



**STRATEGY
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**AIR OCCUPATION: A STRATEGIC AND OPERATIONAL
PLANNING OPTION**

BY

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ABSTRACT

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TITLE: Air Occupation: A Strategic and Operational Planning Option

FORMAT: Strategic Research Project

DATE: 15 April 1997 PAGES: 25 CLASSIFICATION: UNCLASSIFIED

This paper defines, clarifies and investigates the Air Force concept of "air occupation". The Post Cold War era with new doctrines and declining force structures requires new thinking about the application of military power. Moreover, this new thinking is occurring under a continuation of Clausewitz's limited war paradigm. By first putting limited war in perspective today, and then defining air occupation, will set the stage for a historical examination of air occupation. The British use of air occupation in Mesopotamia between the World Wars provides a historical example to clarify air occupation and put the concept in context for today. This historical investigation concludes with current Air Force operations in the no-fly zones over Iraq today.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION.....1

LIMITED WAR.....2

AIR OCCUPATION--THE CONCEPT.....5

HISTORICAL BRIDGE TO TODAY: ROYAL AIR FORCE OPERATIONS IN
MESOPOTAMIA.....9

ANALYSIS OF OPERATIONS IN MESOPOTAMIA.....12

NO-FLY ZONES IN IRAQ.....14

CONCLUSION.....17

ENDNOTES.....19

BIBLIOGRAPHY.....21

INTRODUCTION

During academic year 1997 at the U.S. Army War College, a current warfighting CINC specified that one of the key capabilities we must retain during upcoming budget negotiations with Congress is the ability to conduct "air domination."¹ Although his discussion of the concept was limited, the key premise was the ability to dominate and achieve political objectives through coercion from the air dimension. This evolutionary concept of air domination is based upon strides made by all services, but mainly through the effort of the Air Force. The first officer known to speak in terms of air domination, or as he termed it "air occupation," was Col John A. Warden, USAF. On 15 December 1992, Col Warden, then the Commandant of the Air Command and Staff College, presented a briefing to the School of Advanced Military Studies on Operation INSTANT THUNDER: The Strategic Air Campaign for Operation DESERT STORM. Col Warden's presentation discussed the thirty-eight day coalition air operation that preceded ground operations. During his conclusion, Col Warden emphasized the importance of air operations, and that airpower prevailed over ground forces. Moreover, he stated that INSTANT THUNDER validated the concept of "air occupation."² Regardless of the term used, air occupation or air dominance, conceptually, the terms are the same but air occupation will be used in this paper.

As a concept, air occupation is visionary and worth exploring. It is not official Air Force doctrine, but as Col Warden applied it conceptually in the plan for Operation INSTANT THUNDER, it offers options for joint and combined campaign planning. When Col Warden and his Pentagon team arrived in Saudi Arabia to help with air planning, General Schwartzkopf was skeptical. The theater commander, familiar with Col Warden's book The Air Campaign: Planning for Combat, considered Col Warden an airpower enthusiast who believed airpower could win any war. The general later remarked that Col Warden proved to be a flexible thinker who understood the full dimension of the employment of airpower.³

The evolutionary concept of air occupation coincided with the new 1992 Air Force doctrine. This doctrine captures new thinking about the employment of joint airpower. In addition to supporting the ground forces by dominating the skies overhead, this doctrine says that joint airpower can conduct semi-independent operations that contribute directly to the success of the joint campaign.⁴

Like most new concepts, air occupation is neither universally accepted within the Air Force nor included in AFM 1-1, Basic Aerospace Doctrine of the United States Air Force. As with any new concept, air occupation will take time to become defined and established before it appears in Air Force publications. Therefore, this study will not address the full range of service and joint doctrinal implications of air occupation but only explore its current expression and potential application. This paper defines, clarifies and examines this concept. By defining air occupation and using both past and contemporary historical frames of reference, operational planners can understand it, accept or reject it, and use it in future campaign planning. The historical examination of air occupation will focus on application in a limited war scenario in anticipation that use of force will become even more limited in the future.

LIMITED WAR

Clausewitz defined war as a branch of political theory. In On War Clausewitz states that all wars are governed by policy. Accordingly, the history of warfare shows a transformation in the art of war as the nature of political policies changed.⁵ Since the nature of political policies determines the nature of the war, these same policies shape the strategy employed by the military.⁶ This includes placing limitations on the use of military means to achieve political aims.

The direct use of large conventional military forces is less likely today as a result of changing geopolitics with a regional focus. Analysis of the political and military trends after the Cold War raises questions about the likelihood of using large conventional forces. The 1996

U.S. National Security Strategy, evolving service doctrine, senior military leaders, and international affairs experts seem to prefer policies, conditions, and restraints that limit the military ways and means used in war. As the prevailing political, moral, economic and social issues reflect the nature of regional conflict in the future, most conflicts will not threaten the existence of the states involved. The endstate will emphasize returning to the status quo. Accordingly, the application of military means to achieve national security goals will become more limited.

These political and military trends in the late twentieth century reflect Clausewitz's paradigm of limited war. Although Clausewitz acknowledged absolute war as the ideal, he classified all actual wars as limited.⁷ The basic limitations of war apply especially to democratic nation states dependent upon the stability of a global economy. Today's trend is for first world nations to wage limited regional wars that will only threaten, coerce or compel potential enemies' policies, not threaten their sovereignty or existence.⁸ Since, the object of war as a servant of policy is to impose a nation's will on the enemy, the triad (government, people and military) imposes restraints on national security decision makers. Only a limited application of military means is morally and politically acceptable in democratic societies.⁹ However, the threat of war can achieve political objectives when the enemy triad lacks the consensus to accept the cost of war or cannot garner the support to fight the type of war being waged against them.¹⁰ The use of military force, after all, is a policy tool that requires will to use.

The 1996 National Security Strategy of the United States reflects a political policy of regional limited wars. This affects how the U.S. and its allies use the elements of their national power to pursue and protect their national and regional interests. Although the basic elements of national power are constant, their use has changed dramatically. The probability of direct use of military power as the decisive element of national power has diminished. Today, in a monopolar world, the U.S. is the dominant military power. However, U.S. economic and political power, exerted through diplomatic means, are now more useful in the pursuit of U.S. security

interests and objectives.¹¹ Today, more than ever, the military serves as a buttress for the other elements of national power.

This trend toward a more limited use of military power is understood by senior leaders in the post Cold War military. General Colin L. Powell, former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, put Clausewitz's theory of limited war in context for today. In his article "U.S. Forces: Challenges Ahead," he agrees with Clausewitz by saying that all wars are limited. He says absolute war never occurred and will not occur in the world of today. General Powell believes that wars will become even more limited in the future. They will be limited by three means: the territory on which they are fought, the means used to wage war, and the political objectives for which they are fought. He concludes by stating that the war in the Persian Gulf was a limited war. If it were not, the U.S. and the coalition would occupy Baghdad today.¹²

Clausewitz admonishes political and military leaders to consider the intangible moral dimensions of war. Contemporary author Harry Summers alludes to this new awareness of the moral dimension of war among the American people. He concludes that Americans will not tolerate high casualties when U.S. forces are committed to war. As a result, the political decision to put U.S. ground combat forces in harm's way is now harder to reach because it resonates deeper within the American society.¹³ Air occupation provides U.S. political leaders and operational planners a way to apply military means that limit the number of ground forces put in harm's way.

As Admiral Eberle states in his article "The End of NATO," achieving strategic aims with minimal risk and cost politically, morally, and militarily dominates political decisions involving the use of military force. The admiral believes that large conventional ground forces will suffer the same fate as the declining nuclear forces. Citing the Persian Gulf War, Admiral Eberle judges the use of the military not as an instrument used for conquest, but only as a way of maintaining the status quo.¹⁴ This judgment is supported by historian and correspondent Max Hastings, coauthor of The Battle for Falklands, who said, "As in so many limited wars, the cause of the dispute returned precisely to the status quo, wholly unresolved."¹⁵ Both Eberle and

Hastings conclude that, in the post Cold War period political decisions that use limited military force to achieve limited ends result in outcomes that do not change the original causes of the conflict.

The concept of air occupation has potential application to limited wars today that could alter the cost benefit analysis. General Powell lists "the territory on which wars are waged" as one of today's limitations.¹⁶ Air occupation provides a readily available means to apply military force over a territory to compel the enemy to do our will without the political, economic and moral costs associated with using large ground forces. The political and economic factors, such as those argued by Eberle, militate against a decision to use large conventional forces in today's smaller regional conflicts. Political leaders and operational planners must deal with this reality. Air occupation is a limited, asymmetrical application of military means that may answer Admiral Eberle's concerns about future limited wars.

AIR OCCUPATION--THE CONCEPT

Their superiority of warfighting technology gives U.S. forces an edge during any type of war. Joint Publication 1, Joint Warfare of the Armed Forces of the United States, describes this as the asymmetrical application of military force.¹⁷ Conceptually, air occupation exploits three types (surveillance and monitoring, direct action and command and control), of U.S. advanced aerospace technology because there are fewer political, economic, moral and natural constraints to operations within the air dimension. As an example, asymmetry provides leverage that permits U.S. and NATO force reductions, but still provides a means and way to apply military force effectively within the limited war paradigm.

Air to ground, sea to air, and other forms of the asymmetrical application of force can generate synergistic effects. The strategic and operational leaders who understand the potential of asymmetrical operations can design military campaigns with greater effects but fewer resources. Dr. Gary Guertner, the Chairman of the Department of National Security and

Strategy, U.S. Army War College, provides an example of the need for this new type of thinking. In "NATO Strategy in a New World Order," Guertner recommends that NATO adapt its force structure to accommodate the post Cold War by capitalizing on the technological advantage of asymmetry.¹⁸

Guertner offers two measures of effectiveness for NATO decision makers to use in assessing their ability to achieve strategic objectives. One measure directly addresses the asymmetry of aerospace technology. It includes lethality (lethal munitions), deep strike, and high accuracy. This measure shows how a technology-based capability might offset the smaller ground force structures within NATO. Guertner stresses as a second measure the need for cost effective combat capability based on a mix of high and mid-level technology in weapons platforms and munitions.¹⁹ With decreased U.S. and NATO ground force structures, NATO needs to look for solutions offered by the greater mobility of their air forces. This use of airpower permits rapid response to changing and diverse threats while avoiding the political ramifications associated with deploying ground forces to troubled regions.

The asymmetric advantage of air occupation is its capability to use direct and indirect coercive force against operational or strategic centers of gravity. The use, or threat of use, of force by dominating a specific volume of air over ground for a specified time (short or long duration), allows aerospace forces to operate from a relative position of advantage. From these positions of advantage, the coercive effect of force becomes leverage for a nation to impose its will on the enemy.

Through integration of advanced aerospace technology, a force with such technology can dominate, control, and in effect, occupy the air dimension over a certain region. To dominate the air dimension, joint commanders employ three different types of aerospace technology within the air dimension as dictated by the situation. The first is surveillance and monitoring technology consisting of space-borne and fixed-wing aviation assets. National space assets and fixed wing aviation assets conduct continuous reconnaissance, detection, surveillance, monitoring, and collection of information over a specified region. These assets include all source intelligence

collection and electronic warfare that operate in the air dimension. They are the eyes and ears that operate in the air dimension.

The second technology component is direct action technology. This includes multi-service fixed and rotary-wing aviation platforms and unmanned missile technology. Direct action technology can strike or threaten to strike surface targets from the air to achieve strategic or operational effects. Direct action technology uses the improved capabilities of precision guided munitions to get direct, not simply area, effects. Since the Air Force first used smart munitions in late 1967 to conduct surgical strikes against Hanoi's bridges over the Red River, the capabilities of precision guided munitions have improved significantly. When speaking about precision guided munitions, General Michael Dugan, the former Chief of Staff of the Air Force said, "the technology finally caught up with our doctrine." The enhanced effectiveness of precision guided munitions was a major factor in the success of Operation INSTANT THUNDER and is a key element of air occupation.²⁰

The pinpoint effects of precision guided munitions affect the political and moral dimensions of war. While historically, strategic bombing with inaccurate bombs only galvanized civilian populations who suffered collateral effects, today, precision guided weapons can today protect the population from collateral effects and focus on coercion of the political and military leadership and their resources.²¹ The accuracy of precision guided munitions permits attacking targets without the collateral destruction of nonmilitary targets that produces civilian casualties affecting the moral dimension. Identifying, isolating, and striking only those targets related to operational or strategic centers of gravity reduces the moral dilemma associated with the undesired impact of the war on the population. Precision guided munitions have thus changed the nature of air operations.

The third technological component provides the command and control (C2) architecture to synchronize aerospace systems operating within the air dimension. Space, airborne, and ground based communications and information processing centers provide prompt and reliable information between leaders and system operators. This enhances synchronization of aerospace

technology within the air dimension. This C2 architecture enables diverse systems to communicate and coordinate within the air dimension. Moreover, it permits the direct action systems to remain safe and uncommitted until they are needed.

In these ways, air occupation uses the asymmetry created by advanced aerospace technology to exploit the medium of air in time and space. Systems operating within the air dimension encounter less natural friction than do surface forces, and this allows aerospace systems greater freedom of movement and greater operation and strategic reach. Additionally, the logistical requirements are smaller than those of ground forces. The unmatched superiority of U.S. airpower affords an offensive aerospace force the advantage of choosing the time and place to apply the effects of their direct action technology. Preparing to conduct or actually conducting air occupation over a specified territory creates a continuous threat from the air. Even when not applied, this coercive threat from the air may achieve strategic effects if it adversely affects political decision makers and the moral support of their population and military forces.

Air occupation is doctrinally supported by the joint warfighting concepts expressed in JP 1. Technologically intensive, it creates asymmetry by integrating three types of joint aerospace technology within the air dimension to maintain leverage over a specified region. Political leverage can be held over a designated area by maintaining an asymmetrical advantage on enemy ground and air assets or political decision makers. By exploiting the asymmetrical advantages of aerospace technology, air occupation avoids the political ramifications attendant in committing ground combat forces. With the current ground force structure reductions, air occupation is a valuable addition as an operational concept for the application of military means to achieve limited strategic objectives.

A HISTORICAL BRIDGE TO TODAY
ROYAL AIR FORCE "AIR CONTROL" OPERATIONS IN MESOPOTAMIA

Today as the U.S.--the world's only military super power--is reducing its military, the potential requirements for U.S. military force are increasing.²² The strategic situation in Britain between the World Wars is similar to the situation facing the U.S. in the post Cold War era. The British use of airpower during the period between the wars is instructive relative to today. This historical analysis will serve as a bridge to help clarify the principals of air occupation, and illustrate how air occupation has been applied in the past. The British expanded their colonial empire during and after World War I, especially in the Ottoman Empire. However, the post war economy in Britain required political decisions to drastically reduce the size of the British Army. At the same time, since the British empire had expanded, either more ground troops were required to police the colonies, or some other method of using military power was needed.

During the period between the world wars, The British made extensive use of air assets to expand and control their colonial empires in Africa and the Middle East.²³ The British Royal Air Force (RAF) employed airpower to maintain order in the British colonies in the Middle East. During this period of British history, military operations in the British colonies were called "imperial policing."²⁴ One method used by the British to conduct imperial policing was the RAF-inspired concept of "air control."²⁵

This concept of air control did not come easily. After World War I, the RAF was trying to preserve its position gained during the war. The RAF needed to prove its value in policing the colonial empire or risk reductions or even dissolution. It eventually got its chance to show its operational effectiveness in the British colonies in Africa and the Middle East. However, the RAF initially remained operationally subordinate to the Army in the Sudan, Egypt, Somaliland and other parts of the Middle East after World War I. The British political and military establishment believed the RAF was a supporting element for the British Army and Navy surface forces and not capable of independent operations.²⁶ This soon changed.

In February of 1920 Winston Churchill received notification from the British General Staff that the Army could not control Mesopotamia due to limited Parliamentary funding for ground forces. Churchill's options were simple: he could either give up the colonial possession or try a more economical method of colonial policing. Air Marshall Hugh Trenchard, the Chief of the British Air Staff, thought his chance to validate air control in the British colonies had finally come. However, due to infighting between the services, the RAF did not gain control of operations in Mesopotamia. The Army, even at reduced strengths, retained control of RAF assets and operations.²⁷

A rebellion in Mesopotamia in the 1920's marked the beginning of the end of the Army's control of British military forces in Mesopotamia. At the end of the rebellion, Winston Churchill convened a conference in Cairo to decide the fate of Mesopotamia. Sir Percy Cox, the High Commissioner in Baghdad, and General Sir Aylmer Haldane, the commander of the military forces in Baghdad, opposed turning Mesopotamia over to the RAF. However, since the rebellion demonstrated that the British Army, operating at post war reduced strengths, was unable to maintain control in Mesopotamia, Winston Churchill decided to give the RAF a chance to test air control in a portion of Mesopotamia called Kurdistan. Churchill's decision was largely financially and force structure driven. If air control worked in Mesopotamia, it would cost the British government half of what it cost to maintain the ground forces there.²⁸

After eleven months, the RAF concept of air control passed the test in Kurdistan and gained an ally in Sir Aylmer Haldane. Haldane reported to Churchill that the test in Kurdistan validated the RAF concept of air control. In October, 1922 the RAF got complete control of military operations in Mesopotamia, despite the reservations of the British Army.²⁹

The RAF air control operations in Mesopotamia were joint operations conducted with airpower and small armored car squadrons. The RAF created and trained the small armored formations that became part of the RAF force structure. They defended RAF air bases in Mesopotamia and conducted limited operations in concert with the air arm of the RAF. The ground forces operated among the nomads and along the poorly defined border with Saudi

Arabia. Although they were not fighters in the traditional sense, they represented the British colonial presence on the ground. Both the small armored formations and the air elements of the RAF, with their advanced technology, had an asymmetrical advantage over the population.³⁰ Although RAF operations were a joint application of air and ground forces, operational and strategic success was due primarily to RAF airpower.

The air arm of the RAF conducted many different types of operations under the doctrine of air control. They conducted psychological operations by dropping propaganda leaflets and operated over extended ranges in Mesopotamia beyond the range of the small armored squadrons. Additionally, they were successful at rapidly quelling internal tribal and clan wars to maintain peace in Mesopotamia. The RAF could rapidly move and intervene between rival forces before a conflict could erupt. They also served as a deterrent force by their presence, especially after demonstrating their firepower. This kept the rival forces separated until a political solution could be achieved.³¹ If a situation arose requiring political mediation, the RAF would rapidly transport a British political liaison officer to the scene to arbitrate between the warring factions.³² The arbitrator and the presence of the RAF aircraft set a tone conducive to British political negotiations in Mesopotamia.

The RAF did not like using direct action in Mesopotamia, but used it occasionally against recalcitrant tribes. The British bombed the tribes and clans to force them to pay taxes and submit to British colonial policies. However, the objective or center of gravity was disrupting the normal lives of the population; therefore, indiscriminate destruction and killing was minimal. A major factor that reduced civilian casualties was the bombing accuracy achieved by the RAF pilots. The RAF could drop bombs from tens or hundreds of feet, not thousands. These tactics achieved precision accuracy which enabled the RAF to select and target key resources that, if destroyed, would disrupt the lives of the villages and avoid collateral killing. When used, direct action by the RAF targeted village resources, not the people. RAF airplanes provided coercive leverage over the population who disliked having their lives changed.³³ However, despite

deliberate efforts to limit destruction, there was a moral outcry by the British public against using air control operations to quell unrest in Mesopotamia.

Political agitation against the RAF methods of air control came from within and outside of Britain. The British Labor Party and the League of Nations continuously exerted pressure on the RAF to limit civilian casualties. Many politicians felt that using airpower in the region was immoral and unsporting, especially since the population was outmatched by airpower technology. Moreover, many felt the pilots could dissociate themselves from the brutality and devastating effects of airpower, even though the RAF seldom used direct attacks, and when they did, few civilian casualties resulted.³⁴

Although there was a continuous threat from small arms weapons, RAF airpower operated with relative impunity over the skies of Mesopotamia. Pilot losses were minimal during the extended RAF operations and only fourteen pilots were killed and eighty wounded from 1922 to 1932.³⁵

ANALYSIS OF RAF OPERATIONS IN MESOPOTAMIA

Strategic and economic conditions facing Britain and other European powers after World War I resemble those confronting the U.S. today. To compensate for these conditions, the British adapted an operational concept for using their advanced airpower technology to support their military strategy. The use of air control helped them achieve their limited political and military aims and allowed for smaller ground force structures. The concept of air control was a limited use of coercive military force relying almost exclusively on the use of airpower. The advantages of asymmetry enabled the RAF to politically and militarily achieve their strategic objectives in Mesopotamia of maintaining the status quo.

The British air control operations in Mesopotamia illustrate how limited joint operations applied asymmetrically can achieve relative superiority through airpower at the decisive time and place. This permitted British ground elements, both military and political, to operate in

Mesopotamia under an umbrella of protection from the air. The direct and indirect use of technology from secure positions in the air was a buttress for political and military operations on the ground.

The RAF controlled Mesopotamia due to asymmetrical advantages of airpower over the terrain and the people. Air control worked because the terrain offered little protection to the unsophisticated population that succumbed to the relative invincibility of airpower. In effect, the RAF controlled the population and its leadership by coercion. This worked because the direct or indirect use of airpower against the resources that affected the daily lives of the population--the center of gravity. Moreover, air control operations reduced collateral damage and resulted in few civilian deaths.³⁶

The accuracy of RAF bombing enabled targeting of facilities or resources important to the people with minimal killing and collateral damage. This asymmetrical application of limited force against limited targets supported the British political aims and reduced the moral impact of the use of airpower. The accuracy of the RAF bombing in Mesopotamia is similar to the effects that precision guided munitions might achieve today. Today, precision guided munitions can apply means effectively and efficiently in some situations to reduce the political and moral dilemma of causing massive collateral damage.

The British could not occupy all of Mesopotamia with large numbers of ground forces to maintain control, but strategically they wanted to maintain the political status quo. Air control achieved the same effect as ground occupation by limited use of air and small ground military means to dominate an area in space and time. Air control was a defensive military strategy executed with offensive airpower tactics. It enabled the British to maintain the status quo of their colonial peace in Mesopotamia without the cost of committing large ground forces.

The British colonial policy of imperial policing shares some characteristics with to the political goals stated in the U.S. 1996 National Security Strategy. Today the United States and its allies seek to maintain regional stability through a regional strategy.³⁷ With reduced force levels, NATO and the U.S. need similar operational concepts to meet their commitments such as

the British faced in their colonies after World War I. U.S. forces must find new politically and economically acceptable ways of applying limited military power to achieve their political objectives. The British adapted their doctrine to achieve the desired political effects using asymmetry within the air dimension. Today the U.S. cannot sustain large ground forces to occupy a region for an extended period of time. As the British discovered, political activity complemented by air operations supported by small ground forces is a militarily viable alternative to achieve limited strategic objectives associated with maintaining the status quo.

NO-FLY-ZONES IN IRAQ

In the aftermath of the Persian Gulf War, U.S. and coalition forces are still involved in conflict--a limited airpower war similar in many regards to that of the RAF. Implementation of the no-fly zones in northern and southern Iraq after DESERT STORM are enforcing the U.N. resolutions. Operation PROVIDE COMFORT began immediately after DESERT STORM and Operation SOUTHERN WATCH began on 27 August 1992. Both operations use coalition joint airpower asymmetrically to compel Iraq to comply with the U.N. resolutions. The designated geographic areas subjected to air occupation include portions of northern and southern Iraq above the 36th and below the 33rd parallels. The limited joint military operations, conducted by coalition airpower, represent an application of air occupation as a defensive strategic concept. These operations apply the advantages of airpower asymmetrically over portions of Iraq in a limited way to achieve the desired political and military objectives. These objectives are derived from the resolutions imposed by the United Nations on Iraq after the Gulf War. Two key U.N. resolutions are being enforced by joint coalition airpower over Iraq. The first is to stop Iraqi persecution of the Kurdish people in the north and the Shiites in the south. The second is to eliminate Iraqi nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons of mass destruction.³⁸ Coalition forces are using their airpower as coercive leverage to force Iraqi compliance with these U.N. resolutions. The limited airpower interdiction operations conducted over portions of Iraq reflect

current joint campaign planning doctrine and validate the use of air occupation as a operational concept to maintain the status quo in the region.

Coalition and U.S. unilateral responses to Iraqi transgressions have been measured--limited in nature. Coalition aircraft have engaged and destroyed Iraqi aircraft and radar sites threatening the northern and southern no-fly zones. In January 1993, Iraq refused entrance to U.N. inspection teams unless the coalition suspended the no-fly zone in the south. Coalition airpower took direct action on 16 January against a suspected nuclear weapons facility just outside Baghdad. The following day, additional air strikes finished the mission. The attack was a limited and measured response since the nuclear weapons facility was directly related to the U.N. weapons inspection teams mission of eliminating weapons of mass destruction.³⁹

The coalition airpower operations integrate all three aerospace technologies. As British Prime Minister John Major contends, the coalition has the technological capability to monitor the entire region from the air to ensure compliance with the U.N. resolutions.⁴⁰ When direct action is required to force compliance with the U.N. resolutions, all three types of aerospace technology are synchronized to attack key targets within Iraq. Direct action capitalizes on precision guided munitions and exploits the air dimension over Iraq asymmetrically without the associated political and economic costs of using other military means.

The no-fly zones have moral implications for both the coalition and Iraq regarding the use of military means to achieve strategic objectives. First, due to the asymmetrical aerospace advantages possessed by the coalition, there is minimal risk to coalition pilots. Therefore, the potential for loss of life and the associated political and moral ramifications within the U.S. and its coalition partners are politically and morally acceptable.⁴¹ Additionally, having a past frame of reference adds to effect of air occupation on the morale of the people and leadership within Iraq. With time, the coercive effect of air occupation might erode the political hold of Saddam Hussein on the Iraqi population, but as a minimum it is maintaining the status quo.

Air occupation operations in the no-fly zones, on the other hand, levels the operational and tactical playing field. Coalition airpower denies Iraq the use of its fixed and rotary wing

aircraft by dominating airspace over Iraq. This retards Iraqi combined arms military operations by denying them the ability to integrate air and ground operations.⁴² At the tactical level, ground attacks from the Iraqi Army and artillery still occur, but without dominating support from the air.

Air occupation creates coercive leverage that enables unarmed U.N. weapons inspection teams to travel throughout Iraq under an air umbrella created by the asymmetrical application of airpower. The coercive effect of air occupation forces the Iraqi government to reluctantly support U.N. inspection teams as they identify and destroy Iraqi nuclear, chemical, and biological capabilities and ensure compliance with U.N. sanctions.⁴³

However, as previously illustrated, using asymmetric means can produce a moral backlash. When U.S. Navy missiles attacked the suspected nuclear weapons facility on 16 January 1993, two years to the day of the beginning of the Persian Gulf War, the coalition response was mixed. Britain, Russia and some Arab nations called it an unnecessary use of force that was politically motivated by President Bush. The timing was bad since it coincided with the two year anniversary of the Persian Gulf War and was also too close to President-elect Clinton's inauguration. Although the attack focused on a military target, it caused ethical problems when one of the Navy missiles missed and hit the AL Rashid hotel and killed two innocent civilians.⁴⁴ This same moral backlash has occurred under the Clinton administration when further punitive strikes were used against Saddam Hussein.

The success of the coalition's efforts are relative. Despite the implementation of the northern and southern no-fly zones, Iraq has played a cat and mouse game to defy the U.N. resolutions. Iraqi defiance includes using aircraft to approach and fly into the no-fly zones, moving mobile radars near and within the no-fly zones to track coalition aircraft, denying unconstrained access of the U.N. weapons inspection teams into Iraq, and combat operations in the north.⁴⁵

Despite Iraqi transgressions, the limited use of airpower is achieving strategic and operational objectives in Iraq. The threat, and use of military airpower is a buttress that provides an umbrella protecting the operations of the U.N. inspection teams. Additionally, air occupation

over the northern and southern regions of Iraq helps the Kurds and Shiites by denying Iraq the use of their airpower. The status quo is being maintained using a limited war defensive strategy, a goal in today's post Cold War era. This may be the only realistic alternative, since using large ground forces to occupy and enforce full compliance with the U.N. resolutions is currently politically, economically and morally unthinkable.

CONCLUSION

U.S. services are attempting to come to grips with the post Cold War era. New and diverse threats require new ways to apply military means to achieve strategic goals and protect strategic interests. Like any institution confronted with change, U.S. military forces, and the doctrines for applying force, must adapt to the changing world political environments. With declining force structure, the U.S. military needs innovative ways to use its reduced strength in a mono-polar world. Air occupation is an innovative and economical way of applying limited military means. Conceptually, air occupation applies advanced aerospace technology, a U.S. strength, asymmetrically to achieve strategic objectives.

As the U.S. continues to develop doctrine and reduce force structure in the wake of the Cold War, the capability to respond rapidly to regional crises remains critical. Rapid projection of potent military means to a region can be accomplished by joint airpower. Once deployed to the region, joint and campaign planning doctrine provides a framework for using air occupation as an strategic and operational concept to achieve political objectives. These capabilities may be suitable to many likely situations in the post Cold War era.

Airpower operating in the relative friction free air dimension offers many advantages. It avoids many of the political, social, economic, moral limitations and risks when compared to committing conventional ground forces. Controlling the air space over a region can produce strategic and operational effects when combined with the other elements of national power. Air occupation is compatible with Clausewitz's limited war paradigm. Using airpower

asymmetrically, air occupation provides limited application of military means to achieve significant effects. Politicians and campaign planners balance the ends, ways, and means to ensure the desired strategic objectives are achievable with air occupation. The historical British use of airpower in Mesopotamia and today's use of airpower in the Persian Gulf offer examples of applying airpower asymmetrically to achieve limited political ends such as maintaining the status quo. Thus, air occupation has continued utility in a regional limited war context for the future.

As the government and the military seek new ways of applying military means asymmetrically, Clausewitz' paradigm of limited war militates against using large conventional ground forces. Operating in the air dimension avoids many of the risks and costs of using large ground forces. Therefore, air occupation is a viable way to control an area in space and time to create a situation conducive to political intervention and negotiation--in many cases, to maintain the status quo.

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- ¹ Nonattribution lecture, USAWC.
- ² Col. John A. Warden, USAF, Lecture on 15 December 1992 to the School of Advanced Military Studies.
- ³ Norman H. Schwartzkopf, GEN USA (RET). It Doesn't Take a Hero. (New York: Bantam Books, 1992), 318.
- ⁴ U.S. Air Force, Air Force Manual 1-1, Basic Aerospace Doctrine of the United States Air Force Vol. I, (Washington: Department of the Air Force, 1992), 5.
- ⁵ Carl von Clausewitz, On War, translated by Michael Howard and Peter Paret (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), 610.
- ⁶ Howard, 37-38.
- ⁷ Michael Howard, Clausewitz, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983), 49.
- ⁸ *Ibid.*, 39.
- ⁹ *Ibid.*, 49.
- ¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 42-43.
- ¹¹ General Colin L. Powell USA, "U.S. Forces: Challenges Ahead," Foreign Affairs, Winter 1992-1993, 33.
- ¹² *Ibid.*, 37.
- ¹³ Harry Summers, Lecture given to the School of Advanced Military Studies on 1 September 1992.
- ¹⁴ Jean de Bloch, The Future of War, (Boston: Doubleday and McClure Company, 1899), xiii-lvii.
- ¹⁵ Max Hastings and Simon Jenkins, The Battle for the Falklands, (London and New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1983), 327.
- ¹⁶ Powell, "U.S. Forces: Challenges Ahead", 37.
- ¹⁷ Joint Publication 1, Joint Warfare of the Armed Forces of the United States (Washington, D.C., January 1995), 59-61.
- ¹⁸ Gary L. Guertner, "NATO Strategy in a New World Order," Reprinted in SAMS Course Three Part IV readings, 121.
- ¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 116.
- ²⁰ Mark Clodfelter, "Of Demons Storms and Thunder: A Preliminary Look at Vietnam's Impact on the Persian Gulf Air Campaign," Airpower Journal, Winter 1991, 26.

- ²¹ Ibid.
- ²² Powell, CSPAN interview.
- ²³ Philip Anthony Towle, Pilots and Rebels, (United Kingdom: Brassey's, 1989), 9.
- ²⁴ Ibid., 2.
- ²⁵ Ibid., 12.
- ²⁶ Ibid., 13-17.
- ²⁷ Ibid., 12-13.
- ²⁸ Ibid., 15.
- ²⁹ Ibid., 16.
- ³⁰ Ibid., 16.
- ³¹ Ibid., 16-17.
- ³² Ibid., 16.
- ³³ Ibid., 20-21.
- ³⁴ Ibid., 19-20.
- ³⁵ Ibid., 19.
- ³⁶ Ibid., 2.
- ³⁷ National Security Strategy of the United States, 13.
- ³⁸ Reuters World Service. Dateline Washington. White House press statement by Marlin Fitzwater on 17 January 1993, 15:08 ET.
- ³⁹ North American News Report. Dateline Washington. 17 January 1993, 15:06 ET.
- ⁴⁰ The Associated Press. Dateline London. Press statement by Prime Minister John Major. 19 August 1992, 23:30 ET.
- ⁴¹ The Associated Press. Dateline Baghdad. 28 August 1992, 12:46 ET.
- ⁴² The Associated Press. Dateline Washington. Press statement by Rear Admiral Michael Cramer, Director for Intelligence the Joint Staff during Pentagon news conference. 26 August 1992, 21:30 ET.
- ⁴³ North American News Report. Dateline Baghdad. 23 January 1993, 00:08 ET.
- ⁴⁴ Reuters World Service. Dateline Washington. 19 January 1993, 22:03 ET.
- ⁴⁵ The Associated Press. Dateline Washington. 7 January 1993, 16:29 ET.

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