

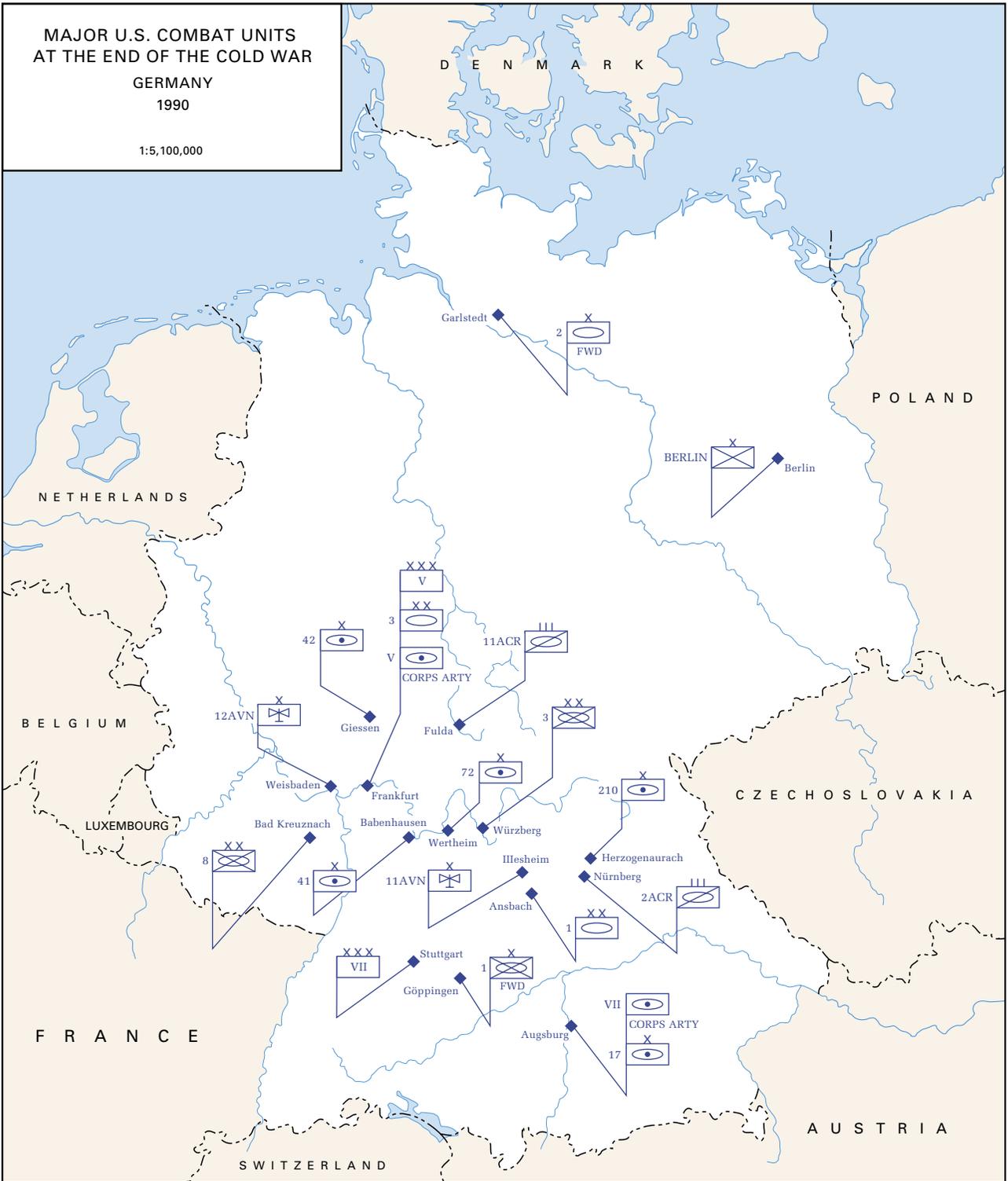
# BEYOND THE WALL OPERATIONS IN A POST-COLD WAR WORLD, 1990–2001

**O**n November 9, 1989, crowds of elated Berliners surged back and forth through ever-enlarging holes in the wall that for so long had divided their city. Similar, albeit smaller, demonstrations also occurred all along the border separating the former East Germany from the West. American soldiers observing these festive affairs soon realized how much was changing in the strategic environment that had brought them to Germany in the first place. Within a few years, Soviet troops evacuated all of their former satellites in the Warsaw Pact countries, those satellites reconfigured themselves as independent and democratic states, the Soviet Union itself collapsed into fifteen different countries, and Germany reunited into a single nation. With little notice the Cold War ended and with it the American military's forty-year preoccupation with containing Communist expansion within an enormous arc that swept from the Norwegian border through Germany, around the southern rim of Eurasia, and across the Korean peninsula to the Bering Straits. (*See Map 25.*) In hot wars and in cold, two generations of American soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines had secured the line separating the Free World from the Communist bloc; now this frontier suddenly disappeared everywhere except in Korea.

Soon the governments of the United States and its allies enthusiastically pursued a “peace dividend,” slashing military budgets and manpower levels in order to reduce taxes or divert resources to other pursuits. By the late 1990s sobering international challenges had taken the bloom off, however; the enduring complexities of national security were apparent to many. Indeed, although the stakes were never as high as they had been during the potential life-or-death struggle with the Soviet Union, American armed forces found their operational tempo of

MAJOR U.S. COMBAT UNITS  
AT THE END OF THE COLD WAR  
GERMANY  
1990

1:5,100,000



Map 25

deployment to distant theaters and into harm's way greater than it had been since the Vietnam War.

Several factors accounted for this proliferation of post-Cold War violence. First, the discipline the Soviets had exerted on satellites, clients, and occupied territories disappeared and long-suppressed national aspirations and ethnic quarrels bubbled up again. Some of these resolved themselves peacefully, but many did not. The disintegration of the totalitarian regime that Josip Broz "Tito" had constructed in Yugoslavia played itself out as a miniature version of the collapse of the Soviet Union. Second, huge inventories of weapons, many of them now surplus from Cold War needs and others manufactured by corporations competing for shrinking markets, were widely available for purchase. Indeed, by one count the adjusted military expenditure of developing countries soared from \$20 billion in 1950 to \$170 billion in 1999. An increasingly lethal array of weapons was now available to such nonstate actors as terrorists, criminal gangs, and drug lords. Third, through wide stretches of Africa, the Middle East, Southern Asia, and Latin America, population growth so outstripped economic growth that desperation and discontent remained widespread. This unrest provided fertile soil for insurgency, ethnic strife, sectarian violence, humanitarian crisis, and general lawlessness. Finally, precipitate military downsizing in both Russia and the West created an impression of vulnerability, thus opportunity, among those inclined to test such weakened military postures. Even if not seeking victory in the traditional sense, such opportunists could hope to present the United States and others with battlefield situations that would cost more in lives and money than they were willing to pay to reverse. The notion of asymmetrical warfare, focusing on narrow and specific vulnerabilities rather than competing across a broad spectrum of conflict, became topical among strategic thinkers. Many thought the American public would no longer accept significant casualties in international quarrels.

This change in America's strategic setting occurred at a time when technological advance suggested the possibility of what some called a revolution in military affairs. The primary driver of this technological advance was the microchip, whose ever-smaller size and ever-greater capacity proliferated the employment of computers through a wide range of uses. The most obvious such use was information technology, managing huge quantities of information and disseminating it indiscriminately at the speed of light. Wedded to advanced sensors, computers rendered the acquisition of targets evermore timely. Wedded to advanced ballistic controls or guidance systems, computers rendered the destruction of targets evermore precise. Precision-guided munitions, or PGMs, provided unprecedented lethality to those who used them effectively. The potential microchip revolution accompanied a sustained evolution in technologies of other types: plastics, light metals, stealth engineering, lasers, night-vision devices, battlefield surgery, and medicine—to name but a few.

As American military planners shifted their focus from the prospects of a titanic struggle with the Soviet Union, they faced risks perhaps less threatening but certainly more diverse. Flexible response, a concept born in the late 1950s to meet Communist aggression with means appropriate to the level at which it presented itself, was reborn

in the notion of a military force capable of meeting a wide variety of adversaries. The possibility of large-scale conventional warfare or even nuclear warfare had not disappeared, but smaller-scale contingencies such as peacemaking, peacekeeping, counterinsurgency, counterterrorism, humanitarian relief, and drug interdiction seemed more likely. Conducting these operations would require skill in multinational coalitions, with the diplomatic and political stakes often as dominant as the military ones. Relationships with such international organizations as the United Nations (UN) and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) would necessarily evolve somewhat differently in this new area. The post–Cold War peace dividend seemed to be an enormous blessing to the American people; but their national security continued to be ensured by the blood, sweat, and tears of the American soldier, sailor, airman, and marine—by a strong and capable military.

### War in the Persian Gulf

In the early morning hours of August 2, 1990, three armored divisions of Saddam Hussein's elite Iraqi *Republican Guard* crossed the Kuwaiti border and sped toward the city of Kuwait. The several brigades and potpourri of military equipment of the hapless Kuwaiti Army, already disorganized by special operations attacks, proved no match for this assault. Within days most Kuwaitis had surrendered or fled to Saudi Arabia, the *Republican Guard* divisions had closed to the Saudi border, and Iraqi follow-on forces had fanned out to secure the oil fields and commercial wealth of the small, yet prosperous country. Iraq had long coveted oil-rich Kuwait, characterizing it as a nineteenth province the British had purloined during the colonial era. This ambition became aggravated during the prolonged, desultory Iran-Iraq War (1980–1988). Saddam Hussein had accrued enormous debts fighting the Iranians, leaving him with a large and battle-hardened army but an economy in disarray. The wealth of Kuwait could fix this problem.

Saddam Hussein's army had grown tenfold during the war with Iran. When fully mobilized, it numbered over a million soldiers. Perhaps more important, it was well equipped by huge purchases from international arms markets. Although most of this equipment was of Soviet design and a generation behind its American counterparts, the sheer numbers of tanks, armored fighting vehicles, artillery pieces, and small arms of all types made it seem formidable indeed. In the years before, the Soviets had parlayed their role as arms supplier to the Iraqis into a species of proxy control; but that discipline of course had broken down as the Soviet Union collapsed. Russian and Ukrainian arms suppliers became desperate to turn inventories into cash, and the oil-rich Iraqis diversified their sources of supply in a buyers' market. Despite the brazen aggression, Hussein could count on support among the most disaffected in the Arab world. Many viewed Kuwait as an American dependent and its seizure as a righteous act of defiance against America.

For the American government and President George H. W. Bush, the first priority quickly became the defense of Saudi Arabia. Disruption of Kuwaiti oil supplies was damaging enough to the global economy; disruption of Saudi oil supplies could be disastrous. The Saudis shared Bush's view, and their national leadership overcame a traditional

antipathy to foreign troops in a land sacred to Mohammed. On August 6 Saudi King Fahd bin Abdul Azziz approved American intervention to assist in the defense of his kingdom, and on August 8 a brigade of the 82d Airborne Division hit the ground in Saudi Arabia.

The arrival of the 82d Airborne Division began an anxious several weeks for American defense planners. The staff of the U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM), commanded by Army General H. Norman Schwarzkopf, Jr., knew the level of risk as it carefully balanced the right proportion of support and combat troops coming into theater. Recognizing the enormous armored wherewithal of the Iraqis, the lightly armed paratroopers called themselves speed bumps, intended at best to delay an Iraqi advance and to signal the determination of the United States to expend American lives to buy time for the buildup of forces. This perception may have been a bit of an exaggeration, given the air and attack helicopter assets that arrived with them in theater.

Compared to historical precedent, the American buildup in Saudi Arabia progressed quickly and efficiently. In a little over two months the powerful XVIII Airborne Corps, consisting of an airborne division, an air-assault division, two heavy divisions, an armored cavalry regiment (ACR), and the requisite array of combat support and combat service support assets, had deployed. The inventory included over 120,000 troops, 700 tanks, 1,400 armored fighting vehicles, and 600 artillery pieces, not to mention the 32,000 troops and 400 tanks local Arab allies provided. Hundreds of planes were operating out of Saudi, Turkish, and Qatari airfields, with more operating off American aircraft carriers and long-range bombers able to range the theater from Diego Garcia and even from the United States. The Navy was on hand and active in the Persian Gulf and its approaches, having already imposed an effective blockade on Iraq.

The mission of defending Saudi Arabia, code-named Operation DESERT SHIELD, relied on presenting the Iraqis a formidable opponent. Had the Iraqis dared to attack, they would have rolled forward into a defense in depth, wherein outlying security elements called in waves of air and aviation counterstrikes while retiring to heavier forces to their

## GENERAL H. NORMAN SCHWARZKOPF, JR. (1934– )

Nicknamed Stormin' Norman and the Bear and best known as Commanding General, Coalition Forces, Persian Gulf War, 1990–1991, General Schwarzkopf had a 35-year military career (1956–1991) that spanned the Cold War, the intervening Vietnam War, and the increasing overseas deployments of the 1980s. A U.S. Military Academy graduate, he served two tours in Vietnam and rose to the grade of full general in 1988. Carrying out contingency plans generated during a command-post exercise against Iraq in July 1990, Schwarzkopf's coalition forces rapidly defeated the Iraqi Army with the five-week air war and the 100-hour ground war in January–February 1991.



*General Schwarzkopf*

rear. Soon the attack would have driven into heavy and precisely surveyed artillery fires, then it would have encountered the deadly accuracy of M1A1 Abrams tanks and TOW (Tube-launched, Optically tracked, Wire-guided) missiles mounted on M2 and M3 Bradley fighting vehicles. American direct-fire weapons had double the effective range of their Iraqi counterparts; under pressure, American defenders would have had a sufficient range advantage to safely withdraw to subsequent firing positions. Iraqi losses would have been appalling well before they had the opportunity to engage in effective combat. This grim pattern would have repeated itself for the entire 200 kilometers the Iraqis would have had to attack through to reach a target of strategic significance.

Some idea of the probable results of an Iraqi attack can be gained from the abortive Iraqi probe into the town of Khafji on January 30–31, 1991. An Iraqi mechanized division lost 80 percent of its strength while attacking a town a mere seven miles inside the Saudi border. Weakened by the forward screen of security—including marines firing TOWs from light armored vehicles (LAVs)—and pummeled from the air, the Iraqis achieved little and lost much; the Saudis chased them back across the border in a day and a half.

In concert with coalition forces, the XVIII Airborne Corps was adequate to defend Saudi Arabia. By early November the objective had changed, however. Frustrated in efforts to achieve a diplomatic solution to the crisis, a worldwide coalition reinforced by UN mandates determined not to allow Saddam Hussein to enjoy the fruits of his aggression. President Bush committed the United States to the liberation of Kuwait as well as to the defense of Saudi Arabia. This objective would require offensive action, and forces deployed to Kuwait did not have sufficient mass to succeed in such an offensive with minimum losses. On November 9 President Bush announced his intent to deploy yet another corps, the VII Corps out of Europe, to Saudi Arabia and his determination that the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait would be reversed by force if

necessary. Saddam Hussein had already developed elaborate defenses of his own and had opined he could make the cost of liberating Kuwait higher than the coalition would be willing to pay. His specific admonition to Americans was “Yours is a nation that cannot afford to take 10,000 casualties in a single day.” The stage was set for DESERT SHIELD to become DESERT STORM.

By November 1990 the Iraqis occupying Kuwait had matured a layered defense of their own, with line infantry entrenched behind protective barriers along the border and reinforced by local mobile reserves of regular army tank and mechanized divisions. These local reserves were themselves backed up by the operational reserves of the heavily mechanized *Republican Guard*. Of these Iraqi forces, the line infantry was



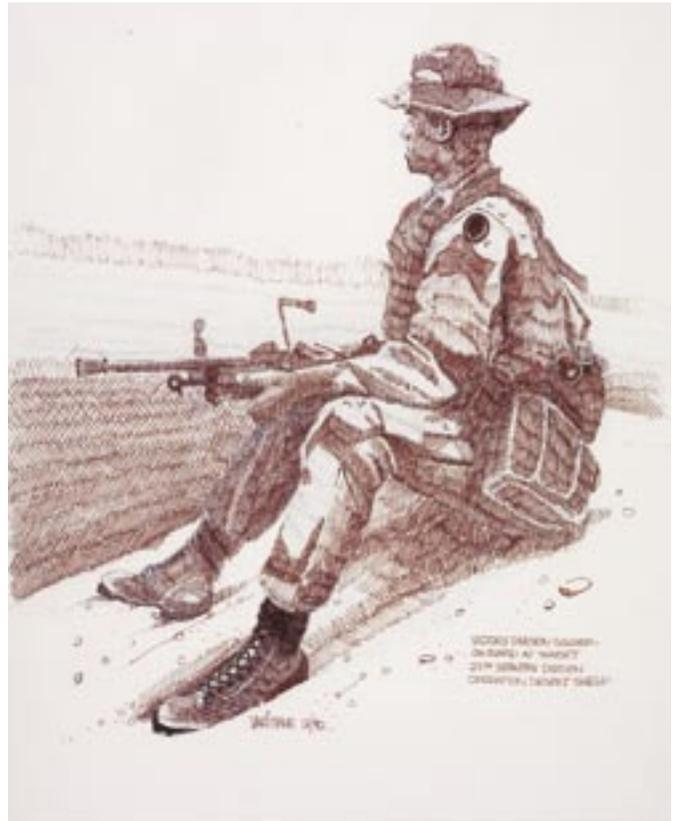
*Like this Abrams tank, all vehicles used in Operation DESERT SHIELD/STORM were painted in desert camouflage.*

considered brittle, the regular army heavy divisions reliable, and the *Republican Guard* formidable. The most direct approach for the coalition would have been an attack into the teeth of Iraqi defenses along the Saudi Arabia–Kuwait border. The avenues available for such an attack included northward along the coastal road, from the “elbow” of the border northeast along the shortest route directly into Kuwait City, or along the Wadi al Batin in the far west of Kuwait. A more indirect approach would have been an envelopment through Iraq, either close in by punching through thinly held defenses immediately west of the Wadi al Batin or deeper by turning the Iraqi line altogether in its far west. Both the direct approach and the envelopment could be complemented by amphibious landings on the Kuwaiti coast and airborne or air-assault landings into the enemy’s rear.

A factor complicating operational deliberations was the role allies were willing play. The United States, Great Britain, and France favored attacking Iraq directly. Their Arab allies believed the legitimate mission was to liberate Kuwait and were reluctant to commit their ground forces to a wider war. Over time a campaign plan emerged that accommodated allied preferences and borrowed heavily from each of the basic operational options available.

Fighting would begin with a multiphase air campaign to establish preconditions for ground assault. Coalition air forces would successively smash Iraqi air defenses, secure air supremacy, suppress Iraqi command and control, isolate the Kuwaiti Theater of Operations (KTO), and attrit enemy ground forces in the path of the proposed offensive. The ground assault would begin with a division-size feint up the Wadi al Batin and a supporting attack by the marines reinforced with an Army armored brigade through the elbow of Kuwait. Arab thrusts equivalent in size to that of the marines would go in to their left and right. A marine amphibious feint would tie Iraqi units into coastal defenses, while an air assault deep into Iraq would isolate the KTO from the Iraqi core around Baghdad. The main attack would be that of the VII Corps, consisting of five heavy divisions, four separate field artillery brigades, an armored cavalry regiment, and a separate aviation brigade. This mailed fist—as the Corps Commander, Lt. Gen. Frederick M. Franks, Jr., described it—would envelope the Iraqi line at its far west end, turning east to annihilate the *Republican Guard* before sweeping across the northern half of Kuwait. The four-division XVIII Airborne Corps, already commanding the air assault into Iraq, would ride the VII Corps’ left flank and continue to isolate the Kuwaiti Theater from the west while assisting in closing the trap to the east.

Operation DESERT STORM, the liberation of Kuwait, began on January 17, 1991, with massive air strikes and missile bombardment throughout Iraq. Air supremacy was readily achieved and does in fact



Victory Division Soldier on Guard at Sunset,  
*Peter G. Varisano, 1990*



*General Franks*

seem to have virtually paralyzed Iraqi command and control by the time the ground war began. Logistical degradation wore unevenly, with Iraqi units most proximate to the border being the most disadvantaged. In part this was because of the greater distances, every kilometer of which exposed units and their supply lines to coalition attack. This was also due in part to the lower priority of the line infantry units on the border and an absence of stockpiles of supplies in them comparable to those built up to support mechanized units to their rear and the *Republican Guard*. Overall, the coalition air campaign was a great success, but it did far less well against dug-in equipment than it did against command and control nodes and logistical assets. This situation changed radically when ground fighting forced theretofore hidden Iraqi equipment to move. Then the synergy achieved by ground and air assets in concert demonstrated itself with devastating effect.

One limit on the operational success of the air campaign was the distraction caused by an urgent diversion of air assets to a campaign against Iraqi Scud missiles. Although the Iraqis launched only eighty-six Scuds, these relatively primitive missiles had an impact well beyond their number. Their range enabled them to reach, albeit inaccurately, soft and unprepared targets. Indeed, for Americans the bloodiest single incident of the war occurred when a Scud missile slammed into a barracks in the Dhahran suburb of Al Khobar, killing twenty-eight and wounding ninety-eight—almost half from a single unit, the 14th Quartermaster Detachment (National Guard) from Greensburg, Pennsylvania. Perhaps as troubling, Scuds launched at Israel threatened to bring that embattled nation into the war, thus wrecking carefully constructed alliances with Arab nations hostile to or suspicious of Israel. Patriot air defense missiles hastily deployed to Saudi Arabia and Israel claimed to have destroyed a number of incoming Scuds; but this certainly did not deter the Iraqis from employing the missiles. By January 24, 40 percent of all coalition air sorties were directed against the Scuds—as were significant intelligence, electronic warfare, and Special Operations resources. A vast cat-and-mouse game developed throughout the western Iraqi desert as American intelligence and reconnaissance assets attempted to find Scuds for fighter-bombers to engage while Iraqis attempted to fire

## PAGONIS AND GULF WAR LOGISTICS

When Maj. Gen. William G. Pagonis (1941 - ) was hand-picked to lead the logistics effort in Operation DESERT SHIELD, his entire Gulf War logistics team consisted of himself and four logisticians. Since no operational plan was on the shelf and no logistics plan or time-phased force deployment data was available, Pagonis had to create the logistics plan during his initial flight to Saudi Arabia. Although the effort was a success, numerous logistical problems occurred during and after the war, including the mountains of extra supplies scattered around the desert in unopened containers.



*General Pagonis*

## PATRIOT MISSILES IN THE GULF WAR

Despite the Patriot's much-touted Gulf War use, it was designed as an anti-aircraft system and only secondarily given an antimissile capability. Operations DESERT SHIELD and DESERT STORM did put the antimissile capability to the test: Army Patriot batteries fired 158 Patriot missiles against 47 of 88 Scud missiles launched from Iraq. The Army initially believed that the Patriot was 100 percent effective, but later analysis showed an effectiveness of 52 percent against incoming missiles, which often presented challenging targets by breaking up and tumbling upon reentry. Even these revised results were controversial: outside critics using the same data claimed an even lower effectiveness rate. Improvements in Patriot missiles, radars, and computers have continued since 1991.



*Patriot Missile Launchers Ready for DESERT SHIELD*

their mobile missiles quickly and then scoot out of harm's way. Planes hunting Scuds could not, of course, pursue other previously agreed-upon targets whose destruction had been preconditions for the ground assault.

The DESERT STORM ground operational scheme consisted of a demonstration, a feint, three supporting attacks, an economy-of-force measure to isolate (guard, if you will) the battlefield, and a main attack that featured a penetration early on and was in itself an envelopment. The U.S. Navy demonstrated with the 5th Marine Expeditionary Brigade (MEB) to create the impression of an imminent amphibious assault. Like many, the Iraqis had been exposed to Marine Corps publicity concerning its ability to wreak havoc across the shore and had believed what they heard. Conscious exposure of the 5th MEB and its preparatory activities on Cable News Network (CNN) and through other media heightened the Iraqi sense of anxiety, as did the visible presence of naval vessels in the Persian Gulf. The Iraqis dug in four divisions along their seaward flank specifically to defend against amphibious assault, and as many more divisions were postured in such a manner to allow them to quickly intercede when the marines came across the beaches. However, once the ground war was well under way, the 5th MEB landed behind friendly lines and became an operational reserve for the supporting attack discussed below.

The 1st Cavalry Division began its ground war by feinting up the Wadi al Batin, ultimately drawing the attention of five Iraqi divisions. (See Map 26.) After exchanging shots and doing some damage, the division backed out of the wadi and swung west to catch up with the VII Corps and serve as its operational reserve.





Demonstrations and feints work best if the deception is plausible and one the enemy is inclined to believe. The Iraqis had reason for anxiety concerning their 200-plus kilometer coastline, particularly since important supply routes ran along it. They also fully expected an attack up the Wadi al Batin, recognizing that the prominent terrain feature would facilitate land navigation deep into the heart of their theater. Indeed, when the VII Corps did conduct its attack from the west, it came across mile after mile of vehicle defensive positions aligned precisely along the azimuth described by 240 degrees magnetic—facing the direction of an attack up the Wadi al Batin. Without much effort the theater deception plan had taken 20 percent of the Iraqi in-theater force structure out of the fight. By the time the Iraqis realized their mistake and attempted to redeploy, it was too late. The 5th MEB and 1st Cavalry Division, on the other hand, were readily available for operations elsewhere.

Supporting attacks are often timed to deceive an enemy into reacting to them as if they were the main attack. They may draw forces away from the main attack and, perhaps even more important, may lead him to malposition his reserves. Since a supporting attack involves significant resources and some risk, a single supporting attack is generally preferred. DESERT STORM featured three, largely because the two divisions of the I Marine Expeditionary Force (reinforced by the M1 tank-equipped Tiger Brigade of the Army's 2d Armored Division and beefed up by additional M1 tanks rotated into their inventory) had lined up on the most direct approach from the elbow of Kuwait into Kuwait City. Suitable but independent missions were needed for the Arab allies to their left and right. The largely Saudi and Gulf Coalition (Bahrain, Oman, and the United Arab Emirates) Joint Forces Command-East (JFC-E) and the largely Egyptian, Syrian, and Saudi Joint Forces Command-North (JFC-N) were each assigned the mission of conducting a supporting attack as well.

The marines attacked before dawn on February 24 with a tightly choreographed breaching effort into the Iraqi infantry defending to their front. These Iraqi units, already brittle, had been pummeled by air strikes and were at the farthest end of Iraq's tenuous logistical chain. They proved no match for the methodical marine attack. M60A1 tanks with dozer blades breached the berms, while engineer line charges and M60A1 tanks with mine plows cleared lanes through the minefields. Marine artillery readily suppressed its Iraqi counterparts, and tanks and TOWs quickly picked off the relatively few T-55s and T-62s that chose to fight. By the end of the first day, the I Marine Expeditionary Force had advanced thirty-two kilometers, destroyed dozens of armored vehicles, captured 10,000 Iraqis, and seized Al Jaber Airfield south of Kuwait City. The following morning an Iraqi heavy division attempted a counterattack but was quickly repulsed. By the third day of the ground war, the I Marine Expeditionary Force had isolated Kuwait City, secured Kuwait International Airport, and seized Mutla Ridge, the dominant terrain feature overlooking Kuwait City and roads north from it. Nothing that the marines encountered could cope with their carefully synchronized and tightly focused supporting attack.

The Arab allies of JFC-E and JFC-N paced themselves according to the marine advance. They were less well equipped and supported, however, and found themselves trailing the marines on the first day.

They did preoccupy substantial Iraqi units to their front; as the extent of the marine penetration became clear, these defending units collapsed as well. By February 27 both joint forces commands were abreast of the marines and expediently passed Saudi-led units through the marines to liberate Kuwait City. (It seemed prudent to have those responsible for securing such a heavily populated area speak the language and understand the culture of the inhabitants.) Since the Iraqis had fled or surrendered, the advance into Kuwait City took on a festive air.

An economy-of-force mission, as the name implies, is an effort to accomplish a supporting purpose with a minimal investment of resources. In the case of DESERT STORM the supporting purpose was the isolation of the Kuwaiti Theater of Operations from the rest of Iraq. The coalition would not allow Iraqi units and logistical assets from outside the KTO to enter nor Iraqi forces inside to escape the theater. The XVIII Airborne Corps was ideally suited for such a role. One element attached to this corps, the French 6th Light Armored Division, reinforced with paratroopers from the 82d Airborne Division and incorporating organic missile-firing Gazelle helicopters, had the general attributes of an American cavalry regiment. On day one of the ground war it rushed forward to seize As Salman in a spirited fight and then faced west to guard against Iraqi intrusion from that direction. At the same time the heliborne 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) flew in to seize a forward operating base 176 kilometers deep into Iraq and then leaped a brigade forward to the Euphrates River valley the following day. From these positions, swarms of Apache and Cobra attack helicopters fanned out to intercept and terrorize Iraqi ground movement along the northerly routes into the KTO. The dangerous east flank of the XVIII Airborne Corps featured the formidably heavy 24th Infantry Division (Mechanized) and the 3d ACR. These units backstopped the French 6th Light Armored Division and 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) until they were set, cleared the corps' right flank to the Euphrates, and then turned east to cooperate with the VII Corps in its main attack against the Iraqi *Republican Guard*. Given that the XVIII Airborne Corps' sole heavy division in effect became part of the main attack, it had in fact isolated the KTO with minimal but well-chosen force.

The main attack was that of the heavily armored Anglo-American VII Corps. This massive steel fist boasted over 146,000 soldiers and almost 50,000 vehicles. Its divisions advanced along frontages twenty-four kilometers wide by forty-eight kilometers deep. Never before had so much firepower been concentrated into such an organization, and never before had such an organization featured such extraordinary tactical mobility. Generally, a main attack seeks to crush an enemy's center of gravity, that asset or attribute most essential to his prospects for success. The Iraqi center of gravity was adjudged to be the *Republican Guard*, three heavy and five motorized divisions equipped and trained to Iraq's highest standards. As formidable as the *Republican Guard* was, the even more superbly equipped and far more highly trained VII Corps seemed the right force to defeat it.

The VII Corps' 1st Infantry Division ("Big Red One") breach was as methodical as that of the marines farther east. Tightly synchronized teams of M1A1 bulldozer tanks, M1A1 mine plow tanks, combat engineer vehicles, and accompanying engineers in armored personnel carri-



*Desert Camouflage Hat, 1991*

ers (APCs) bored through sand berms, minefields, and other obstacles. The teams were guarded by sniper tanks and supported by the preparatory fires of fourteen battalions of field artillery. A carefully derived intelligence picture hopelessly compromised the Iraqi defenders, who found their crew-served weapons destroyed even before the first American target offered itself. In a few hours the Big Red One had cut twenty-four lanes across a sixteen-kilometer front without the loss of a single soldier. In short order the division pulled its own units through the breach and passed the U.K. 1st Armoured Division through as well.

Meanwhile, the 2d ACR and 1st and 3d Armored Divisions had swept around the western margin of the obstacle belt and had swung east to envelop the Iraqi defenses. Finding little opposition short of Al Busayyah, the 1st Armored Division hammered that town with preparatory artillery and then swept through it, overrunning an Iraqi division and a corps headquarters en route. Farther east, the 3d Armored Division had made contact with the *Republican Guard's Tawakalna Division*, as had the 2d ACR screening to the east of the two armored divisions. Outnumbered but engaging accurately at extended ranges, the cavalymen soon identified the basic contours of the *Republican Guard* defenses, including several regular army heavy divisions that augmented its force structure. Within hours the 1st and 3d Armored Divisions rolling in from the west and the 1st Infantry Division and U.K. 1st Armoured Division emerging from the breach were on line facing the east to deliver the decisive blow.

The VII Corps attack on the *Republican Guard* was a massive and well-coordinated armored assault. The M1A1 Abrams tanks moved forward on line, closely supported by M2 Bradley infantry fighting vehicles. The tanks destroyed major enemy armored vehicles with their main guns while the infantry vehicles used their machine guns on thinner-skinned targets. Infantry dismounted from the Bradleys as needed to clear positions or collect prisoners. Farther to the rear, M113 APCs sped along with communicators, engineers, mortarmen, mechanics, and other supporting troops, accompanied by the occasional recovery vehicle. Even farther to the rear, howitzers kept the advance in range of

their supporting fires. Potential targets were destroyed by the tankers or surrendered to the infantrymen so quickly that the artillerymen seldom had an opportunity to fire; but when they did, the effects were devastating. The Americans, equipped with night-vision sights and devices, relentlessly pressed the attacks in daylight and darkness with equal ferocity. The *Republican Guard*—outflanked, surprised, outranged, and in any given exchange outgunned—had no chance. The decisive attack achieved decisive results; in little more than a day VII Corps



*U.S. Checkpoint on Highway 8*



Left: Retreating Iraqi soldiers left behind ruined vehicles like this T-55 main battle tank on the highway between Kuwait City and Basra, Iraq. Below: Defeated Iraqi forces set fire to Kuwaiti oil wells, causing an environmental and economic catastrophe.

smashed the *Republican Guard* in its path as well as those regular army units chosen to fight alongside it and then swept on across northern Kuwait.

Americans reasonably expected to win the war with Saddam Hussein but nevertheless were surprised by the expediency of the victory and its low cost in coalition lives. The Americans had suffered 148 battle deaths and their allies another 99, versus something upward of 20,000 for the Iraqis. Another 50,000 Iraqis were wounded or captured. This result can be largely explained by the superb equipment, rigorous training, and professional character the coalition's armed forces brought to the fight, as well as by the poor quality of the Iraqi Army. The epitome of the coalition's qualities was the professional American soldier, thoroughly trained to make the best use of the most modern equipment. The operational scheme for DESERT STORM was well conceived and capitalized on coalition strengths while exploiting Iraqi weaknesses. Never before had American forces been more fully prepared for war. The Army that had recovered its balance in the 1970s and trained so hard in the 1980s had done all that was asked of it in the desert in 1991.



### Striving for Strategic Mobility

Operations in Panama and the Persian Gulf had made a powerful case for anticipating expeditionary combat—the ability to project power around the world on short notice. American forces had rapidly deployed with very little warning to fight on distant and unexpected battlegrounds. In the aftermath of the Cold War, expeditionary combat

seemed to be the future of warfare for the United States. However, the Army faced the daunting task of redesigning itself to meet such global challenges while reducing the active force from 772,000 in 1989 to 529,000 in 1994 with commensurate cuts in the National Guard and Army Reserve. Chief of Staff General Gordon R. Sullivan's "modern Louisiana Maneuvers" (LAM) Task Force (TF) replicated the spirit of operational adaptation and innovation embodied in the World War II LAM initiative while adapting the smaller force structure to the still-challenging requirements. This initiative resulted in an integrated array of battle labs, each capable of testing adjustments to organization, doctrine, and weaponry using the latest techniques for simulation and modeling.

In due course this intellectual fermentation diverted Army planners from feeling sorry about the force structure they had lost to feeling excited by the challenges for which they had to prepare—a major goal of General Sullivan. The 1993 version of Field Manual 100–5, *Operations*, greatly expanded the attention given to power projection and to operations other than war (peacekeeping, humanitarian relief, etc.). Initial efforts focused on expanding sealift, airlift, and the infrastructure that complemented them, soon followed by the establishment of stockpiles located in advance, called pre-positioning, close to likely trouble spots overseas. Over time these initiatives also included efforts to change the nature of the forces being moved. Improved strategic mobility would be the product of strategic lift, pre-positioning, and transformed forces.

As effective as the deployment for DESERT SHIELD had been, it retrospectively seemed frenzied and ad hoc to those who had participated in it. Convenient roll-on roll-off (RO-RO) shipping was not sufficiently available to accommodate the huge mass of vehicles. Break-bulk shipping, requiring cranes and heavy equipment to off-load, was more plentiful but required considerably more time in port. It took extraordinary efforts to keep track of supplies and equipment in international shipping containers, and maddening delays resulted when recordkeeping broke down. Units in Saudi Arabia too often found themselves piecing their hardware together first from one ship and then from another, rummaging through hundreds of containers to find items they had lost track of or pursuing supplies and equipment that had been unloaded from the ships but then wheeled past them to the "iron mountains" of supplies building up in the desert. The hasty preparations for war in a distant theater were a far cry from the methodical long-term preparations that characterized major Cold War plans.

An obvious first step was to procure more shipping, particularly RO-RO ships capable of accommodating entire battalions or brigades. Sealift in the Maritime Administration's Ready Reserve Fleet expanded from 17 RO-RO ships in 1990, through 29 in 1994, to 36 in 1996. Expanding sealift was accompanied by corresponding improvements in infrastructure and training. During DESERT SHIELD many divisions deployed through seaports not planned for that purpose, and others did so through facilities that were antiquated or in poor condition. By 1994 a massive \$506 million deployment infrastructure refurbishment plan was under way, investing heavily in port facilities, railheads, and airfields to speed departing units on their way. The lion's share of this expenditure went to such high-profile troop establishments as Fort

Bragg, North Carolina, for airborne forces; Fort Campbell, Kentucky, for aviation; Fort Stewart, Georgia, and Fort Hood, Texas, for heavy forces; and Fort Bliss, Texas, for air defense. Training budgets adapted to ensure that units were proficient with respect to deployment processes. In 1994 alone, \$26 million went to Sea Emergency Deployment Readiness Exercises wherein combat units raced to port, loaded themselves onto ships, and deployed into a training event featuring some combination of amphibious, over-the-shore, and through-port entry into a selected battlefield. National Training Center (NTC) scenarios, in which heavy battalions participated ostensibly on a rotating two-year basis, featured a speedy tactical draw of vehicles and equipment such as might be the case when uniting troops with hardware previously shipped or pre-positioned. By the mid-1990s, rotations to draw battalion sets of equipment into Kuwait and then to train in the Kuwaiti desert offered further expeditionary training.

The disposition of pre-positioned equipment for deploying U.S.-based units adjusted to the new realities. During the Cold War such equipment had been stockpiled in division sets in Germany and the Benelux countries. In annual REFORGER exercises, troops from the United States flew to Europe, drew and manned that equipment, and rolled out to training areas, thus demonstrating their capability to rapidly reinforce NATO. During the 1990s this capability dispersed more broadly, with a total of eight brigade sets spread throughout Europe, Korea, Kuwait, Qatar, and afloat. The set pre-positioned afloat in the Indian Ocean offered the most flexibility. It consisted of a brigade set of two armored and two mechanized infantry battalions with a thirty-day supply of food, fuel, and ammunition aboard sixteen ships, of which seven were roll-on, roll-off. Collectively considered, the sets in Kuwait, Qatar, and afloat could have positioned a heavy division into the Persian Gulf in days rather than the month plus of DESERT SHIELD. By the mid-1990s the expeditionary intent of the Army proposed a capability to deploy five-and-a-third divisions into a theater of war within seventy-five days.

Deployment on such a scale would rely on the reserve components as never before. The post-Vietnam force structure had allocated to the reserves and National Guard major fractions of the combat support and combat service support upon which the active component depended. During DESERT STORM (when active duty strength was 728,000, reserve strength was 335,000, and National Guard strength was 458,000), 39,000 reservists and 37,000 National Guardsmen were called up to support a total force of 297,000 deployed to Southwest Asia. As the active force shrank to 529,000 and continued to decline and the Army budget went from \$77.7 billion in 1990 to \$63.5 billion in 1994, early reliance upon the reserve components during major deployments became even more critical. The relative size, composition, balance, and roles of the active and reserve components would remain an important aspect of Army deliberations throughout the 1990s and beyond.

A major consideration with respect to strategic mobility was the logistical footprint of forces once deployed. American heavy divisions had gotten into the habit of accumulating huge iron mountains of spare parts and supplies of all types in their immediate rear in case they needed it. Without reliable means for precisely tracking and quickly delivering

**The relative size, composition, balance, and roles of the active and reserve components would remain an important aspect of Army deliberations throughout the 1990s and beyond.**

specific repair parts, they had no other options. During the 1990s information technology advanced to the point that it seemed possible to radically reduce the need for these stockpiles. Required materials might be delivered as they were needed rather than hoarded in advance. Emerging technologies offered to help solve this problem with bar coding, satellite communications, and global positioning systems (GPS) to provide visibility of supplies and repair parts as they moved through the supply and transportation network. Other technical advances, including embedded vehicle diagnostics, greater fuel efficiency, and on-board water generation systems held out hope of further reducing the amount of supplies needed on hand in the future. The expectation of rapid deployment would become a way of life for thousands of servicemen and women in the United States and overseas, and the material means to support that way of life became increasingly available as the decade progressed.

### **Northern Iraq: Operation PROVIDE COMFORT**

America's first post-DESERT STORM experience with expeditionary operations came unexpectedly. The stunning Gulf War destruction of the Iraqi Army in Kuwait had seemed decisive, but Saddam Hussein had withheld or evacuated forces sufficient to secure his regime. Dissident Shiites in southern Iraq and Kurds in northern Iraq were emboldened by Hussein's defeat and revolted against his regime. Unfortunately for them, there was little external support for such revolt. The coalition had agreed to liberate Kuwait but not to a sustained intervention in Iraq. Americans were wary of Shiite fundamentalists in Iran and inclined to believe the Shiites in Iraq might prove as hostile to them as they were to Saddam Hussein. America's allies in the region, themselves by and large Sunni Muslims inclined toward secularism, advised against involvement. Moreover, NATO allies were sufficiently deferential to Turkish sensibilities to avoid any impression of supporting Kurdish autonomy. The Gulf War coalition restricted Iraqi use of some air assets but initially failed to ground Iraqi helicopter forces, thus allowing Hussein a vital edge to attack the rebels. Nervous about splintering Iraq, U.S. policymakers stood by as Hussein crushed first the Shiites in the south, then the Kurds in the north.

If the cause of the revolutionaries did not much excite world opinion, the plight of refugees did. Shiites tended to flee to coreligionists in

## **PROVIDE COMFORT**

After the end of Operation DESERT STORM, Saddam Hussein turned against his own people who were trying to throw off the shackles of tyranny. The Kurds in northern Iraq were particularly hard hit; and over 450,000 of them streamed north into the mountains of southern Turkey, where they faced disease, cold, and hunger. On April 7, 1991, U.S. and coalition forces moved into southern Turkey and helped set up refugee camps, deliver food and water, and provide rudimentary medical care. They quickly averted what could have been a humanitarian disaster. With a strong allied presence watching over them, the Kurds were induced to return in safety to their homes by the end of July with only minimal losses.

Iran rather than westward, although a number did seek refuge in Saudi Arabia and Kuwait and were accommodated by coalition forces there. Many Kurds fled into Iran as well, but over a half-million fled into Turkey. Kurdish refugees in Turkey were in a desperate plight, dying by the hundreds. Iraqi control of the roads had forced them into the mountains; and in the mountains, they faced the bitter cold and drizzle of late winter without adequate food, water, clothing, or shelter. They quickly overwhelmed the capacity of relief agencies to support them in the border areas, yet the Turks were loath to move them out of those border areas because they already had significant problems with internal Kurdish insurgency and unrest. Rapid-fire discussions and negotiations crystallized into three sequential imperatives: stop the dying and suffering in the mountains, resettle the refugees in temporary camps, and return the refugees to their original homes.

American and NATO forces had long operated out of bases in eastern Turkey, and during DESERT STORM a composite U.S. air wing had flown 4,595 sorties out of them with over 140 aircraft while Special Operations Forces stood by to rescue downed pilots. This effort's Air Force commander, Maj. Gen. James L. Jamerson, and the Special Operations Command, Europe (SOCEUR), commander, Brig. Gen. Richard W. Potter, would later emerge as key players as the Kurdish crisis unfolded. Indeed, they had barely returned from Turkey to their home stations when calls over the night of April 5-6, 1991, notified them that they were going back. Units initially to deploy with them for the upcoming Operation PROVIDE COMFORT would include the 39th Special Operations Wing, the 10th Special Forces Group (Airborne), and the 7th Special Operations Support Command.

The quickest way to get relief to the Kurds was to airdrop supplies directly to them. This was also the least efficient, guaranteeing enormous losses and waste and unlikely to get supplies distributed to all who needed them. Heliborne delivery would be more efficient and routine truck delivery, when feasible, even more so. The urgent mission to stop the suffering and dying progressed through these increasingly efficient methods. At 11:00 A.M. on April 7, PROVIDE COMFORT began with two MC-130 aircraft dropping eight 2,000-lb. bundles of blankets and rations to the Kurds along the Turkish border. Numerous other airdrops followed, and within a week sufficient rotary-wing aircraft were on hand to begin heliborne deliveries of the tons of supplies accumulating at ports and airfields in Turkey. This shift to heliborne delivery was accompanied by frenzied construction efforts as Army and Air Force engineers refurbished airfields close enough to the refugees to facilitate the transition from cargo planes to helicopters. While this was going on, Army Special Forces teams pushed forward into the refugee encampments to organize the effort from that end. If encampments could be consolidated and camp life made routine, an orderly shift to ground transportation could begin.

Special Forces proved the Army's best choice to make contact with and assist in organizing the refugees. They were trained to deal with indigenous cultures, experienced in organizing such peoples, and contained a wide range of talents in a small, dozen-man team. Understandably, their medical proficiencies were most in demand initially. Their military bearing and prowess favorably impressed the martial Kurds.

What was more, their communications and ability to reach back for transportation and logistics enabled a few soldiers on the spot to quickly get assistance forward where it was needed.

Special Forces organizational and reach-back capabilities also proved of great value in facilitating the integration of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and private volunteer organizations (PVOs) into the overall relief effort. These organizations, likely partners in the case of humanitarian relief, varied widely in structure and capabilities. Some, like the Red Cross and Red Crescent, featured substantial organization and means. Most, however, were smaller agencies with specialized skills and limited logistical assets. Many were deeply ambivalent about working alongside the military, but all appreciated what military communications, transportation, and logistics could do to enhance their contributions. Over time, useful working relationships developed among the Special Forces, the NGOs, PVOs, other allied soldiers in the encampments, and the Kurdish family and clan leadership. Tents were erected, food and water became routinely available, medical support matured, and the dying ceased.

As Kurdish camp life along the Turkish border stabilized into a survivable routine, allied leaders shifted their attention to returning the Kurds to their homes. This would require, in effect, yet another invasion of Iraq. The Kurds would not return to homes the Iraqi Army occupied, so coalition forces would have to provide a security envelope within Iraq into which the Kurds could resettle. American General John M. Shalikashvili was given overall responsibility for the operation, with Joint Task Force (JTF) ALPHA established under General Potter to sustain support to the encampments in Turkey and JTF BRAVO under Maj. Gen. Jay M. Garner to clear northern Iraq sufficiently to get the Kurds back into their homes. Soon American marines and soldiers accompanied by British marines and French soldiers entered northern Iraq. The allied forces met little opposition, with the Iraqis readily giving way before the intervening forces. Trusting their new benefactors to defend them, the Kurds swarmed out of the mountain camps and back to their ancestral homes. Civilian relief agency volunteers accompanied the return, and international efforts to replant, rebuild, and refurbish came on the heels of the returning tide of refugees. Within months, the local population seemed resettled and the United States and its allies sought to extricate themselves from the improved situation.

The Kurds were understandably nervous about being left in Iraq without American troops; initial attempts to withdraw were met by demonstrations, riots, and the threat of another refugee crisis. Ultimately, Americans persuaded the Kurds that the combination of international observers, air patrols over the no-fly zone, readily available American expeditionary forces, and Iraqi memories of the Gulf War would be enough to guarantee their future security. America and its allies sought to protect the Kurds so that their lives and property were reasonably secure, but not so that they became a politically autonomous entity. Within a few years factional fighting among the Kurds would enable the Iraqis to reassert a military presence within the region. However, in early 1991, faced with a huge and largely unanticipated refugee crisis, America and its allies had stopped the dying, resettled the refugees into

sustainable camps, and returned them to their ancestral homes without unduly upsetting the delicate international political balance in that far-off region. It constituted a credible use of armed forces to resolve an unanticipated and unconventional international circumstance.

## Somalia

Even as one humanitarian crisis subsided in northern Iraq, another emerged in Somalia, an arid, impoverished, and turbulent failed state on the horn of Africa. Americans had had some Cold War interest in Somalia, neighboring Ethiopia, and the strategically positioned horn of Africa; but the end of the Cold War and the dissolution of Somalia into sectarian and clan warfare demolished whatever attraction the region might have held for national policy considerations.

This disinterest reversed itself when a devastating drought precipitated famine, and internecine warfare rendered relief efforts ineffective. Combatant clans raided each other's food supplies, local warlords charged protection money to international relief agencies attempting to deliver supplies, and convoys delivering supplies were nevertheless looted to enhance the wherewithal and prestige of the warlords. Starvation became a weapon, and supplies did not make it into the hands of the hundreds of thousands who needed them most. Night after night international television broadcast images of starving, emaciated children covered with flies and dying in filth. A Pulitzer Prize went to a photographer who captured the agonies of a dying child with a painfully distended abdomen, crying as expectant vultures perched nearby. President Bush believed he could ignore this situation no longer.

On August 15, 1992, the United States launched Operation PROVIDE RELIEF, an effort to airlift supplies from nearby Kenya to airfields throughout the interior of Somalia. This would avoid the bottlenecks and uncertainty of clan politics in the congested port of Mogadishu while dispersing supplies throughout the country to get a head start in distribution. Local distribution was to remain in the hands of the international relief agencies already there, but the warring factions and armed gangs quickly adapted their operations to steal these relief supplies as well. They hoarded food, terrorized international agencies, killed those who did not pay protection money, and allowed tens of thousands to continue starving.

Embarrassed by this continuing confusion, the United States, supported by UN resolutions, launched Operation RESTORE HOPE on December 8. Heavily armed marines and soldiers of the 10th Mountain Division, supported by Special Forces elements, 13,000 all told, deployed by sea and air into Somalia to cow the warring factions with their overwhelming strength. The warlords quickly came to terms with the



*An Army medic renders aid to a small Somali child.*

Americans and each other, and relief supplies began to flow to their intended recipients. UN forces organized nine Humanitarian Relief Sectors throughout Somalia. Ultimately, some 38,000 soldiers from twenty-three nations supporting forty-nine humanitarian-relief agencies fanned out to secure the countryside and guarantee food deliveries to the starving people. Over 40,000 tons of grain was off-loaded and distributed by the end of December, and within a few weeks the worst of the crisis had passed. Markets reopened, travel became more common, indigenous crops began to come in, and the U.S. government decided the situation was stable enough to yield control to the United Nations. On May 4, 1993, Turkish Lt. Gen. Cevik Bir assumed command of UN Forces in Somalia as the U.S. military presence continued to dwindle. By October the UN command in Somalia was reduced to 16,000 peacekeepers from twenty-one nations, only about 4,000 from the United States.

Unfortunately, demonstrable success in ending the famine did not mean success in achieving political stability. The warlords had temporarily cooperated out of necessity: they sullenly stood aside while UN troops preempted their practice of hoarding food and coldly calculating who would eat and who would starve. Ostensible participants in a disarmament program, they were actually hiding weapons and military supplies, warily biding their time until the opportunity presented itself to resume their internecine conflict. Perhaps the most disgruntled was Muhammed Aideed of the Habr Gidr subclan, a former general officer who had been locked in conflict with Ali Mahdi Mohammed of the Abgal subclan for control of the port of Mogadishu. Aideed perceived UN operations as weakening his authority and as having become increasingly partisan.

One confrontation led to another; and on June 5, 1993, Aideed's forces ambushed and killed twenty-four Pakistani soldiers. U.S. and UN

## BLACK HAWK DOWN

The raid on October 3 against Somali strongman Mohammed Aideed in Mogadishu was initially a success. The highly skilled Special Operations Forces achieved surprise and took several high-value prisoners. However, the plan fell apart with the downing of two circling Black Hawk helicopters. The soldiers rushed to the first crash site and set up a perimeter but could not reach the second. Defending the site and their increasing number of wounded men, they waited much of the night for relief. In the early morning hours of the next day, U.S. and coalition elements reached the cut-off forces and took them to safety. The shock of so many casualties in these elite units helped to doom this effort to save Somalia from itself.



*A Black Hawk Helicopter in a Clearing in Somalia*

forces retaliated with attacks on weapons-storage facilities and Radio Mogadishu. The United States deployed a Joint Special Operations Task Force (JSOTF), named TF RANGER, to assist. These exceptional forces—Army rangers, Navy SEALs (Sea, Air, Land operators), Special Forces, and Special Operations aviation assets—went on the offensive during August and September, conducting a series of raids directed at Aideed and his henchmen. They captured a number of Aideed's ranking subordinates and destroyed some of his facilities and equipment; Aideed himself eluded capture in Mogadishu's confusing rabbit warren of streets, alleys, and buildings.

Unfortunately, TF RANGER's efforts did not reflect unity of command. RANGER took its orders through its own U.S. command channels and did not adequately coordinate with the more numerous and pervasive UN forces or even with the senior U.S. general in theater working under UN auspices. This limited the timeliness of the assistance the allies could give each other.

The seventh major TF RANGER mission went spectacularly wrong. A heliborne Special Operations assault team captured twenty-four of Aideed's henchmen in a lightning strike into downtown Mogadishu and then transferred the men to a wheeled convoy for ground evacuation. While this was happening, Habr Gidr militia gathering to resist the intrusion fired on helicopters circling in support of the operation. Two were downed. This precipitated an evening and night of fierce fighting as rangers diverted from securing the capture site to securing the first crash site while two Special Forces snipers helicoptered in to attempt to secure the second crash site. (*See Map 27.*) The ground convoy extricating the Somali prisoners and others attempting further relief also came under heavy attack and were forced to retreat to the U.S.-controlled airport. The confused melee ebbed and flowed through the jumbled urban sprawl of Mogadishu, with embattled American soldiers desperately defending themselves at close ranges while heavily supported by helicopter gunships circling overhead.

Ultimately, a relief column from the American 10th Mountain Division supported by a hastily improvised augmentation of Malaysian and Pakistani armor extracted the troops from the first crash site. The second crash site had been overrun already, its two heroic defenders posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor. TF RANGER suffered 16 killed and 83 wounded during the fighting and the relief column 1 killed and a number more wounded. The Habr Gidr subclan had been far more severely punished: perhaps as many as 500–1,000 killed and an inestimable number wounded.

Traditional logic would have characterized the fighting on October 3–4 as an American tactical victory, but televised news coverage of Somali crowds jubilantly dragging American corpses through the streets soon stood traditional logic on its head. The American public had drifted away from giving Somalia much attention after the food crisis had passed but was shocked at Americans' having been turned on by their intended beneficiaries, who visibly exulted in the soldiers' deaths. Reinforcements rushed to Somalia were constrained from further retaliation, and President William J. Clinton decided to withdraw from



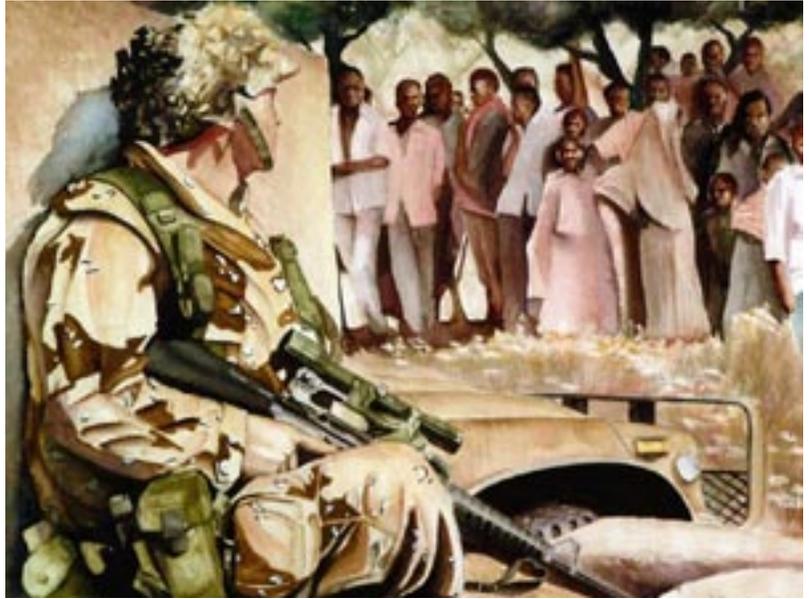
Ready for Convoy, Peter G. Varisano, 1993



Map 27

the country altogether. American units had left Somalia by March 25, 1994, and the United Nations was out within a year later.

Somalia had a chilling effect on American humanitarian instincts, especially with respect to sub-Saharan Africa. The United States by and large stood aside as hundreds of thousands of inhabitants of Rwanda, Burundia, the Congo, Angola, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Zimbabwe, Liberia, Sierra Leone, and the Ivory Coast perished due to civil strife, starvation, and natural disaster over the next several years. Somalia, no longer starving, was abandoned to the depredations of its own warlords and internal power struggles. Humanitarian relief alone would not be a sufficient argument for significant American military intervention. Other national interests would have to be involved; significant allied participation would be expected; and, if peacekeeping were to be a mission, there would have to be a peace to keep.

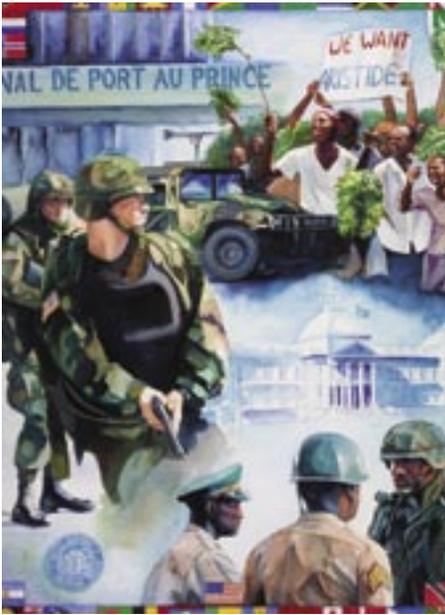


On Watch, Jeffrey Manuszak, 1994

## Haiti

Throughout most of the Cold War, the United States and the Organization of American States (OAS) had tolerated repressive dictatorial regimes in the island nation of Haiti. Intervention would have been complex and difficult, many other Latin American nations featured military dictatorships, legal mechanisms did not exist for meddling in the internal politics of another country, and at the time dictatorships seemed preferable to Communist regimes. With the Cold War over, Americans became more assertive in their support of democracy, virtually all Latin American nations had transitioned into democracies, and the United Nations and other international organizations were setting precedents of intervening on behalf of the people in the cases of failed states. On September 30, 1991, a military coup led by Lt. Gen. Raoul Cedras turned out Jean-Bertrand Aristide, the first elected President in Haitian history. The Organization of American States quickly imposed a trade embargo on Haiti and in coordination with the United Nations contemplated further economic, diplomatic, and political initiatives to restore democracy to Haiti.

The United States was party to OAS and UN deliberations, of course, but soon found it had more at stake than most. Thousands of Haitians fled their country on rickety boats at great personal risk, most of them bound for the United States. This precipitated a major humanitarian crisis as dozens were lost at sea and thousands of others detained, turned back, or forcibly repatriated by skittish U.S. immigration authorities. American policy was permissive toward those seeking political asylum but restrictive toward economic refugees (the latter characteriza-



Haiti, 1994, *Jeffrey T. Manuszak, 1996*

tion seemed to fit most Haitians). The murkiness of the two categories, given Cedras' repressive military dictatorship, and apparent differences in the treatment of Haitian and Cuban refugees proved a domestic embarrassment first to President Bush and then to President Clinton. Democracy needed to be restored to Haiti to remove political incentives to flee and perhaps to establish a climate wherein economic conditions would improve as well. Many believed that democracies should be upheld as a matter of principle.

As sentiment built toward American intervention, the degree of force to be involved remained unclear. Ultimately, two distinct military campaign plans developed in parallel, one envisioning forcible entry and the battlefield destruction of the Haitian Army and the other espousing a more gentle intervention into a negotiated permissive environment. In July 1993 it seemed that the gentle approach would work when Cedras, pressured by UN sanctions and the freezing of his foreign assets, signed a UN-brokered accord providing for his retirement, the return of Aristide, and the retraining and professionalization of the Haitian Army. Within weeks of the United Nations' suspending its sanctions, however, Cedras was back to his old ways. He may have thought that neither the United States nor the United Nations had the stomach for actual casualties. With few rounds fired, thugs in his employ forcibly prevented an American ship, the USS *Harlan County*, from off-loading UN troops intended to retrain the Haitian Army and police; attacked the car of the U.S. Charge d' Affairs with axe handles; and assassinated known Aristide supporters. After a few months more of failed sanctions and diplomacy, UN Secretary General Butros Butros-Ghali acknowledged the failure of peaceful efforts and UN Security Council Resolution 940 authorized the "application of all necessary means to restore democracy in Haiti." This set the stage for forcible entry, to be spearheaded by the XVIII Airborne Corps' 82d Airborne Division and U.S. Special Operations assets.

Even as the paratroopers were en route to their targets, the situation changed again. Former President Jimmy Carter headed a last-minute



*"Hummers" make their way down a flooded road between villages.*

delegation to seek nonviolent resolution. With invasion imminent, Cedras and his cronies capitulated, agreeing to an unopposed landing the following day. Parallel planning for nonforcible options had progressed apace, and troops and helicopters of the 10th Mountain Division were offshore aboard the carrier USS *Eisenhower* with rangers and Special Operations Forces and their helicopters positioned on the carrier USS *America*. Waves of theretofore invading combat and airborne assault aircraft returned to home stations; and at 9:00 A.M. on September 19, 1994, 10th Mountain Division troops in full battle gear leaped out of helicopters onto the tarmac of Port-au-Prince, there to be met by a U.S. Embassy Army officer casually dressed in a summer Class B uniform.



*U.S. soldiers on patrol in Haiti draw the attention of curious villagers.*

The American soldiers and marines entering Haiti found themselves in an ambiguous political situation. Rather than destroying or displacing Haitian troops loyal to Cedras, they were to work alongside them for a period of weeks while Cedras and his colleagues made arrangements to depart and Aristide and his allies arrived to assume the reins of government. U.S. forces would conduct military operations to restore and preserve civil order, protect the interests of U.S. citizens and third-country nationals, restore the legitimately elected government of Haiti, and provide technical assistance. They were not, however, to be unduly aggressive, nor were they to directly disarm Haitian forces or be drawn too far into nation-building.

Ambiguities in the concept of operations led to ambiguities in their conduct. In Port-au-Prince, American troops interpreted rules of engagement narrowly, deferring to existing Haitian authorities to maintain public order and not intervening in “Haitian on Haitian” violence. This hands-off attitude had immediate and unfortunate results when surly Haitian police beat a man to death in full view of the media while American troops stood idly by. In the interior of Haiti, on the other hand, Special Forces A Teams followed their traditional formulas of working through local community leaders, taking charge as much as they viewed necessary, and incarcerating the worst known criminals and attachés (pro-Cedras vigilantes). As they expanded their control—ultimately 1,200 Special Forces personnel spread through over two-dozen towns and cities—they dabbled in medical support and other community activities to reinforce the notion that the American presence was a good idea.

In Cap Haitien, Haiti’s second largest city, a marine patrol responded to an imminent attack by opening fire, killing ten pro-Cedras Haitian policemen in a sharp firefight. From that point U.S. forces dominated the streets in Cap Haitien, a circumstance the average Haitian welcomed. Some commentators would later contrast a minimalist “siege mentality” allegedly acquired in Somalia and demonstrated in Port-au-Prince with

the more expansive engagement by the Special Forces and the more aggressive posture of the marines. It is probably more accurate to say that the initial circumstances and guidance were unclear, thus yielding inconsistent troop behavior as well.

The Joint Chiefs of Staff soon changed the rules of engagement to authorize intervention to protect Haitian lives, and 1,000 American military police took to patrolling the streets of Port-au-Prince to assist in that purpose. (*Map 28*) By October 2 the intervening multinational force (including the battalion-size Caribbean Command) had peaked at 20,931 and plans were under way to reduce, refurbish, and retrain the Haitian military and police. Pro-Cedras paramilitaries persisted in some violence, but their grip steadily slipped. American soldiers found themselves in the increasingly ironic position of protecting Cedras' supporters from mob violence.

On October 13 Cedras and his Chief of Staff fled the country, and on October 15 Aristide triumphantly returned. Soon the Haitian Senate outlawed paramilitary groups, 15,000 weapons were turned over to the multinational force, known human-rights abusers were in custody or had fled the country, the Haitian Army was downsized and redesignated as a border patrol of 1,500, and Haitian police began rotating through a six-day course taught by international monitors. Violence subsided, American soldiers were generally welcomed as liberators, thousands of Haitians who had fled the country returned, and circumstances seemed stable enough to transition to UN supervision before restoring independence altogether. On March 31, 1995, the American-dominated multinational force handed over its responsibilities to the newly established United Nations Mission in Haiti.

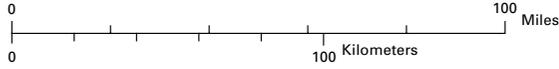
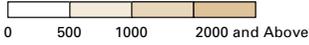
## Multinational Operations

Operations in northern Iraq, Somalia, and Haiti reflected changing philosophies with respect to armed intervention on the part of both the United Nations and the United States. Throughout the Cold War, peacekeeping and humanitarian relief had featured minor to modest military participation. In such operations, political and diplomatic imperatives had heavily outweighed military ones and troops were introduced sparingly. In 1987 about 10,000 UN troops were deployed on seven operations at a cost of perhaps \$230 million. Very few of these troops were Americans. By 1995, 80,000 personnel were deployed on twenty peacekeeping operations at a cost exceeding \$3.5 billion and a major fraction of the troops were American. What had changed?

The most notable change was an elevated expectation of the role uniformed soldiers would play. Traditional peacekeeping had envisioned the interposition of lightly armed observers between two armed parties that had agreed to separation and had the internal discipline to enforce an agreed cease-fire upon their own soldiers. Generally the belligerents were national armies—Israelis, Egyptians, Syrians, Indians, or Pakistanis, for example—but even if they were not, the expectation existed that there would be a peace to keep before UN observers became involved. The peacekeepers observed and reported on both parties, physically separated the adversaries, defended themselves in cases of minor infractions, and generally facilitated a cooling-off period while

OPERATION UPHOLD DEMOCRACY  
19 September 1994–31 March 1995  
and  
UNITED NATIONS MISSION  
31 March 1995–February 1996  
HAITI

ELEVATION IN FEET



Map 28

diplomats sought more permanent solutions. In the interests of impartiality, the United Nations preferred collections of small contingents of troops from all over the world, and most featured dual chains of command both to the United Nations and to their country of origin. This was not the kind of force for serious warfighting. The long, unhappy experience of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL, 1978–1996) eroded the notion that former belligerents would behave as agreed or be able to control their own subordinates. Heavily armed desperadoes operating with autonomy and impunity in the wreckage of failed states required a more robust response to keep or, more properly, to impose a peace.

Fortunately for those who favored an energetic approach, the end of the Cold War removed an important brake on multinational activity. The remarkably broad-based coalition that fought the Gulf War featured a diverse mix of former allies and adversaries under an American lead with UN approval and Russian acquiescence. The UN Security Council found itself newly imbued with a spirit of consensus when cleaning up the debris of the Cold War. Angola, Cambodia, El Salvador, Mozambique, Namibia, and Nicaragua were Cold War battlegrounds whose internal quarrels were no longer of interest to the Great Powers. Strife in the former Yugoslavia, Tajikistan, and Georgia were viewed as threats to the general peace more so than as cracks in Russian hegemony. Each of these embattled war zones soon received substantial UN peacekeeping forces, generally numbering in the thousands and tens of thousands rather than in the hundreds of an earlier era. The impotence of UNIFIL in Lebanon was not to be repeated. This new team on the UN Security Council created an ambitious expectation on the council of what to expect from dispatched forces. Between 1945 and 1990, vetoes had paralyzed the Security Council 279 times; between 1990 and 1994, none did.

The United Nations' new-found energy had important implications for the U.S. Army. The distinguished world body had diminished the inviolability of the nation state when it endorsed intervention in destructive civil quarrels within failed states that could not control them. The simplicity of interposing lightly armed observers between the disciplined forces of two nation states was replaced by the complexity of controlling a highly lethal environment wherein factions could not ensure the compliance of their subordinates. Suddenly, peacekeepers might well need armored vehicles, attack helicopters, overwhelming firepower and an assertive attitude to make their mandates endure.

Only a few countries, like the United States, or alliances could provide the organizational and logistical framework within which such a force could be fielded. President Clinton had adopted a national strategy of “shape, prepare, respond,” wherein shaping the international environment with a modest investment of forces and funds and preparing for worldwide contingencies became as important conceptually as responding to major crises after they had already occurred. Shaping and preparing argued for intense multinational activity during periods of peace or operations other than war and for developing capabilities useful worldwide at all levels of the combat spectrum rather than those focused narrowly on a specific threat. Chief of Staff General Dennis J. Reimer recognized the challenging human dimension of transitioning

**Heavily armed desperadoes operating with autonomy and impunity in the wreckage of failed states required a more robust response to keep or, more properly, to impose a peace.**

to a highly flexible capabilities-based force and set about revising the Officer Personnel Management System to, among other things, ensure appropriate career opportunities for officers not pursuing traditional combat-arms tracks. Indeed, he believed so strongly in putting a human face on the President's national strategy that he adopted the motto "Soldiers are our credentials."

The United States had taken the lead in northern Iraq and even went so far as to forcibly occupy the region to secure the resettlement of the Kurds. The United States also had taken the lead in Somalia, sending troops to the southern third of the country to guarantee the arrival of relief supplies until the worst of the food distribution crisis had been resolved, then turning over the operation to a UN force with a substantial American contingent. Similarly, intervention in Haiti had started as an American operation and then mutated into a UN one. Soon, as we shall see, the United States found itself heavily involved in multinational efforts to bring peace to Macedonia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, and Kosovo as well. In all cases operations were intensely multinational, and in most allied troops under UN auspices eventually outnumbered the Americans on the ground.

Recognizing that integrated multinational operations were increasingly likely, American soldiers gave considerable attention to preparing for them. In 1993 the North Atlantic Treaty Organization established the Partnership for Peace program, a concerted effort to draw neutrals, former Warsaw Pact nations, and former Soviet constituent republics into multinational military exercises. Training exercises emphasized search and rescue, humanitarian relief, and peacekeeping. Dozens of such exercises every year, involving dozens of nations at a time, became a standard feature of NATO training regimes. Similar exercises in Latin America and around the Pacific Rim followed suit, albeit with less consistency, diversity, and scale. Allied units were increasingly invited to participate in U.S. National Training Center, Joint Readiness Training Center (JRTC), and Combat Maneuver Training Center (CMTTC) exercises on an evermore integrated basis. American soldiers had had ample experience working with allies but seldom in circumstances wherein the mix of nations was so great and the scale of combined operations so small. Individual patrols and even checkpoints often became multinational events during the conduct of peacekeeping. This contrasted with earlier operations in Europe, Korea, or Southwest Asia, where allies were present but American soldiers were largely independent in their own brigades and divisions.

## **The Breakup of Yugoslavia**

During the early 1990s the former nation of Yugoslavia disintegrated into chaos. Yugoslavia had been a post-World War I construct that artificially conglomerated Serbs, Slovenes, Croats, Bosnian Muslims, Albanians, Macedonians, Montenegrans, Hungarians, and others into a single state. Historic ethnic rivalries had been exploited by German and Italian occupation authorities during World War II and then ruthlessly suppressed by Communist strongman Tito during his subsequent 35-year rule. After Tito's death in 1980, ethnic rivalries bubbled up again, achieving particular virulence with Serbian leader Slobodan Milošević.

Fearing the worst from Milošević's ferocious Serbian nationalism, Slovenia and Croatia broke free from Yugoslavia in sharp, relatively brief wars of independence during 1991.

The Muslim plurality of Bosnia-Herzegovina was not so fortunate when it attempted to follow suit. At that time Bosnia was 44 percent Muslim, 33 percent Serb, and 17 percent Croat. When the European community recognized Bosnia-Herzegovina as an independent state on April 6, 1992, its constituent Serbs revolted from within it. The Serb-dominated Yugoslav National Army (JNA) heavily assisted the Bosnian Serbs; soon thousands on both sides were dead and over a million were refugees. The Serbs had the upper hand initially and forced Muslims and Croats out of one village after another. A gruesome campaign of murder, rape, and intimidation labeled "ethnic cleansing" forced dispossessed refugees from areas the Serbs wanted to control.

The United States had hoped to stay clear of this Balkan conflict, being preoccupied elsewhere and hopeful that European leaders or perhaps the United Nations would sort things out. The United Nations did embargo arms shipments to the former Yugoslavia in 1991 and deployed a United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) in 1992 to enforce agreed-upon cease-fires and to facilitate humanitarian relief. Over time UNPROFOR became the largest and most expensive UN peacekeeping operation in history, featuring 38,000 troops from thirty-seven countries. It nevertheless proved no match for the heavily armed Serbs, who intermittently bullied or defied the peacekeepers. A particularly egregious demonstration of UNPROFOR's ineffectiveness occurred in July 1995, when Serbian forces overwhelmed the so-called UN Safe Area of Srebrenica in a calculated orgy of mass murder and forcible deportation.

NATO and the United States attempted to stiffen UNPROFOR with naval and air support. Over a two-year period an average of seventeen ships at a time enforced the arms embargo by challenging 31,400 ships, boarding 2,575, and diverting 643 into port for further inspection. A multinational humanitarian airlift labeled Operation PROVIDE PROMISE delivered more than 176,000 tons of humanitarian supplies over a three-year period while airdropping a further 19,800 tons into areas isolated by the Bosnian Serbs. NATO imposed and enforced a no-fly zone over Bosnia to deny combatants the option of inflicting mayhem from the air. The Serbs challenged this restriction once, and American F-16s shot down four of their Jastreb J-1s. NATO threats to engage Serbian ground targets worked less well, in part because of the difficulty of identifying them in the terrain and weather and in part because of the



*A Suburb of Sarajevo after a Clash between Serbs and Muslims*

fear that Serbs would retaliate by attacking UNPROFOR peacekeepers. Prior to August 1995 NATO aircraft struck or threatened to strike Serbian ground targets on only a few occasions, when UNPROFOR peacekeepers or their charges were at exceptional risk.

On one such occasion the Bosnian Serbs did in fact seize scores of UNPROFOR peacekeepers to use as shields against further attack. This embarrassment underscored the vulnerability of UNPROFOR and increased the inclination in frustrated NATO capitals for more resolute action. On August 28 Bosnian Serbs who had besieged the beautiful Bosnian capital of Sarajevo for three years were alleged to have fired a mortar round that dropped into a crowded market square, killing thirty-seven people. This was the last straw. UNPROFOR coiled into a defensive posture while NATO responded with a sustained air campaign against Serbian guns and heavy equipment surrounding Sarajevo. Over a three-week period NATO flew 3,515 sorties, of which 2,318 were American, before the Serbs agreed to break the siege and withdraw their big guns. In addition to air operations, the United States deployed an infantry battalion (Operation ABLE SENTRY) to newly independent Macedonia to ensure that the conflict did not widen.

The show of American and European resolve did much to bring Milošević into peace negotiations at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base in Dayton, Ohio, in the fall of 1995. The damage done by years of crippling international economic sanctions did even more. What perhaps accomplished the most was a dramatic reversal of Bosnian Serb fortunes in the ground fighting. Croatian strongman Franjo Tuđman had long resented the Serbian retention of some Croatian lands after his successful bid for independence. He had quietly built up his army into a capable offensive force, assisted somewhat by American advisers, many of them military retirees under contract. On August 4 he struck viciously and successfully to drive the Serbs out of Croatia. He then drove on to assist the now-allied Bosnian Muslims and Croats, who themselves were pressing successful attacks against the Serbs. In short order they rolled the Bosnian Serbs from controlling almost three-fourths of the country to controlling less than half. America and its allies were wary of too much Croatian success, however, fearing the direct intervention of the Yugoslav Army. They helped broker peace and brought Serbs, Croats, and Muslims to the table at Dayton.

The Bosnian Peace Agreement envisioned a robust UN-sanctioned, NATO-led implementation force (IFOR) responsible for ensuring: compliance with the cease-fire; separation of the forces; withdrawal of forces out of zones of separation into their respective territories; collection of heavy weapons into agreed cantonment sites; safe withdrawal of UN forces; and control of Bosnian air space. The IFOR would ultimately consist of 60,000 troops deployed into the area under the command of the Allied Rapid Reaction Corps (ARRC). In addition to NATO troops, IFOR included soldiers from Albania, Austria, the Czech Republic, Egypt, Estonia, Finland, Hungary, Jordan, Latvia, Lithuania, Malaysia, Morocco, Poland, Romania, Russia, Sweden, and the Ukraine. Russia's participation was particularly important because of her previous hostility to NATO and because of

her special relationship with the Serbs. Most of the troops arriving as part of IFOR were well trained, well equipped, heavily armed, and prepared for combat should circumstances require—a posture very different from that of UNPROFOR.

In addition to leading the overall military effort from a headquarters under the supervision of the U.S. Army, Europe (USAREUR), commander, the United States contributed to the IFOR 20,000 troops built around the Germany-based 1st Armored Division. About half as many international troops also worked under the 1st Armored Division's supervision, to include a Russian airborne brigade. Rather than competing with their allies for access through the damaged, diminutive, and restricted Adriatic ports, the Americans decided to deploy overland with an intermediate staging base in Taszar, Hungary, and an operational sector in northern Bosnia around Tuzla. The 3/325 Airborne Infantry Battalion Task Force from Vicenza, Italy, parachuted in to seize Tuzla and establish an early presence while the heavy division arrived by road and rail through Hungary. Severe winter weather, extensive flooding, and horrible mud forced the Americans into a monumental bridging exercise to get across the swollen Sava River. From December 20–31 the deployment had more to do with man against nature than it did with man against man. U.S. Army engineers persevered, installing a pontoon bridge, across which tanks, infantry fighting vehicles, trucks, and other vehicles rolled in a seemingly unending stream.

Once deployed, IFOR handled its military tasks fairly readily. The Serbs, Croats, and Muslims were weary of war and respectful of the NATO display of force. Occasional efforts to cheat with respect to hiding heavy weapons or avoiding inspection were abandoned in the face of further demonstrations of overwhelming military muscle. Fighting ceased. Landmines remained as a legacy of the earlier warfare, proving deadly to peacekeepers and civilians alike. De-mining operations fell behind schedule because of the sheer numbers involved, because of poor records kept when laying mines, and because of subsequent difficulty in finding them. De-mining progressed nevertheless.

American soldiers eventually settled into a routine of patrols, collateral training, and camp life. Civilian contractors built or deployed modular living and working facilities with electrical power, water, and waste disposal in the base camps. Original plans called for eight base camps with 3,000 soldiers each, but extremes of terrain compartmentalization forced the construction of twenty smaller camps. The soldiers needed expedient access to the secured population, who themselves benefited from employment in building or servicing the camps or in reconstructing roads and the infrastructure to support them.



*IFOR vehicles cross the Sava River on the hastily constructed bridge.*

Within the camps, soldiers found respite in post exchanges, long-distance telephones, Internet access, mess halls, and recreational facilities. Other than separation from loved ones, an air of normalcy emerged inside the wire surrounding the camps.

Outside the wire, things were not quite normal. Although the strictly military tasks of enforcing the cease-fire, separating former adversaries, and sustaining control of heavy weapons went generally as envisioned, issues for which civil resolution was anticipated went less well for a number of reasons. Crime was rampant. Apolitical incidence of theft, drugs, and prostitution were complicated by hate crimes involving arson, intimidation, and even murder. Efforts to resettle refugees in their original homes were clandestinely resisted by those who had forced them out, and freedom of movement became a hotly contested issue. Members of one ethnicity attempting to cross the territory of another to visit family, gravesites, or property were spat upon, bullied, or stoned. In the absence of a capable and reliable police force, allied soldiers soon found themselves deeply involved in law and order issues. In this difficult environment, economic recovery understandably lagged as well.

The mandate for the IFOR expired on December 20, 1996. Too many had assumed that in a year the difficulties of Bosnia could be resolved to a point at which the country no longer required outside assistance. Indeed, one American brigade commander created a media flap when he opined that Americans would be in Bosnia for years to come. Results bore him out. At the end of a year circumstances were still too fragile to hope that NATO could leave Bosnia without its reversion into chaos, and the allies were unwilling to continue the mission without U.S. participation. The parties involved agreed to continue the missions with a UN-sanctioned, NATO-led stabilization force (SFOR). (See *Map 29*.) Testimonial to the progress that had been made was the fact that 31,000 troops, about half the IFOR requirement, seemed sufficient for the SFOR.

NATO settled in for the long haul. For the American soldiers, one six-month rotation followed another as divisions took their turns in Bosnia. Slowly, progress was made. Houses were rebuilt, refugees resettled, freedom of movement restored, elections supervised and held, and economic enterprises undertaken. By 2003 SFOR 12, the twelfth American rotation into SFOR, included a U.S. contingent of only 1,450 troops. Their duties were a fairly routine round of presence patrols, security, and backup to local authorities. To that point, however, the Bosnian Serbs, Croats, and Muslims had become used to peaceably living apart more than they had learned to work together. Their effective governance and fledgling democratic processes were parallel rather than integrated, and there seemed to be no way to resolve disputes between them without the intervention of some UN or NATO leader or commander. A de facto partition of the country of Bosnia-Herzegovina emerged, with the predominately Muslim state of Bosnia-Herzegovina counterpoised by the predominately Christian Serb Republic. The creation of a truly viable, multiethnic Bosnian state may take generations, if it occurs at all. In the meantime, a peaceable, if divided, land policed by several thousand NATO-led soldiers is infinitely preferable to what happened before.



Map 29



## Kosovo

Bosnia was not the last casualty of Milošević's fervent Serbian nationalism. The southern province of Kosovo held an especially revered place in Serbian folklore. Here, much of the nation's earliest history had transpired. Here, the semimythical Prince Lazar had died at the hands of the Turks in an epic battle that came to epitomize martyrdom in the defense of Serbian national identity. For all of Kosovo's Serbian roots, however, by the 1990s, 90 percent of its population was Albanian. Milošević ruthlessly suppressed the local autonomy these Albanian Kosovars had previously enjoyed. Excesses on the part of Yugoslav police and armed forces fueled Kosovar agitation for independence or unification with Albania, which in turn fueled further repression. A shadowy guerrilla force known as the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) emerged occasionally to attack Yugoslav officials and policemen. The cycle of violence and revenge threatened to escalate into another Bosnia, and the NATO nations determined not to let it do so. After a particularly egregious attack wherein Serbian security forces massacred forty-five Albanian civilians in the Kosovar village of Račak, NATO pressured all parties involved into peace talks in Rambouillet, France, beginning February 6, 1999. The talks broke down when Milošević refused to accept NATO peacekeeping troops in Kosovo, a precondition without which other provisions eventually would have proved meaningless.

The Rambouillet talks broke down on March 19, and on March 20 Serbian forces launched a major offensive in Kosovo that clearly they had been preparing for some time. Heavily armed Yugoslav soldiers and Serbian paramilitaries, supported by formidable complements of armed vehicles, ravaged one village after another in an orgy of arson, murder, and rape. The objective was ethnic cleansing on a vast scale to reverse the demographics throughout Kosovo and bring about a Serbian majority. Soon thousands were dead and hundreds of thousands desperate refugees fleeing into the mountains or into neighboring Albania and Macedonia. The sheer mass of the humanitarian crisis threatened to overwhelm those countries, and the complexities of dealing with refugees encumbered military options. American pilots flew 500 airlift missions to deliver 3,100 tons of humanitarian supplies, while American engineers and contractors hastily constructed three camps in Albania to accommodate 60,000 refugees. Another 9,000 refugees were flown to temporary accommodations in Fort Dix, New Jersey. As it was, the U.S. government accounted for about a fifth of the humanitarian effort, with the rest borne by allies and nongovernmental agencies. In addition to resources diverted to bringing succor to the refugees, competition developed between relief efforts and combat operations in the use of transportation, airfields, roads, and other infrastructures.

The NATO nations resolved to thwart Milošević's aggression and the threat it posed to Balkan stability. Perhaps too soon they ruled out intervention on the ground, constrained more by political fears than military possibilities, and undertook to punish the Belgrade regime from the air. NATO decisionmaking required the consent of all nations to each major permutation of the target set or plan—a fact perhaps

**Competition developed between relief efforts and combat operations in the use of transportation, airfields, roads, and other infrastructures.**

not fully appreciated in Washington, D.C.—and the earliest rounds of attacks were designed more to send a message to Milošević than to do any real damage. Shock at the emerging fate of the Kosovar Albanians stiffened NATO resolve for tougher and more damaging strikes, but a certain asymmetry remained as the Serbs pretty much did as they chose on the ground while the allies were supreme in the air.

The Kosovo Air Campaign lasted seventy-eight days and featured 38,000 sorties, about 40 percent by NATO allies and 60 percent by the United States. Although modest in its effects at first, as the campaign progressed it had the cumulative effect of severely eroding Yugoslav strategic capabilities. Allied air strikes significantly damaged all oil refineries, 57 percent of petroleum reserves, 29 percent of ammunition storage, 34 highway bridges, 11 railroad bridges, 14 command posts, and 10 military airfields, as well as destroying over 100 aircraft on the ground. Perhaps most remarkably, NATO lost only two planes and no pilots despite the robustness of the Yugoslav air defenses. A thoughtful combination of PGMs delivered from high altitudes, suppression and destruction of Yugoslav air defenses, electronic countermeasures, and superb coordination and training accounted for this unprecedented success in preventing friendly casualties.

Despite strategic damage to Yugoslavia, efforts to deter the Serbs from terrorizing the Albanians had less success. The Serbs made artful use of camouflage and decoys, and frequent bad weather greatly reduced the effectiveness of air strikes against mobile or indeterminate targets. NATO efforts to avoid civilian casualties allowed the Serbs to use Albanians as shields, and the incidents of civilian casualties quickly aroused the attention of the media and were broadcast for all the world to see. For a period it appeared as if NATO was hammering away from the air at the civilian infrastructure of remnant Yugoslavia while the Serbs were terrorizing the Albanians at will, with neither adversary able to come to grips with what was vital to the other. This asymmetry was resolved in part by the increasing effectiveness of the KLA and its gradual cooperation with the NATO air and missile campaign. The KLA was on the ground in Kosovo and could identify Serbian targets and distinguish them from decoys and noncombatants. KLA attacks forced the Yugoslavs to concentrate, and attempted counterstrikes against the KLA forced them to concentrate even more. This created useful observed targets for marauding NATO aircraft. Indeed, NATO reported that its destruction of Serbian ground assets shot up from 20 tanks, 40 other armored vehicles, and 40 mortars and artillery pieces during the first sixty days of the air campaign to 122 tanks, 222 other armored vehicles, and 454 mortars and artillery pieces in the weeks after NATO had achieved effective synergy with the KLA.

The KLA in effect provided NATO the ground option it had earlier dismissed and with it the synergy that AirLand Battle generates. Even as this KLA contribution was maturing, the prospect that NATO would after all introduce its own ground forces into Kosovo also came into play. NATO land forces had built up over time in Macedonia and Albania, initially with peacekeeping in mind but increasingly capable of other missions. The American contribution in this regard was named Task Force HAWK, a brigade-size mix of attack helicopters, rocket artillery, and mechanized forces deployed into Albania. TF HAWK was

initially intended to deploy to Macedonia and provide a cross-border capability, low-flying helicopters supported by artillery attacking the fleeting ground targets that high-flying NATO planes were having such difficulty engaging. It never actually got into combat for that purpose. Macedonia balked at harboring such a force, so it was diverted to Albania. Weather, changes directed in its organization and disposition, and competition with humanitarian relief assets for lift and airfield space further delayed its deployment. Despite those obstacles the soldiers of TF Hawk did establish themselves as a credible ground force proximate to Kosovo. However, the Serbs thickened their low-level air defenses in the formidable mountains separating Albania from Kosovo. It seemed increasingly dangerous to helicopter into them without a more general ground offensive. Media debate favoring such a ground complement to the air campaign, in addition to increasing KLA effectiveness and the apparent advocacy of ground intervention in several NATO capitals, must have weighed on the minds of Milošević and his colleagues. Moreover, better weather improved the effectiveness of allied bombing.

After seventy-eight days of NATO bombing, Milošević capitulated and agreed to evacuate loyal forces from Kosovo, allow NATO-led peacekeepers to replace them in securing the province, and accept the right of return of the refugees he had so recently been attempting to drive from the country. It remains unclear exactly why Milošević capitulated when he did, but reasons probably included

the strategic damage to his national infrastructure; the prospects of an allied ground campaign's reinforcing the already dangerous KLA ground campaign; the continuing solidarity of the NATO alliance even as it committed to increasingly severe military measures; the absence of NATO casualties; economic and legal sanctions' crippling his fiscal posture; and his one possible ally, Russia, committing to favor the end state the allies were trying to achieve (if not their means). Shortly before Milošević capitulated, Russian Special Envoy Viktor Chernomyrdin visited Belgrade in the company of the Finnish President and explained that the refugees should return, Serbian forces should leave, and a NATO-led security force should replace them. A decade of conscious effort to engage Russia in a common vision for European security was paying off.

For Supreme Allied Commander, Europe (SACEUR), General Wesley K. Clark, the issues of command and control were unprecedented. The scale and pace of the military campaign by itself would have been difficult enough to manage and was enormously complicated by alliance politics in keeping the sixteen participating NATO nations aboard and achieving their unanimous support for each major permutation of the war effort. Ubiquitous media coverage catapulted tactical events into strategic visibility, especially if civilian casualties were involved. Media coverage played in different capitals differently, forcing Clark into recurrent rounds of negotiation with national counterparts—



Peace Keeper, *Henrietta Snowden, 2000*

including those of his own government—as issues arose. On the positive side, modern communications made it possible for these exchanges to occur quickly, and video-telephone conferences (VTCs) allowed parties involved from all over the world to meet “face to face” on a daily basis, though a role for traditional written correspondence and documentation remained. Clark’s extensive background in Europe and NATO and positions of high responsibility facilitated his development of a command style uniquely appropriate to this effort and the technology that supported it.

Communications were but one arena of technological advance witnessed by the Kosovo conflict. Another was with respect to PGMs. During Operation DESERT STORM, PGMs had been effective but expensive. Costs easily ran into hundreds of thousands or even millions of dollars per munition, and PGMs constituted only about 8 percent of the bombs and missiles used. By the late 1990s satellite-based global positioning systems had come of age and provided a reliable alternative to such guidance systems as lasers, radio or radar signals, heat seeking, television guidance, and the like. Moreover, GPS sensing was so pervasive that a newly developed \$18,000 add-on kit could make a \$3,000, 2,000-lb. “dumb” bomb “smart.” This radically increased the numbers of PGMs available and the platforms from which they could be fired. Thirty-five percent of NATO’s Kosovo strikes were with PGMs. NATO aircraft had made considerable strides with respect to interoperability in the years before this war, and the overall air campaign progressed smoothly under an umbrella of American intelligence synchronization and air-space management. There was, however, further work to be done to sufficiently modernize many of the allied air forces to allow for their full participation in a PGM-based high-technology campaign.

When Milošević capitulated and signed the Military Technical Agreement, attention quickly swung to getting ground troops into Kosovo rapidly. NATO envisioned the ARRC in control of five multinational brigades, one each from the United States, Great Britain, Germany, France, and Italy. Many of these soldiers were already in position to move forward from Macedonia. The U.S. contingent was capped at 7,000, some of it drawn from TF HAWK in Albania. Given the enormous refugee crisis, the lack of civil government, and the collapse of law enforcement, it was important that these troops move in close behind the Serbian withdrawal. Concerns were that abandoned weapons might fall into the wrong hands, that pillage and lawlessness might erupt, that returning refugees would overwhelm the means hastily gathered to support them, and that returning Albanians would avenge themselves on Serbian civilians who had chosen to remain. The NATO occupation of Serbian Kosovo did proceed quickly and generally according to plan. (See *Map 30*.) One miniature crisis did erupt when a contingent of Russian troops from Bosnia slipped all controls, roared triumphantly through Pristina, and secured the nearby Slatini Airport in the expectation other Russians would quickly be airlifted in. This puzzling and maverick show of force fizzled when Bulgaria and Romania refused to let Russian airborne reinforcements fly through their air space.

The Americans of the Kosovo Force (KFOR) soon settled into a routine of checkpoints, vehicle searches, patrols, searches for illegal



Map 30

weapons, support to humanitarian relief efforts and liaison with allies, nongovernmental organizations, and local officials. The Albanians welcomed the Americans as liberators, but scuff-laws among them did not hesitate to simultaneously work their own agendas with respect to smuggling, crime, and vice. Lawlessness in the absence of an effective police force became a military problem while a police force was being hastily constructed. A more serious problem stemmed from Albanian retali-

ation against the few Serbs that remained, mostly in dispersed enclaves or along the northern border. The allies found themselves in the ironic position of spending much of their energy protecting hostile Serbs from friendly Albanians. Impartiality is one of the most important attributes of peacekeeping.

Over time and under the steady hand of NATO peacekeepers, circumstances in Kosovo began to follow the pattern set in Bosnia. Violence subsided, residents returned to peaceable activities, and some semblance of economic and civil life returned. In the town of Cernica, for example, serious incidents of violence dropped from about eighty during 2000 to none in six months during 2002. By 2003 Americans committed to KFOR dropped to under 3,000, a decrease of more than half. As was the case with Bosnia, however, this progress represented separation more than reconciliation. Albanians and Serbs demonstrated no particular interest in working together, and a modest number of NATO peacekeepers remained necessary to resolve or avoid difficulties between them.

### Army Transformation

The dramatic events of the post-Cold War world focused the senior Army leadership on changing the Army to meet these new challenges. When General Eric K. Shinseki became the thirty-fourth Army Chief of Staff in June 1999, he was already committed to a dramatic transformation of the Army. He had commanded a heavy division and had served as Commander of USAREUR and SFOR in Bosnia. He had been Vice Chief of Staff of the Army when the Army was bruised by press and congressional criticism concerning how long it took to deploy TF HAWK to Albania. In his opinion, the heavy divisions were too heavy to get where they might be needed quickly and the light forces lacked the staying power to stand up to a capable adversary. As an opening move he established several marks on the wall with respect to deployability: a fully capable brigade anywhere in the world within 96 hours, a similarly capable division within 5 days, and a corps of five divisions in 30 days. He gave the process he was embarking upon a definitive label: Army Transformation.

These timelines mandated a lighter and more nimble Army. At the time, a lively debate was ongoing among defense intellectuals concerning whether significant changes were more often evolutionary or revolutionary and whether or not the stars were aligned for what some called a revolution in military affairs. Within most venues, technical advance was perking along in an evolutionary manner; but revolutionary potential seemed near at hand in two venues: digitally enabled network-centric warfare and affordable PGMs. If this revolutionary potential could become reality, a lighter and more lethal force was a possibility.



Waiting To Phone Home, *Henrietta Snowden, 2000*

## REVOLUTION IN MILITARY AFFAIRS

A number of defense experts inaugurated a debate in the late twentieth century over an impending revolution in military affairs, or RMA. For the next decade most of the discussion of this RMA centered on major advances in information management. Even beyond technology, others argued that the revolution also represented social and economic changes that fundamentally altered the face of battle. In short, many postulated that the RMA would render all previous forms of warfare obsolete. Such revolutions had been declared before when the tank or the airplane or the atomic bomb were supposed to relegate the foot soldier to the ash heap of history. It remained to be seen whether the events of the early twenty-first century were to be truly revolutionary or just a continuing evolution in warfighting.

Network-centric warfare was the military manifestation of the digital technology that had led to the Internet and its capability to move huge masses of data quickly and accurately. Coupled with modern communications, sufficient bandwidth, and trained personnel, it permitted a real-time battlefield picture shared by all parties involved. Coming out of DESERT STORM, and in part because of difficulties achieving a shared battlefield picture during that conflict, the Army had begun experimenting extensively with and investing heavily in digital technology. Friendly force tracking, for example, envisioned transponders on vehicles and platforms that would relay friendly locations through satellite-based global positioning systems in such a manner that U.S. commanders at all levels were instantly aware of all locations and movements. Detected enemy locations and activities could also be instantly available to all parties on the net. Perhaps as important, logistical information could be tracked with such precision that the great mountains of contingency supplies could diminish. Commanders who knew the exact location of their logistical assets could have increased confidence to bring them forward just in time, an enormous increase in efficiency. Instructions and information of all types could be instantly accessed everywhere, permitting, for example, troops engaged in operations overseas to rummage through databases in the United States for counsel and advice. Knowledge would be power.

The most valuable sort of knowledge would be sufficiently precise for targeting enemy locations. With digitized communications such information would progress instantaneously from the sensor detecting the target to the shooter intended to engage it and would be available to other stations on the net at the same time. This would bring into play the second revolutionary advance, PGMs. Global positioning enabled a dramatic drop in the cost of such weapons. In future wars, potentially all stand-off munitions could be precision guided and could then cost-effectively engage trucks and troops as well as high-value targets. The timeliness of destructive effects, avoidance of unwanted collateral damage, and proliferation of platforms from which PGMs could be dropped, launched, or fired would dramatically alter the nature of warfighting. In addition, the economy with which munitions were used would reduce the need for huge stockpiles of ammunition massed at the front. Such stockpiles had always represented a large fraction of a

heavy division's lift requirements, and reducing them would go a long way toward developing a lighter and nimbler force.

Those venues wherein technology was evolving at a less revolutionary pace could nonetheless appreciably deepen the revolution introduced by digitization and PGMs. More-fuel-efficient engines—and perhaps an eventual shift to hybrid engines or batteries alone—would chop away at yet another logistical encumbrance. Fuel supplies comprised 70 percent of the tonnage within defense logistics. Improved vehicular armor could reduce the weight of vehicles while preserving crew protection. Body armor that could reliably protect against artillery fragments and small arms was now feasible for individual soldiers. Lasers could prove as useful in targeting direct-fire weapons as they were in guiding PGMs and might eventually directly destroy ballistic missiles and aircraft as well. Unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) had steadily improved in performance and reliability, and the prospect for using them as weapons platforms as well as for surveillance now seemed feasible. Night-vision devices were more sophisticated and more miniaturized, allowing American soldiers to “rule the night” as never before. Indeed, the downside of such modernization was battery consumption. This set in motion a new technological evolution: the search for miniature, long-lasting, rechargeable batteries.

Perhaps the most controversial transformation decision was the determination to step away from the formidable and proven, but fuel-consumptive and logistically demanding, seventy-ton M1 series tanks in favor of a twenty-ton vehicle airliftable by C-130 and preferably wheeled. The Army envisioned such a Future Combat System (FCS) as coming in several variants: reconnaissance, troop carrying, tank killing, artillery bearing, and the like. Technical advances with respect to armor and crew protection might close some of the gap with the heavier tank with respect to survivability, but even more protection was to be afforded by inconspicuousness and by the lethality of an overall array of sensors, shooters, and digital connectivity that was to destroy the enemy before the enemy could reliably engage. Historical experiences with light tanks or vehicles in lieu of tanks had not gone well, so the FCS concept had its share of critics. Chief of Staff Shinseki nevertheless committed the Army to the development of such a vehicle and further committed it to have a first battalion-size unit equipped during the period 2008–2010.

Investment in a future force did not mean that the current force could be ignored. This so-called Legacy Force was still a powerful fighting machine and had to be maintained, even upgraded with new technology, to be ready for any operations in the near future. The Legacy Force would continue the worldwide missions of the Army during the immediate future, and some mix of Legacy with more modern forces, as they became available, would be in the Army's inventory of units for years to come. An Interim Force was to be an immediate fix for the gap between the heavy Legacy Force and the light future forces. This force was to be equipped with light armored wheeled vehicles named Stryker. These vehicles were designed in variants similar to those envisioned for the FCS and would be organized into six brigade combat teams, each of which could be quickly airlifted into operations overseas. Although Strykers would be at a disadvantage against modernized heavy divisions,

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they could fight well against all else and offered a test bed for technology and doctrine intended for the future Objective Force. The Objective Force would be built around the FCS, when developed, and would embed all the technological advances possible. Interim Force brigades would be fielded at a pace of about one a year through 2006, and the Army would transition into the Objective Force in the dozen or so years following 2008.

To succeed, the Legacy Force, the Interim Force, and the Objective Force all required appropriate manning; and the prolonged downsizing of the 1990s had inhibited the incentive to recruit. When active-duty strength finally bottomed out at 480,000 in 1998, the Army had to replace each departing soldier with a new recruit—something it had not needed to do for some time. In 1999 the Army missed its recruiting goals by 6,000 in the active force and 10,000 in the Army Reserve. Within the next several years the Army revamped its emphasis on recruiting and introduced an initially controversial “Army of One” campaign. This campaign heavily emphasized the contributions of and skills acquired by individual soldiers and steered prospective recruits into Internet-based information to learn more about Army service. Indeed, one of the Internet’s most popular role-playing games during the period was an action adventure based upon and sponsored by the U.S. Army. The Army met its recruiting goals while attracting a substantial number of computer-savvy young people interested in self-improvement who were an ideal match for its increasingly digital posture.

When fielded, the proposed Objective Force would embody a new way of war. Digital technology would provide it knowledge of its own forces, of the enemy, and of environmental circumstances so quickly that it could make decisions and act on them far more rapidly than could the enemy. That same digital technology, combined with a vast array of sensors and shooters, would rain PGMs onto a hapless enemy with devastating effects. Enabling information would course through a worldwide network drawing into the fight joint forces of all descriptions along with other government agencies and forces from other nations. This theoretical force of the future would take full advantage of the effectiveness of PGMs, more-fuel-efficient vehicles, and digital logistical-information networks to shrink the size of unit logistical footprints. Modular subordinate tactical elements would organize and reorganize at a rapid pace, enabled by the sureness of their battlefield knowledge to do so at the right time, each time. Gone would be the elaborate control measures and methodical coordination that had kept a less information-capable Army from shooting its own people. What need for unit boundaries, phase lines, and carefully maintained alignment when nimble units could speed through the battlefield in small, difficult-to-target swarms, each fully mindful of the presence of the others? The possibilities of this new force of the future, however dependent on the success of a number of technological breakthroughs, were dizzying.

To succeed, Army Transformation as envisioned would require a prolonged campaign of development, testing, and garnering of institutional, political, and financial support. Few had any illusions that it would reach fruition quickly, although successful lobbying in the halls

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of Congress provided transformation a measure of budgetary support and momentum. In 2000 the Army budget began to grow for several years, and important pieces did seem in place for long-term success. Skeptics to such a dramatic departure from the past did remain, especially among some in the Office of the Secretary of Defense, in civilian think tanks, and among retirees. These cautioned against committing to technology that had not yet matured, were concerned that emphasis on the FCS might evolve into too narrow a hardware solution, and believed that the huge reliance on communications technologies and bandwidth might make the Army unduly vulnerable to a sophisticated adversary who could compromise both. Transformation also seemed to further reinforce American supremacies that already existed in battlefield technology and logistics while not addressing weaknesses in peacekeeping, urban combat, etc., wherein the technical advances were not all that great an asset. Successful Army Transformation would require continued attention to doctrine, training, leadership development, and force structure addressing all levels of intensity on the combat spectrum.

## Conclusion

The U.S. Army accomplished much in the years following the Cold War. It successfully fought a major war in Southwest Asia. It then downsized by a third while nevertheless sustaining high levels of overseas deployment. This requirement for overseas presence led it to improve upon its expeditionary capabilities while at the same time operating in such unfamiliar places as northern Iraq, Somalia, and Haiti. Tight budgets and international expectations suggested multinational operations, and the United States prepared for and proved the key player in successful operations in Bosnia and Kosovo. Even as it sustained a blistering operational tempo overseas, the Army undertook to transform itself. This transformation envisioned taking full advantage of technical leaps with respect to digitization and PGMs, as well as changes beyond technology.

Throughout the 1990s the Army's strategic focus remained broad and diffuse. No single adversary dominated its attention, and often it reacted to circumstances rather than adversaries. Paradigms developed, albeit slowly and deliberately, for a capabilities-based force, able to go almost anywhere and do almost anything, rather than for a threat-based force with a given adversary in mind. As busy as the Army was, it assumed its risks at some distance from the American people. Freedom's battles were being fought on Freedom's frontiers. The American people could go about their peaceable pursuits at home unmolested. How abruptly that would change.

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. The end of the Cold War led to major reductions both in the size of the U.S. military structure and in the budgets available to the services. Discuss the benefits and dangers to America of this development.

2. Why did the United States deploy forces to Saudi Arabia so quickly in 1990 after the Iraqi occupation of Kuwait? Was this in the vital interest of the United States?

3. How did the Gulf War in 1991 highlight the changes made to the Army after Vietnam? How did the American people view these changes?

4. Why should the U.S. Army be used as a peacekeeping or nation building force? Discuss some positive and negative aspects of such missions.

5. With the end of the Cold War, what was the continuing usefulness of NATO? Why should or should not the alliance continue to exist?

6. To what degree did the United States play the role of “world policeman” in the 1990s? What dynamics have increasingly forced the United States to assume this role? What role did, and should, allies play in this effort?

7. In what ways did the Army attempt to transform itself after the end of the Cold War, and why?

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