.
24. Ulses interview.
25. Interview with Colonel (Ret) Arthur Tulak, 20 March 2015
26. Interview with Lieutenant Colonel Chris Jeszenszky, 3 March 2015
27. Tulak interview.
28. Interview with Colonel Jack Pritchard, 26 March 2015
29. Interview with Mr. Robert Ralston, 9 March 2015
30. Tulak interview.
31. Interview with Colonel Russell Bailey, 6 March 2015
32. Bailey interview.
33. Bailey interview.
34. Bailey interview.
35. Bailey interview.
36. Jeszenszky interview.
37. Interview with Colonel Joel Clark, 30 March 2015
38. Pasquarette interview.
39. Ralston interview.
40. Ralston interview.
41. Tulak interview.
42. Brooks interview.
43. Interview with Mr. Joe Peck, 13 February 2015
44. Bunch interview.
45. Peck interview.
46. Peck interview.
47. Robinson interview.
48. Interview with Mr. John Beury, 3 March 2015
49. Marshall interview.
50. Powers interview.
51. Interview with Command Sergeant Major Frank Leota, 28 May 2014

52. Pasquarette interview.
53. Brooks interview.
54. Pritchard interview.
55. Interview with Lieutenant Colonel Hunter Marshall, 25 March 2015
56. Interview with Colonel Kenneth Hawley, 12 March 2015
57. Interview with Major Joshua Powers, 26 March 2015
58. Powers interview.
59. Brooks – Bailey interviews.
60. Brooks – Bailey interviews.
61. Clark interview.
62. Brooks interview.

Conclusion

Lieutenant General Mike Lundy

Joint force commanders require trained and ready Army forces that can shape regions, prevent conflict, and defeat enemy forces in large-scale combat.

–2017 FM 3-0, *Operations*

It is said that the only thing that remains constant in the world is change. The operational environment that the United States Army faces continually changes, forcing the Army to adapt. It has changed significantly in recent decades as we moved from a Cold War focus on conventional large-scale combat operations, to stability operations in the Balkans and elsewhere, and then to counter-insurgency and counter-terrorism operations largely focused on Afghanistan and Iraq after 11 September 2001. It continues to change today, as large-scale combat operations against a capable regional peer adversary are no longer unthinkable as they were just a few years ago. Today's Army needs to be organized, trained, and equipped to fight regional peer threats as part of a joint, multinational force, even as it continues to conduct operations against irregular forces and ideologically motivated terrorist organizations globally.

This collection of case studies, focused on division, corps, and theater army-level operations, provides an opportunity for military professionals to examine history and its application to current and future operations. While we may not know where or who the Army will be asked to fight next, we can be assured that our civilian and military leaders expect their Army to be prepared to fight and win at every echelon in any environment.

The purpose of this book is to provide examples of historical case studies where the division, corps, and theater army-level commanders and staffs faced significant challenges in terms of preparation for combat and enemies who proved more capable and adaptive than expected. It highlights both successes and failures relevant to professional Soldiers and leaders today. We currently face a very complex operational environment with rapidly changing technologies and increasingly capable adversaries who are able to challenge the positions of relative advantage we have enjoyed for decades. The case studies give us perspective and show that those who went before us faced similar challenges.

As has been demonstrated throughout this book, what echelons do and how they perform matters. Divisions, corps, and theater armies are critical to operational success across the range of military operations and especially, large-scale combat operations. Each echelon historically played a vital role in the successful prosecution of land combat, and each will play an equally vital role in the future.

As we look forward, we recognize an operational environment that will likely be a mix of two extremes. Our Army must be trained to face peer regional enemies in large-scale combat operations; this is a reality that the US has not faced since the end of the Cold War. Meanwhile, the Army must retain the ability to conduct counterinsurgency and counter-terrorism operations learned at a high cost over the past 15-plus years. Adversary nations have been watching and learning during that time. They have worked to counter our strengths while simultaneously developing their own technological advantages. Our Army must adapt to the reality that it no longer has the advantage in every potential conflict.

The Army provides the joint forces commander with options to prevent, shape, win, and consolidate gains. Theater armies, corps, and divisions are designed to support the accomplishment of those strategic roles. In this complex and ever-changing environment, it is ultimately these formations that will plan, prepare for, execute, and effectively assess operations to provide the tactical and operational support necessary to achieve strategic victory – to win in a complex world.

About the Authors

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General (Ret) Frederick M. Franks Jr., US Army, deployed and commanded VII Corps in DESERT STORM. A graduate of the United States Military Academy, GEN Franks served with the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment in Germany and Vietnam. Seriously wounded in the Cambodian invasion he successfully fought to stay on active duty and returned to command the 11th ACR, the 7th Army Training Command, and the 1st Armored Division. GEN Franks was deputy commandant of CGSC where he oversaw the development of the 1986 FM 100-5 *Operations*, small group instruction, and the beginning of the Battle Command Training Program. As TRADOC Commander he envisioned

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