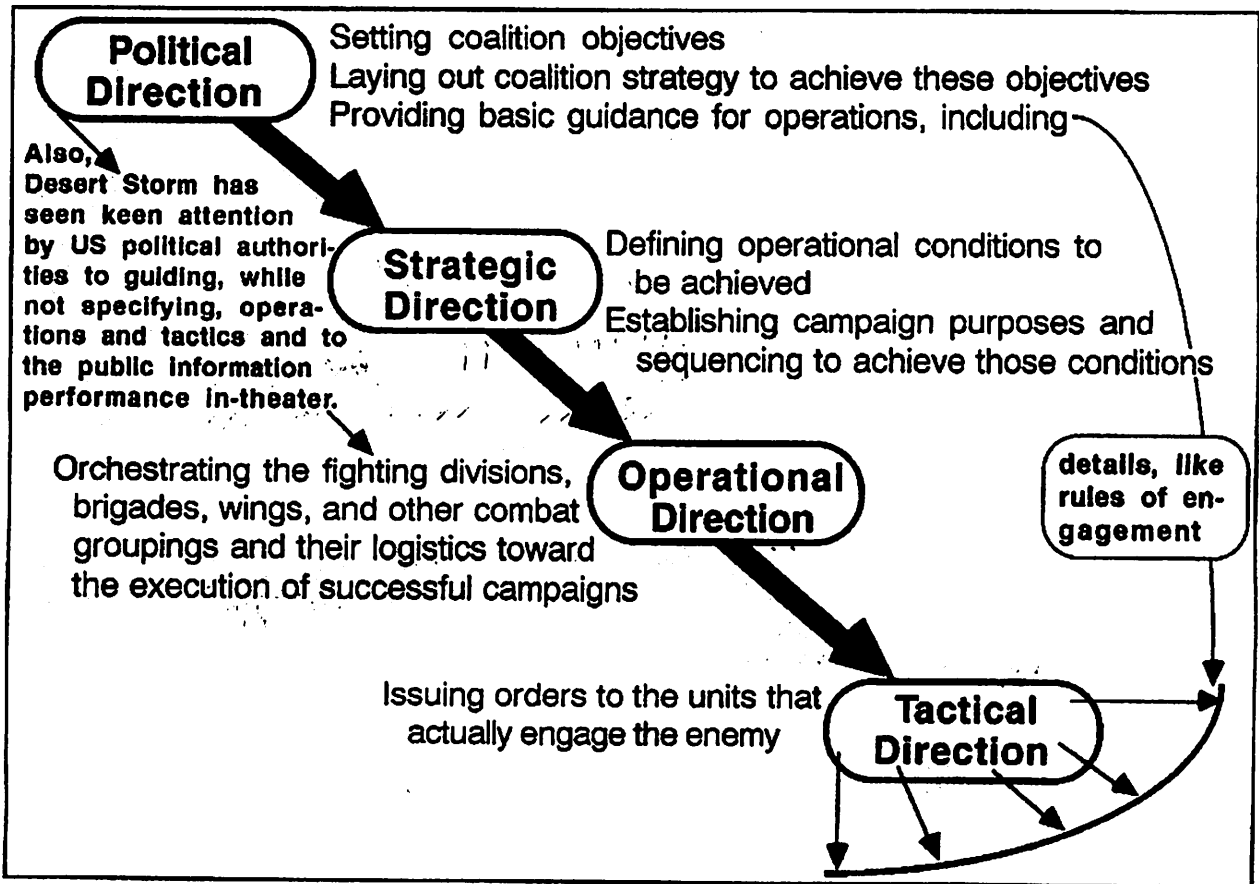


Writing about command and control for the Mideast coalition while the war still unfolds and before major ground action has begun if such is to be -- and without any inside knowledge whatever -- is risky, but...

Direction (command and control) of a coalition military force, as for a single-nation force, takes place at four interlocking levels: political, strategic, operational, and tactical.



The Chain of War's Command and Control

From the outset, the challenge to the Mideast coalition has been, if war should come, to achieve superior performance at all four of these levels, from top left to lower right. The coalition and its members are given only one opportunity to do it right.

Political/Strategic Direction

Political/strategic direction is the product of a nation's, or coalition's, highest political and military authorities working in concert, with leadership in political guidance being the realm of high political authorities and strategic direction being the area of expertise of

high military authorities. A theater commander in chief joins the high military authorities in formulating strategic direction, while he concurrently considers and carries out his in-theater strategic direction.

In that United Nations Security Council resolutions authorize its members' actions, the Mideast coalition resembles that of the Korean War. But there are differences. In 1950 the Soviet Union was boycotting Security Council meetings; today it is a US partner. In 1950 the Security Council provided for a single US-led UN Command; today there is no such structure. In 1950, US forces went to war immediately and unprepared; this time America and its allies had more than five months for their air and sea forces to get ready to fight, and more than six months for their ground forces. And in 1990 the scene is the Middle East, complicating the political/strategic equation by a factor of ten.

Quickly after Iraq's seizure of Kuwait, the Security Council defined the objectives of the emerging coalition: Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait; restoration of Kuwait's former regime; security of Saudi Arabia from Iraqi attack; and release of the people whom the Iraqis held against their will, since achieved. Beyond calling immediately for an embargo enforced by UN members' military action, and four months later authorizing members to use "all necessary means" to force Iraqi compliance with the UN objectives, the Security Council has provided no political or strategic direction. As the coalition's leader and committing by far the greatest share of military might, the United States, in close contact with other key nations and with their evident consent, has been the moving force and the de facto drafter and coordinator of political/strategic direction.

The classic February 1944 directive by the Combined Chiefs of Staff to General Eisenhower for the invasion of Europe, reproduced below, might give an idea of the form of that direction. The conjectured words to General Schwarzkopf, CINCCENT,¹ in italics paragraph by paragraph, might give an idea of its content.

1. [Combined Chiefs of Staff to Eisenhower] You are hereby designated as Supreme Allied Commander of the forces placed under your orders for operations for liberation of Europe from Germans. Your title will be Supreme Commander Allied Expeditionary Force.

[Chairman, JCS, for the US Secretary of Defense, to Schwarzkopf] In your capacity as Commander in Chief, United States Central Command, and with the agreement of all other members of the United Nations coalition, you are designated as the primary coordinator for the military operations of the United Nations coalition forces in and near Saudi Arabia responsive to Iraq's invasion of Kuwait.

¹ CINCCENT means Commander in Chief, US Central Command, or CENTCOM.

2. **Task.** You will enter the continent of Europe and, in conjunction with the other United Nations, undertake operations aimed at the heart of Germany and the destruction of her armed forces. The date for entering the Continent is the month of May, 1944. After adequate channel ports have been secured, exploitation will be directed toward securing an area that will facilitate both ground and air operations against the enemy.

Task. When directed by the Secretary of Defense, you will undertake and coordinate operations aimed at the destruction of Iraqi armed forces and the liberation of Kuwait. In executing this task, you are authorized to conduct, and to coordinate the conduct of, sea operations in and from designated waters, air operations throughout Kuwait and Iraq, and land operations in Kuwait and into Iraq as necessary to recover and defend Kuwait and to destroy such Iraqi forces as immediately threaten Kuwait's territory.

3. Notwithstanding the target date above you will be prepared at any time to take immediate advantage of favorable circumstances, such as withdrawal by the enemy on your front, to effect a reentry into the Continent with such forces as you have available at the time; a general plan for this operation when approved will be furnished for your assistance.

Pending authority to execute the above task you will defend and coordinate the defense of the territory of Saudi Arabia. Should Iraq forces attack into Saudi Arabia you are authorized to conduct and to coordinate the conduct of defensive air, land, and sea operations, to include hot pursuit over Iraq's territory.

4. **Command.** You are responsible to the Combined Chiefs of Staff and will exercise command generally in accordance with the diagram at Appendix. Direct communication with the United States and British Chiefs of Staff is authorized in the interest of facilitating your operations and for arranging necessary logistics.

You are responsible to the Secretary of Defense through the Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff. Under the provision of Joint Publication 1-01, Unified Action Armed Forces, you will have combatant command of all assigned United States forces. The governments of the United Kingdom [and others as named] have agreed that their forces present will be under your operational control. Forces of Saudi Arabia [and others as named] will cooperate according to arrangements for coordination worked out by you with each national commander. Direct communication with national representatives of nations in the United Nations coalition force is authorized in the interest of facilitating operations and for arranging necessary logistics.

5. **Logistics.** In the United Kingdom the responsibility for logistics organization, concentration, movement, and supply of forces to meet the requirements of your plan will rest with British Service Ministries so far as British Forces are concerned. So far as United States Forces are concerned, this responsibility will rest with the United

States War and Navy Departments. You will be responsible for the coordination of logistical arrangements on the Continent. You will also be responsible for coordinating the requirements of British and United States forces under your command.

The responsibility for logistics support of national forces will rest with the respective nations; this can include logistics agreements between nations. You will be responsible for coordinating the logistics requirements and activities of the forces present in the coalition and for bringing to the attention of the Chairman, JCS, logistics deficiencies which will adversely affect your operations.

6. Coordination of operations of other Forces and Agencies. In preparation for your assault on enemy occupied Europe, Sea and Air Forces agencies of sabotage, subversion, and propaganda, acting under a variety of authorities are now in action. You may recommend any variation in these activities which may seem to you to be desirable.

In furtherance of the United Nations' aim of liberating Kuwait, a coordinated program of special operations is now in action. You may recommend any variation in these activities which may seem to you to be desirable.

8. Relationship with Allied Governments -- the re-establishment of Civil Governments and Liberated Allied Territories and the administration of enemy territories. Further instructions will be issued to you on these subjects at a later date.²

Instructions for the re-establishment of civil government in Kuwait and for the administration of Iraqi territories taken by your forces will be issued at a later date.

Details like the following, not in the Eisenhower directive, are probably called for today.

Use of nuclear and lethal chemical weapons is not contemplated... Taking into account the need for military effectiveness and the avoidance of unnecessary military casualties, make every effort to limit damage to noncombatants, religious structures, and the civil infrastructure of Kuwait and Iraq.

The aims of your air campaign will be to gain full freedom of air action, to deny Iraq any use of its air and fleet, to destroy Iraq's capabilities to produce nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons, and to greatly reduce its army's ability to fight.

Your land campaign will aim at the destruction of Iraqi forces in and threatening Kuwait and the liberation of Kuwait. You are authorized to permit Iraq to make the first offensive move, which, if made, you will decisively defeat, thereupon taking up

²The directive to General Eisenhower appears in Gordon A. Harrison, Cross-Channel Attack, Office of the Chief of Military History, Department of the Army, Washington, 1950, pp. 457-458. Paragraph 7, Relationship to United Nations Forces in Other Areas, is omitted here.

an offensive which destroys the opposing Iraqi forces and achieves the liberation of Kuwait. You will, however, prepare a land campaign which takes the offensive when directed, in the event Iraq does not attack on land.

One can surmise that the above is roughly the guidance General Schwarzkopf received; that he participated in its formulation; that it was essentially in place by early November; that President Bush's decision at that time to double the size of US forces in Saudi Arabia reflected the Joint Chiefs of Staff's and General Schwarzkopf's judgment as to the forces required to carry it out; that the late November US-led action in the UN Security Council (Secretary Baker in the chair) which set the January 15 deadline for Saddam Hussein to withdraw from Kuwait reflected General Schwarzkopf's thinking as to when the air campaign could start, with the land campaign to begin a month or so later when land reinforcements were fully ready to fight; that meanwhile General Schwarzkopf and his coalition team were developing their in-theater plans; that when the US President directed the plan's execution, key allies having agreed, the coalition force began coordinated operations according to those plans; that from the very first General Schwarzkopf was under no illusion that Arab contingents of the coalition force would come under his operational command; and that he had set about building a framework for operations that would work even under that circumstance.

Operational/Tactical Direction

In modern war, command and control at the operational and tactical levels where the fighting takes place is very much a matter of "command and control systems".³ Using their respective C2 systems linked with those of others, battle participants throughout the force seek to see the situation, to decide what to do, and to get it done. C2 and its systems are thus critical to a force's collective skill. Skill gets the job done quickly; skill also saves lives. The Mideast force requires the utmost in skill, hence in C2 system quality.

As Clausewitz said, "Everything in war is very simple, but the simplest thing is difficult. The difficulties accumulate and end by producing a kind of friction that is inconceivable unless one has experienced war."⁴ Immeasurably more fast moving and technically complex than in Clausewitz' time, war remains the domain of friction -- late information, uncertain information, inaccurate information, orders issued on wrong information, orders not understood, orders not carried out, orders carried out but not at the right time -- and of uncertainties. Amelioration of friction and reduction of uncertainties is what each commander most wants from his C2 system.

³A command and control system is "the facilities, equipment, communications, procedures, and personnel essential to a commander for planning, directing, and controlling operations..." Joint Pub 1-02, Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms, Office of the Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, (Washington,1989) p. 77. "Command and control" is often abbreviated as "C2".

⁴Carl von Clausewitz, On War, edited and translated by Michael Howard and Peter Paret (Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1984) p. 119.

The Mideast theater's war is an intricate amalgam of sea, air, and air/land warfare. In principle, land-based air *forces* can engage in each form of warfare (for example, close air support in air/land warfare, and air reconnaissance in sea warfare). Sea-based *forces* can likewise engage in all three (close air support and amphibious operations in air/land warfare, offensive counter air in air warfare). Land *forces* can do the same (high altitude air defense in air warfare; forcible entry airborne seizure of an advanced fleet base in sea [maritime] warfare). The Mideast challenge is to combine the three forms of *warfare*, and the three kinds of *forces*, highly effectively in a single context.

Arriving in August at his CENTCOM forward headquarters and judging that Saddam Hussein had missed his chance to attack southward, General Schwarzkopf could infer, if he had not been told, his mission: liberate Kuwait; he could estimate the enemy, impressive indeed; he could see before him the vast area of operations, with its Kuwait focal point; he could calculate the time, force, and logistics factors of the troop flow into the region. His requirement: to plan a theater campaign and to orchestrate its subordinate air, sea, and land campaigns.⁵ He faced fundamental decisions on how to organize and direct the US parts, which he commanded, of the emerging coalition force and how to cohere the remainder.

General Schwarzkopf's US forces came to him in "components" -- ARCENT (Third US Army), MARCENT (I Marine Expeditionary Force), NAVCENT (Eighth Fleet), and CENTAF (Ninth Air Force), each with a three-star commander.⁶ CINCCENT evidently decided to build his US warfighting team around these four commanders and in so doing to place behind each's effort the full energy and resources of his Service. Over these components he wielded powerful new team-building authorities, given by law in 1986. Among them: "...authoritative direction over all aspects of military operations... prescribing the chain of command... organizing [subordinate] commands and forces as he considers necessary... employing forces as he considers necessary... assigning command functions to subordinate commanders..." and more.⁷ General Schwarzkopf was able to pull together his US forces as tightly as he wished. Owing by far the largest coalition contingent, he could then persuasively suggest that other nations' smaller contingents should join his team in the interest of common mission accomplishment.

Air warfare, simple to summarize but complex to carry out well, entails writing each day an air tasking order that spells out what each single or multi-aircraft mission -- from air

⁵A campaign plan is a "plan for a series of related military operations aimed to accomplish a common objective, normally within a given time and space." Joint Pub 1-02, p. 60.

⁶ARCENT means Army Forces, MARCENT means Marine Forces, NAVCENT means Navy Forces, and CENTAF means Air Forces of CENTCOM. A fifth component is SOCCENT (the special operations forces of CENTCOM) which is a subunified command created from units of the US Special Operations Command.

⁷Public Law 99-433--October 1, 1986, Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986, Section 164 (c) Command Authority of Combatant Commanders.

refuelers, to defensive fighter cover, to air defense suppression and ground attack -- will do, at what place, and at what minute. The success of Desert Storm's multinational air campaign, stunningly initiated and by all accounts well managed through the first weeks of war, stems directly from Goldwater-Nichols' authorities and General Schwarzkopf's delegating approach. Any US joint force commander can now designate a single air authority, known as the JFACC (for joint force air component commander), for the "planning, coordination, allocation and tasking" of all tactical air in the force⁸, regardless of its Service component -- an authority heretofore not available to joint commanders in war. The commander CENTAF (Ninth Air Force), his tactical air control center staffed in part with people of other Services and nations, is CINCCENT's JFACC. Other nations' air forces conform to the common air tasking order. It is in their own interests; through no other way can Saudi and US AWACS (airborne warning and control system) aircraft work together in a single scheme and can other nations' sorties "deconflict" -- get to the right place at the right time without running into other missions.

Sea warfare, while not involving each ship's tasking in detail as for air, entails organizing task forces and task groups and assigning each its missions -- strike, anti-air, anti-surface, naval gunfire, amphibious, and so on -- with cruise missile and tactical air operations coming under the tasking control of the JFACC. As with air, CINCCENT can task Commander NAVCENT (Seventh Fleet) to conduct sea and coastal operations with the US Navy forces he commands and other US forces (such as Marine units and Army helicopter elements on occasion) he has under his operational control, and to coordinate with other nations' sea contingents the coalition's common naval campaign. With operations like the reflagging and escort of Kuwaiti tankers three and four years ago, the US Navy in the Persian Gulf has become adept at coordinating multinational sea operations without operational control of other nations' combatants.

As of this writing major air/land operations are yet to unfold, although surely their components such as force positioning, intelligence, enemy land force attrition, and deception have been under way. Should they start, one can be sure that mission-by-mission JFACC air tasking methods will give way to the decentralized tactical air operations which are essential to successful conduct of modern air/land warfare.

There are in the desert three rough groupings of air/land forces: the US Army's, the US Marine Corps', and all others', to include the British, French, and Arabs. Resembling each other in many ways, each has its own ways of organizing for battle and its own ways of fighting.

The US Army has two corps in the desert. A corps, typically 60 to 100 thousand strong and commanded by a lieutenant general, is made up of three or more divisions plus "corps troops" such as armored cavalry, field artillery, air defense, signal, and service

⁸Joint Pub 1-02, p. 197.

support. Owning only helicopters in the air, the corps relies primarily on the US Air Force for tactical air support. The Army's "AirLand Battle" thinking visualizes deep, close, and rear corps operations, with close operations including close combat, indirect fire, close air support, attack helicopter movement and fires, forward area air defense, close-in intelligence, obstacles and their clearance, and movement/maneuver -- and with deep operations including deeper intelligence, battlefield air interdiction, distant strikes of artillery and attack helicopters, and far ranging maneuver of airborne, air mobile, and special operations forces. The "basic tenets" of AirLand Battle are "agility, initiative, depth, and synchronization."⁹

Organized, trained, and equipped primarily but not solely for amphibious operations, the Marine Corps' basic formation is the Marine Air-Ground Task Force (MAGTF); this is a task organization under single Marine command structured to accomplish a specific mission. A MAGTF always consists of command, ground combat, aviation combat, and combat service support elements (including Navy support elements). One MAGTF would be a Marine Expeditionary Force (MEF), commanded by a lieutenant general and including a reinforced Marine division, rotary and fixed wing squadrons and detachments of various types, low and medium altitude air defense units, and a force service support group which can sustain lengthy operations ashore. Another is a Marine Expeditionary Brigade (MEB), built around a ground combat element consisting of a regimental landing team. The Marines have deployed six MEBs to Saudi Arabia; these have been "composited" into a single MEF of two divisions, one large air wing, and a sizeable force service support group. Some part of this force is afloat in a position to carry out amphibious operations. The Marines' watchword is "maneuver warfare."¹⁰

British, French, Saudi, Egyptian, and Syrian divisions and brigades follow pretty much the US Army's organizational pattern. None has its own tactical air, although both the French and British have deployed close support aircraft in the desert.

We can surmise that in October or so General Schwarzkopf conveyed to his three-star US commanders, in words something like this, his thinking on air/land operations:

"Commander Ninth Air Force will be the JFACC and Commander Seventh Fleet will take care of coalition naval operations. I am satisfied that we have those two areas of theater warfare under reasonable control. Now I want to talk about organizing for land, or more accurately air/land, operations.

"The US has two air/land formations in the desert. These are the I MEF with its two divisions and organic air, and Third Army with its VII and XVIII Corps of some seven divisions total and its air support. I am not speaking of those parts of MARCENT and

⁹Field Manual 100-5. Operations (Department of the Army, Washington, 1986), p.14.

¹⁰Fleet Marine Force Manual 1. Warfighting, (Headquarters, US Marine Corps, Washington, 1989), p 30..

ARCENT that do rear area tasks, or of ARCENT's Patriot units which the JFACC directs.

"Each of these formations is indoctrinated in its own ways of fighting, each is under its Service-designated commanders, and each has the full support of its parent Service. To maximize the effectiveness of each, I want to keep them reasonably separate. Time is short; teamwork within formations is vital; and there isn't time to teach Army divisions how to operate in a Marine formation, nor to teach Marine regiments or divisions how to operate inside Army corps or divisions.

"That means that I have to divide up the air/land battlefield. So I will place I MEF along the East coast where it can work closely with the fleet, and I will place Third Army inland. I MEF, even with its tank battalions equipped with M1A1 tanks provided by the Army, will be short of armor, so I am assigning it a reinforced Army armor brigade. And I am assigning the British 1st Armoured Division to Third Army.

"The Saudi armor and mechanized brigades and the Egyptian and Syrian armor and mechanized divisions and other Arab contingents make up a third land formation. While we are preparing for our air/land offensive, if it should come, the Arab formations will by their own choice be disposed along the Kuwaiti border. When we take up the offensive, I visualize that Arab troops, probably under single Arab command but not under my command, will advance into Kuwait in a sector of their own. In the interim, I am counting on the commanders of I MEF and Third Army to coordinate operations with Arab units in their respective sectors. I served as both an advisor and US battalion commander in Vietnam and know that our best units learned how to do this very well in the absence of unity of command.

"When we take the offensive, I expect I MEF, supported by fleet naval gunfire and amphibious operations, to attack northward into Kuwait; and I expect Third Army to come at the Iraqi forces from the west in an air/land blitzkrieg operation such as the world has not seen since George Patton's time. I MEF will use its 3d Marine Aircraft Wing for tactical air, and Third Army will be supported by the Ninth Air Force (the same numbered air force incidentally that, under Hoyt Vandenberg, supported Patton's Third Army in 1944). JFACC will task 7th Fleet's air to support either I MEF or Third Army, or both. And of course, JFACC, with air supremacy, will direct the air interdiction campaign.

"Functions which cross all air/land sectors -- Arab, I MEF, and Third Army -- such as intelligence, electronic warfare, and logistics will be coordinated at my level. And of course you understand that I have the authority and responsibility to shift any and all

US tactical air (Marine air included) from one sector to another as necessary for mission accomplishment.

"I am counting on the US Marine Corps and the US Army to put into place in their respective air/land formations the very best command and control equipment possible from their inventories or producible in the time available. And I am counting on the commanders of I MEF and Third Army, working closely with Seventh Fleet and Ninth Air Force, to train their troops to absolute top efficiency so that, when and if air/land operations begin, they will go very well indeed."

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And that's the best picture I can draw at this writing of command and control in the Mideast coalition. JHC.