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**The Gulf War:**

**Operational Leadership and the Failure to Destroy the Republican Guard.**

By

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A paper submitted to the Faculty of the Naval War College in partial satisfaction of the requirements of the Joint Military Operations Department.

The contents of this paper reflect my own personal views and are not necessarily endorsed by the Naval War College or the Department of the Navy.

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17 May 2001

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## **Abstract**

### **The Gulf War:**

#### **Operational Leadership and the Failure to Destroy the Republican Guard.**

This paper will focus on the Operational Commander, General H. Norman Schwarzkopf, Commander in Chief, U.S. Central Command, and the relationship between operational leadership and some of the critical operational decisions he made during the Gulf War. An operational analysis of the Gulf War reveals that it is an example of several poor decisions made at the operational level that resulted in lost opportunities. Specifically, the Operational Commander made two decisions that resulted in the failure of the U.S. led coalition to achieve its key operational objective. The decision not to appoint a Joint Force Land Component Commander (JFLCC) and the decision to halt the ground war at 100 hours were critical mistakes. This paper will show that the decision to cease the ground war at 100 hours was made as a result of not having a JFLCC, and that both decisions were heavily influenced by General Schwarzkopf's style of leadership and its application in the Operational Art of war. General Schwarzkopf's decision not to appoint a JFLCC, but to retain that authority, overburdened him and caused him to spread his focus too thin, thus making him less effective at both the tactical and operational levels. This, coupled with General Schwarzkopf's fiery temper, tantrums, and continual berating of subordinates, prevented him from getting timely information from his tactical commanders. In the end, General Schwarzkopf did not have a complete picture of the battlefield when the President needed input for the purpose of a cease-fire. Consequently, General Schwarzkopf was not able to make a case for extending the ground war, and concurred with the decision to end the ground war at 100 hours.

## INTRODUCTION

The Gulf War has been hailed as a victory of superior technology and superior tactics; however, for those who dig a little deeper, there are some significant issues that must be addressed. The study of military leadership is as old as war itself; therefore a critical analysis of leadership during the Gulf War and its impact on the outcome of the war is justified in order to provide benefit for future leaders. This paper will focus on the Operational Commander, General H. Norman Schwarzkopf, Commander in Chief, U.S. Central Command, and the relationship between operational leadership and some of the key operational decisions he made during the Gulf War.

**An operational analysis of the Gulf War reveals that it is an example of several poor decisions made at the operational level that resulted in lost opportunities. Specifically, the Operational Commander made two decisions that resulted in the failure of the U.S. led coalition to achieve its key operational objective. The decision not to appoint a Joint Force Land Component Commander (JFLCC) and the decision to halt the ground war at 100 hours were critical mistakes. This paper will show that the decision to cease the ground war at 100 hours was made as a result of not having a JFLCC, and that both decisions were heavily influenced by General Schwarzkopf's style of leadership and its application in the Operational Art of war.** It should be noted that, throughout this paper, the decision to end the ground war at 100 hours is consistently attributed to General Schwarzkopf. While the decision to cease ground operations was ultimately made by President Bush, it was only with the concurrence of General Schwarzkopf that the final decision was made. Therefore, it is logical to conclude that General Schwarzkopf's input into the decision was a critical factor into the timing of it. It can also be assumed that had General Schwarzkopf made the case to the President, through

General Colin Powell, Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, that more time was needed to accomplish key operational objectives, the ground war would have been extended. The decision to stop the ground offensive at 100 hours was a crucial mistake that ultimately allowed a significant number of the Iraqi Republican Guard Force (RGFC) divisions to escape intact. Central Intelligence Agency analysis concludes that 842 Iraqi tanks, 365 of which were T-72 tanks, 1412 armored personnel carriers, and the majority of the soldiers escaped the theater unharmed.<sup>1</sup>

### **Operational Objectives and Center of Gravity**

There were several operational objectives in the Desert Storm Operation, but the most significant objective was the destruction of the RGFC. General Schwarzkopf had identified the RGFC as the enemy's operational center of gravity. The issue of Operational Objectives and Centers of Gravity can sometimes be a source of confusion, and depending on which "school of thought" the reader follows, the issue can lead to emotional and lengthy debates. At the operational level in the Gulf War, there was not any debate, for General Schwarzkopf was quite clear in his determination of the operational center of gravity and key operational objective. The RGFC represented the strength of Saddam Hussein's regime. It possessed the bulk of his offensive force projection capability as well as the heart of the domestic power base used by Saddam to retain control of the Iraqi government.<sup>2</sup> It was appropriate that the focus of General Schwarzkopf's efforts would be the RGFC.

General Schwarzkopf made it quite clear to his subordinate commanders as to his intentions for the RGFC during his meeting on 14 November. He described his intent for the RGFC as follows:

We need to destroy—not attack, not damage, not surround—I want you to destroy the Republican Guard. When you're done with them, I don't want them to be an effective fighting force anymore. I don't

want them to exist as a military organization. We're not going into this with one arm tied behind our backs. We're not gonna say we want to be as nice as we possibly can, and if they draw back across the border that's fine with us. That's bullshit! We are going to destroy the Republican Guard.<sup>3</sup>

Further explanation of the Operational Commander's intent for the RGFC is not needed. Although not a strategic objective, the destruction of the RGFC was clearly a priority for General Powell. "I don't want to end the war without certain things being accomplished, I want to leave those tanks as smoking kilometer signposts all the way back to Baghdad."<sup>4</sup> It was the failure to achieve that objective, the destruction of the RGFC, that led to much of the aftermath that was not only embarrassing to the U.S., but was the catalyst that has led to doubts about the U.S. success in the Gulf War and has spawned contentious relations with Iraq ever since. With so much emphasis on the destruction of the RGFC, the question that must be answered is how the U.S. coalition failed to accomplish that key objective? The answer to that question is simple. General Schwarzkopf, CINCCENT, and the Operational Commander during the Gulf War, made a controversial decision not to appoint a JFLCC, but to retain command of the land forces for himself. This decision significantly overburdened him, and caused him to be less effective at both the tactical and operational levels. Furthermore, this decision, coupled with his operational leadership, and the resulting relationship with his subordinates, resulted in a poor flow of information and a consequentially a poor decision on ending the ground war.

### **Joint Force Land Component Commander Issue**

In accordance with Joint Doctrine, Combatant Commanders exercise command authority over assigned forces; are responsible for assigned missions, and the preparedness of their commands. They prescribe the chain of command within their combatant commands,

and designate the appropriate authority to be exercised by subordinate commanders.<sup>5</sup> The decision to retain JFLCC responsibility is complicated and was not easily made by General Schwarzkopf. He had to be concerned with his relationship with the Arab-Islamic forces, for they would not tolerate being under the command of a Westerner. Initially, the Arabs wanted to be in charge of everything:

As soon as forces started touching down, I got worried calls from General Horner and General Yeosock. They reported that the Saudi military had taken the position, "Your soldiers are on our soil, so of course we're in charge of everything." We knew full well that the response of Americans would be, "Bull. We're sending most of the forces; we should be in charge of everything."<sup>6</sup>

General Schwarzkopf also had to be concerned with the perception and reaction of U.S. leaders, should he decide to make the Saudi prince, Lieutenant General Khalid bin Sultan, the JFLCC and place him in charge of U.S. forces. To alleviate this burden, and for political reasons, General Schwarzkopf agreed to a parallel command structure, with Arab forces under General Khalid bin Sultan, acting as Commander, Joint Theater of Operations. By allowing Khalid to wield authority over what became known as the Joint Arab Task Force, General Schwarzkopf alleviated some political tension and lightened his load of that burden.<sup>7</sup> That decision did not relieve General Schwarzkopf of the magnitude of his responsibilities and the problem caused by the significant number of additional ground forces that were still under separate commands. General Powell repeatedly suggested that General Schwarzkopf establish an overall commander of ground forces, fearing that the land offensive was consuming too much of Schwarzkopf's time and energy.<sup>8</sup> General Schwarzkopf realized, early on, that he was becoming overburdened. As early as 19 October, he was beginning to feel the tedium of war. He found himself mired in administrative chores: briefing congressional delegations, giving press interviews, heading off cultural problems with the



Saudis, and fielding bureaucratic questions from Washington.<sup>9</sup> Since the preponderance of ground forces were U.S. Army, it was logical, that if he had appointed a JFLCC, that he would come from that service. In early November 1990, General Powell assigned Lieutenant General Calvin Waller as the Deputy CINC, with the intent that General Waller would be named the JFLCC. General Powell was worried that ground forces in the gulf lacked a single ground commander to oversee both Army and Marine divisions, and since General Schwarzkopf had already appointed Lieutenant General Charles A. Horner as the Joint Force Air Component Commander, it was logical that he would appoint a JFLCC as well. Amongst other reasons, which will be addressed in more detail later, General Waller recommended, that by further expanding his role on the staff, it would further upset the Marines and Air Force who were already irritated that the top two positions on the Central Command Staff were being filled by U.S. Army Generals.<sup>10</sup> General Schwarzkopf was also hesitant to name a JFLCC for the simple reason of having to create an additional staff, the approximate 200 members which would have to come out of combat forces. He was already concerned there were too few "trigger pullers" in theater as it was.<sup>11</sup> The end result was that he made the decision to retain the land component commander responsibility, with General Waller serving as his primary assistant for ground combat issues.<sup>12</sup> To assist him in dealing with the ground forces were the service component commanders, Lieutenant General John Yeosock, Commander of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Army, Lieutenant General Walter E. Boomer, Commander of the Marine Forces and General Sir Peter de la Billiere, Commander of the British Forces. The feasibility of such a command structure working was possible, but complicated by General Schwarzkopf's recognition that as the land component commander, he had the option of bypassing General Yeosock and going directly with instructions to his two Army corps commanders, Lieutenant General Fred Franks, VII Corps, and Lieutenant General Gary

Luck, XVIII Airborne Corps, should he choose to do so. From the other direction, Generals Franks and Luck had to deal directly with General Yeosock, and did not have a direct line to General Schwarzkopf.<sup>13</sup> This type of command structure created a significant possibility for miscommunications between the operational and tactical commanders, and had the potential for important links to be omitted from communications and the decision making process. For any such convoluted command structure to work, it would depend significantly on the leadership and cooperation of the key players, and as it is frequently said, "Leadership starts at the top."

### **Operational Leadership**

Leadership is a key ingredient in any military organization, and while it may seem inappropriate to analyze the leadership of an accomplished individual like General Schwarzkopf, this paper will show that it was flaws in his personality that adversely affected his decision making and damaged his command relationship with subordinates. His personality was instrumental in decisions that he made, and contributed to the poor flow of information from his tactical commanders.

Leadership, from a purely academic perspective is simple, but to be a good leader in reality is anything but academic. Some contend that good leadership is an inherited quality, or that the basics of good leadership are instilled at an early age. Clearly there are those who are, what could be considered, "natural born" leaders, that seem to gravitate to positions of authority and excel with seemingly little effort. There are also those who work diligently at being leaders, but never seem to measure up to the task. In the United States Marine Corps, leadership is taught at the earliest stages of recruit and officer training. Like all other normal people, Marines master leadership at different rates, some naturally, and some struggle with it throughout their normally short careers. For the purposes of instruction, leadership is

categorized into leadership principles and leadership traits. For the Marine, there are eleven leadership principles and fourteen leadership traits that are drilled into the “brain-housing group” of every new recruit and officer candidate before an individual can ever pass “Go.”<sup>14</sup> Leadership traits and principles are taught by all services to varying degrees of mastery, but the application of leadership, as alluded to earlier, is achieved at different rates, depending on the individual, his experience and his personality.

In order to analyze the leadership abilities of General Schwarzkopf at the operational level, it is necessary to understand what “Operational Leadership” means. The book, Operational Warfare, by Professor Milan N. Vego, that is used at the United States Naval War College to teach operational leadership does not provide a clear definition. Rather, it explains operational leadership in terms of composition and traits, how it pertains to the levels of command and what it should accomplish.

Operational leadership provides the interface between national or alliance/coalition policy on one hand, and military strategy and tactics on the other. A qualitative feature of operational leadership is its ability to point out to the highest political leadership when certain military objectives cannot be accomplished with the forces available.<sup>15</sup>

Professor Vego goes on to explain that the elements of operational leadership are **personality, professional knowledge and operational thinking**. The focus of the leadership portion of this paper will be on personality and operational thinking as it pertains to General Schwarzkopf during the Gulf War. Operational thinking, which is the third leg of the operational leadership triad, is the ability of the operational commander to not get bogged down at the tactical level. It requires the operational commander to focus on broad military objectives that can range from the destruction of the enemy forces in the field to undermining public support for war or the enemy’s will to fight.<sup>16</sup> Essentially, it is the ability of the operational commander to look beyond the present and focus days and weeks ahead. The

decision by General Schwarzkopf to retain JFLCC responsibility caused the General to attempt to split his focus between the tactics of the ground war and the need to focus on broader military objectives. Ultimately, General Schwarzkopf was overburdened, and this significantly impacted his capacity for operational thinking.

The first leg of the operational leadership triad is personality. According to Professor Vego, personality consists of such things as: (1) The leader should educate and instruct his subordinates. (2) The operational commander must possess to the highest degree strength of character, high intellect, creativity and boldness. (3) Operational commanders should be men of strong character. (4) The operational commander should not be obstinate, for obstinacy is not an intellectual defect, but a fault of temperament because it comes from the reluctance to admit that one is wrong. (5) The operational commander must be a good judge of other people's character and abilities when choosing his subordinates. (6) An operational commander must have great personal integrity. (7) The operational commander should be both trustworthy and trusting. As a superior, trusting subordinates is required, allowing them as much freedom of action as possible and encouraging them to exercise initiative at their level. (8) Courage is another personality trait of a successful operational commander. (9) Closely related to courage, and essential for operational commanders is presence of mind. (10) Boldness is the acceptance of calculated risks; however, the boldest operational commander is powerless if his army does not have the same spirit. (11) Foresight is essential in a good operational commander. (12) Strong will is one of the operational commander's most important prerequisites for success. Clausewitz wrote that a strong will overcomes friction and breaks down obstacles, but sometimes it breaks down the machine also. Ultimately, Professor Vego states that a successful operational commander must know how to articulate his plans and orders. He should use clear, concise language in drafting his plan

and order.<sup>17</sup> It is easy to see that the personality aspect of operational leadership is closely tied to leadership traits and principles taught at the basic levels of recruit and officer training. In the Gulf War, the personality of the operational commander, General Schwarzkopf, played a significant role in how he fostered a relationship with his subordinate commanders and staff.

Leadership comes down to character, and as Professor Vego stated, “character is the bedrock on which the entire leadership rests.”<sup>18</sup> An analysis of General Schwarzkopf’s personality as it relates to Professor Vego’s construct reveals that General Schwarzkopf would receive high marks in many areas, but was severely lacking in areas such as being both trusting of his subordinates and trustworthy to them. His inability to trust his subordinates was partially the reason for not naming any of his subordinate Army Generals as the JFLCC.

What is not discussed in regards to leadership training, or in Professor Vego’s book, but was quite evident in General Schwarzkopf personality, were the characteristics of arrogance and anger. It should be noted that these characteristics are not considered leadership traits, but are critical characteristics that influence an individual’s leadership style and personality. Arrogance and anger are not necessarily bad characteristics if used appropriately; however, when they become the overriding characteristic of an individual’s personality they can become detrimental, and can undermine all the good leadership traits and principles an individual possesses. Arrogance and anger were both dominant characteristics in Schwarzkopf’s personality, and were significant factors that influenced, both directly and indirectly, the decisions he made that were crucial to the end-state of the war.

## **Arrogance and Leadership**

History identifies many great leaders who were arrogant. General George Patton and General Douglass MacArthur were known for being very pretentious. It was General Patton's arrogance and desire to "outshine" General Montgomery in the Sicily operation that prompted him to disobey orders from superiors for the simple purpose of beating General Montgomery's 8<sup>th</sup> Army to Messina. It was out of this desire to outdo Montgomery that Patton risked the entire 3<sup>rd</sup> Division under the command of Major General Lucian Truscott Jr. in an amphibious assault at Licata. The amphibious assault was costly, but highly successful, and ultimately allowed General Patton's army to beat General Montgomery's army to Messina. Shortly afterwards, and for a combination of reasons, General Patton was relieved of command, but clearly his arrogance played heavily in the decision. General Eisenhower was smart enough; however, to recognize that Patton's arrogance, which fueled his aggressive nature, had made a lasting impression on the Germans. He used Patton's reputation as a decoy, by setting General Patton up with a fictitious command during the Normandy invasion that would ultimately hold the German 15<sup>th</sup> Army of twelve divisions in place at Calais, and prevented them from defending against the cross channel amphibious assault. General MacArthur is another example of a great military leader who allowed his arrogance to get him in trouble with higher authority. His outspoken criticism of his superior's handling of the Korean War, and his obvious designs on political office after the war cost him his command during the Korean War. This paper does not contend that General Schwarzkopf's arrogance was comparable with that of Generals Patton or MacArthur; but arrogance did play a role in General Schwarzkopf's decision making process. General Schwarzkopf could easily have appointed General Waller to be the JFLCC, but he viewed himself as being both Eisenhower and Bradley during the Normandy invasion.<sup>19</sup> He

did not believe his subordinates were as capable as he was and he wanted to be the commander who took the U.S. forces to victory in the ground war against the RGFC. After all, Schwarzkopf made no bones about the fact that he had ambitious desires beyond being CINC, CENTCOM.

“If this thing turns out right, maybe I should reconsider my retirement plans. I’ve been thrust into the limelight—I could end up chief of staff of the Army!” Other people, most significantly Colin Powell, had told me I was a contender for the Army’s top job; suddenly it seemed like a real possibility.<sup>20</sup>

General Schwarzkopf’s arrogance did not go unnoticed by his superiors, but they did little to control it or use it in a beneficial manner. There was some concern by the Secretary of Defense, Dick Cheney, about Schwarzkopf’s fitness to command such a delicate and large coalition.

One incident in particular nagged at Cheney. In early August, at Bush’s behest, he had flown to Saudi Arabia to secure King Fahd’s approval for deployment of American forces. Schwarzkopf was aboard for the fifteen-hour flight. When the dozing passengers awoke at dawn, a line formed to use the bathroom. The queue inched forward and a major who finally worked his way to the front turned and said, “General?” The officer had been Schwarzkopf’s placeholder. About the same time, Cheney glanced down the aisle and saw a colonel on hands and knees ironing the CINC’s uniform blouse. The secretary of defense prided himself on his plebeian touch; pretensions offended and irritated him.<sup>21</sup>

Mr. Cheney was wary of General Schwarzkopf and questioned General Powell about his fitness to command such a large coalition.

### **Leadership by Intimidation**

The other aspect of General Schwarzkopf’s personality that will be examined is his anger. The overuse of anger by the operational commander can result in leadership by means of intimidation. Those who knew him and worked with him can only portray the use of anger by General Schwarzkopf as a common day occurrence. His overuse of this

characteristic led him to be a feared man by his staff and subordinate commanders. Mentioned, during the discussion on the JFLCC decision, was General Waller's recommendation that General Schwarzkopf retain JFLCC responsibility. As stated earlier, General Waller was concerned about the Marine Corps and Air Force perception of an Army JFLCC, but the other part of the reason why General Waller recommended that General Schwarzkopf retain JFLCC authority was because he saw himself being needed as a buffer between Schwarzkopf and his staff. General Waller could see himself performing a better function: shielding the staff from the CINC's fiery temper and injecting some esprit into CENTCOM headquarters, which since August had grown steadily more miserable. That, he believed, was his unspoken writ from Powell, who was well aware of how dispirited life had become in Riyadh.

And dispirited it was. The low morale shocked Waller, despite his experience in working with Schwarzkopf. He was astonished at the extent to which even senior generals were intimidated by the CINC. He came to think of Schwarzkopf as a volcano—at times nearly dormant but for a small hiss of steam, at other times erupting with molten rage.<sup>22</sup>

General Schwarzkopf had his staff in such fear of his frequent rages that they were afraid to wake him when he was sleeping, no matter how important the issue.

Lieutenant General Calvin Waller's first inkling of what he would find came in early November 1990, when he phoned Riyadh from Fort Lewis to talk to Schwarzkopf about Waller's new appointment as deputy CINC. After placing the call at 7:30 A.M. Saudi time, he encountered resistance from first one staff officer, then another. Schwarzkopf, they explained, had worked late the previous night and was still asleep. "Well, wake his ass up," Waller suggested. They refused. A few minutes later, Waller took a return call from the CINC's chief of staff, Major General Robert Johnston, who was courteous, solicitous, and firmly disinclined to rouse Schwarzkopf. "Sir," Johnston said, "we don't want to wake him up. That would be terrible."<sup>23</sup>

General Schwarzkopf's anger and rage and the resulting intimidation were not only evident amongst his staff, but his subordinate commanders also suffered from his tantrums and



constant fits of rage. His quick temper and inability to handle any news other than good news was detrimental to the desire of his tactical commanders to relay information about the tactical situation to him in Riyadh during the ground offensive. This was to impact significantly on the picture Schwarzkopf had of the situation with VII Corps and the RGFC and was instrumental in him not fully understanding the situation on the 3<sup>rd</sup> day of the ground war. As a result of not having a complete picture General Schwarzkopf concurred with President Bush's desire to end the ground war at 100 hours. Because of General Schwarzkopf's use of anger, there developed a lack of one of Professor Vego's personality characteristics; that of being trusting and trustworthy of subordinates.

Trust is...considered a key ingredient for the effective functioning of an organization. Trust facilitates interpersonal acceptance and openness of expression, whereas mistrust evokes interpersonal rejection and arouses defensive behavior...an increase in trust will increase the exchange of accurate, comprehensive, and timely information.<sup>24</sup>

In a study conducted by James Lussier and Terrill Saxon of the U.S. Army Research Institute, it was determined that trust repeatedly arises as one of the most important variables in information flow. Trust is defined by Lussier and Saxon as the confidence a person has in a leader's character, strength, ability and as a generalized expectancy about the trustworthiness of others.<sup>25</sup>

General Schwarzkopf can only blame himself for the situation he fostered with his subordinate commanders. He was indiscriminate as to upon whom he focused his anger, and seldom considered the consequences of his frequent fits of rage, and the impact it would have on his ability to communicate with his subordinates during the Ground War. Of particular importance was the relationship he needed to develop between himself and Generals Yeosock and Franks. His berating of General Yeosock resulted in the loss of credibility by a proud and accomplished military leader.

Lieutenant General John Yeosock, the senior Army commander, was so frequently berated that he seemed reluctant to leave his headquarters outside Riyadh for the daily CENTCOM meetings. Again, the public upbraiding of a senior officer—considered bad form—bred contempt amongst subordinates, who privately and unfairly referred to Yeosock as General Halftrack, the confused, aging commander in the cartoon strip “Beetle Bailey.”<sup>26</sup>

Even worse than his relationship with General Yeosock was the relationship that he developed with General Franks, the man who was tasked with the most important mission in the ground war, that of destroying the RGFC. General Schwarzkopf had doubts about Franks’ ability to command from their first meeting on 14 November. In the aftermath of the war, Schwarzkopf recalls that Franks was timid and did not seem aggressive enough for the mission he was assigned and the manner in which General Schwarzkopf expected him to execute. From that meeting, he recalled that Franks expressed doubt about the ability of the VII Corps to accomplish its assigned mission with the number of forces assigned. General Schwarzkopf said that Franks was asking for reserve forces to be assigned to his command.<sup>27</sup> After the war, General Franks was questioned about that particular meeting, but he did not have the same recollection as General Schwarzkopf.

In fact, Franks was profoundly enthusiastic about the CINC’s concept, and he was absolutely certain that when it came to a fight, his troops would win. After General Schwarzkopf finished speaking, he invited the others up front to look more closely at the maps and the intelligence photos of the minefields and barrier systems, and the like. While Franks was up there, examining them, the CINC approached him and asked, “Hey, Fred, what do you think?” And Franks answered, in a calm, confident, forceful, but professional voice, “We can do this. We’ll make it happen.”<sup>28</sup>

The effect that General Schwarzkopf’s anger had on his staff and subordinate commanders was not lost on non-American members of the coalition. General Sir Peter de la Billiere of the British Army made note of the effect that Schwarzkopf’s temper had on his staff and subordinates. General de la Billiere said of Schwarzkopf:

“Like everyone else, he had failings, among them the quick temper which gave him the nickname, Stormin’ Norman. He could certainly flare up—or, as his staff described it, ‘go ballistic’—and when he did so, he became very frightening. His immediate staff respected him—as everyone did—but they were also frightened of him, and reluctant to take decisions unless he backed them, with the result that he lost some input from them.”<sup>29</sup>

The examples of General Schwarzkopf’s use of anger and the debilitating affect that it had on his staff and his relationship with his subordinate commanders is almost endless. Suffice it to say that General Schwarzkopf’s personality, as it relates to operational leadership, was greatly affected by his use of anger, and that anger drove a wedge between him, his staff and his commanders.

In the end, the ground war went exceedingly well and the concern by the political leaders was, that by allowing the ground war to proceed, particularly in light of the manner it was being reported on CNN, that it would appear that the U.S. was being ruthless and killing the Iraqi Army that had become defenseless. It was out of this concern, that President Bush sought a recommendation on when to end the ground war. When the idea of ending the ground war at 100 hours was presented to General Schwarzkopf, he did not have an accurate picture of the tactical situation that existed between General Franks’ VII Corps and the RGFC. The information flow was slow and General Franks was not anxious to provide frequent updates on the situation. His attack on the RGFC was proceeding slower than General Schwarzkopf wanted and he was hesitant to provide news that would needlessly send General Schwarzkopf into a tirade that would be directed at him. As a result, General Schwarzkopf was unable to give an accurate portrayal of how the battle was proceeding. General Schwarzkopf knew the gate had been closed, but did not know that the hammer General Franks had in store for the RGFC had yet to fall. General Schwarzkopf could not provide an informed recommendation to General Powell and was reluctant to ask for

additional time to access the situation. Ultimately, General Schwarzkopf acquiesced to the political pressures to end the ground war. When the decision to cease ground operations was made, the tactical commanders were flabbergasted as to the reason for stopping the attack when they were so close to the destruction of the RGFC. The war ended and General Franks had not even been asked if the VII Corps had accomplished all their objectives. Of particular note was General Wall's reaction to the early end to the ground war.

“You have got to be shitting me. Why a cease-fire now?” Waller asked.  
“One hundred hours has a nice ring,” replied Schwarzkopf. “That’s bullshit,” Waller exclaimed. “Then you go argue with them,” replied Schwarzkopf.<sup>30</sup>

Perhaps, had General Schwarzkopf appointed Waller as the JFLCC, General Waller's opinion would have carried more weight, for he would have been completely focused on the movement of his Corps and the synchronization of the battle. He would have been in close contact with his Corps commanders and would have been able to recommend that the ground war continue. In the aftermath of the war, General Schwarzkopf admitted that the information he received was incomplete and that being located in his command bunker in Riyadh prevented him from having a clear operational picture of the situation on the ground. As a result of his decision not to appoint a JFLCC and his operational leadership flaws, the opportunity to destroy the RGFC and accomplish the key operational objective and ultimately destroy the Iraqi operational center of gravity was lost.

### **Lessons Learned**

The Gulf War, like many wars and operations conducted over history, is filled with lessons to be learned. The purpose of this paper was to point out the importance of the failure by the Operational Commander not to appoint a JFLCC and how arrogance played a role in that decision. Retaining JFLCC responsibilities was overwhelming and with his

volatile personality, and the resulting relationship with his subordinates, General Schwarzkopf was ineffective in fulfilling the role of JFLCC himself. Appointing General Waller as the JFLCC would have allowed General Schwarzkopf to concentrate at the operational level and not have to spread his focus too thin. This would have given General Schwarzkopf a single person to turn to for information about the situation on the ground and would have provided more accurate and timely information. General Waller was not the type of commander who would have berated his subordinates publicly. He was not prone to outbursts of rage and he would have certainly developed a relationship that was based upon trusting subordinates and being trustworthy to them.

Sun Tzu prizes steadiness, resolution, stability, patience, and calmness, which enable a general faced with the chaos and adversity of war to make rational, calculated decisions. No less than Sun Tzu, Clausewitz admires self-control as well as steadfastness or strength of mind which he sees as: the ability to keep one's head at times when exceptional stress and violent emotion...Strength of character does not consist solely in having powerful feelings, but in maintaining one's balance in spite of them.<sup>31</sup>

## Appendix A

# Marine Corps Leadership Principles and Traits

### Marine Corps Leadership Principles

- Know yourself and seek self-improvement.
- Be technically and tactically proficient.
- Develop a sense of responsibility among your subordinates.
- Make sound and timely decisions.
- Set the example.
- Know your Marines and look out for their welfare.
- Keep your Marines informed.
- Seek responsibility and take responsibility for your actions.
- Ensure assigned tasks are understood, supervised, and accomplished.
- Train your Marines as a team.
- Employ your command in accordance with its capabilities.

### Marine Corps Leadership Traits

- **Dependability**  
The certainty of proper performance of duty.
- **Bearing**  
Creating a favorable impression in carriage, appearance and personal conduct at all times.

- **Courage**  
The mental quality that recognizes fear of danger or criticism, but enables a man to proceed in the face of it with calmness and firmness.
- **Decisiveness**  
Ability to make decisions promptly and to announce them in clear, forceful manner.
- **Endurance**  
The mental and physical stamina measured by the ability to withstand pain, fatigue, stress and hardship.
- **Enthusiasm**  
The display of sincere interest and exuberance in the performance of duty.
- **Initiative**  
Taking action in the absence of orders.
- **Integrity**  
Uprightness of character and soundness of moral principles; includes the qualities of truthfulness and honesty.
- **Judgment**  
The ability to weigh facts and possible solutions on which to base sound decisions.
- **Justice**  
Giving reward and punishment according to merits of the case in question. The ability to administer a system of rewards and punishments impartially and consistently.
- **Knowledge**  
Understanding of a science or an art. The range of one's information, including professional knowledge and an understanding of your Marines.
- **Tact**  
The ability to deal with others without creating offense.
- **Unselfishness**  
Avoidance of providing for one's own comfort and personal advancement at the expense of others.
- **Loyalty**  
The quality of faithfulness to country, the Corps, the unit, to one's seniors, subordinates and peers.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> Michael R. Gordon and Bernard E. Trainor, The General's War: The Inside Story of the Conflict in the Gulf (Toronto: Little, Brown and Company, 1995), 429.

<sup>2</sup> Douglas W. Craft, "An Operational Analysis of the Persian Gulf War," (Unpublished Research Paper, U.S. Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, PA: 1992), 32.

<sup>3</sup> General H. Norman Schwarzkopf and Peter Petre, The Autobiography: It Doesn't Take a Hero (New York: Linda Grey Bantam Books, 1992), 381-382.

<sup>4</sup> Rick Atkinson, Crusade: The Untold Story of the Gulf War (New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1993), 60.

<sup>5</sup> Joint Chiefs of Staff, Unified Action Armed Forces (UNAAF), Joint Pub 0-2 (Washington DC: 24 February 1995), I-7.

<sup>6</sup> Schwarzkopf, 312-313.

<sup>7</sup> Damian J. McCarthy and Susan A. Medlin, "Two Hats for the Joint Force Commander?," Joint Force Quarterly, (Summer 2000): 92.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid, 92.

<sup>9</sup> Schwarzkopf, 363.

<sup>10</sup> Atkinson, 67-68.

<sup>11</sup> Brig. Gen. Robert H. Scales Jr., Certain Victory: The U.S. Army in the Gulf War (Washington: Brassey's, 1994), 140-141.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid, 140.

<sup>13</sup> McCarthy, 93; Scales, 141.

<sup>14</sup> Appendix A provides a detailed list of the Marine Corps' 11 leadership principles and 14 leadership traits.

<sup>15</sup> Milan N. Vego, Operational Warfare (Newport: U.S. Naval War College, 2000), 561.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid, 568.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid, 561-566.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid, 562.

<sup>19</sup> Atkinson, 67.

<sup>20</sup> Schwarzkopf, 316.

<sup>21</sup> Atkinson, 94-95.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid, 68.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid, 67.



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- <sup>24</sup> D. Zand, "Trust and Managerial Problem Solving." Administrative Science Quarterly 17.2 (1972): 232.
- <sup>25</sup> James W. Lussier and Terrill F. Saxon, Critical Factors in the Art of Battle Command (Fort Leavenworth: U.S. Army Research Institute, 1994), 24.
- <sup>26</sup> Atkinson, 69.
- <sup>27</sup> Schwarzkopf, 383.
- <sup>28</sup> Tom Clancy and General Fred Franks, Into the Storm: A Study in Command (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1997), 194-195.
- <sup>29</sup> General Sir Peter de la Billiere, Storm Command: A Personal Account of the Gulf War (Dubai: Motivated Publishing, 1992), 40.
- <sup>30</sup> Gordon, 423.
- <sup>31</sup> Michael I. Handel, Masters of War: Classical Strategic Thought, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (London: Frank Cass & Co., 1996), 161-162.

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