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The Principle of the Objective and Promoting National Interests: Desert Shield/Storm--A Case Study

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ABSTRACT OF RESEARCH PAPER PREPARED BY LTC WILLIAM A. REESE

THE PRINCIPLE OF THE OBJECTIVE AND
PROMOTING NATIONAL INTERESTS: DESERT
SHIELD/STORM -- A CASE STUDY

The successes and failures of American use of military force in the past have been significantly effected by the degree to which the political objectives embodied clarity, measurability and achievability. It is the purpose of this paper to:

1. Trace and analyze the formulation of America's national objectives in response to Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in August 1990.
2. To analyze how these objectives contributed to a successful conduct and termination of the Gulf crisis.
3. To determine if, in the long run, these declared national objectives, in fact, best protect or further the US interests in the region.

While it is important to learn from our mistakes of the past, it is as important to learn from those things that cause us to succeed. And so it is the success story of Desert Shield/Storm and the associated US objectives that provide a powerful lesson in conflict termination and the use of the military instrument.

Each crisis will always be unique in its own way, as was the 1990 invasion of Kuwait. Next time, the objectives may be harder to formulate, the situation not as straight forward or generally more complicated in an ever changing world. It may mean that we have to search harder to find what we really want to achieve or that we establish some interim objectives if the situation calls for immediate action.

When we get to the point that we can not formulate clear, measurable and achievable objectives, we must go no farther. We must know where we want to end up before we start down the path to get there. Perhaps Clausewitz said it best when he said, "No one starts war - or rather, no one in his senses ought to do so - without first being clear in his mind what he intends to achieve by that war and how he intends to conduct it."

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Shield/Storm--A Case Study**

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INTRODUCTION

The successes and failures of American use of military force in the past have been significantly effected by the degree to which the political objectives embodied clarity, measurability and achievability. It is the purpose of this paper to:

1. Trace and analyze the formulation of America's national objectives in response to Iraq's invasion of Kuwait in August 1990.
2. To analyze how these objectives contributed to a successful conduct and termination of the Gulf crisis.
3. To determine if, in the long run, these declared national objectives, in fact, best protect or further the US interests in the region.

While it is important to learn from our mistakes of the past, it is as important to learn from those things that cause us to succeed. And so it is the success story of Desert Shield/Storm and the associated US objectives that provide a powerful lesson in conflict termination and the use of the military instrument.

While the Desert Shield/Storm military campaign was a success, the political situation continues to develop. President Bush is out and Saddam Hussein is still in. Did we adopt the correct objectives to support our national interests? Did we perhaps terminate the war prematurely, declare victory, and come home without addressing the underlying issues?

Properly designed political objectives are the building blocks for all other actions leading to the successful conclusion of a crisis, and if necessary, ultimate victory on the battlefield. It is from these political objectives that we harness the power of the will and determination of the American people.

From the political objectives comes a determination as to what resources or tools the country can make or will make available in order to proceed with a selected option designed to attain the stated objectives. If it is a military option that is required, military strategies, campaign plans and tactical objectives are formulated for a selected force to execute. In order for the military force to be successful, the senior military leaders must know, in clear terms, what the political objectives are and what defines victory. In a 1974 survey of Army generals who had commanded in Vietnam, Brigadier General Douglas Kinnard, later the Army's chief of military history, found that "almost 70 percent of the Army generals who managed the war were uncertain of its objectives." Kinnard went on to say that this fact, "mirrors a deep-seated strategic failure: the inability of policy-makers to frame tangible, obtainable goals." (#16 p.25)

The far reaching dimensions of the objective is not a new idea. It was Clausewitz who said, "The political object - the original motive for the war - will thus determine both the military objective to be reached and the amount of effort it requires." (#14 p.81) Both the Army and the Air Force incorporate the strategic dimension

of the objective into their doctrinal thinking. The Basic Aerospace Doctrine of the United States Air Force (AFM 1-1 , March 1984) says, "the most basic principle for success in any military operation is a clear and concise statement of a realistic objective...War is a means to achieve a political objective and must never be considered apart from the political end." The Army's doctrine manual emphasizes that not until the political purpose has been determined and defined by the President and the Congress, can strategic and tactical objectives be clearly defined and developed.

While the military can dictate doctrine at the tactical and operational level, it is the civilian political leadership which determines National strategy and the political objectives for the country. Clausewitz once classified his understanding of this fact when he emphasized that political control of the military rests on "the natural and unavoidable assumption that policy knows the instrument it means to use." (#14 p.607).

And finally, with risk of belaboring the point, Secretary of Defense Weinberger, in a 1984 address to the National Press Club, said, "Policies formed without a clear understanding of what we hope to achieve would earn us the scorn of our troops, who would have an understandable opposition to being used - in every sense of the word."

AGENDA

Now armed with a viewpoint and understanding of how the setting of political objectives are linked to successful attainment and victory on the battlefield, we will trace the formulation of the US national objectives developed for Desert Shield and Storm. We will do this by looking at the lead-up to the August invasion and a brief discussion of US interests in the region. We will then identify the US goals and national objectives, how they were developed, and how they shaped the military objectives. Last we will determine whether these objectives actually supported our national interests in the region.

A brief overview of the war itself will help us to understand the outcomes of the war and how they related to the military and national objectives. We will discuss questions such as: Were the national objectives attained? Did the key leaders all understand the objectives and the true intent of the President? As the situation developed, should the US have modified the stated national objectives? And we will consider the often asked and popularly debated question of whether we ended the war prematurely.

BACKGROUND

HISTORICAL INTERESTS

For decades, the United States' policy makers have clearly

understood the strategic dimension of oil. In more recent times, not only has oil been a baseline resource of military power, it has been the biggest of big business. While the computer chip of today rivals oil for its place in capitalism and the modern business world as well as in the defense industry, seven of the top twenty companies in the Fortune 500 are oil companies. (#37 p. 21)

Except for a portion of the Navy powered by nuclear fuel, every US and foreign weapons platform (ship, plane, tank, etc.), is powered by oil. The entire US military support base is oil powered (airlift, sealift, rearm and refueling system). In fact, except for a nuclear exchange, no country could wage a war without oil - a product which has been the very source of many conflicts in the twentieth century.

Today the world is so dependent on oil, that we can hardly comprehend its pervasive significance. Oil has practically determined where we live, how we live, how we commute to work, and how we travel. It is truly the lifeblood of the global community. Oil is an essential component in the fertilizer on which world agriculture depends. It allows the transport of food to the totally non-self sufficient megacities of the world. Oil provides the plastics and chemicals that have become the very basis of our contemporary civilization - a civilization that would collapse over night if the oil ran dry. (#37 p.27)

In 1943, President Roosevelt said, "The defense of Saudi Arabia

is vital to the defense of the United States." In July of 1958, President Eisenhower sent 14,000 troops to Lebanon to defend the "integrity and independence" of Lebanon and to impress the Iraqis, Soviets and Egyptians that the US was serious about its interests in the region.

In January of 1980, President Carter, in his last state of the union address, said, "An attempt by any outside force to gain control of the Persian Gulf region will be regarded as an assault on the vital interests of the United States, and such an assault will be repelled by any means necessary, including military force." All of the Presidential doctrines of intervention in the Gulf region, from President Roosevelt to President Carter, had oil reserves at the center of their strategic policy.

THE INITIAL BUILDUP

By 1978, there were 675 US military personnel and 10,000 civilian employees of US defense contractors in Saudi Arabia building military installations. (#31 p.36) Iraq's invasion of Iran in September 1980 fueled Saudi Arabia's fears in the region and gave the US a more favorable relationship with Saudi Arabia. Over the course of the next decade, Saudi Arabia poured nearly \$50 billion into a Gulf wide air defense system. By 1988, the US Army Corps of Engineers had constructed a \$14 billion network of military facilities across Saudi Arabia.

In 1983, the Pentagon transformed the Rapid Deployment Force into a new military command called Central Command (CENTCOM). A floating logistics base of 17 ships stationed out of Diego Garcia and a newly acquired authority to requisition 300,000 - 350,000 troops made CENTCOM a powerful command to project power in the region.

In 1987, President Reagan responded to a request from Kuwait to place its oil tankers under US protection - a response which resulted in a US armada of nearly 50 ships in the immediate Gulf area. By 1988, President Bush had inherited the apparatus and the mission for US military intervention in the Gulf. The US cooperation with Iraq since the 1984 seemed to be a prudent move on the part of the US. Saddam Hussein's regime in Baghdad seemed to be a successful junior partner in maintaining the Status Quo. (#31 p.38)
But in August of 1990, a quick change in US policy was required.

US INTERESTS

Prior to the August Iraqi invasion, the major US interests in the region were:

1. Continued access to the massive oil reserves
2. Prevention of the Soviet Union from expanding its influence and interests in the region.
3. Stabilization of oil prices and some ability to influence OPEC/major oil producers.
4. Peace and Stability in the region (status quo)
5. Support and security of Israel.

Given the state of the Soviet Union, the prospect of their intervention in the region was perhaps not what it used to be. The human rights and moral dimension was not really an issue prior to the invasion but certainly became a powerful item of interest and concern for most Americans. The human rights and moral dimension involving Iraqi inflicted atrocities on innocent civilians of a smaller neighboring country stirred the American people and President Bush personally. The economic interest was not simply a matter of cheap oil. It involved the control of the very basis of the US economy, life style, and cultural freedom for practically all Americans. It was a combination of these national interests that drove the formulation of the US objectives in response to the Iraqi invasion.

IRAQI INTERESTS

As a result of the war between Iraq and Iran, Iraq acquired a \$40 billion war debt (#33 p.123) In an effort to get some fast money, Iraq pushed OPEC to accelerate the increases in the price of oil. But Iraq was unsuccessful. Moreover, Kuwait, which at one time was part of Iraq, was not well liked by the other Arab States in the Gulf region. Many considered Kuwait as overly wealthy and a nation of arrogant lazy people. Better access to the Gulf, the lucrative wells in the Ramlan oil fields of northern Kuwait, and irredentism, were all temptations for Saddam and his monstrous ego. The acquisition of Kuwait would be a tremendous boost to Iraq's stature in the Arab world and a monumental increase in Iraq's position as an oil power. The annexation of Kuwait would give Iraq control of 20%

of the world's oil supply and indirect control of Saudi Arabia's 25% of the world's supply based on the intimidation factor.

SETTING THE STAGE FOR AN INVASION

Saddam Hussein was sure he had the military power to pull off the invasion and to hold onto Kuwait against some level of outside military involvement. He even calculated that he could repulse limited American military involvement. Iraq's calculations involved the recent historical trends of US responses in other parts of the world. Vietnam was Saddam's primary historical lesson in this respect. He believed the American people and its leaders to be caught in the Vietnam syndrome where the American people would not tolerate or support a military response and commitment necessary to reverse the invasion of Kuwait.

Certainly the 25 July 1990 meeting between Ambassador Glaspie and Saddam Hussein did not discourage Saddam's invasion plans. In that meeting, Glaspie told Saddam, "... we have no opinion on the Arab to Arab conflicts like your border disagreement with Kuwait." Additionally, within the previous eleven days, Iraq massed eight Divisions along the Northern Iraq/Kuwait border. In all, about 100,000 troops and associated equipment moved 400 miles - a considerable military achievement for any nation.

There was no reaction from the US. (#36 p. 190) This is not

to say that the US was not monitoring the Iraqi build-up. But the US (General Powell) did notice that not all the necessary communications, artillery stocks, and logistics were in place to support a large scale offensive. The US conclusion was that Saddam was saber-rattling (#36 p.193) Even Saudi Ambassador Bandar agreed. The missing indicators for an Iraqi offensive, the communications, artillery, and the logistics all materialized a few days prior to the 2 Aug invasion. This lack of US response sent Saddam a signal which incorrectly reflected the US reaction yet to come.

After the invasion of Kuwait, Saddam continued to listen selectively to the clamor of American dissension concerning possible war in the Middle East. He was convinced that President Bush was bluffing with the American troop buildup as the first units of the 82d Airborne arrived in Saudi Arabia and later as the VII Corps was deployed from Europe to provide an "offensive option."

FORMULATING OBJECTIVES

INITIAL REACTIONS

When President Bush was first informed by Mr. Scowcroft on the evening of 1 Aug, of the Iraqi invasion, President Bush said he wanted something done right away. Later that evening, a public statement was issued (approved by the President) strongly condemning

the invasion and calling for "the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of all Iraqi forces." (#36 p.203) The next public statement was made by President Bush the following morning to the press from the cabinet room at a meeting of the full National Security Council (NSC). When asked if the US was contemplating any intervention or sending troops, President Bush said, "I'm not contemplating such action." The President also said there was no evidence that any other countries in the Middle East were threatened.

At the the NSC meeting on the morning of 2 Aug, Secretary of Defense Cheney said that the marriage of Iraq's military of one million men, with 20 percent of the world's oil, presented a significant threat. Following the NSC meeting, neither Secretary Cheney nor General Powell knew what the President was going to do or whether he would accept the loss of Kuwait. Later that day, President Bush spoke with King Fahd of Saudi Arabia and they both agreed that the invasion into Kuwait was unacceptable but did not settle on what to do about it.

Secretary Cheney was busy meeting with his top civilian and military staff and looking to the military for options he could present to the President. The military was frustrated. What was it they were suppose to offer a plan for? (#36 p.215) General Powell had not received any guidance from either the Secretary of Defense or the President, and absent a mission, formulating options was not terribly productive. Cheney was extremely frustrated and still

without options and General Powell was still without guidance, a mission, or any stated political objectives to support.

The next day, 3 August, the NSC met again at the White House. Scowcroft began the meeting by saying that the long range interests of the country and the Middle East must be examined (perhaps they were not adequately formulated) and that the deliberations should begin with the fact that this invasion is unacceptable. This was the first time the President's position on the invasion was expressed to his advisors. Secretary Cheney was still frustrated that a military option was not available but General Powell was still without stated political objectives. In fact, Cheney was so frustrated, that he began to direct his staff to query their parent services about surgical-strike plans on Iraq. This in effect circumvented General Powell and the Joint Chiefs.

On 3 August, Prince Bandar met with President Bush. President Bush explained that he was upset that Kuwait had not asked for assistance from the United States until only several minutes prior to the invasion. President Bush's point was that he did not want Saudi Arabia to follow the same course of action of waiting too late before asking for help. Bandar wanted to ensure that the United States was serious about a commitment to help Saudi Arabia. President Bush responded to the concern by saying, "I give my word of honor. I will see this through with you."

BUILDING SUPPORT

It then became critically important to demonstrate to Prince Bandar and King Fahd that the Iraqi troop deployment into Kuwait was a serious threat to Saudi Arabia. A special briefing team led by Secretary Cheney and General Powell went to Saudi Arabia. They showed King Fahd top secret satellite photos of the Iraqi troop movement and briefed him on a special plan (OPLAN 90-1002) to defend Saudi Arabia with a force of 250,000 US troops. This resulted in the US being invited into Saudi Arabia by King Fahd.

Soon thereafter, President Bush told a news reporter and the world, that this aggression against Kuwait would not stand, and issued his famous line, "just wait, watch and learn." General Powell, watching the whole thing on CNN television, knew that the country had just been committed to a new goal or objective - not only to defend Saudi Arabia, but to reverse the invasion of Kuwait.

By 6 August, President Bush ordered the initial force of F15 aircraft and the 82d Airborne to Saudi Arabia. By 7 August, the initial forces were on the way and the next day, President Bush addressed the country. He spelled out the national objectives. "Four simple principles guide our policy," he said,

1. "First, we seek the immediate, unconditional and complete withdrawal of all Iraqi forces from Kuwait."

2. "Second, Kuwait's legitimate government must be restored to replace the puppet regime."

3. "And third, my administration, as had been the case with every president from President Roosevelt to President Regan, is committed to the security and stability of the Persian Gulf."

4. " And fourth, I am determined to protect the lives of American citizens abroad."

THE COST OF DOING BUSINESS

These were honorable objectives that would win the support of Congress, the American people, and the entire coalition. While the attainment of these objectives would not be easy, they were objectives for which the American people would be willing to accrue considerable costs. They were formulated and announced early on in the crisis which allowed for more time to the consideration of options. If the objectives are not well founded, they are doomed to be abandoned at the first encounter of difficulty.

In stating and formulating objectives, resources such as military power, industrial capability, and national will must be taken into account. While we may have the industrial power or military power to attain a particular objective, we must have the national will to expend the resources. The real question boils down to how much will it cost compared to how much we value attainment of a stated objective. The answer to this question is not easy since the associated costs are generally hard to express.

For example, while a dollar value can be placed on a tank, or a particular ship or aircraft, the time required to build one of

these pieces of hardware (industrial capacity) is not directly dollar related. No matter how many dollars you have, you can not buy more time. Manpower and human life are other resources that cannot be directly translated to the dollar.

All these costs are estimated. In business, we use historical costs, associated costs, and experience to develop estimates. But unlike business, our adversary will do everything possible to increase our costs and disrupt our estimate process. At times this can result in wildly inaccurate guesses. General McPeak's estimate to the President of a loss of 150 airplanes for the first 30 days was reason for careful consideration. (#36 p.327)

Certainly if we had known that the US led coalition offensive to kick Saddam out of Kuwait was going to cost us so little in terms of casualties and weapon system losses, we might not have debated so long and hard about whether to allow more time for the sanctions to work.

As we can see, the cost a country is willing to pay to achieve an objective has several dimensions. Once the country "signs up" for the political objectives and is willing to accept the costs involved, the process and points of consideration are still incomplete. The leaders must be prepared for a change of heart once the country gets half way into a selected option. An alternate option could possibly be exercised. If not, the political objective may no longer be worth pursuing. As Clausewitz had predicted, and our country once verified

(Vietnam), "Once the expenditure of effort exceeds the political object, the object must be renounced." (#14 p.92). The point of all this is that the political objective is the building block on which all else follows.

MILITARY OBJECTIVES

Once the option to use military force is selected to achieve the political objectives, as was the case with Desert Storm, military objectives must be determined along with a campaign strategy. The degree to which military objectives can be translated from the political objectives, has a significant impact on clarity of the missions down to the lowest level of command. It is this clarity of mission that allows the US military to capitalize on one of its great strengths - initiative on the battlefield.

THE REPUBLICAN GUARDS (RGFC)

The CENTCOM (Central Command) operations Orders listed the destruction of the RGFC as a primary objective of the campaign. These eight elite divisions were determined to be the center of gravity of the Iraqi military. It was Saddam's base of power. These units were the best trained, best equipped, and best led of all the Iraqi forces. The officers and soldiers were paid more and they were granted privileges and status greater than their counterparts in the other military units. Ultimately, the RGFC would have to be defeated in order to reestablish the Iraq/Kuwait border and to realistically attain the stated political objectives as outlined by President Bush on 8 Aug 1990.

Change of Mission

Although the four stated political objectives did not change, the military objectives did change. At some point, President Bush believed that with the continued Iraqi troop build-up in Kuwait, and the lack of significant economic leverage in the short-run from the sanctions, it would take military offensive action to force Saddam out of Kuwait. He orchestrated U.N. and coalition efforts to that end.

Military planning transitioned from providing a force capable of defending Saudi Arabia to a force capable of forcibly ejecting Iraq from Kuwait. Although this was a monumental and complex undertaking, it was still directly and clearly related to the political objective of reversing the Iraqi invasion. It was a logical follow-on to the defense of Saudi Arabia.

THE WAR

Although deadlines were exceeded and all diplomatic efforts exhausted, the coalition air offensive came as a surprise to Iraq. It was testimony to Saddam's miscalculation. The openness of the American society, and the decision making process of the United States, had unintentionally caused Saddam's self-declared greatness and craftiness to fail him.

On 17 January 1991, a massive air attack was initiated by the

coalition. On 24 February 1991, the largest ground Armor offensive in history was launched.

On 28 February 1991, General Schwarzkof, in agreement with President Bush, determined that the United States' objectives had been met and that a cease fire was in order. The Iraqi Army of 545,000 men, 4,300 tanks, and 3,100 pieces of artillery had been defeated by the coalition within 100 hours of ground combat following a five week air operation. It was a magnificent demonstration of military power delivered by high-tech weapon systems and manned by one of the finest military forces in history.

OUTCOMES OF THE WAR

Iraq was removed from Kuwait and the legitimate government of Kuwait had been restored. But, the attained objectives were not without cost. There were seven Americans missing in action, 137 killed in action, and many more wounded. Estimates went as high as 100,000 Iraqi military killed in action and probably thousands of non-combatant Iraqis.

Many Armor units of the RGFC were able to escape the swift attack of the coalition ground force. General Schwarzkof knew that the RGFC was Saddam's base of power and that left intact, those forces would be back. Although the intelligence indicated that the RGFC was attritted to a non-functioning military organization no

longer capable of coherent offensive action, there was some disappointment in losing this opportunity to destroy every last unit of the RGFC.

Along with General Schwarzkof, most Americans would confess that emotionally, they would have liked to have seen Saddam Hussein brought to some form of justice. But those opportunities seemed to be behind us as we began to set the terms for peace.

On 3 March 1991, a few days after the cease fire, General Schwarzkof met with the Iraqi Generals Ahmad and Mahmud who represented the Iraqi Government. The meeting to discuss the terms of the cease fire took place at the small Iraqi airfield of Safwan just north of the Kuwait Border. LTG Ahmad was the deputy Chief of Staff of the Iraqi Ministry of Defense and LTG Mahmud was the commander of the defeated and defunct III Corps.

Prior to the cease fire meeting with the Iraqis, General Schwarzkof forwarded his recommendations for the terms of the cease fire to Secretary Cheney and the President. Once approved the conditions were relayed to Baghdad in preparation for the cease-fire meeting.

CEASE-FIRE CONDITIONS

The first item was the immediate release of all coalition

prisoners of war, full disclosure of information concerning troops listed as missing in action, and the return of any remains. The second condition was the Iraqi cooperation to make the battle zone safe. This entailed the disclosure on the location of all mine fields and booby traps in Kuwait and the location of any storage sites for chemical, biological or nuclear weapons. The last requirement was to establish and adhere to a demarcation line to physically separate the coalition and Iraqi Armies.

These were not terribly demanding conditions for a country which had been so thoroughly defeated on the battlefield. The coalition had the military capacity to impose more conditions. Twenty-four Iraqi divisions that never entered the Kuwaiti war were still at large. These units soon engaged in devastating attacks on anti-Saddam factions in Basra and other cities in Iraq. As we analyze the attainment of the stated objectives this issue and others must be addressed.

ANALYSIS OF THE OBJECTIVES

Each of the four national objectives passed the tests of clarity, measurability, and achievability, and were formulated within the first week of the crisis. This was a great step forward and allowed for responsive, coordinated action and world consensus building. An analysis of each of these objectives follows.

NUMBER ONE - "Complete withdrawal of all Iraqi forces from Kuwait"

First, it is impossible to misinterpret this. It was easily measured and translated into military objectives. In addition, there is no doubt that this objective was accomplished. In contrast, the objective could have been: "To fight Iraqi aggression and to convince Iraq that aggression will not be rewarded." This sounds clear but it might be impossible to measure or achieve. On July 28, 1965, President Johnson introduced a new objective for the Vietnam war, "We intend to convince the communists that we cannot be defeated by force of arms or by superior power." (#16 p.23) This objective did not pass the test of clarity, measurability or achievability. Seventy percent of the Army generals who "managed" the Vietnam war were uncertain of its objectives.

NUMBER TWO - "Restore Kuwait's Legitimate Government"

This objective established a status quo of ante bellum. It was clear and measurable. It supported the coalition's good intentions and demonstrated that the US was not seeking to act as an opportunist in the determination of Kuwait's future. In the end, this objective was clearly achieved.

NUMBER THREE - "Security and Stability of the Persian Gulf"

Admittedly this gets harder to measure. But, the intent was clearly achievable in a relative sense. While the objective did not delineate the level or duration of security, it clearly supported US interests in the region. In a relative sense, there is security and

stability in the Persian Gulf (as of this writing). Long term stability may be an oxymoron. We must continue to monitor and take decisive action when appropriate. No single response will maintain security and stability. It was never our intent to secure permanent regional stability through this single war effort.

NUMBER FOUR - "Protect the Lives of American Citizens Abroad"

Some American citizens in Kuwait were directly threatened by the invasion, and some initially held hostage as "human shields". Not only did the US have to take action to secure the release of the hostages but it became necessary to restrict Saddam's ability to further threaten US citizens in the region. Furthermore, this objective provided an international example that the US would not tolerate her citizens being threatened and established a deterrence against similar acts in the future by Iraq or any other country. However, this is a never ending mission and will continue to be a challenge to the US as a world leader.

OPTIONS

THE SANCTIONS AT WORK

Admiral William Crowe and General David Jones, -- former Chairmen of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, -- among many others, argued that we should be willing to give sanctions a chance -- another six, twelve, or eighteen months, they said. (#31 p.7) Saddam listened.

It was estimated by the International Institute for Economics, that the sanctions should bring about a reduction in Iraq's gross national product of about forty percent. (#31 p.8) But this estimate failed to mention how long the sanctions would have to be in effect to cause this forty percent reduction. The entire estimate was entirely speculative.

Iraq is a fertile country and can feed itself if necessary. Even with a well coordinated sanction with strict enforcement, there would be some smuggling of food and other essentials that will always get through and Iraq would be able to adjust. An estimated reduction in per capita income from \$2,600 to \$1,600 per year was projected - still twice what it is in Egypt. (#31 p.8)

But Saddam is a man who was willing to persist in a war with Iran despite a million Iraqi casualties. It was hard to think that Saddam would withdraw from Kuwait because the Iraqi people would have to reduce their caloric intake or because they would have a slight decrease in their standard of living.

There were only two ways in which the sanctions would cause the Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait and successfully end the crisis. First, Saddam would have to decide to withdraw from Kuwait, or he would have to be overthrown by his own military and replaced by a leader who would withdraw from Kuwait. Saddam continued listening to the American debate concerning economic sanctions against his country,

and increasingly was convinced that this was but another indicator that confirmed the wisdom of his initial decision to invade Kuwait.

COULD WE HAVE DONE MORE?

Of the four objectives set forth by the President and the UN, it certainly appeared that each had been either fully achieved or furthered by the time the cease fire went into effect. But perhaps there were some unexpected opportunities presented by the quick and decisive victory that should have been seized. This would have meant modifying the initial objectives. For example, since many RGFC forces escaped to the north before the VII US Corps reached the Kuwaiti highway out of Kuwait City, it seems that the surrender of those tanks, artillery pieces and armored personnel carriers could have been an additional term for the permanent cease fire.

Disarming the remaining RGFC force might have destroyed Saddam's power base. Had enough of the RGFC really been destroyed? The key point is -- what is "enough?" The anger in most of the western world seemed to indicate that it was not enough. More than likely we miscalculated what we had actually destroyed. Whatever the numbers were concerning destroyed RGFC units, there will always be a feeling and a case made that we should have gotten more of the elite Republican Guards.

General Schwarzkof insisted that the cease-fire meeting at Safwan was not a negotiation. It was a discussion of terms dictated by the coalition for a permanent cease-fire. Yet, based on negotiation on the part of the Iraqi General, Iraq was allowed to use armed helicopters to transport government officials to areas where roads and bridges had been knocked out. If we successfully insisted that some number of RGFC tanks and artillery pieces be surrendered, we might have further reduced Saddam's power base.

Of course the Iraqis may not have agreed. We might have been compelled to reinitiate offensive action. The risks were, Iraq rejecting the terms, continuing the war, and a falling out with our Arab allies. Additionally, we had already told the country and the world that the objectives had been achieved. Anything further would have required some measure of international political process to reach consensus.

In addition to the more complete destruction of the RGFC was the issue of Saddam himself. Some would argue that lasting stability in the region would never be achieved so long as Saddam was in power. Although not directly reflected as an objective, President Bush did call for covert action to be taken (early in August 1990) to destabilize the Saddam regime.

During the war, the United States and the rest of the world could not contain their enthusiasm that the targeted and destroyed

command posts and bunkers would produce a deceased Saddam Hussein. However, catching someone like Saddam in a large armed camp such as Iraq is not a simple task. Saddam was most imaginative and clever through the entire ordeal. Anyway, most predicted that he would be overthrown as a result of being defeated.

Much criticism has mounted about not continuing the offensive to Baghdad and "finishing the job." This is where the clear, measurable and attainable objectives resulted in the right answer. The United Nations resolutions that provided the coalition the legal basis to kick Iraq out of Kuwait did not provide for a follow-on mission of revenge to further punish the country of Iraq with a death march to downtown Baghdad.

Much of the strength and support of the United States action came from the coalition formed by many Arab countries in the region. A continuation of offensive operations to Baghdad would have created a split in the coalition. Although the US had the military might to go it alone, the strength of purpose provided by the coalition would have been lost. The United Kingdom would have been the only country willing to continue the attack to Baghdad. In fact, no Arab force ever entered into Iraq. Only the British, French and American Forces fought on Iraqi territory. (#27 P.498) Of primary importance, continuation would have been counterproductive to our long range interests in the region. Prospects for a future middle east peace would have dimmed.

Moreover, under the Geneva and Hague conventions, the US would have been considered an occupying force and accountable for the costs of restoring government, education and a multitude of essential services to the Iraqi people. Predictably, we would still be there today, bearing the costs of occupation and rebuilding - a cost the American people were not in the mood to support.

Saddam characterized the entire war as a war against western imperialists acting as lackeys of Israel intent on the destruction of the only Arab nation willing to destroy the state of Israel. A fragmented attack by the US and Great Britain to occupy Baghdad would have given some credibility to Saddam's arguments. Many citizens would have questioned the true motives of the United States. Instead, we ended the war with the liberation of Kuwait, the coalition intact, no additional casualties, and a withdrawal of major western forces as we had promised.

SHORTCOMINGS AND ALTERNATIVES

While each of the four stated political objectives passed the tests of clarity, measurability and achievability, perhaps the attainment of these objectives have not adequately supported all of our national interests in the region.

Once Iraq completed its invasion and took over Kuwait, Iraq had effective control of almost 50% of the world's oil supply. This was

disturbing to most countries of the industrialized world. But perhaps it wasn't as bad as it sounds. Iraq would still have had to sell the oil somewhere. Its interests were in what the money from the sale of oil could buy, not the oil itself. Rather than to incur the risks and expenses of launching a multi-billion dollar war campaign against Iraq, it has been argued that the US could have dealt with Iraq as an emerging world oil power in the region. The US has befriended other dictators in the past. Could the US have gotten Saddam and Iraq on the "payroll" and influenced the action? Might paying whatever slight increase in the price of middle-east oil have been preferred to launching a multi-billion dollar high risk war? Japan was clearly thinking along these lines - "so what if we have to pay a little more for a barrel of oil." Whomever owns the oil must sell it at a reasonable price or risk losing market share to countries willing to sell it cheaper. Moreover, advances in alternate energy sources might reduce the leverage of oil.

The problem with this argument is that we could not expect Saddam to act in a rational manner. Not only could he cause the price to go up, but he could decide to freeze exports for several months even at Iraq's expense. Why would Saddam do that? Who knows, maybe just a display of power or to punish the United States or some other country who happened to make him angry that particular day. The danger lies in having a proven irrational and violent leader controlling a critical world resource. Additionally, while the United States may be able to overcome or survive such a situation,

many other countries, heavily dependent on imported oil, would not. In this age of global economies, we find that Japan's well being, for example, is very important to our well being.

While the use of the military option can be debated as the best course of action, the present situation suggests that the pursued political objectives did not completely produce the desired results. The core of Saddam's regime is still intact. He has reestablished six Republican Guard divisions and is playing games with international inspectors supervising his disarmament. The essence of his nuclear program - personnel - is intact and can be expected to produce weapons a few years after import restrictions are eased. (#8 p.16). Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and other Arab neighbors are politically weakened. It has been demonstrated that they can only survive with the support of the west.

Saddam is in a good position for resuming his military and political threats and empire building. While the continued embargo against Iraq has slowed its recovery, it has spurred internal industrialization for those products it used to be able to import. It has helped to rally the people to overcome the western induced hardships. Additionally, the Kurds and Shiite problem continues to develop. After the war, the escaped units of the RGFC took out their rage on Shiite and Kurdish civilians. The genocide sent millions fleeing for the nearest border where they died at the rate of up to 1,000 per day. (#8 p.17)

The national objectives treated the Iraq invasion as the main problem to be solved rather than as a symptom of the problem. The US did not address Saddam Hussein's hostile intent which was the real basis of the conflict. As such, we applied a temporary fix to a difficult situation which has not gone away.

For a variety of reasons, Saddam Hussein is still around and in power. To the extent that we let him remain or that we were unsuccessful in promoting his termination is unclear. It now seems that most of the problems center around Saddam's continued existence.

We may soon find ourselves facing the same set of pre-war conditions with respect to Iraq's military power and Saddam's unstable and violent behavior. But, based on the US response to the August 1990 invasion, there are two major differences. The US now knows just how unreasonable, irresponsible, and violent Saddam is and Saddam now understands just how devastatingly powerful the US military is. More importantly, Saddam understands the US willingness to use force to support its interests in the Gulf region. Although the US is still "not willing to lose 10,000 dead in one battle", it is willing and able to inflict death on 10,000 enemy soldiers in a single battle. Although diffused, the situation is not completely resolved. Saddam's character and personality demonstrate that he will continue to push and test the resolve of the United States.

CONCLUSION

It is unlikely that the United States could have secured significantly more out of the cease fire settlement at the end of the Gulf war. It is likely that additional significant concessions on the part of Iraq would have been at some cost to the United States. As time goes by, it is apparent, that additional short term gains may have been at the expense of the originally stated US objectives or other interests in the region.

To understand war is to understand its complexities and the unexplainable during battle. It is a tool for achieving political objectives but it is not precise. By design, war is an attempt to manage deception, destruction, and the most contemptible human characteristics we can imagine. It must be anticipated that there will be "side effects" when the war option is exercised.

Two more days of battle in a pursuit of the RGFC to Baghdad could have meant an absolute and total destruction of the Republican Guards Army. But, it could have also resulted in fifty, one hundred, three hundred American casualties.

The calculation of the associated risk with respect to the anticipated gain leads us to a particular course of action. In the end, we must be able to justify each measure of cost for what has been achieved. When asked by General Powell, "The President is

thinking about going on the air tonight at nine o'clock and announcing we're cutting it off. Would you have any problem with that?", General Schwarzkofit said he took a few minutes to think.

"My gut reaction was that a quick cease fire would save lives. If we continued to attack through Thursday, more of our troops would get killed, probably not many, but some. What was more, we'd accomplished our mission. I'd have been happy to keep on destroying the Iraqi military for the next six months. Yet we'd kicked this guy's butt, leaving no doubt in anybody's mind that we'd won decisively, and we'd done it with very few casualties. Why not end it? Why get somebody else killed tomorrow? That made up my mind." (#27 p.470)

The military mission had been completed. If someone, like the President or Congress wanted something more, let's say the death of Saddam, or greater destruction of the RGFC, then they should have changed or modified the political objectives.

Even with the objectives attained, in the long run, only history will be able to accurately judge the wisdom of ending the war the way we did. So far, all seems well. Iraq's nuclear weapons program has been rolled back and Saddam's thirst for more blood is effectively contained.

Each crisis will always be unique in its own way, as was the 1990 invasion of Kuwait. Next time, the objectives may be harder to formulate, the situation not as straight forward or generally more complicated in an ever changing world. It may mean that we have to search harder to find what we really want to achieve or that we establish some interim objectives if the situation calls for immediate action.

When we get to the point that we can not formulate clear, measurable and achievable objectives, we must go no farther. We must know where we want to end up before we start down the path to get there. Perhaps Clausewitz said it best when he said, "No one starts war - or rather, no one in his senses ought to do so - without first being clear in his mind what he intends to achieve by that war and how he intends to conduct it."

Finally, no adopted course of action, no matter how brilliantly executed, can produce the 100 percent solution. To begin with, none of us is clairvoyant. During the entire Desert Shield/Storm campaign, there were an indefinite number of things that could have gone wrong. Some did go wrong. But from 2 August 1990 on, the formulation of solid objectives, coalition building, the conduct of the war, humanitarian assistance and UN resolution verification turned a world nightmare into a reasonably acceptable situation in the region. There is not one act or course of action that will solve all the problems engrained in the Gulf region. We must continue to

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