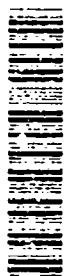
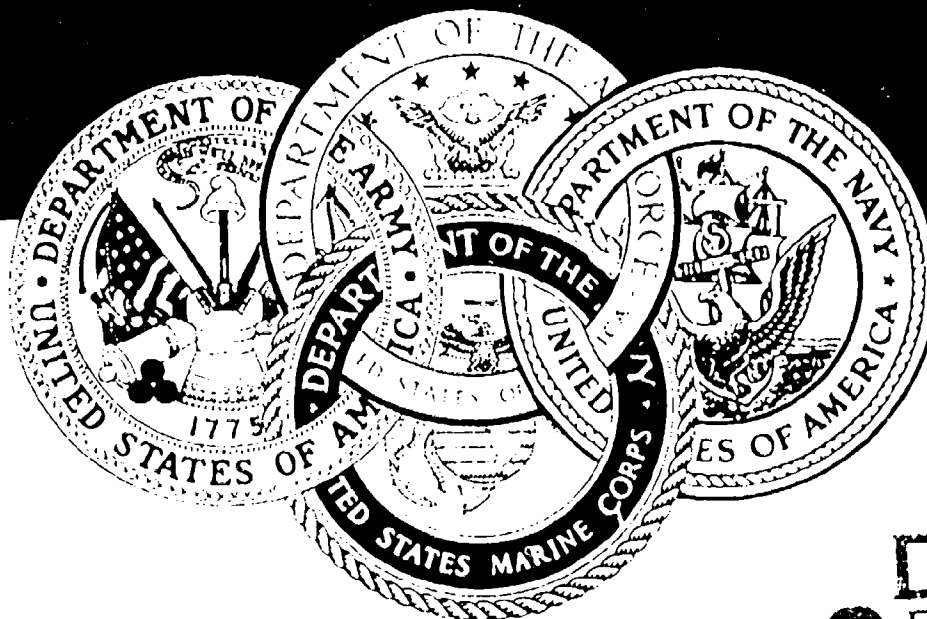


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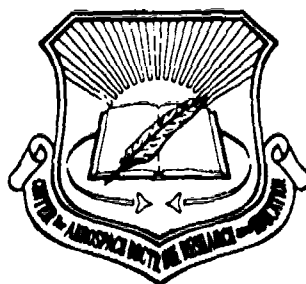
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Special Operations

Joint Training

by

THIERY G. CURTIS, Lt Col, USAF
Research Fellow
Airpower Research Institute

**Produced in Association
with
Air War College
Military Airlift Command**

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Foreword

The American public depends on its military leaders to maximize the effectiveness of US military forces. With current and projected fiscal constraints and the resulting manpower cuts levied by Congress, the military services will no longer be able to operate unilaterally and will depend increasingly on joint operational capabilities. Although jointness is required in all unified commands, joint operations are an even more significant factor for the newest, the United States Special Operations Command (USSOCOM), at MacDill Air Force Base (AFB), Florida. The high level of dependence each USSOCOM service component has on the others makes it paramount that the components concentrate on the interoperability of their forces to achieve maximum effectiveness. Such effectiveness will never be achieved unless the components learn to operate jointly, especially in the environment of the 1990s. The end of the cold war has spawned a multipolar world with diverse interests, new players, and varying threats. Many of these threats fall at the lower end of the conflict spectrum, and USSOCOM's joint special operations capabilities for that end of the spectrum may hold the key to future US national security.

Lt Col Thiery G. Curtis has in this research project attempted to determine the effectiveness of USSOCOM's joint training program in readying special operations forces for contingency operations at the lower end of the operational continuum. He has determined that current methods of joint training do not provide the mission-ready force needed. Colonel Curtis identifies some of the problem areas in the present training program and provides suggestions for improvement.

About the Author



Lt Col Thierry G. Curtis

Lt Col Thierry G. Curtis was the Military Airlift Command's (MAC) research fellow at the Airpower Research Institute (ARI), Air University Center for Aerospace Doctrine, Research, and Education (AUCADRE), Maxwell AFB, Alabama, in 1990-91. He is a command pilot with 19 years of operations and joint staff experience. He has accumulated more than 3,000 hours in the T-37, T-38, and HC-130.

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Acknowledgments

This paper draws extensively from published and unpublished sources as well as from the personal experiences of the many special operators who took the time to help this operator turned author. I am indebted to several organizations and individuals for their outstanding support.

Thanks are due to MAC for giving me the opportunity to conduct this research and for the support I received from the MAC staff in developing portions of my paper. I would also like to thank the members of the Training Division and Mission Analysis Division at the USSOCOM for the many hours they devoted to helping me and for putting up with my research efforts. Without their help, this paper would not have been possible. There were also many individuals at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, and Hurlburt Field, Florida, who took time out of their busy schedules to help me through this effort. For lack of space, I cannot list the many who made this paper possible, but let me say a heartfelt thanks to all of you. I also want to thank the men and women of CADRE whose administrative and editorial support allowed the timely completion of this work.

Among the individuals I owe special thanks are my reading group and my family. My reading group chairman, Jerry Klingaman, and editor, John Jordan, were a class act that was the envy of all the research fellows. They were able to provide just the right amount of support, criticism, and recommendations to help this novice writer through the year. It is impossible to adequately express my thanks to my wife and family for the unquestioning support they gave me during this year of late hours and working weekends. Without their support I would not have made it through this challenge.

As evidenced by these acknowledgments, this paper was not a one-man show. To those I have mentioned and to those I may have overlooked—Thanks!

Introduction

Everyone has the will to win, but the problem is that not everyone has the will to prepare to win.

—Bobby Knight, US Olympic Coach

The purpose of this paper is to analyze and assess United States Special Operations Command's joint training program, to see how far such training has come since the command's activation, and to determine what remains to be done to meet the challenges of the future. It also presents recommendations to improve joint training of USSOCOM forces.

Premises and Limitations

The basic premise of this paper—that there is a need for more effective joint training and interoperability¹ between USSOCOM components—is widely believed within the special operations forces (SOF) community. Research for this paper found almost total agreement within the SOF community on the need for more effective joint training of components.² Interviews with special operators revealed the common opinion that more “jointness” is required at all levels of USSOCOM if it is to take full advantage of the capabilities of each service. This perception is the motivation for this paper.

The reader may think it odd that the author chose to devote a year's research to a perception widely held and whose correction appears fairly obvious. After all, if USSOCOM personnel are in general agreement that more and better joint training is required, surely the command could supply the required “fix” without prodding from the author. A number of factors underlie the author's pursuit of the obvious.

First, and perhaps most important, the obvious is not always the whole story. In fact, one of the obstacles the author faced was a lack of documented evidence that better joint training is needed. Everyone has “war stories” to tell, many historical examples are replete with joint failures, and everybody knows that jointness is being stressed at the highest levels of the military. But exactly what does all of the above translate to when applied to training in SOF units? *Who* needs to do *what* with *whom* and *how*? War stories are great, history is interesting, and “fixing what's broke” at the bar is a lot of fun, but none yield many specific answers. Thus the author developed what he fondly hopes is a plausible SOF scenario for two purposes: to identify types of joint training needed and to demonstrate the lack of such train-

ing. When USSOCOM respondents to a survey on the scenario generally agreed that the scenario was plausible, identified types of joint tasks required, and asserted that they did not have a requirement for joint training in these tasks, the author had something more than a general and rather abstract perception to work with.

Having established that there was truth in the obvious, the next question became how to fix the problem, and the answer was again obvious—provide joint training—but the obvious got murky in a hurry when translated to specifics. If there is to be joint training, there must be recognized “right” ways for doing things, and the right way is usually the service way. If Army aviation assets must operate with Air Force assets, the right way is the Army way if one is part of an Army aircrew. The right way is the Air Force way if one wears a blue suit. Unless, of course, the blue or green suiters are part of the SOF community, in which case, there may well be two more right ways. The author can do little more than note that such biases are alive and well, hope that required joint training will surface such differences before they wreck operations, and recommend that the command reconcile them in training. In fact, such differences and the need to accommodate, reconcile, or modify them are heavy arguments for increased joint training.

The reader should note that USSOCOM is working on the problem. The command has made great strides, and SOF are far better prepared than they were 10 years ago to deal with operations across the operational continuum. USSOCOM has organized an effective SOF command structure with Army, Air Force, and Navy components and has set up a budgetary system to provide the unique state-of-the-art equipment required by SOF. But has it concentrated enough on the joint training of special forces? Organizational and budgetary improvements are important, but in the author's opinion, these efforts will not sufficiently prepare SOF for future operations³ without improved joint training and education⁴ of the component forces.

The nature of special operations requires that the three service components of USSOCOM train jointly during peacetime if they are to accomplish military missions across the operational continuum. SOF joint training for contingencies at all levels of conflict are of concern, but this analysis stresses the low-intensity regime for reasons of space, time, and operational significance. SOF low-intensity conflict (LIC) operational requirements are not necessarily more important than nor different from those at the higher levels of conflict, but this realm is illustrative of SOF joint training across the continuum. Likewise, this paper does not dismiss the importance of the SOF-conventional force interface, but it does emphasize the importance of USSOCOM components being able to work jointly and internally before they work with conventional forces. Additionally, the probabilities for traditional warfare seem somewhat remote while conflicts at the lower end of the continuum are continuous and provide the most likely cause of US military action. Thus they require ready and well-trained forces.

The author must also acknowledge that there are different levels of training and readiness in the SOF community. The forces come from the same core—Army Rangers, Special Forces, psychological operations, civil affairs, and aviation assets;

Navy Sea-Air-Land (SEAL) forces; and Air Force aviation assets—but it is a fact that some elements are more highly trained than others. Since the more highly trained forces are the minority and much of their training is classified, this paper focuses on the differently trained majority. This majority constitutes much of a theater commander in chief's forces that face a strong likelihood of being employed in the full spectrum of special operations missions. This focus allows the writing of an unclassified document to reach that broader group.

The second major premise of this paper is that forces should train the way they will fight, and the principle assertion is that training for SOF should be geared to the assumption that minimum rehearsal time will be available for future contingency operations. The challenge for USSOCOM is to prepare SOF now for the way they will have to fight in tomorrow's environment, and that way will be jointly with minimum rehearsal time.

Methodology

Chapter 1 describes the environment in which special operations forces will operate during the next decade. It also establishes the need for a mission-ready joint SOF capability by reviewing SOF operations across the operational continuum and by identifying the most complex and most politically and time-sensitive missions SOF may be tasked to perform. The chapter then assesses regional instability in the lesser-developed world and identifies US interests within those regions. The combination of instability and US interests makes these regions likely candidates for use of the SOF capability. Lastly, the arms threat in those regions is reviewed.

With the need for a mission-ready joint force clearly demonstrated, chapter 2 provides the foundation for a joint training requirement by identifying the need for jointness in SOF and by discussing lessons learned in past SOF operations. The chapter looks at the importance of jointness in the SOF community and the need for effective joint training if SOF are to operate in the third-world environment described in chapter 1. It also addresses what is "special" about SOF and how that "specialness" makes joint training even more important. The chapter then reviews the joint training lessons of past contingencies (the Son Tay raid, the SS *Mayaguez* incident, the Iranian hostage rescue attempt, and Urgent Fury) to see how joint training, or its lack, affected each operation. This review also sets the stage for explaining Department of Defense (DOD) and congressional actions in establishing a separate unified command for special operations forces.

Chapter 3 briefly reviews DOD and congressional efforts in the 1980s to improve the effectiveness of special operations forces. These efforts ultimately led to the establishment of the USSOCOM. The chapter then highlights the authority and responsibility given to the commander in chief of USSOCOM (USCINCSOC) in

establishing a joint training program to prevent the problems identified in chapter 2 from recurring.

To see where USSOCOM is today with its joint training program, chapter 4 analyzes a plausible scenario for the 1990s involving SOF in a direct-action contingency operation. The discussion identifies joint critical nodes in the scenario where two or more services must operate jointly. It also identifies specific joint critical tasks required at each node. These tasks are then compared to current training requirements for special operations forces. The comparison should highlight possible problem areas in joint training.

Chapter 5 makes recommendations for improvement of joint training and education of special operations forces. It begins with recommendations for improving joint training at the unit level. Because the units cannot implement the recommendations without support from higher levels, one chapter also provides suggestions for enabling actions at the component and command levels.

Notes

1. Interoperability can be defined as the ability of two or more units to conduct effective and successful joint missions through the effort of like training methods or joint training programs.
2. The author's interviews with individuals at all levels of USSOCOM, Air Force Special Operations Command (AFSOC), and US Army Special Operations Command (USASOC) reflected a common need for more effective joint training within SOF. The solutions offered were diverse.
3. Dr Sam C. Sarkesian, "Low-Intensity Conflict: Concepts, Principles, and Policy Guidelines," in *Low-Intensity Conflict and Modern Technology*, ed. Lt Col David J. Dean (Maxwell AFB, Ala.: Air University Press, June 1986), 23.
4. Since training and education are so closely associated and require the same priority, the terms are, for the most part, used interchangeably in this paper.

Chapter 1

Special Operations Environment

Barring the unlikely event of world peace, the occurrence of low-intensity conflict will unfortunately be far more prevalent in 2010 than it is today.

—Rod Paschall
Former Delta Force commander

Shifting relations between the United States and the Soviet Union are changing the nature of the most likely military operations in the next decade. The once bipolar world is evolving into new groupings of regional states with nationalistic tendencies reflecting ethnic, political, and religious differences. Instability in these groupings is increasing the potential for conflict in the third world.^{1, 2}

Four assumptions affecting use of US forces in the near future can be made. First, the Soviet Union will continue to exploit opportunities resulting from instability in the third world. Second, with the end of the cold war and current fiscal constraints on the superpowers, the probability of a direct East-West confrontation is low. Third, US and Soviet fiscal constraints; emerging nationalism and an increasing struggle for religious, economic, and political self-determination in lesser-developed regions; and other factors will cause at least a relative decline in superpower influence in the third world. Fourth, the perceived decrease in East-West influence will result in increased boldness on the part of third-world nations.³ Iraq's invasion of Kuwait is an example of this new boldness.

If these assumptions are correct, then, as stated by William Taylor, a member of the Center for Strategic International Studies, "the US should expand its specially trained, specifically tailored light forces."⁴ Although Taylor's prescription was for the 1980s, it holds true for the 1990s. The problem is that as a result of fiscal constraints and the requirement to do more with less, the United States must expand the capabilities of its specifically tailored forces, including special operations forces (SOF), through effective joint training, not by simply increasing force size.

This chapter uses the operational continuum as a means to discuss where joint special operations (SO) are most likely to occur in the coming decade and to determine which operations are most likely to be performed. The discussion focuses on the low-intensity conflict (LIC) region of the operational continuum, discusses the instabilities of the third-world environment, and tries

to identify regions where instability is likely to be greatest. The chapter then looks at the military threat posed by third-world countries. The result of these discussions should be to establish the need for a joint SOF capability to deal with third-world conflicts

Operational Continuum

The operational continuum, or spectrum of conflict as it is referred to in some writings, has been the subject of much discussion in the last decade, and the term probably has been overused. Nevertheless, the author presents his version of the continuum in figure 1 because it offers a tool for defining the roles, missions, and capabilities of SOF in different types of conflict. Moreover, the continuum rather clearly depicts the sorts of conflict SOF face and the relationship between conflicts.

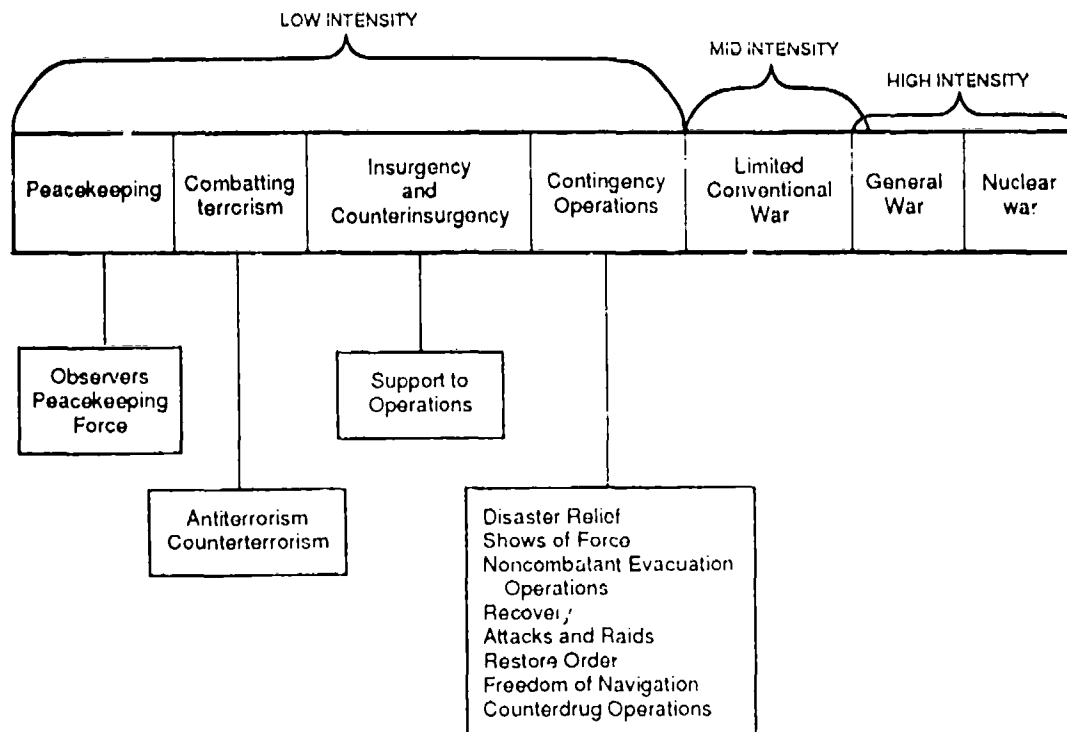


Figure 1. Operational Continuum

High Intensity

The high-intensity end of the continuum contains general war; that is, armed conflict between two major powers characterized by the use of weapons

of mass destruction (e.g., World War II).⁵ General war usually employs total military capability and threatens survival of the involved countries.⁶

The SOF role in warfare at the high-intensity level is to conduct coordinated operations with conventional forces. Since special operations forces have unique capabilities, they normally operate in small formations and are best suited for limited-duration operations. They should not be substituted for larger, more heavily armed forces. Instead, they should be selected for operations in which their capabilities act as force multipliers for conventional forces. Such usage is impossible without the ability to coordinate their operations with conventional operations. This ability can be achieved only by extensive training with the supported forces. Such training, of course, must be joint given the requirement for integrated-service operations in high-intensity conflict and the joint nature of SOF themselves.

In general war, SOF would complement conventional forces by carrying out operations behind enemy lines as well as by protecting rear areas. Missions behind enemy lines would be the most difficult, would tend to be strategic, and would be high risk. The tasking level would generally be the theater commander in chief or the national command authorities (NCA). As an example, a SOF operation could involve infiltration and exfiltration of an Army Special Forces team by an MC-130 Combat Talon to destroy targets of economic or military significance (railroad yards, command and control centers, etc.) or to conduct reconnaissance for conventional forces.⁷ Although these types of missions might not have an immediate impact on the battle itself, they would certainly affect the movement of enemy follow-on forces. SOF operations also could be conducted to produce immediate effect in the tactical arena. Special operations forces could attack critical choke points and forward command and control centers, or they could be used to counter enemy special forces in friendly rear areas.⁸ Any and all of these types of SOF operations would have to be accomplished jointly with conventional forces.

Mid Intensity

The mid-intensity region of the continuum is generally considered to contain conflicts short of general war characterized by constrained means and ends.⁹ Such conflicts are called limited war and involve sustained combat between regular forces, whether or not there has been a formal declaration of war. Examples of limited war are the conflicts in Korea and Vietnam. In both cases, US usage of conventional forces and SOF was limited by political constraints.

Beyond the constraints on operations, SO activities in the mid-intensity region are much like those in high-intensity conflict. Joint SOF-conventional force operations at the mid- and high-intensity levels require continued exercise to ensure that conventional force commanders fully understand the capabilities of SOF and that the forces can operate jointly. (This requirement was highlighted during Operation Desert Storm.)

Low Intensity

The LIC end of the continuum contains the highest potential for conflict and for use of special operations forces. This area is of primary concern to this paper. Special operations forces have an important role in low-intensity conflict. In fact, LIC is sometimes considered the sole purview of special operations. Low-intensity conflict is defined in the fiscal year 1991 US Army Posture Statement as "a politico-military confrontation between states or groups . . . usually [involving] a protracted struggle between principles or ideologies." The posture statement adds that LIC can range from nation-building operations to the limited use of armed force as well as the political and economic instruments of power. Generally, the military instrument has the less dominant role, but when used, it must be used effectively and many times clandestinely.¹⁰

As shown in figure 1, LIC operations are grouped in four operations categories: peacekeeping, combating terrorism, insurgency and counterinsurgency, and contingency operations.¹¹ Historically, contingency operations have been the most politicized of these categories. They also require the most effective joint action to be successful. As examples, the Son Tay raid and the attempted Iranian hostage rescue operation were carried out halfway around the world and required significant, coordinated multiservice efforts. The results of both these missions had significant political repercussions for US administrations. In short, contingency operations tend to be the most difficult and most significant category, and they require a high degree of joint effort.

The reader should note a point of potential confusion in the terminology. Some authorities use the term *contingency* to mean any foreseeable military incident. In that usage, contingency operations can occur at any level of conflict, but this paper only addresses those contingencies categorized under low-intensity conflict. In this sense, contingency operations are further defined in Joint Test Pub 3-07, *Doctrine for Joint Operations in Low Intensity Conflict*, as disaster relief, shows of force, noncombatant evacuation operations, recoveries, freedom of navigation and protection of shipping, operations to restore order, counterdrug operations, and attacks and raids.¹² This paper's analysis concentrates on attacks and raids for the same reasons it restricts itself to contingency operations in LIC. All the roles are politically sensitive and require joint operations to some degree, but attacks and raids are the most difficult, most significant, and most politicized. Moreover, they require a high degree of jointness.

Attacks and raids are defined in Joint Test Pub 3-07 as "small-scale operations involving swift penetration of hostile territory to secure information, temporarily seize an objective, or destroy a target, followed by a rapid, preplanned withdrawal." This type of mission is analogous to the direct-action mission described in Joint Test Pub 3-05, *Doctrine for Joint Special*

Operations, as a short-duration strike or small-scale offensive taken by special forces in the form of a raid or a direct assault.¹³ Since attacks and raids and direct-action missions are so similar, the terms are used interchangeably in the rest of this paper.

For more than two decades, conflicts short of conventional war have threatened US interests and are the most probable arena for US application of military force in the foreseeable future. Authorities reckon that in the nineteenth century 65 percent of all conflicts were LICs. In the 1970s the figure rose to 80 percent, with a rise to 90 percent in the 1980s. There is little reason to believe that these statistics will decrease significantly.¹⁴ The increased likelihood of LICs is also reflected in the increase in third-world conflicts since 1945. Between 1945 and 1977, there were 56 documented conflicts between third-world states, while in 1983 alone, 40 to 50 of these nations were at war.¹⁵ The United States has come to appreciate the need to combat this threat. Current US policy is to have the capability to apply military power in indirect as well as direct ways, and many authorities believe indirect application of power is more cost-effective and appropriate.

Although the overall goal of the Department of Defense (DOD) is to improve both conventional and special operations capabilities to deal with the low-intensity conflict threat, SOF's special skills and low visibility provide a cost-effective military response to situations that require a focused use of armed force. Thus SOF are usually the force of choice in such circumstances. Special operations forces are likely to form the nucleus of any future LIC operation,¹⁶ even though conventional forces are sometimes used to help prosecute missions in this environment. Special operations forces must be planned for, organized, and trained in such a manner that they will be effective in the LIC environment.

The contingencies of the next decade will more than likely require the United States to deploy small groups of forces to counter possible attacks on US personnel, US military installations, nuclear power plants, scientific laboratories, or other critical assets. Or the purpose could be hostage rescue, antiterrorism, or small military incursions to seize or capture assets.¹⁷ These operations will be tied to limited politico-military goals and usually will be limited in duration. The need for larger conventional force operations, as in *Urgent Fury* and *Just Cause*, seems less likely. The increased probability for use of small forces coupled with forecasted fiscal constraints requires a highly integrated joint force that can work together in the third-world environment while taking advantage of other-service capabilities. Such integration can only be achieved through effective joint training of special forces.¹⁸

Special operations doctrine states that, "SOF should train and exercise under conditions resembling the operational environment in which they tend to operate."¹⁹ Thus a review of the characteristics of the third world is impor-

tant. Such a review is not central to the argument for joint training, but it illustrates the political, cultural, and military environment in which special operations are most likely to occur.

The Third World

At this writing turmoil in the third world is growing with more than 40 insurgencies now occurring around the world, including those in El Salvador and the Philippines.²⁰ Protecting US interests in the face of third-world threats requires highly trained military elements capable of operating in the low-intensity conflict regime.

General Characteristics

The number of nation-states has increased. (There were 51 members in the original United Nations compared to 159 by 1985.) Most of the new countries can be characterized as third world and were created as a result of the breakup of the British, Spanish, Dutch, and Portuguese empires. The third world now comprises five-sixths of United Nations membership.²¹

Third-world nations have been able to exert more power than their economies and populations would seem to support through individual alliances with major powers, by aligning themselves in regional groups, and by, in some cases, presenting a solid third-world front. Thus they have had great influence on the policies of the United Nations.

As noted earlier, there are many causes for instability in the third world. A major and ironical factor is the lessening of superpower tensions. During the cold-war era, regional crises often affected US and Soviet interests, and both countries went to great lengths to restrain lesser-developed countries from rash behavior. This restraint was an unwritten rule of the international game that helped keep superpower competition from getting out of hand. The end of the cold war has meant less superpower interference, which also means loss of some degree of control over the third world. Decline of US-Soviet interference serves as a stimulus in the third world for taking risks that would have been avoided in the past. Iraq is only one of the first to take advantage of this "power vacuum." The 1990s are likely to see this trend continue as more third-world countries seek to expand or otherwise take advantage of less militarily capable neighbors.²²

Another factor in third-world instability is the nature of the governments themselves. In many of these countries, governmental failure to modernize effectively and to reduce the large gulf between the "haves" and the "have-nots" coupled with an inability or refusal to meet other needs of their people causes unrest.²³ Moreover, some third-world turmoil is caused by expansionism, driven by religious and ethnic ideologies that support revolution.

Such urges reduce the affected nation and its neighbors to a perpetual state of instability. An example is Iran under the control of the Ayatollah Khomeini. Even though he exercised strong control over the population, Iran was fertile ground for internal unrest, and the government's revolutionary and Islamic fundamentalistic ideology rocked the region.

Additional problems that cause instability are lack of food, high population growth rates, and poor economies. Insofar as food production is concerned, the projection is that world food production will increase 90 percent from the 1970 level by the year 2000. The problem is that this increase will occur in countries already having large food-production capacity while the hungry regions of South Asia, the Middle East, and Africa will produce little growth or will actually post a decline. Populations in the African sub-Sahara and in the Asian Himalayas have already exceeded the agricultural capacity of their lands.²⁴ By the year 2000, the price of food is expected to double in real terms. Additionally, the amount of arable land for growing that food will only increase by 4 percent, while the water required to grow crops will become increasingly difficult to obtain. As a result of the expected population level in the year 2000, the water requirement for half the world will double.²⁵ Water shortages will make increasing the agricultural output of the third world even more difficult.

The *Global 2000* report states that in the last quarter of the twentieth century world population will increase by 50 percent, and most of that growth will be in the lesser-developed countries least able to accommodate it.²⁶ The world's population is expected to grow from 4 billion in 1975 to 6.35 billion in the year 2000. The nations making up the first world will contain 13 percent of the population, while the third world will comprise 80 percent.²⁷ In the year 2000, population will continue to grow at a rate of 100 million per year, with 90 percent of that growth in third-world countries.²⁸ As a specific example, Africa's population is expected to double in 24 years to 1.4 billion.

This increase in population is the result of many factors, but one of the most important is that the present third-world population largely consists of people in their child-bearing years; thus, there is built-in momentum for growth. The internal pressures that develop in a nation that cannot provide food and services to an ever-increasing population are a prescription for political instability and inhibit the formation of capital needed to build a better economy.²⁹

The economic gap between the "haves" and the "have-nots" has grown markedly since World War II and is projected to widen even further by the year 2000.³⁰ The average annual income for each person in the third world was less than \$790 in 1982, while in the first and second worlds average income was \$9,500 (12 times greater).³¹ The differential continues to climb largely as a result of rapid population growth in developing countries. Although forecasters expect third-world economies to grow faster than those of

the first and second worlds, the growth will not be enough to overcome the population pressure. Moreover, economic growth will not be even. It will occur mostly in Latin America, with Africa and Asia actually showing a decline.³²

The factors just discussed will increase poverty and hunger. These conditions are ideal motivators for rebellion and insurgencies, but there are also other less-tangible factors adding to instability. A large gulf exists between the rich and the poor within the third world, and this uneven distribution of wealth goes hand in hand with an uneven distribution of power. Third-world countries are frequently dictatorships. Such monopoly of power often occurs in a "dual-track" economy in which a modern developing sector works alongside a neglected rural sector. Such contrasts yield tremendous societal pressures.

Many third-world countries are succumbing to massive debt loads (e.g., many Latin American countries) that create high inflation and a deepening dependence on the economic largess of first- and second-world nations. The already heavy influence of first-world corporations and financial institutions is not happily accepted by third-world leaders. Many of these leaders believe that the rules governing the international system are stacked to prevent their countries from matching the levels of wealth attained by the first world. The perception is the rich get richer and the poor get poorer.³³

Economically, the third world is becoming more closely linked to the superpowers. The superpowers are, and will become more, dependent on the third world for raw materials. At the same time, heavy industries are moving from industrialized nations to the third world. (In the 1970s, up to 90 percent of steel and aluminum plants were built outside the United States.) Superpower dependence on these materials and industries means that access to third-world regions and those regions' economic stability are important foreign policy objectives.³⁴

Thus, as the potential for LICs increases, the United States and other Western nations are becoming critically dependent on the third world for raw materials. In addition, economy interdependence and the need for forward bases make these regions vital to US interests.³⁵ The areas of the world that appear most likely to see use of US military force in the LIC arena are parts of Asia, Middle East, sub-Saharan Africa, and Latin America.

Asia

The principal US interest in Asia will remain preventing any single nation from dominating the region. This interest was evident when the People's Republic of China (PRC) tried to expand into India in 1962, when Pakistan's existence was threatened by India in 1972, and when the Soviets seized Afghanistan in 1980.³⁶ There are presently a number of potential flash points in the region. These include the Korean peninsula, the Philippines, and the

India-Pakistan area.³⁷ In the 1990s, the United States is likely to work closely with the PRC, on issues in the Asian region. Although the Chinese have little capability for projecting military power, they will be a key to finding political solutions to third-world conflicts. The Chinese are viewed as "comrade in arms" by third-world countries and have great influence in many parts of the developing world.³⁸ With the end of the cold war, US attempts to reestablish good relations with the PRC, and the peace between India and Pakistan (however dubious), the Asian region seems to present a relatively low likelihood (compared to other third-world regions) for the use of US special forces in the 1990s.

Middle East

The Middle East will continue in importance to the United States, not only because of US consumption of its oil but also because of other strategic and security interests. The importance of oil should not be underestimated. The Middle East contains 60 percent of the world's proven oil reserves, and US allies are highly dependent on these sources. Japan imports 90 percent of its needs and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) countries import 60 to 80 percent of theirs. The United States is less directly dependent on Mideast oil. Although the United States consumes 30 percent of the world's oil production, it only imports 40 percent of its needs and only 40 percent of that comes from the Middle East.³⁹ The main US concern in the Middle East is the security of allies. Since interruption of oil flow would mean economic disaster for US allies and since national economies are so interdependent, the United States must ensure the flow of oil at reasonable prices.⁴⁰ Operation Desert Storm is evidence of the high stakes in the region.

Beyond oil, the strategic importance of the Middle East in the past has resulted from concern about the southern flank of the NATO and the Soviet threat in the region. With the Soviet pullout from Afghanistan and the arrival of *glasnost* and *perestroika*, the Soviets seem to be too preoccupied with internal economic and ethnic turmoil to pose a significant threat in the 1990s. The greatest threat in the region will be from the boldness of such nations as Iraq, Iran, and Syria. These nations will surely attempt to take advantage of decreased superpower influence in the region by trying to expand their territory and influence. In addition, continued Syrian support of Moslem and Palestinian forces in Lebanon in their fight against the Israeli-supported Christian Phalangists makes this area a hot spot.⁴¹ The ongoing disputes in Israel over the West Bank and the Gaza Strip also increase tension.

Israel is an important factor in US security interests in the region. Even though the United States has had many disagreements with Israel, it is a strong ally and is sometimes the sole source of support in an often anti-American region.⁴² At times the United States views the Israelis as the policemen of the region responsible for keeping radical states and terrorist groups in line. With continuing unrest in Lebanon, Iraq, Pakistan, and

Afghanistan, the prospects for stability in this region in the 1990s is low, and the potential for contingency operations is high.

Sub-Sahara

The sub-Saharan region of Africa is rife with economic and population problems. Compared with the Middle East, US interest in the region is relatively low; however, the United States is concerned about Soviet influence in the area. Thus the United States provides economic assistance to sub-Saharan nations to help them solve their problems without Soviet intervention. If Soviet support of the Marxist states of Angola, Mozambique, and Zimbabwe is successful, these Soviet clients could cut a cordon across southern Africa. This strip would give them control of the region's mineral resources and negatively affect Western interests.⁴³

Mineral deposits in the sub-Sahara are of crucial concern to the West. As a result of significant US stockpiles and mineral wealth, the United States is less dependent on those resources than are the Europeans, but historically, European interests have been closely tied to US interests. West European trade in the region is 5 to 10 times that of the United States, and the West Europeans are more dependent on fuels and minerals from the region. The importance of the region will increase significantly because Africa's mineral deposits are, for all practical purposes, underdeveloped. Yet, they presently yield more than one-half of the world's production of seven crucial minerals including chromium from Zimbabwe and South Africa, cobalt from Zaire and Zambia, platinum and gold from South Africa, and manganese from South Africa and Gabon.⁴⁴ At the same time, Nigeria is a leading supplier of American oil imports and potentially a supplier for liquefied natural gas.⁴⁵ Denial of any of these resources in the 1990s could trigger military intervention.

Since the sub-Sahara is not a center of world power or trade, it is not a natural battlefield for the superpowers. It does contain key sea-lanes for shipping Middle East oil to Europe and America. This fact makes the region of interest to Western oil importing powers and the Soviets.⁴⁶ Africa also sits astride some of the key sea line of communications, giving it potential military importance to the superpowers. Nevertheless, in the near future, US interests in the region are not as likely to require the use of military operations as in the Middle Eastern and Latin American regions.

Latin America

Historically, the United States has given Latin America low priority in the realm of foreign policy, but the increased US interest of the 1980s will continue through the 1990s. The region provides such low-cost raw materials as copper, tin, and bauxite to US allies,⁴⁷ and at the same time, Latin America is one of the largest areas of US foreign investment and trade. The United States imports oil and such strategic minerals as manganese and aluminum and considers its strategic interests in the region vital.⁴⁸

US ability to protect its southern flank is critical. Protection of the sea line of communications in the Atlantic narrows and the Caribbean basin is essential. Also of significance is the fact that if the United States were to become involved in an overseas war more than half of the required supplies would pass through the Gulf of Mexico and the Panama Canal.⁴⁹ The Soviets also appreciate the importance of this region as shown by their economic and military support of Cuba. US concern over their efforts were displayed clearly in the October 1979 discussions about Soviet efforts to place a brigade in Cuba. Although the situation was resolved by reminding the Soviets to comply with the 1962 agreement against offensive weapons in Cuba, the incident shows the importance of the region to both superpowers.

Although strides were made in the 1980s to increase stability of the region (as evidenced by the military removal of Cuban forces from Grenada and the removal of the Soviet/Cuban-backed government from Nicaragua by free election), there will be considerable instability in Latin America in the 1990s. Some of the expected conflicts will result from Soviet and surrogate intervention and some will not. The principle form of conflict will be insurgency. El Salvador and Guatemala continue to face serious challenges from Cuban-backed insurgents, and these struggles are likely to continue for some time.⁵⁰ Potential for insurgencies also exists in Costa Rica, Honduras, Panama, the Dominican Republic, Guyana, and Columbia.⁵¹

Beyond insurgency problems, the United States will continue to work with nations in the region to attempt to eradicate sources of drugs by arresting drug barons and by destroying fields in countries like Mexico and Peru. As the drug war intensifies, this effort itself may cause instability in the region because, in some cases, the drug war conflicts with the economic needs of the people of drug-producing countries.

Latin America is of relatively low economic importance to the United States, but it is of key strategic importance. Thus the United States will continue to monitor the stability of the region. The potential for US military intervention, as a result of the drug war and continuing efforts to stabilize governments as in operations Urgent Fury and Just Cause, is high.

It appears extremely likely that instability in at least some of the regions just discussed will worsen. If the United States is to employ force in the third-world environment, it should be highly selective and apply force only when a positive result can be obtained quickly. If the United States is to achieve such results, another factor that must be recognized is the military threat likely to be encountered.

Military Threat

The third world is developing unprecedented military capability as a result of the international free flow of arms of varying sophistication. Current military threats range from highly sophisticated aerospace systems to tribal warriors using spears for weapons and drums for command and control.⁵²

The sophisticated weapons are available from the Soviet Union, the United States, and many developing nations that are building their own defense industries. Weapons trade will most certainly increase in the 1990s and will increase the hazards in the military environment. Any military force that must operate in the third world should be trained and equipped to deal with these varied and increasingly potent threats.⁵³

Global armament expenditures increased from \$10 billion at the turn of the century to \$950 billion by the mid-1980s.⁵⁴ Over the years, the trend has shifted from weapon sales to the allies of the United States and Soviet Union to sales to the third world. During the 1970s, Middle Eastern nations purchased almost one-third of arms sold, even though during the same period arms shipments to Africa grew by a factor of 21.⁵⁵ The United States has been the largest supplier of arms and has exported more than \$100 billion worth since WWII. It now annually ships an average of \$9 billion worth of arms.⁵⁶ In the 1980s, the Soviets were responsible for 50 percent of arms sales to the third world.⁵⁷ The infusion of arms has produced increased instability in the third world along with increased military capabilities.

The arming of third-world countries is increasing the potential for conflict. In the early 1970s, for example, Egypt wanted to attack Israel but did not, at least in part, because Egypt lacked an air defense system that could ward off Israeli counterattacks. With Soviet help, Egypt got its air defense systems and attacked. Something similar occurred when Iraq waited until 1980 to attack Iran. Likewise, in 1990 Iraq felt its newest weapons gave it the power to attack and hold Kuwait.⁵⁸ The mere presence of high-performance aircraft, tanks, artillery, and surface-to-air missiles (SAM) sometimes leads to military opportunism in the third world, though many such countries, even when they have modern arms, do not have the infrastructure to take full advantage of the weapons' capabilities.

As lesser-developed countries continue to obtain more potent weapons, their threat to Western interests grows. Since the 1980s, developing countries have been purchasing top-of-the-line military aircraft, and such aircraft are now a highly sought after commodity. This trend is illustrated by the sale of F-16s to Pakistan, F-15s to Saudi Arabia, and Mirage 2000s to India. Middle Eastern nations have also bought A-4s, MiG-23s, MiG-25s, F-14s, and Jaguars. As noted, few of these nations have the ability to use these types of weapons properly because few have the capability to maintain them fully.

An even more popular piece of equipment is the light armored vehicle. These vehicles can pack a potent punch, are relatively easy to maintain, and do not cost as much as high-performance aircraft or tanks. These types of vehicles have been high on the list of priorities for Middle Eastern, African, and Asian countries. The Soviet Union alone exported an annual average of almost 3,000 armored vehicles during the 1980s.⁵⁹ The British Scorpion and the Brazilian Urutu and Cascavel are most popular.⁶⁰ To add to the capability of these vehicles, third-world nations have shown strong interest in

modifying them to carry barrage systems and rockets. They believe such modifications give them the most cost-effective use of high technology.⁶¹

Another popular high-tech weapon is the lightweight, shoulder-fired antitank or antiaircraft missile.⁶² The effectiveness of these rapidly improving weapons was evident with the Afghan rebel's use of them against Soviet aircraft. Currently, improvements are being developed that will enable such missiles to identify and counter a number of the deception techniques modern aircraft employ.⁶³ Such missiles have so far proved to be too complex for some lesser-developed nations and for most insurgents.

As to the future, precision guided munitions and sophisticated electronic equipment are becoming available to the third world. Such systems include communications, radar and surveillance, and countermeasures equipment. The United States has already sold airborne warning and control systems (AWACS) to Saudi Arabia and is discussing selling Pakistan the same capability.⁶⁴

For the less technologically advanced and those who cannot afford the more sophisticated equipment, small arms are the weapons of choice. Even here the tendency is to purchase the most lethal weapons money can buy, and the mix of small arms is making the threat more complex. For example, many third-world countries are obtaining small-caliber NATO assault weapons at the same time they are procuring military shotguns. Simple or low-tech is not necessarily obsolete. Much combat in the third world is at close range, and shotguns give a large initial burst of firepower at short range. Another sought after capability is the laser-sighted rifle, which offers pinpoint accuracy to the average insurgent.

In short, a wide array of equipment including the most sophisticated weaponry is available. The third-world threat is characterized by the simultaneous use of advanced and simple weapons, and the total numbers will continue to grow. High-tech weapons are a factor in some instances, but much of the terrain in the third world is better suited for less sophisticated weapons. These will be the weapons of choice in areas like Africa and Latin America. To deal with these threats, US military forces will have to be ready to face a spectrum of weapons ranging from bows to fighter-bombers.

Conclusion

In the 1990s, third-world nations will face continuing problems with population control, feeding their populations, and defects in their economic bases. Given the increasing need for food and the inability to support current populations, the potential for instability in such nations is increasing markedly. As a result, the likelihood for use of US special operations forces in the third world is high.

The high probability that SOF will be used in third-world LIC requires that special operations forces of the 1990s be trained to operate in this environ-

ment. The most politically sensitive and difficult mission in this environment is the direct-action mission. Training programs must stress the need for joint training among Army, Navy, and Air Force SOF components if they are to be successful in this and other missions at the lower end of the operational continuum.

Military forces that may have to operate in this environment must be cognizant of the increased and improved arms of potential adversaries and the increased capabilities those arms give. Many third-world countries can afford new aircraft, armored vehicles, shoulder-fired missiles, highly capable communications equipment, and more accurate small arms. All these nations and many subnational groups have access to less expensive items and to a wide array of older but still deadly weaponry. SOF must be ready to meet this broad range of military threats in any eventuality.

In short, the question appears to be "when," not "if" SOF will be used in the third world. Thus, the United States must be concerned with how best to prepare SOF for such action.

Notes

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Chapter 2

Joint Special Operations *Lessons Learned*

The lessons of the past do not always enlighten future behavior, though frequently they provide a guide to future responses.

—Edwin Fedder

This chapter examines how joint training, or its absence, has affected past contingency operations. The chapter first looks at the importance of “jointness” in special military operations and why jointness is particularly important to the special operations community. After reviewing what is “special” about special operations and what that means to training, the chapter reviews the joint training requirements of the Son Tay raid, the *Mayaguez* incident, the Desert One rescue attempt, and the Grenada operation. It then assesses the effect of joint training on the outcome of each of these missions.

Need for Jointness

The following discussion is timely in light of the establishment of United States Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) with its legislated requirement to train forces. If USSOCOM's three service components are to carry out their missions to full effectiveness, they must learn to depend on each other's capabilities by working jointly. The term *joint* is extremely popular in DOD circles, but is one that often receives only lip service. As defined in a readily available dictionary, joint refers to sharing or acting in common for a common interest or action.¹ In contrast, Joint Pub 1-02, *Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms*, defines the term as activities, operations, and organizations that involve more than one military service of a nation.² Although the DOD definition is not wrong, it does not contain the full essence of jointness. The difference is significant in that jointness in the military should not only involve operations of more than one service but also the interdependent operations and team effort critical to achieving a *common goal*. Beyond the question of definition, an important aspect of US SOF capability is that it is not a single-service capability. Thus

US special operations are inherently joint, and SOF usually must be exercised in a joint environment because component units are dependent on each other's capabilities.

Special operations forces should be organized jointly and should routinely plan, execute, command, and control operations from a joint perspective. Although a given SO may be conducted as a single-service operation, most require the capabilities of more than one component, and the strength of the SOF is the synergistic effect attained from that joint effort. To quote Gen John W. Vessey, Jr., former chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS), "Joint operations [occur] when the unique capabilities of two or more of the services come together to make the whole greater than the sum of the parts in order to kick the tar out of the enemies of the United States."³

Note that such jointness requires more than writing staff papers that use buzzwords advocating jointness in general guidance. A joint operation is an Air Force helicopter conducting an infiltration to carry a Navy Sea-Air-Land (SEAL) team to the right place at the right time. Jointness is an Air Force AC-130 Spectre gunship supporting Army ground troops with accurate fire support. Jointness is an Army MH-47E conducting an exfiltration of a joint Army Special Forces and Air Force combat control team from a hot landing zone. Accomplishing these types of missions effectively and safely is the goal of jointness in the SOF community.

There are several reasons why jointness is integral to SOF. First, as already noted, no one service's component of SOF has all the capabilities required to accomplish special operations across the operational continuum. Thus SOF components depend on other-service components to provide necessary support. Second, the military services have relatively few resources in USSOCOM, and those few must be used jointly to ensure their most effective employment.⁴ Third, the probability is low that in today's environment any operation will be taken on a unilateral service basis, and this consideration is especially true in the SO arena.⁵ Fourth, a characteristic of special operations is that they are multimediate; therefore, such operations naturally occur in a multiservice environment.⁶ Fifth, the SOF mission often involves high-threat, night or adverse-weather, and covert or clandestine operations in politically sensitive areas. Such operations usually feature infiltration and/or exfiltration of ground forces at extreme ranges requiring refueling operations. To accomplish such missions, each service component must take advantage of the others' capabilities. SOF components must be interoperable for they are more interdependent than elements of any other military force. All of which add up to saying that the SOF must be joint.⁷

The problem that most affects attainment of SOF jointness is ever-present service bias. As noted by former Secretary of Defense James R. Schlesinger, "The tendency for each service is to build into itself capabilities that will permit it to be independent of the other services." Because of the interdependence of SOF forces, it is important that SOF continue to move toward the ultimate goal of operating as a totally integrated force.⁸ Effective and routine

joint training programs can help in overcoming biases in the SOF service components and in establishing a more effective fighting force. Routine contact eliminates conventional barriers to good communications, faith, trust, and cohesion.

Need for Joint Training

A comprehensive and long-term joint training program is particularly important in the special operations environment, not least so because it would allow SOF components to communicate their concerns and biases to the other service components. For example, in 1947 the Army lost a large portion of its aviation capability when the Air Force was established. Since then the Army has continually attempted to regain some of that capability through such acquisitions as long-range helicopters that can be used for tactical airlift and attack helicopters that can be used for close air support.⁹ This situation has carried over into the special operations community with Army aviation capability closely rivaling some of the capabilities of the Air Force. The Army's viewpoint, tradition, and capabilities are not going to disappear overnight, and the other components of SOF must adapt to this situation. The fact is USSOCOM needs all the capabilities that each service can contribute. Thus it must overcome service biases by pursuing an effective joint training program that makes maximum use of all its resources.

Joint training is also important in bringing together differing techniques and procedures. Special operations forces use a combination of service-unique, joint, and other-service tactics to accomplish their missions. As an example, Army Special Forces paratroopers may use Army standard jump procedures to deploy from an Army or Air Force aircraft, but on the ground they carry out their operations using their unique procedures. Exfiltration operations by Army and Air Force assets may involve differing procedures.¹⁰ Opportunities for confusion and procedural disconnects are abundant, and the best way to increase the chances of success is through joint training. "Joint training exercises are essential to the preparation of US defense. Unless operating forces are trained and evaluated jointly, total force readiness cannot be achieved."¹¹ If USSOCOM is to meet its missions, joint capabilities and attitudes must permeate SOF.

Besides decreasing problems associated with service bias, joint training can also decrease other problems associated with joint operations. Clausewitz referred to such problems as the "friction of war" and said, "Everything in war is very simple, but the simplest thing is difficult."¹² Although he was ahead of his time, Clausewitz could not have anticipated the amount of friction created by three different services using air, land, and sea forces to accomplish a covert mission. Joint training can decrease the effects of such friction as demonstrated by the operational efficiency at Son Tay, which was largely a result of a comprehensive training program.

Another benefit of joint training is the opportunity to train as a *team*. In the beginning of such training, there is a learning period during which elements discover each other's capabilities. In time, each individual develops a bond with other team members, and the trust achieved enables the team to exceed personal boundaries and limitations. This synergy allows the team to develop a capability greater than its numbers indicate. This effect also holds true in the larger joint environment where USSOCOM service components must learn each other's capabilities and develop trust.

Joint training is a large part of the foundation for developing and updating joint doctrine at all levels.¹³ One of the most important goals of joint training is to increase the effectiveness of the forces through increased standardization of procedures and interoperability.^{14, 15} *Standardization* means that all procedures are the same, while *interoperability* means that the need for different procedures is recognized and through joint training each service works within those differences. Interoperability is commonly used relative to equipment and communications, but the SOF community must also integrate procedures. Joint Pub 0-2, *Unified Action Armed Forces (UNAAF)*, describes interoperability as the only way forces can work together effectively and states that interoperability is achieved through development of joint doctrine, joint tactics, techniques, and procedures; development of joint plans; and conduct of joint training.¹⁶ Interoperability is a major factor in reducing the friction of war.

A Rand study of commando raids showed that the level of training of attack forces was a significant factor in the success of such operations. The study compared 51 irregular-force operations to 49 elite-force operations. The irregulars had a 66 percent success rate; the elite forces were successful 88 percent of the time.¹⁷ Training made the difference. General Vessey once again hit the nail on the head when he said, "Training is the mucilage that makes the peacetime forces, their equipment and doctrine the cohesive ready force needed to deter war or defend the nation if deterrence fails."¹⁸

This quick review has emphasized the importance of jointness and of joint training in special operations. The special nature of SOF and the resulting need for increased attention to joint training are also important factors.

Special Operations Forces

The term *special* in special operations has a negative connotation for many who are not a part of the community. In fact, many would argue that there is nothing special about SOF. A common dictionary definition of special is: "having a particular function, purpose, or application." An alternative definition is: "great, extraordinary, exceptional." Although many would argue that the second definition fits, the first is more germane. Special operations forces should be regarded as special because of the characteristics of the particular

function they must conduct. "From looking at the characteristics of SOF it's clear that SOF [are] not special because they are supermen, the only area that clearly identifies them is that these soldiers are highly trained for specific missions."¹⁹ Training is the real key to SOF ability to carry out what has often been described as the surgical-type missions that make the SOF special.

Because of their particular functions, SOF have characteristics that make them different from conventional forces. Special operations forces often are required to conduct high-risk offensive operations for high returns. They are likely to be tasked through the national command authorities (NCA) to carry out missions of particular politico-military importance.²⁰ As noted by Lt Gen Samuel V. Wilson, a former Special Forces commander and chief of the Defense Intelligence Agency, "political considerations are far more significant in using SOF than in conventional forces." He goes on to say that the difference is largely in targeting. Conventional forces usually target a physical objective while SOF go after human targets.²¹ There are also less tangible differences.

Special operations forces are usually characterized by comprehensive screening of volunteers, small-unit operations, and lengthy training programs.²² The Army aviation component program is a good example of the in-depth screening program required for selection. To be considered, Army pilots must have 400 to 500 hours of flight time including 50 to 100 hours using night vision goggles and must pass rigorous psychological, academic, and physical tests.²³ Such rigorous screening is required by the nature of special operations.

As noted, special operations are usually small-unit operations. The benefit of using a small unit is that it more easily achieves a unique capability, provides a level of response that does not entail the degree of political risk a larger conventional force poses, and can deploy quickly to provide the NCA a military capability between the diplomatic and overt military options.²⁴

The amount and level of training required is also an important factor in the characterization of special operations units. Becoming a fully qualified mission-capable crew member or ground team member may take years. Thus all training programs must make maximum use of the training time available. This qualification process covers not only unilateral service training requirements but also the all-important joint training requirements and exercises. Also as a consequence of high-training levels and small-unit size, there is a much smaller replacement pool than for conventional units. When there is a downsizing of the force as a result of attrition or fiscal constraints, it is much more difficult to produce qualified replacements without extensive lead time to allow for training.

Clearly, SOF must be joint and are special for many reasons, not the least of which is the level of joint training they require. The next portion of this chapter reviews selected special operations missions and the effect joint training had on those missions. The review includes such areas as personnel

selection, unilateral and joint training, and mission rehearsal. Although training of US aircrews and ground teams for special missions or raids can be traced back at least to World War II—and many lessons were learned in those early years—for the sake of brevity, the following discussion reviews only the Son Tay raid, the *Mayaguez* incident, the Iranian hostage rescue attempt, and the Grenada operation.

Son Tay Raid

In the late 1960s, President Nixon was under great pressure from the American public to take action to secure the return of the prisoners of war (POW) held in North Vietnam. Nixon proposed to Hanoi the release of the POWs, but when Hanoi did not respond, he authorized rescue attempts.²⁵

US intelligence located a POW camp 23 miles west of Hanoi near the town of Son Tay. Overhead imagery showed what looked like a signal for help. POWs working outside the camp had spread their uniforms on the ground to spell SAR (search and rescue). Intelligence experts reported the observation to Pentagon authorities in the spring of 1970.²⁶

In May 1970 the Joint Chiefs of Staff, after being briefed on possible alternatives to free the POWs, approved the planning phase of a rescue operation. The assault on Son Tay would be carried out by Army Special Forces airlifted by Air Force helicopters. While the assault was being conducted, the Navy would create a diversion by attacking Haiphong.²⁷ Planning continued through August 1970.

Brig Gen Leroy J. Manor was selected as the overall commander of the Son Tay raid while Col Arthur ("Bull") Simons would lead the ground forces.²⁸ With the feasibility plan and concept of operations approved in July, the joint contingency task group (JCTG) for Operation Ivory Coast was formed. The JCTG was to continue planning the mission and to oversee training the force to conduct the actual operations. Training started on 20 August.²⁹

The training challenge was to assure that Air Force SAR helicopter crews and Army Special Forces could operate together (they had never operated jointly in an operation of this type). New equipment and procedures had to be developed before a mission could be conducted. For example, the operation required the helicopter crews to achieve a night, low-level, formation flying capability. Moreover, several types of aircraft were involved (two MC-130s, one HC-130, five HH-53s, one UH-1, one HH-3, and five A-1Es).³⁰

The four-phase training program designed by General Manor progressed from individual service to joint activities using a building-block approach. The first phase was the selection process and movement to training areas. In the screening process, the Army called for volunteers and administered extensive physical and psychological examinations, while Air Force selection was based on the air commander's opinion as to the best or most experienced

pilots. Both services were looking for strength of character as well as physical excellence.³¹

Phase two of the training program stressed unilateral training. The Army worked on conditioning and procedural drills. Meanwhile the Air Force practiced rendezvous, formation flying, and day and night mission profiles. During this phase, many new procedures and tactics had to be developed and refined. For example, the Air Force had to develop procedures to allow the HH-3 and UH-1 to draft behind the MC-130s and HC-130 since otherwise the helicopters were not fast enough to keep up.³² By 28 September 1970, units were ready for the joint-training phase.

The objective of phase three was to practice aerial and ground rescue operations including tactics and recovery and emergency procedures. In short, the force was to go through the full-mission profile. The Air Force and Army assets rehearsed day and night (conducting three day landings and insertions and three more at night). Once again training was a step-by-step process moving from day to night operations, dry to live fire, and walk-through to real-time pacing.³³

Alternative plans green, red, and blue were also practiced in the joint third phase. Plan green was to be used if Colonel Simons's helicopter was lost. Plan red was called for if the second support helicopter did not reach Son Tay. Blue was the plan if the compound assault helicopter failed to make the objective.³⁴ As much time was spent training for possible emergencies as was expended on practicing the primary concept.³⁵ At the completion of phase three on 6 October, the forces were declared mission capable.³⁶

The final phase of the training was joint training and mission rehearsal. Procedures were fine tuned and interoperability of forces was assured. During this phase, planners recognized that the UH-1 would not be able to carry enough assault forces to the compound. They decided to use the larger, air refuelable HH-3, even though the HH-3 would have to crash land in the compound with its assault force on board. On the night of 6 November, the total joint force went through its last full rehearsal of the mission.³⁷

The unit then moved to several bases in Thailand, and on 21 November 1970 the order was given to execute the mission. The assault force launched from the Thai bases and the total force met en route to North Vietnam (fig. 2). The HC-130 refueler went about half way to Son Tay and stayed in an orbit position while the rest of the force was in the objective area. The specially configured MC-130s then led (one aircraft led the helicopters to Son Tay while the other rendezvoused with the close-air-support A1-Es and led them to the objective). The MC-130s with their navigation capability and forward-looking radar were ideal for this lead-in mission.³⁸

Problems did arise with the ability of the MC-130s to fly formation with the other aircraft. The MC-130s, which usually flew at 250 knots, had to slow to an average speed of 105 knots to fly with the helicopters and 145 knots to escort the A-1Es. Flight at 105 knots proved especially difficult because at its heavy gross weight the MC-130 was always near stall speed. The A-1E escort

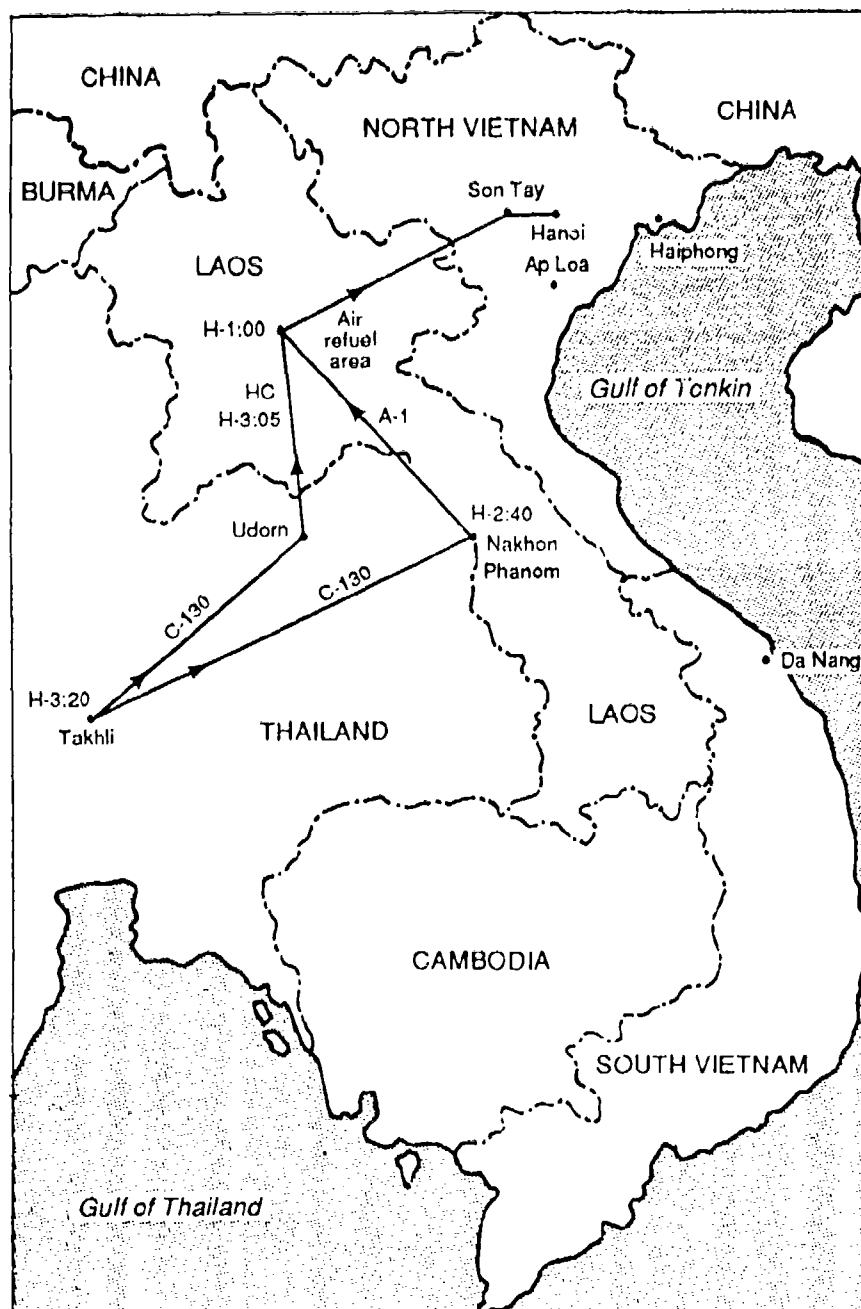


Figure 2. Son Tay Raid

had a little easier flight. It flew a weave pattern that allowed the A1-Es to maintain position.³⁹ The intensive training program allowed these and other less significant problems to be overcome.

The route from Thailand through Laos into North Vietnam had been planned to avoid as many enemy radar, gun, and SAM sites as possible. As the aircraft approached the objective area, the Navy diversionary attack on Haiphong Harbor was fully visible.⁴⁰

The first MC-130 departed from the helicopter formation and proceeded directly to the POW compound to deploy flares for the helicopters. Two of the HH-53s (spares for flare deployment) then moved off to their holding location over a point seven nautical miles to the west.⁴¹ The other helicopters then ran into a situation that endangered the operation and plagued analysis of the mission for years to come. Wind speed and direction had changed from that forecast and had blown the helicopters south of course. This displacement would not have been a significant problem except that another compound (a school) was located to the south of the objective site. To make matters worse, the southern compound had many of the structural and geographic characteristics of the intended landing site.⁴² Three days before the operation, intelligence experts warned the pilots that the school could easily be mistaken for the POW compound.⁴³ The lead helicopter crew recognized that it had sighted the wrong compound, but for reasons of communications security, maintained radio silence.⁴⁴

Fortunately, all but one of the following helicopters also recognized the problem, corrected north, and proceeded to the intended objective. The remaining HH-53 landed outside the wrong compound. This helicopter carried Colonel Simons and the largest portion of the assault force. To add to their surprise, these soldiers found the school was filled with more than 200 hostile troops who had not been identified during intelligence briefings. These forces could have caused a serious problem if they had not been dealt with immediately.⁴⁵

Meanwhile, the rest of the force went to plan green since Colonel Simons's helicopter was missing. The forces carried out plan green successfully, but they found no prisoners. They then reboarded the helicopters for the return trip to Thailand.

Although the Son Tay operation can be called a failure in terms of US intelligence collection capability, it was a success from the viewpoint of the ability of the services to work jointly and overcome differing procedures. The key to this success in the operation was the joint training program developed for the ground and air forces. General Manor stated in his after-action report that "as commander of the JCTG, I emphasized the importance of a completely joint and unified approach to every facet of this complex operation."⁴⁶

As noted, the operation started with four distinct phases of training. The first was a comprehensive selection process that made sure the right people were in the operation. The second was the intense service-oriented training programs completed before entering the joint training phase. This third phase was a key to the success of the operation. General Manor planned a comprehensive joint training program and did not move to the final phase of training until the units were ready to do so. The team was able to develop

new procedures and establish interoperability between the ground and air units. The extensive joint training produced "a closely knit team which was essential to survival and extremely effective."⁴⁷ Many of the procedures used by the units had to be developed as the need presented itself. Another key to the success of the Son Tay raid was the stress on actual mission rehearsal during the fourth phase and on making rehearsals as realistic as possible. The 30-minute mission was practiced more than 170 times.⁴⁸ The many rehearsals developed such a high level of expertise that the raiders developed near automatic responses to a number of emergencies. They demonstrated this ability during the raid when they went to plan green with little loss to mission execution.

Although the raid did not free the POWs, it was an operational and training success as well as a political success. It was also a strategic as well as a tactical success. In the tactical sense, the raid was carried out almost flawlessly. Strategically, it showed US resolve to release the POWs, and it improved their lives. Gen John P. Flynn, the senior American POW, is quoted as saying, "It was the most magnificent operation of the war." The raid ultimately caused the North Vietnamese to gather all POWs from the countryside and place them in camps in Hanoi. These large concentrations allowed POWs to talk, to take care of each other, and to organize themselves.⁴⁹

Analysis of the Son Tay raid demonstrates that its training program and tactics were successful. Mission planners selected highly qualified individuals to carry out the demanding task. Following the selection process, joint training programs and rehearsal exercises were planned and carried out in depth. Joint training between the ground and air forces enabled them to carry out operations with speed, flexibility, and accuracy.

In summary, the establishment of the force was ad hoc in nature, but the raiders had the time and leadership to select members of the force properly and to train in individual as well as joint skills. They also had time for extensive mission rehearsal. The ideal situation would have been to have a preselected and trained force assigned to the operation, enabling the raiders to start with phase three, joint training. The next mission analysis shows what can happen when a force is established on an ad hoc basis and time is not available for extensive training and rehearsal.

Mayaguez Incident

The military operations in the SS *Mayaguez* incident are much different from those of the Son Tay raid for a number of reasons, not the least of which is that the forces involved in the *Mayaguez* incident were mainly conventional forces organized on short notice for a joint operation. Even though conven-

tional forces were used, the operation is relevant to this paper because it was a joint operation involving air assets and ground forces with a common, high-risk, high-interest, and specific mission. The incident highlights what can happen if reaction time is short, force selection is ad hoc, there has been no previous joint training, and none can be provided in the time available. The *Mayaguez* operation was extremely time-constrained because President Gerald Ford wanted to recover the ship's crew members before they were taken to the Cambodian mainland.⁵⁰ There was no time to hand-select aircrews or ground forces or to develop a training and exercise program for the forces that had to operate jointly.

On 12 May 1975 the US-owned container ship SS *Mayaguez* was boarded and seized by Cambodian forces while 60 miles off the Cambodian coast near the Wai islands. The next day the ship was taken to Koh Tang Island while the ship's captain and 38-man crew were taken to another island for interrogation.⁵¹

Seizure of the *Mayaguez* came at a particularly bad time for the United States because the country had just suffered several severe national strategy setbacks in the Indochina region. With the fall of Phnom Penh on 17 April and the fall of Saigon on 30 April, US presence and influence in Indochina seemed to be over.

At the same time, the Cambodian Communists were flush with victory and were trying to demonstrate their independence by extending their territorial waters to 90 miles instead of the 12-mile limit sanctioned by international law. Thus, even before 12 May, several similar incidents had occurred involving ships from Thailand, Panama, and South Korea.⁵²

Remembering US inaction in the USS *Pueblo* incident and considering the taking of the *Mayaguez* "an act of piracy," President Ford initiated diplomatic discussions as well as directing military planning. The president's political efforts made no headway, so he called on the military option.

The US military had sent surveillance aircraft to orbit the ship when distress calls from the *Mayaguez* were received. Thus the military was able to keep track of the ship as well as the military situation in the area.⁵³ At the same time, Marine Corps units from Okinawa were deployed to U-Tapao Royal Thai Air Force Base. The US plan called for Air Force helicopters stationed in Thailand to support the Marines in an assault on Koh Tang to retrieve the crew members (fig. 3). The plan also required Air Force helicopters to transport another contingent of Marines to the USS *Holt*. These Marines would then board and retake the *Mayaguez* itself. Strikes from Air Force and Navy aircraft, support from USAF forward air controllers and an airborne battlefield command and control center, and gunfire from Navy ships were significant in the operation, but this analysis concentrates on the joint actions of the Air Force helicopters and Marine forces.⁵⁴

The first phase of the operation called for 11 helicopters (six HH-53 air refuelable Air Rescue Service helicopters and five CH-53 nonrefuelable special operations helicopters). The operation began on the morning of 15 May 1975

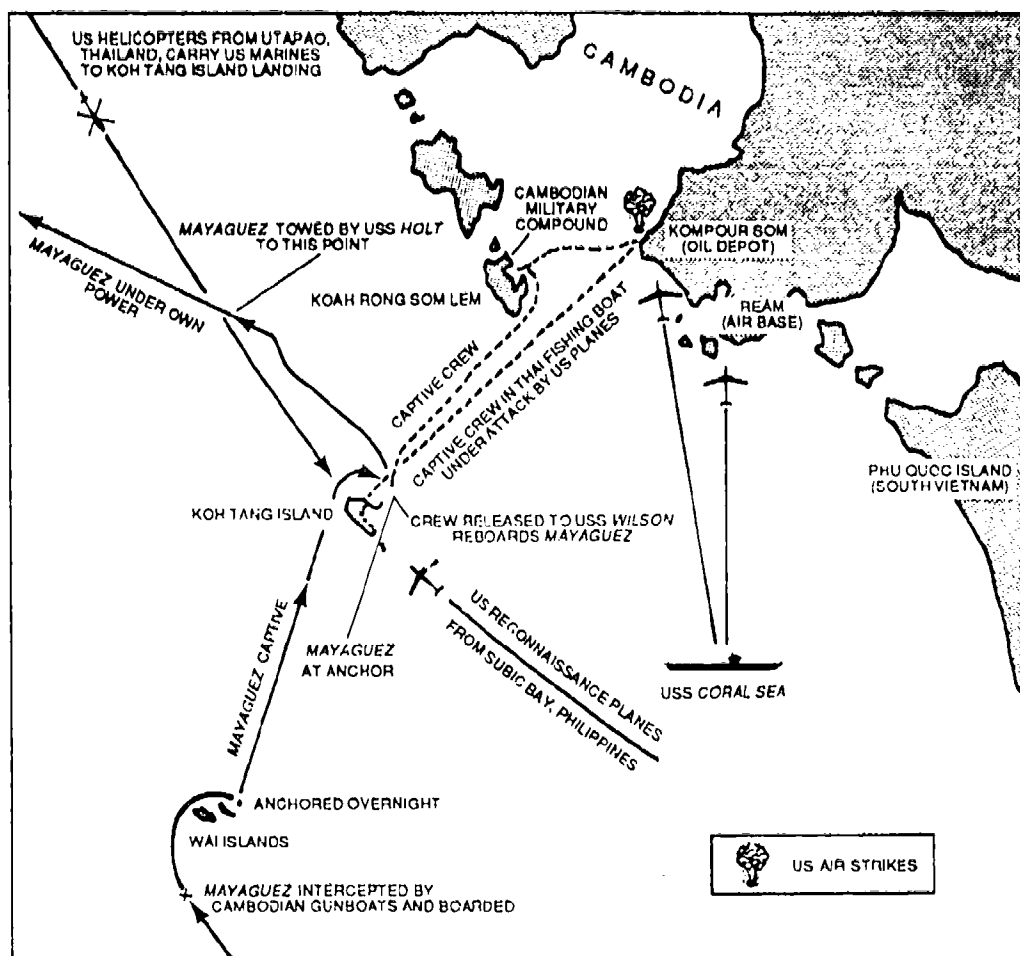


Figure 3. *Mayaguez* Rescue Mission

with three of the helicopters carrying the Marine boarding party to the *USS Holt* and the other eight carrying the Marine assault force to eastern and western landing zones on Koh Tang Island.

The landing on the *Holt* and subsequent boarding of the *Mayaguez* were accomplished without incident within the first hour. The assault of Koh Tang did not go nearly as well. Because of low estimates of the number of Cambodian forces coupled with the belief that the *Mayaguez* crew members were also on the island, there was no landing zone preparation or preassault bombardment.⁵⁵

The first helicopter assaults on Koh Tang met extensive fire at both landing zones with the greater concentration at the eastern beach. By the time the first assault operations were completed, all but one of the original eight helicopters had been destroyed or damaged. Only 131 of the planned 180

Marines had been deployed on the island and 15 had been killed.⁵⁶ These operations took about four hours, and the Marines who had gotten to the island now had to hold out until the remaining helicopters could get to U-Tapao and pick up the rest of the assault force.

Ironically, about three hours into the first assault, the Cambodians gave the entire crew of the *Mayaguez* back to forces from the USS *Holt*, so the original problem had been solved. The new problem was that the Marines on Koh Tang had to be reinforced before they could be extracted. With the four of the original 11 helicopters that were flyable and an additional two that had been made available, the reinforcement phase of the operation began.⁵⁷

The reinforcement successfully deployed 100 Marines and even though the helicopters took hits, none were lost.⁵⁸ With the reinforcement complete, the extraction operations commenced. The extraction operations lasted through the night and used extensive fire support from other Air Force and Navy assets in the area. Under this cover, the helicopters evacuated approximately 230 Marines. Total US casualties were 15 killed in action, three missing in action, and about 49 wounded.⁵⁹

Beyond the obvious problems caused by time constraints and poor intelligence, several questions arise about this operation. Was the selection of the joint Air Force and Marine assault force appropriate considering that the selected elements never had an opportunity to train jointly and were not knowledgeable of each other's procedures? Both forces were highly qualified in their individual functions. For example, the Marines had worked for years to perfect their assault doctrine, but they were deployed by Air Force crews who had no training under that doctrine. Thus it should be no surprise that the Center for Naval Analysis report on the incident states that the helicopters used in the assault did not follow tactics outlined in Marine Corps doctrine. This doctrine stresses the integrated use of Marine air forces with the ground forces to establish a team for training and operations. The team concept was never used since the forces were so quickly assembled and had limited time to coordinate operations. Likewise, the doctrine's stress on the need for reconnaissance, preassault strikes, and helicopter escort capable of providing suppressive fire was certainly not met. The report goes on to say that preassault strikes should be followed by troop insertion and departure of the helicopters. Moreover, the doctrine emphasizes a quick buildup of forces. The Marine doctrine was developed from years of experience and was largely ignored in the planning process.⁶⁰ The fact that Air Force helicopter crews were not trained in Marine doctrine was not their fault, but the lack of such training was a problem that the planning staff should have recognized in the initial assignment of forces.⁶¹

The questions one has to ask here are: Since the military had forces highly trained in such operations, shouldn't planners have found time to employ those forces? Or shouldn't planners have allowed time for the required training and rehearsal for the mission? Were the losses sustained worth the final outcome?

As in the Son Tay raid, the *Mayaguez* operation featured an ad hoc organization of forces, but the problem in this case was that these forces had little or no time to train jointly or rehearse for the operation. The results were disastrous even though the forces were certainly proficient in their service missions. This operation indicates that even if forces are highly trained in a unilateral mission, a joint mission without joint training is programmed for disaster.

The next example once again supports the premise that joint training of a force is a significant factor in the success of a joint operation. Apparently, the US military remembered little from the Son Tay raid or *Mayaguez* operation when it was time to select and train forces for Operation Eagle Claw, the attempted rescue of American hostages in Iran.

Iranian Hostage Rescue Attempt

Teheran, Iran, November 4, 1979.—Moslem students stormed the United States embassy today, seized about 90 Americans and vowed to stay there until the deposed Shah was sent back from New York to face trial in Iran.⁶²

In reaction, the JCS began to develop contingency plans. By December of 1979, a rescue force had been selected and a training program was under way. Training exercises were conducted through March 1980 and the JCS approved mission execution on 16 April 1980. Between 19 and 23 April the forces deployed to Southwest Asia.

On the evening of 24 April, six C-130s left Masirah Island, Oman, and eight RH-53D helicopters departed the USS *Nimitz* in the Arabian Sea. Both formations headed for the location in the desert code-named Desert One. Within four hours, two helicopters had aborted, one for warning indications of a possible rotor blade failure and the other from loss of navigation and flight instruments. The remaining helicopters were delayed due to an unforecast "dust front," and one developed a hydraulic leak that its crew could not fix at the Desert One site. Because planners had decided that a minimum of six helicopters would be required at the refueling site for the mission to continue, the rescue attempt was aborted.

Unfortunately, while the helicopters were repositioning to refuel from the C-130s for the return flight, one collided with a C-130. The on-scene commander decided at that point to load the survivors of the collision and all the other helicopter crews in the C-130s and depart the area.⁶³

Following the aborted rescue operation, the JCS established the Special Operations Review Group to conduct a thorough examination of the mission and to recommend areas of improvement for future operations. The review group identified 23 areas that it investigated in depth. Of these, 11 were considered major issues that had an "identifiable influence" on the rescue mission's results.⁶⁴ Four of the areas are of interest to this paper.

As seen in the missions previously reviewed, the first, and an extremely important, part of the training process is to select qualified crews and ground forces. Issue 12 of the review group's findings states that the selection process was not crucial to Operation Eagle Claw because of the time available for training. It also noted that if tasking time were shorter (as in the case of the *Mayaguez* operation), selection of more experienced and better previously trained pilots would have been mandatory.

Initially, Navy pilots with experience in the RH-53D and carrier operations were paired with Marine pilots who had assault helicopter experience. When training progressed slowly, pilots were selected who had more experience in the type of mission to be carried out.⁶⁵ Richard Gabriel in his book, *Military Incompetence*, attributes aircrew selection problems to interservice rivalry rather than to a lack of aircrew qualification. He also states that an Air Force officer was put in charge of air operations while a Marine colonel was selected as flight commander of the helicopter force for the same reason. He believes this situation caused tension during much of the training phase.⁶⁶

Despite saying that the issue was not critical, the review group was concerned about the process of selection. Navy and Marine pilots with little experience in long-range overland navigation or refueling from C-130s were selected even though 114 qualified Air Force H-53 pilots were available. Ultimately, as was the answer to many other findings, operational security was the reason planners gave for selecting Navy and Marine pilots. The planners believed the use of large numbers of Air Force pilots on carriers would have been difficult to disguise.

Another question posed by the review group was: Would it have been easier to transition Air Force crews qualified in the complex mission to a different variant of aircraft than to train crews qualified in the aircraft to become familiar with the complex mission? In this case, the review group felt strongly that the selection criteria were satisfactory, but that if a similar mission faced significant time constraints, aircrew selection should be based on operational experience instead of aircraft type.⁶⁷ In an interesting parallel, military planners used Air Force pilots instead of assault-trained Marine pilots for the *Mayaguez* operation, while for the hostage rescue attempt they used Marine and Navy pilots instead of long-range rescue-trained Air Force pilots.

Also significant was the review group's issue number 5, lack of a comprehensive readiness evaluation and mission rehearsal program. From its beginnings, training for the rescue was not conducted in a truly joint manner. It was compartmentalized and held at various locations throughout the western United States. Individual and unit training were conducted and evaluated within the separate component command structures. Even when components operated together in training, concern for operational security limited effective joint communications.⁶⁸ For example, after many of the segments of training, the component forces recovered to separate areas that were several hundred miles apart and were unable to discuss the results of their efforts. Additionally, the limited rehearsals that were conducted assessed

only specific segments of the total mission, and the operators did not necessarily have the "need to know" how the segments fit into the overall operation.⁶⁹

Security concerns also precluded running a full-rehearsal exercise, but the review group believed the benefits of strong operational security outweighed the disadvantages caused by limited rehearsals. However, this author believes integration of the rescue force would have allowed the different components to assess their roles in a total perspective and to modify the plan based on those assessments. As seen in the Son Tay training, such fine tuning of alternate plans creates flexibility and can avert disaster when alternates have to be used. Had the helicopter and C-130 crews for Eagle Claw worked more closely and been able to discuss problems amongst themselves, the disaster at Desert One might have been avoided.

The general attitude toward the total integration of training was summed up by one of the C-130 pilots.

Full integration, in my opinion, would have hindered the 130s rather than helped them. The only possible exception to this would be more refueling practice between the 130s and the choppers. Such practice, however, would not require full integration.⁷⁰

This attitude seemed to be the norm at all levels. For example, participants stated that C-130 and helicopter crews had not debriefed or critiqued each other during training. The reasons for the lack of joint briefings were attributed to logistical problems and the distances involved, but the general acceptance of this situation illustrates the larger problem of a lack of understanding of the importance of joint training and rehearsals.⁷¹

Major issue 21, command and control at Desert One, also drives home the point that a full-mission rehearsal might have helped to avoid the debacle. The training exercise that validated the mission concept used only two C-130s and four H-53s. No rehearsal ever brought together the whole task force. A full rehearsal would have displayed the noise level and confusion that were later experienced at Desert One and could have led to procedural changes in helicopter refueling that might have avoided the accident or, at least, some of the confusion after the accident.⁷²

Issue 6 discusses the lack of overall coordination of what joint training there was. The only overall coordination was provided by personnel from the joint task force (JTF) in Washington, D.C. They were not responsible for management of training, but it was their duty to send out the messages tasking units to train jointly. Members of the JTF staff then went out to observe and supervise training events. Even though the JTF commander believed sufficient emphasis was put on training through his personal attendance, the review group thought an officer should have been assigned as overall joint training coordinator. The group believed that having such an officer would have allowed the JTF commander to concentrate on concept development and planning. At the same time, the coordinator could have focused on joint training schedules, operational and administrative support,

and outside support. More important, the training officer could have corrected deficiencies on the spot and coordinated procedural disparities between services.⁷³ The lesson would appear to be that the commanding unit should not delegate responsibility for joint training to the separate service components. Service biases and procedural differences require that a central authority take charge to control and coordinate training efforts.

The results of this operation demonstrate the importance of lessons that should have been learned in the two operations already discussed. Although certain elements of this force were highly trained, many parts of the force were formed on an ad hoc basis. This mission, like Son Tay, was blessed with time for training, but as indicated by the review group, did not use the time to full advantage as a result of concern for operational security. Although some have claimed the problem was not the lack of joint training but the lack of helicopters, the author strongly believes that more effective joint training could have solved that problem.

In retrospect, one cannot fault concern for operational security, but one can question carrying that concern to such lengths that it adversely affects training and readiness. Obviously, someone must understand the total picture and how each component fits into the total plan. Such understanding is necessary if unity of effort and integration of forces are to be achieved.

The review group's overall recommendation was that a "Counterterrorist Joint Task Force (CTJTF) be established as a field agency of the Joint Chiefs of Staff with permanently assigned staff personnel and forces." The group also recommended that a Special Operations Advisory Panel, made up of high-ranking active duty and retired officers, be established to act as an advisory group to the JCS.⁷⁴

In an attempt to cope with the many problems experienced in such operations, the Joint Special Operations Command (JSOC) was formed in the early 1980s. The command's establishment was intended to deal with the command and control, training, and force integration problems SOF units had experienced during Eagle Claw.⁷⁵ The JSOC took many positive steps to improve the effectiveness of special operations forces. Of particular importance to this paper were efforts to standardize doctrine, procedures, and training for specific aspects of the SOF mission. These steps certainly decreased the ad hoc arrangements that had characterized special operations before Operation Urgent Fury. The question is: Did JSOC go far enough? Analysis of Urgent Fury should yield answers to this and other critical questions about the effectiveness of special operations.

Operation Urgent Fury

On 25 October 1983, the United States decided that it had to use military force to maintain stability on the island of Grenada and to avoid another

hostage crisis by evacuating American students threatened by Grenadian leftists. The military operation was code-named Operation Urgent Fury. Although the overall operation contained failures in conventional and joint operations, this review focuses on the special operations missions of Urgent Fury.

Crisis planning started on 19 October 1983. The selected special operations forces were assigned under Joint Task Force 120. Intelligence estimates revealed: (1) rough terrain and hazardous beaches restricted landings near Pearls airstrip on the north part of the island and Salines runway in the south, (2) a majority of the endangered students were on the southern part of the island, and (3) a large portion of the Grenadian populace and several armed battalions were in the south near the capital city of St. George's. Because of the inaccessibility of the airports to conventional forces, several special operations missions were required before the full-scale invasion of the island. As a result of the many SOF missions to be conducted around Salines and St. George's, special operations personnel initially ran the show in the south.⁷⁶ The command and control staff was deployed over the island in a C-130 command and control aircraft.⁷⁷

Although there were as many as 10 special operations missions, this analysis looks at only a few to investigate the effect establishment of JSOC may have had on the overall unilateral and joint training levels of SOF.⁷⁸ The paper reviews the initial attempt to reconnoiter the area near Salines airport by SEALs and combat controllers, the attempted rescue of Sir Paul Scoon from St. George's, and SEAL operations to destroy Radio Free Grenada and the local power station. Several authors have claimed that the missions assigned to SOF during Urgent Fury were merely to let them participate in the operation and could have been given to conventional forces or ignored altogether. Although the validity of these operations will be argued for years, this analysis is limited to how training may have affected them.

The first mission reviewed is the deployment of SEAL and combat control teams to reconnoiter the Salines airport and to place beacons on the runway to guide the landing of the main force 24 hours later. Since the mission involved a parachute drop near a ship, the Navy argued strongly that SEALs should be involved. The Air Force believed strongly that its combat controllers should participate since setting up runways is their business. The mission required night deployment of the resultant "joint" SEAL and combat control team into the ocean. The team then had to navigate to the Salines area undetected, place beacons on the runway, and conceal themselves until the Rangers landed 24 hours later.

This mission did not get Urgent Fury off to a good start. It required each of two C-130s to deploy eight-man teams near the USS *Clifton Sprague*. The teams were then to make a sea approach to the Salines area in 23-foot Boston Whalers deployed by the *Sprague*. Planners realized that this method of insertion was tricky, but the alternate method of employing a submarine was

not an option because the SEALs were not yet trained in this special technique and no time was available for such training.

Among the problems the teams encountered were 25-knot winds (usually drops would be canceled at this wind level), the inexperience of the aircrew in dropping in this kind of environment (night, low level, and weather), and the lack of joint training of the SEAL-controller teams. Twenty-five percent of the deployed force was killed on the first drop. The survivors boarded a boat and started for shore, but cut the boat's engine for fear of being sighted by a local boat. They were unable to restart the engine and drifted out to sea until picked up by the destroyer. To add insult to injury, the same mission was attempted the next evening with no better results. This time teams were unable to make it to shore because their boats swamped. Fortunately, no life was lost during the second attempt.⁷⁹

Although the SEALs and controllers were highly trained and select forces in their own right, they were unable to carry out the mission. The participants might well have been able to accomplish their tasks if they had been afforded the opportunity to train jointly and conduct rehearsals. This operation supports the contention that if one is to conduct joint operations on short notice, forces must be given joint training before the operations are required.

The next mission discussed is the SEAL team operation to secure the British Crown representative, Sir Paul Scoon. Scoon and his family were under house arrest, and the SEALs were to free and then protect them until the arrival of ground forces later in the day. Shortly after the SEALs were inserted by Blackhawk helicopters, the Crown residence was surrounded by Cubans and Grenadians who were equipped with a BTR-60 armored personnel carrier (APC) and small arms. As the APC started to enter the area of the residence, the SEALs called in an AC-130 Spectre gunship for fire support, and the Spectre's 20-millimeter (mm) and 40-mm shells damaged the APC. The SEALs managed to hold out and complete the mission despite the fact that the Marine ground force was delayed, and relief did not occur until 26 hours later.⁸⁰ The SEALs' unilateral training had certainly readied them for this difficult mission against a greater force, and the joint training they had received enabled them to communicate effectively with the AC-130 for fire support. SOF were ready and trained for this mission.

Two other missions that involved special operations forces were the capturing of the diesel generating plant and the transmitter tower for Radio Free Grenada. The generating plant and six employees were quickly taken by a 16-man SEAL team, and the radio transmitter was captured by two 4-man SEAL teams who approached the beach in rubber whaleboats. These teams also were able to call in an AC-130 gunship to destroy the building.⁸¹ Once again unilateral and joint training seems to have paid off during these missions.

An interesting incident occurred during the Grenada operation when the Navy hesitated to allow Army helicopters carrying casualties to land on the USS *Guam*. The Navy did not believe Army pilots were adequately trained to land on decks and said that even if the helicopters could land safely, Navy

funding did not provide for giving them fuel.⁸² Even though Adm Wesley L. McDonald, the commander in chief of Atlantic Command, solved the problem later, the fact remains that an area of joint training critical to the mission had not been considered.

This short look at a cross section of special operations missions in Urgent Fury shows mixed results. Selection of highly qualified personnel and their level of component service training seem to have been sufficient for the missions SOF had to carry out. Unlike earlier operations reviewed, Urgent Fury was not ad hoc from this standpoint. On the other hand, as a result of the lack of time for joint training and mission rehearsal, there were still some difficulties. JSOC had made significant strides in preparing SOF for operations, but the results of Operation Urgent Fury indicate that more needed to be done.

Conclusion

Goals in this chapter were to describe the importance of jointness in special operations training and to show that joint training is a key factor in the success of special operations. Another goal was to review selected special operations for lessons because such lessons dictate how SOF should prepare for the future.

The Son Tay raid exhibited a clear concern for joint training with a comprehensive joint training program for ground and air forces. This training included a highly selective recruiting process and thorough component as well as joint exercise programs that fostered a training environment that led to flexibility and creation of common procedures for uncommon situations. Procedures that did not lend themselves to commonality were rehearsed until they were interoperable between services. Son Tay preparations are a model for joint operations training when circumstances permit time for extensive training for a specific operation. Without such time, special operations forces have to trust in the level of pre-mission training, as in the case of the *Mayaguez* operation.

In the *Mayaguez* and the Iranian hostage rescue attempt operations, the lessons learned about joint training from Son Tay were not carried forward, and joint training seems to have been slighted. In the case of the *Mayaguez* the available time did not permit joint training and rehearsal. In the hostage rescue attempt, security considerations limited joint training. In each case, component forces appeared to operate according to service preference and not as a joint force. Although many factors contributed to less than satisfactory joint performances in these operations, the bottom line is that neither of these operations had an adequate joint training program.

Operation Urgent Fury showed the results of steps to improve the organization as well as training of SOF. The majority of the single-service SOF missions were successful, but the joint missions demonstrated a continuing

requirement for improvement. Since many people believed that the problems in Urgent Fury, and in earlier missions, were largely a result of the low priority afforded to special operations by service components, DOD and Congress began to take action.

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Chapter 3

Department of Defense and Congressional Actions to Improve Special Operations

USCINCSOC [United States commander in chief, Special Operations Command] is charged by legislation with training assigned forces to meet mission requirements to ensure interoperability with conventional non-SO forces as well as other SC . . .

— Joint Test Pub 3-05

As seen in the last chapter, the level of joint training has a definite effect on the success of a mission. However, joint training programs do not exist in a vacuum, and a multitude of factors impact the effectiveness of joint training, including the organization of special operations forces, budgetary constraints, leadership understanding of SOF capabilities, and service bias. Readers should understand actions taken by DCD and Congress to counter these limitations on the performance of SOF. Clearly, improvement of joint training was not the only cause for these actions, but joint training is the focus of this paper and, for that reason, other causes receive little attention here.

Background

Between World War II and the late 1970s, the lot of SOF was feast or famine. As with most US forces after World War II, they were cut to minimal levels. SOF budget and numbers saw only small increases in the 1950s, but were rejuvenated in the early 1960s by President John F. Kennedy. Because of Kennedy's concern with third-world contingencies and his belief that SOF were the most effective military instrument for those contingencies, he initiated a large-scale buildup of special operations capabilities. This buildup did not last long. It was a victim of the post-Vietnam antimilitary environment. The SOF budget fell as much as 95 percent from its Vietnam-era highs.

These budget cuts significantly reduced the capability of SOF. Four of seven Army Special Forces groups were disbanded, 95 percent of the Air Force's special operations aircraft were deactivated, Navy special boat units were reduced, and modernization needs were all but ignored.¹ By the late

1970s, the Army was preparing to deactivate additional forces, the Navy was considering decommissioning its only special operations dedicated submarine, and the Air Force was starting to transfer its SO mission to the Army and the Reserve. With the then current military predilection for large conventional forces, the outlook for SOF was truly discouraging. In fact, the demise of active duty SOF might have been close at hand had it not been for the failed attempt to rescue the Iranian hostages.²

The failure of the rescue made evident the poor state of SOF and highlighted the need for their rejuvenation. The Special Operations Review Group, established by the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) to review the rescue operation, cited the neglected state of SOF:

The Joint Chiefs of Staff had to start, essentially, from the beginning to establish a JTF [Joint Task Force], create an organization, provide a staff, develop a plan, select the units, and train the force before the first mission capability could be attained.³

The report cited the lack of a central controlling organization, identified a lack of coordination resulting from interservice rivalries, and specified the need for more joint training.

Publication of the group's report was timely in that it corresponded with President Ronald Reagan's effort to expand US military capabilities. The principle behind Reagan's buildup was to gain parity with the Soviet military and to obtain a capability for dealing with the Soviet Union's aggressive third-world agenda. He believed that the third world was the key to the East-West confrontation and that the United States had to be able to counter Soviet support of insurgents and terrorists in such areas of the world as Central America and the Middle East.⁴ This requirement was the beginning of the latest SOF growth.

Department of Defense Action

Special operations forces were to be used not only in their traditional role as supporting forces but also as the primary actors in the counterterrorist role. Noel Koch, then principal deputy assistant secretary of defense for international security affairs, was given the responsibility for revitalization of special operations forces. Koch clearly outlined the rationale underlying the need for an effective SOF capability:

We will face crises in the coming years in which the use of major force would be inappropriate for a variety of political or military reasons. . . . The [SOF] peacetime requirements we face today inevitably will expand and wartime requirements are even greater.⁵

Koch's challenge was to produce the capability to meet these requirements in light of service sensitivities and overall DOD negativism toward special operations.

The administration, through the DOD, undertook to revitalize SOF using infusions of money and personnel. In addition, an attempt was to be made to impose an overarching SOF structure. The improved structure was thought necessary in light of the ad hoc nature of the Iranian rescue mission and was to coordinate future operations.⁶ The administration wanted to ensure that ad hoc arrangements in special operations would no longer be the rule.

The SOF budget rose from \$440 million in 1981 to \$1.1 billion in 1986, resulting in a significant increase in overall capability.⁷ Army and Navy special warfare units grew by 20 percent while the size of the Air Force MC-130E Combat Talon force was programmed to double.⁸ With this growth in personnel and funding came a corresponding growth in overhead structure to manage the expansion.

The bureaucratic growth took many forms. At the national level, DOD established the Joint Special Operations Agency (JSOA) as overseer of expansion of SOF and as advisor to the JCS. As an advisor, JSOA often found itself in a difficult position in coordinating overall SOF activities, and many in Congress claimed the agency was ineffective because it lacked any directive or command authority over special operations forces.⁹ As noted in the previous chapter, DOD also set up the Joint Special Operations Command to develop, standardize, and train special operations forces in an effort to avoid another debacle like the Iranian hostage rescue.¹⁰

Meanwhile, two advisory panels were formed at the highest levels of government, one to advise DOD and the other to advise Congress. The Special Operations Advisory Group, made up of retired generals, advised DOD, and the Special Operations Panel, under a subcommittee of the House Armed Services Committee, advised Congress and tracked improvements in SOF.¹¹ Congress was increasingly interested in SOF expansion since it involved so much money, and SOF capability was to be used in highly visible and sensitive situations. Congressional concern gradually shifted from people and money to overall SOF organization. With increased funding and establishment of oversight and control organizations, revitalization appeared well started.

Each military service was at the same time consolidating its special operations capabilities. The Army consolidated its forces under the First Special Operations Command, the Air Force placed its assets under the Twenty-third Air Force, and the Navy was working to enhance its special warfare staffs. To provide theaterwide control of SOF, special operations commands were also established under the unified commanders.¹²

Despite all the efforts, enhancement of SOF was slowed significantly by service foot-dragging. When, three years after the Desert One (Iranian hostage rescue) debacle, it became clear that resistance to the Reagan plan still existed in DOD, Deputy Secretary of Defense Paul Thayer prodded service secretaries, the JCS, and the director of defense agencies in a memo. This memo required each service to submit time-phased plans and warned that "lowering the priority would not be tolerated."

US national security requires the maintenance of Special Operations Forces (SOF) capable of conducting the full range of special operations on a worldwide basis, and revitalization of those forces must be pursued as a matter of national urgency.¹³

Thayer was not the only administration or congressional official to be frustrated by the slow pace of revitalization. Koch and others believed that many in the Defense Department were not supporting the administration's plan.

Make no mistake, the resistance is there, though it seldom comes into the open. . . . I have discovered in critical areas in the Pentagon, on the subject of special operations force revitalization, that when they say no, they mean no, when they say maybe, they mean maybe, and if they meant anything but no, they wouldn't be there.¹⁴

Whatever the truth of such allegations, service actions were viewed against this background of frustration. For example, during this period, Chief of Staff of the Air Force Charles A. Gabriel was meeting with Chief of Staff of the Army John A. Wickam, Jr., to discuss joint initiatives that included an attempt to transfer Air Force rotary-wing SOF assets to the Army.¹⁵ Many senior administration officials and many in Congress believed Air Force willingness to yield these assets accurately reflected Air Force esteem and support for SOF.¹⁶ Lt Gen John T. Chain, Jr., then Air Force deputy chief of staff for operations, told members of Congress, "Having Special Forces is like carrying a loaded gun . . . they should only be used as traditional behind the lines commandos who organize guerrillas and engage in sabotage to support the US military during war."¹⁷ Such negative service attitudes coupled with service failures to assign SOF assets high priorities in budget requests (i.e., Air Force treatment of the MC-130E) convinced Congress that the services would not revitalize the special operations capability on their own.¹⁸

Congressional Action

As a result of its perception of the military's hesitancy in revitalizing special operations forces, Congress stepped in. Although Congress was hesitant to insert itself in an issue it saw as a DOD concern, members of both houses considered the situation serious enough to draft specific legislation to force revitalization.¹⁹

In reviewing the historical cycle of SOF, Congress viewed the trend as wasteful for two reasons. First, members believed that while SOF were relatively inexpensive compared to total DOD outlay, the personnel involved required continuous "intensive and extensive training." Decline every 10 years or so led to a loss of trained personnel who could be replaced only after a significant investment over a long period. Second, they saw the requirements for SOF becoming more time sensitive and requiring central control and integration.²⁰

Many lawmakers shared the perception of service aversion for special operations forces. Rep Dan Daniel (D-Va.), chairman of the Readiness Subcommittee of the House Armed Services Committee, was one of the leaders of congressional efforts to revitalize SOF. He became so frustrated with the situation that he recommended a separate armed service be formed to provide a home for SOF. He also strongly believed that the DOD was not doing enough to ready itself to combat low-intensity conflicts, the type of conflict in which many military strategists believed the United States was most likely to become engaged. Daniel believed SOF provided the required capability for LIC.²¹

Sen William S. Cohen (R-Me.), another proponent of SOF revitalization, agreed with Daniel that DOD efforts were insufficient and that the creation of another service might solve the problem.²² Cohen stated in an article in the *Armed Forces Journal International* that "the United States still lacks joint military institutions capable of effectively integrating the forces of different services in combined operations." His assertion was largely a result of the lack of effectiveness exhibited by special operations forces in the Iranian rescue attempt and the Grenada operations.²³ Cohen noted that the United States could not count on having an extended period for training forces for a specific situation. Thus he believed that a separate organization for SOF was mandatory so the United States would have "trained" forces in place to handle such situations. Although the separate-service idea was not adopted, a compromise was reached with DOD.

Faced with inadequate DOD efforts on SOF revitalization, Congress took action in May 1986 via a draft bill. The bill was intended as nonbinding legislation, and Congress seemed satisfied with the progress being made in negotiations with Secretary of Defense Caspar W. Weinberger on the exact requirements of the bill.²⁴ However, at this point, Congress received a memo from Koch explaining the continuing difficulties he was having in the Pentagon in carrying out SOF reorganization.²⁵ Members apparently viewed this evidence of further DOD resistance as the final straw and believed they had no choice but to take control of the situation.

The Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986 and the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1987, as amended by legislation put forth by Senator Cohen and Sen Sam Nunn (D-Ga.), were approved in the fall of 1986. Congress created USSOCOM and established the position of assistant secretary of defense for special operations and low-intensity conflict.²⁶ In part, congressional intent in creating this overhead structure was to give special operations the high-level advocacy needed to compete in Pentagon budgetary wars.

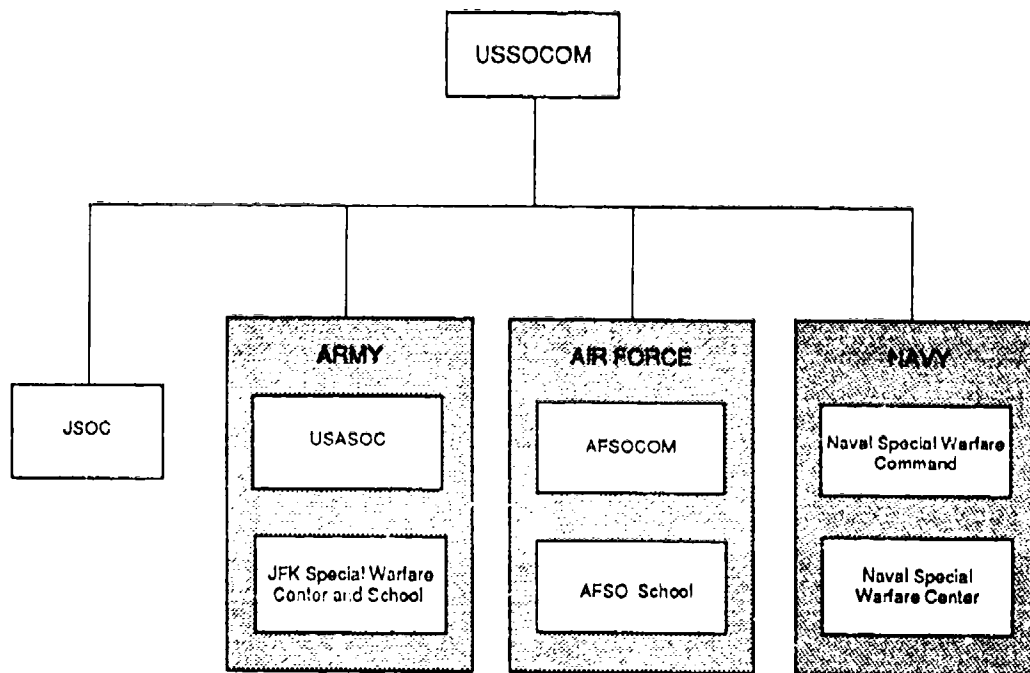
More specifically, the Goldwater-Nichols Act directed that the new command "would combine the special operations missions, responsibilities, and forces of the armed forces."²⁷ Amendments to the subsequent authorization bill and Title 10, Section 13, make the command responsible for 10 specific areas:

- Developing strategy, doctrine, and tactics.
- Training assigned forces.
- Conducting specialized courses of instruction for commissioned and non-commissioned officers.
- Validating requirements.
- Establishing priorities for requirements.
- Ensuring combat readiness.
- Developing and acquiring special operations-peculiar equipment and acquiring special operations-peculiar materiel, supplies, and services.
- Ensuring the interoperability of equipment and forces.
- Formulating and submitting requirements for intelligence support.
- Monitoring promotions, assignments, retention, training, and professional military education of special operations officers.²⁸

USSOCOM, established on 16 April 1987, was given duties and responsibilities that have traditionally been the domain of the services, including acquisition and organization of forces and training.²⁹ Fully understanding his charter, Gen James J. Lindsay, the first commander of USSOCOM, stated in an article in *Defense* 87 that "the Special Operations Command has the responsibility to revitalize and standardize special operations forces assets."³⁰

General Lindsay organized his command to accomplish the training mission based on guidance from several directives. The *Unified Command Plan* states that "it is the responsibility of the commander to ensure unity of effort in the accomplishment of the commander's assigned missions" and to "ensure interoperability of special operations equipment and forces."³¹ Joint Pub 0-2, *Unified Action Armed Forces (UNAAF)*, states that the commander must ensure that "sufficient joint training is conducted within his command to ensure effective conduct of joint operations."³² In a narrower focus, Joint Test Pub 7-05, *Doctrine for Joint Special Operations*, states that "the Commander in Chief, United States Special Operations Command, is charged with training assigned forces to meet mission taskings as herein described and to ensure their interoperability with conventional forces as well as other SOF." Although the responsibility for ensuring joint training and interoperability with conventional forces is shared with other commander in chiefs (CINC), USCINCSOC is explicitly charged to train USSOCOM's joint forces to achieve "unity of effort" and "interoperability."³³ This requirement means joint training to a level that enables the components to standardize their procedures or at least fully understand each other's different procedures. To effect this level of jointness, USCINCSOC established directly reporting major command (MAJCOM) components.

Even though there was some initial resistance, by May 1990 all services had complied by forming MAJCOMs (fig. 4). The Navy established the Naval Special Warfare Command at the Naval Amphibious Base, Coronado, California, with Special Warfare Groups 1 and 2 reporting to it. The Naval Warfare Center, which is the authority on naval special warfare doctrine and which provides instruction and training for the Navy, also reports to the command.



Legend:

AF = Air Force
 AFSOCOM = Air Force Special Operations Command
 JSOC = Joint Special Operations Command
 SO = Special Operations
 USASOC = US Army Special Operations Command
 USSOCOM = US Special Operations Command

Figure 4. United States Special Operations Command

The Army established the United States Army Special Operations Command (USASOC) at Fort Bragg, North Carolina. This organization is the largest service component and consists of active duty, Reserve, and National Guard forces. These forces are organized in nine Special Forces groups, a Ranger regiment, psychological operations and civil affairs groups, and the Special Operations Aviation Regiment with its support units. The John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School supports USASOC. This school conducts training and education courses and is responsible for developing doctrine and new equipment for Army special operations forces.

The Air Force MAJCOM of USSOCOM is the Air Force Special Operations Command (AFSOC) located at Hurlburt Field, Florida. The USAF Special Operations School, which is responsible for education of selected allied and US personnel on SOF joint operations and unconventional warfare, reports to AFSOC. AFSOC is responsible for all Air Force fixed- and rotary-wing SOF aircrew training conducted at Hurlburt Field.³⁴ The Military Airlift Com-

mand, as of this writing, is responsible for special operations crew training at Kirtland AFB, New Mexico, based on AFSOC guidelines.

Conclusion

Through the efforts of individuals in DOD and Congress, the United States now has a central organization that can produce and preserve effective special operations capabilities. In addition, USSOCOM, the focal point for the component commands, now has the organizations and authority to carry out a meaningful joint training program to ensure standardization and interoperability between its service components.

United States Special Operations Command has already taken action to improve the jointness of its components. Some examples of this effort are SEAL attendance in Army medical training, Air Force SOF pararescue personnel attending Army Special Forces and Navy SEAL skill courses, and Army Special Forces personnel attending Navy schools for combat rubber raiding craft, dive operations, and dive maintenance training.³⁵ USSOCOM has made progress in the joint training arena, but the fact remains that after attending these joint courses, individuals usually return to their units and selectively apply the joint procedures they have learned to service-unique procedures. Thus USSOCOM components are exposed to some joint courses, but they still conduct most training as if they will operate independently. Since SEALs and Army Special Forces do conduct largely independent operations once they are in place, this limitation may not be pronounced in such situations. However, surface operations are becoming increasingly dependent on air support, and many operations require direct application of aerial forces. In these cases, the procedures and tactics used by ground forces and aircrews must be standardized or the results could be repetitions of previous mission disjunctions.

Legislation has given DOD and USSOCOM the means to provide the levels of joint training required of a mission-ready force. With the means available, USSOCOM and its service components should establish the apparatus to ensure joint training is carried out effectively. The next chapter attempts to see if the means have led to the ends required for an acceptable level of joint training.

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Chapter 4

Joint Training Tasks

The key to fighting and winning is an understanding of "how we train to fight" at every echelon. Training programs must result in demonstrated tactical and technical competence, confidence, and initiative in our soldiers and their leaders.

—Gen Carl E. Vuono

Because responsibility for joint training of special operations forces clearly rests with USSOCOM, the command must ensure that its joint operational training program is comprehensive enough to provide an effective and efficient force. As shown earlier, the selection process, component service training, joint training, and mission rehearsals are significant in successful prosecution of a mission.

Establishment of USSOCOM and its components has in itself resolved many of the problems with selection processes and component-unique training requirements, and establishment of a more comprehensive peacetime training program that enables SOF to train jointly will help resolve many of the joint problems. These observations do not mean that all is well—much remains to be done.

Consider, for example, the issue of mission rehearsals. While mission rehearsals will always be a requirement, a comprehensive peacetime joint training program could lessen the need for extensive joint training for specific missions before rehearsals can begin. Such a training program might also shorten the time needed for rehearsals. These results could be important for future operations.

Elaborate rehearsals, such as those used before the 1970 Son Tay raid, would be preferable. Usually, however, time is at a premium. SOF often have to trust in their pre-mission training, designed to enable them to improvise on the spot.¹

Thus the USSOCOM training program should allow its forces to start mission-specific joint training at the rehearsal stage when they are called to action. They should not have to use up the available time for general joint training.

This chapter attempts to identify whether SOF are presently training to such a level. The chapter begins with the Joint Chiefs of Staff system of joint mission essential task lists (JMETL) as the basis for analysis. The chapter explains how JMETLs are used at the USSOCOM and component levels and

how JMETLs shape joint tasks at the unit level. Then, using a plausible direct-action mission scenario, the chapter identifies joint nodes (JN), and joint tasks at those nodes, critical to the outcome of the scenario.² As the joint nodes and tasks are identified, the discussion mixes the hypothetical scenario with examples of actual incidents to illustrate the problems that can result from lack of joint training.³ Finally, the chapter compares the scenario joint tasks to the joint tasks that special operations forces are presently accomplishing in training programs. This comparison should help determine whether special operations forces are currently training for the missions of the decade ahead.

Joint Mission Essential Tasks

JCS Memorandum of Policy (MOP), number 26, Joint Training Program, defines a JMETL as:

A CINC's list of key joint operational tasks considered essential for accomplishment of operational plans predicated on the missions assigned and forces apportioned by the Joint Strategic Capabilities Plan (JSCP), US alliance or treaty, or by regional initiatives.⁴

The memorandum requires CINCs to identify joint training tasks, establish joint training plans, and provide a method to review the effectiveness of the training.⁵ Each of the joint training tasks is subdivided into supporting tasks essential to mission accomplishment. USSOCOM has developed JMETLs in accordance with JCS guidance.

Identification of joint mission essential tasks (JMET) is the key step because it ultimately leads to the training tasks to be accomplished at the unit level. Combining all such tasks provides a comprehensive joint training program. USSOCOM's annually published joint training plan (JTP) lists all the "joint training" conducted by USSOCOM and its forces. Readers should note that the tasks identified in the JTP are based on those forces apportioned in the JSCP for current on-the-shelf operational plans.⁶ These plans are primarily conventional warfare plans in which SOF play a supporting role. (There are very few on-the-shelf plans for direct-action/contingency operations that are SOF-only operations.) Thus the joint training tasks identified in USSOCOM's JTP reflect the joint SOF/conventional force interface, but they are not necessarily the training tasks required to maintain joint proficiency in SOF-only contingency operations. Although it is clear that identification of mission essential tasks in this way has a spin-off effect on internal SOF joint capability, the system is not specifically designed to improve joint training for SOF-only contingency operations. USSOCOM must, of course, be as concerned with internal SOF joint capabilities as it is with the special operations/conventional force interface.

In light of the need for SOF-only joint training, the USSOCOM joint training plan does state that component forces train together on occasion to "practice joint common skills and . . . unit drills that require close timing and repetition to acquire and sustain proficiency." The JTP goes on to say that this training provides an "optimum" environment of training that does not require meeting joint staff timelines.⁷ This optimum training environment does not require forces to train together unless the training is convenient for the component forces involved. It does not appear to the author to be the best way to ready a force for contingency operations.

The JMETs in the USSOCOM JTP are general in nature, as they should be for that level. An example of a USSOCOM joint task is "train and provide to US combatant commanders special operations, psychological operations, and civil action forces." The subordinate task for this joint task is "conduct all aspects of joint special operations training . . . ensuring consistency with joint doctrine, force interoperability, and combat readiness . . . across the operational continuum."⁸ The point in giving this sample is to show that fulfilling the tasks clearly requires joint training at the component level. USSOCOM has taken the JMETL process a step further by requiring the components to develop supporting lists.

Each component must identify tasks that support and complement USSOCOM's joint mission essential task lists. These component task lists form the basis for component training programs.⁹ Since the component task lists were still being developed at this writing, the author can only comment on the drafts. The titles and text of the service drafts do not contain the term *joint*. They are simply referred to as mission essential task lists (METL). As an example, one of the tasks in the Navy METL reads, "Ensure training is effective and supports requirements," while a task in the Air Force METL states, "Establish training programs, as required, for AFSOC instruction."¹⁰ Neither of these examples refers to a need for jointness in training. These component METLs have been developed primarily from a service perspective with training requirements based solely on service doctrine. Many of the tasks therefore do not adequately support joint tasks and JCS doctrinal development programs. To achieve jointness the next step must be to develop tasks, conditions, and standards that clearly articulate the need for jointness in training. Jointness will be perpetuated down to the component level only when the components are required to develop these *joint* mission essential tasks, conditions, and standards. To be sure, many component-only tasks will appear on the lists, but many of the component tasks are joint in nature (e.g., training). If the tasks identified at component level are not joint, truly joint training at the unit level will never be a reality.

Identifying specific joint tasks depends upon understanding what operations units will be expected to do. Thus one returns to the need to train as one expects to fight. The following section examines a direct-action mission scenario as an aid in identifying required joint training tasks at the unit level.

Scenario

With the explanation of the JMETL process and the need for identifying joint tasks at the USSOCOM and component levels as background, this section establishes some of the joint tasks required at the unit level for a specific type of mission. As noted earlier, jointness must not be limited to the command levels but must permeate all levels if it is to be effective. The following potential direct-action scenario is only a framework for identifying some of the joint tasks that units could and should be expected to accomplish. While the following mission is fictional, the background information is factual.

Background

To provide plausibility, the scenario takes place in Peru. The United States has interests in that country, the entire Latin American region suffers from political and economic instability, and insurgent activity is high in Peru. "Peru is a hellish place to live and none too easy to visit,"¹¹ largely as a result of political, economic, and drug-related problems. Citizens and visitors alike are in danger from terrorists and criminals. A large part of this instability stems from a weak economy.

Peru's economic problems began to assume truly serious proportions in the early 1970s with the military government's inability to pay its bills. At that time, Peru was the only country in the region in danger of being blackballed by international finance organizations¹² and was, in fact, the first Latin American country to default on its debts.¹³ Runaway inflation has increased Peru's woes. By 1988 the inflation rate had increased to 1,722 percent. Such inflation has resulted in a 50 to 60 percent unemployment rate that makes mere subsistence difficult.¹⁴ For many Peruvians the answer was emigration. Total legal departures reached 120,000 in 1988, four times the total in 1986. Although Peru has made valiant efforts to improve its economy, the economy is still a disaster and provides an ideal breeding ground for insurgent operations.

Peru has been plagued by political violence for many years. The military proved inept at running the government in the 1970s, and civilian leadership did not do much better in the 1980s. Insurgents have used the government's inability to solve economic problems to obtain the support of the people for particular causes.¹⁵ Terrorist incidents peaked in 1988 with the killing of 4,446 military and police officials.¹⁶ Of the many insurgent groups in Peru, the most threatening is the *Sendero Luminoso* (SL or Shining Path).

The Shining Path is the largest insurgent movement in Latin America and is the dominant guerrilla force in Peru.¹⁷ (The SL was believed responsible for 80 percent of all terrorist incidents in Peru in 1988.¹⁸) This group considers the present government a dictatorship and has the stated goal of creating a new state for the workers and the peasants.¹⁹ The organization was founded in the 1960s in the remote highland of Ayacucho and is rooted in

mysticism and Maoism. It has grown to a force of 4,000 hardened guerrillas who "make up in ruthlessness what they lack in sophistication."²⁰ As of mid-1989, the Shining Path had been credited with murdering more than 13,000 people, being involved in the disappearance of over 3,000 individuals, and having caused property damage exceeding \$10 billion.²¹ The movement obtains its funding through bank robberies, the cocaine network, extortion and protection, and a limited number of kidnappings. The SL tries to avoid kidnapping, because unlike most other insurgent groups, it wishes to avoid publicity and relies mostly on the "propaganda of the deed."²²

In addition to the economic and the political woes of the country, drugs and their relationship to insurgents have further exacerbated Peru's problems. Growth in the drug trade started in the 1970s in reaction to increased demand in the United States. In 1988 coca leaf production reached 300,000 tons, providing over 50 percent of the world's supply.²³ The most important area for growing this crop is in the Upper Huallaga River valley on the eastern side of the Andes about 250 miles from Lima.²⁴ The SL has expanded its efforts in drug operations during the last few years and now has effective control over the entire region. It is estimated that the SL receives \$10 to \$30 million in drug money per year which it uses to help pay for cadre salaries and for weapons.²⁵ The US and Peruvian governments are working together to stem the flow of drugs through crop eradication and substitution. This effort is in the best interest of the United States, but it does little to improve the economy of the region.

The principle weapon used by the SL is dynamite. Guerrillas steal it from local mines and launch it "as is" by means of the llama-hair sling, a traditional Inca weapon, or use it in hand grenades. Their firearms are usually acquired from raids on local gun shops or from attacks on military and police armories. They have Winchester rifles, Belgian-made automatic rifles, and submachine guns as well as mortars and homemade bazookas. For communications, the guerrillas use transmitters stolen from local telephone companies.²⁶

The Problem

The situation on 10 November 1994 is that an American embassy C-12 flying out of Lima, Peru, with six passengers and two crew members has made a forced landing near La Muzada (fig. 5). The passengers were traveling to the Tingo Maria/Uchiza area to inspect Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) resources and to conduct local area reconnaissance. DEA sources state that aircraft wreckage has been found just north of La Muzada, about 100 feet west of the Rio Huallaga. DEA also reports that the passengers and crew survived the crash landing and were abducted by an armed group. The passengers were taken to a building north of La Muzada. Shortly after this information was received, *La Prensa*, the Peruvian national newspaper, reported that the Shining Path had abducted the crew and was demanding \$2 million and the removal of all DEA personnel from Peru. DEA further reports



Figure 5. Area for Scenario

that it has positively identified the location of the hostages in La Muzada and that the hostages are being held by a force of 30, armed with Belgian automatic rifles. The insurgents are reported to be alert and appear to be well led and organized

The national command authorities have ordered United States Southern Command (USSOUTHCOM) in Panama (the regional command) to coordinate with the Peruvian country team and DEA to prepare two alternatives to rescue the eight Americans. The code name given to the operation is Quick Save. Southern Command has decided to use special operations forces due to

minimal planning and rehearsal time and limited availability of resources. Subsequently, SOUTHCOM established a joint special operations task force (JSOTF) at Howard AFB, Panama, to plan, coordinate, and execute the mission.

Planning factors are as follows:

- Forty-eight hours before rescue execution, an "eyes-on" reconnaissance and surveillance (R&S) team must be inserted.
- Infiltration of the R&S team and the actual rescue must be conducted at night.
- The weather forecast is poor for the next 48 hours, but the weather should clear after that.
- All forces needed have already forward deployed to Howard AFB to participate in a commander in chief US Southern Command (CINCSOUTH) exercise. The force list is as follows:
 - Navy resources are three ships with medical teams and SEAL personnel.
 - Air Force resources include an MC-130, AC-130, HC-130, two MH-53Js, and a KC-10.
 - Army resources include two MH-47Es and Special Forces personnel.
- The government of Peru has approved the concept of the mission and the use of US military forces.
- Time is of the essence because the hostages will be moved soon. Thus there is limited time for mission rehearsal.
- The DEA airfield at Santa Lucia can be used as a staging base.
- Command and control arrangements between the country team, DEA, and the military have been developed, coordinated, and approved.

Although numerous different courses of action could be pursued, the two courses selected for discussion were developed to highlight the potential for joint interaction in the special operations community. Course of action 1 uses Army Special Forces for recovery of the hostages; course of action 2 uses Navy SEALs. Both courses of action use Army and Air Force special operations aviation assets.

Course of Action 1

The first step in the mission is the organizational setup and mission planning phase. The forces, or at least the planners, will meet at Howard AFB to plan the mission. An MC-130 will conduct an infiltration mission into Peru shortly thereafter. The aircraft will conduct a low-altitude parachute deployment of a five-man reconnaissance and surveillance team to provide eyes on the target. The aircraft will return to Panama. The MC-130 will be used because of its navigational accuracy and ability to deploy forces unnoticed.

Forty-eight hours later two Air Force MH-53Js and two Army MH-47Es will deploy to Santa Lucia, Peru. Each will transport Army Special Forces personnel. Lack of immediately available resources and the need for all-

weather, night-vision goggle capable aircraft require the Army/Air Force aviation mix. The helicopters will fly directly to Eagle Point, the helicopter landing zone near the target, to deploy the Army Special Forces. The four helicopters will then go to a holding point while the team rescues the hostages. When called, the helicopters will return to Eagle Point for the pickup and will take the hostages and team members to US Navy ships waiting offshore. An MC-130 and HC-130 will provide air refueling support for the helicopters en route to the area of operations. The refuelers will then orbit off the coast of Peru with the MC-130 providing command and control capability. A medical support team will be on the HC-130 to be available for deployment to Santa Lucia, if needed.

The AC-130 will fly to Santa Lucia and establish an orbit to provide airborne fire support if needed. The MC-, AC-, and HC-130s will receive refueling support from the KC-10 en route to Peru.²⁷ All 130s will return to Panama after the helicopters have recovered to the Navy ships.

The following joint nodes will occur during course of action 1 (fig. 6). (The JNs identified are not all-inclusive but do highlight major areas of joint interaction.)

JN 1. Army/Air Force/Navy mission planning. This node involves organization setup, and joint planning and rehearsal for the operation.

JN 2. MC-130/Special Forces interface. This node consists of loading, infiltration, and low-altitude airdrop.

JN 3. MH-47/MH-53/Special Forces interface. This node involves loading and unloading of troops, infiltration and exfiltration operations, and landing zone operations.

JN 4. AC-130/Special Forces interface. This node involves air/ground communications for fire support.

JN 5. MC-130/HC-130/MH-47/MH-53 interface. This node consists of Air Force aerial refueling of Army and Air Force helicopters.

JN 6. MH-47/MH-53/ship interface. This node involves dissimilar formation and shipboard operations.

Course of Action 2

Course of action 2 entails the use of Navy SEALs in lieu of the Army Special Forces team. In this case, the MC-130 will conduct an infiltration of the target area to deploy an R&S team of Navy SEALs to provide eyes-on target 48 hours before the rescue mission. The helicopters will then fly to Santa Lucia with Navy SEALs on board. The MC-130, HC-130, and AC-130 will carry out the same actions described in the first course of action. The only added requirement is that the MC-130 must deliver three rubber raiding craft to Santa Lucia. Once at Santa Lucia, the SEALs will transfer the raiding craft to the helicopters. The helicopters will then deploy the Navy SEALs and their boats in the river near the Santa Lucia base. The SEALs will travel down river to La Muzada. They will beach just north of the city and move on foot to the target area. Following the rescue, they will return to the beach

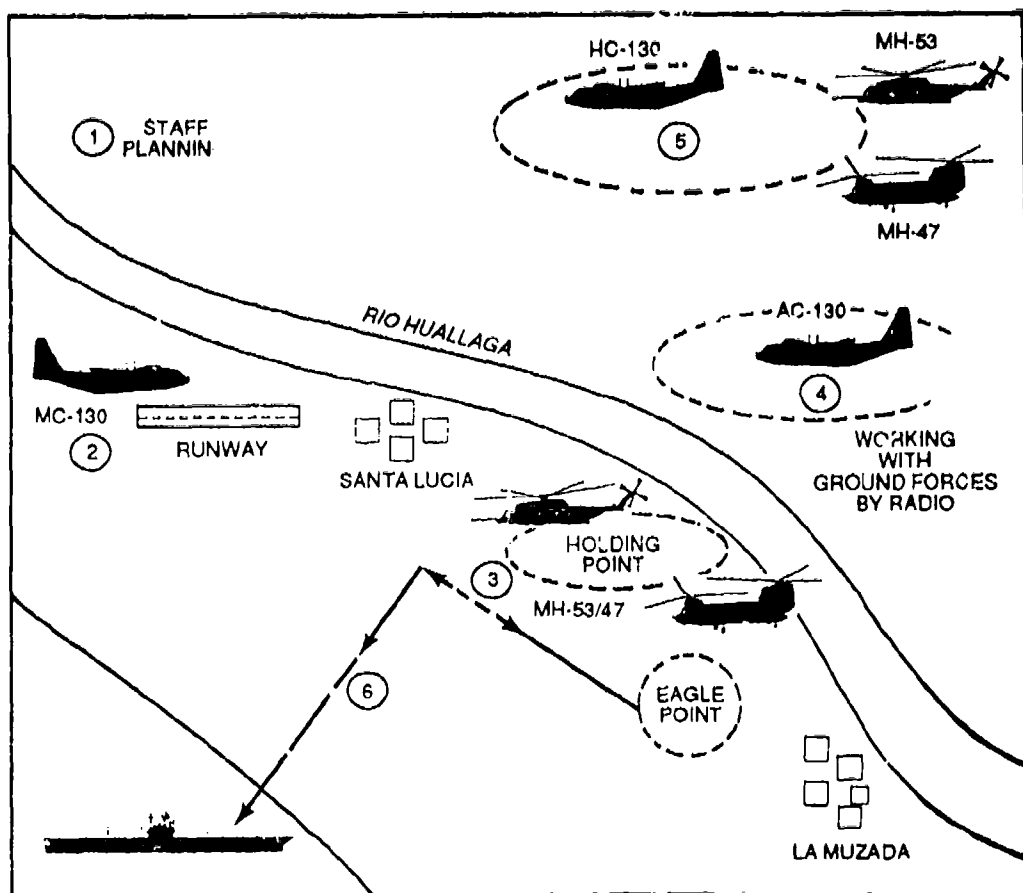


Figure 6. Course of Action 1, Joint Nodes

landing area and call for the helicopters, which will be waiting at an airborne holding point, to pick them up. After recovery, the helicopters will transport the SEALs and the hostages to the waiting ships. Once again the 130s will recover to Howard AFB. The JNs for course of action 2 (fig. 7) are as follows:

- JN 1. Same as in course of action 1.
- JN 2. MC-130/SEAL interface. This node involves loading, infiltration, and low-altitude airdrop.
- JN 3. MH-47/MH-53/SEAL interface. This node consists of loading and unloading, infiltration and exfiltration, and deployment of SEALs with rafts and landing zone operations.
- JN 4. AC-130/SEAL interface. This node involves communications between the aircraft and the SEALs on the ground
- JN 5. Same as in course of action 1.
- JN 6. Same as in course of action 1.

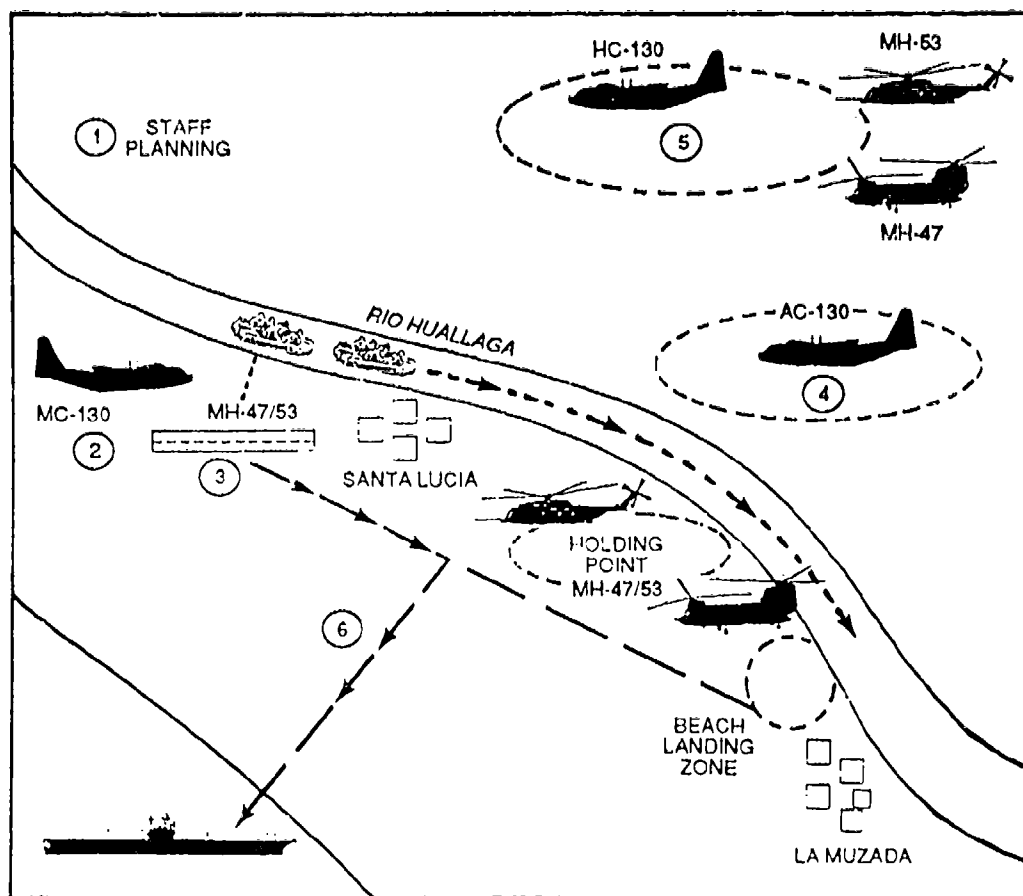


Figure 7. Course of Action 2, Joint Nodes

Analysis

This section analyzes some of the joint nodes by identifying the joint mission essential tasks within each node. For the purpose of this paper, these tasks will be referred to as joint tasks. Like the JNs, the joint tasks are not necessarily all-inclusive, but illustrate some key tasks that component services must conduct jointly during contingency operations. For brevity, the Army Special Forces and the Navy SEAL nodes are evaluated together since the joint tasks within these nodes are much the same. Additionally, since the ad hoc nature of the personnel selection process and the component-unique training problems noted in chapter 2 have been largely resolved by the establishment of the United States Special Operations Command and its dedicated components, the discussion addresses only joint training and rehearsal operations. As the joint tasks are identified, they are evaluated as to the need for prior training. The training requirements are then compared to the way USSOCOM components train today.

Identification of the joint tasks for the nodes results from the author's compilation and interpretation of information from operators in the field. The author interviewed by phone, in person, or by survey several individuals from each operations specialty and solicited their comments as to the plausibility of the courses of action and as to the identification of critical joint nodes and joint tasks to be accomplished at each node. Although their expertise was invaluable, the opinions expressed here are solely those of the author.

Joint Node 1. The first node identified, and probably the most critical to the success of the mission, is establishment of the organization, joint operational planning for the mission, and joint rehearsals. Joint planning does not supersede required component service planning, but the keys to accomplishment of the operation are cooperation between and integration of component capabilities in a total effort.

The first joint task would be to set up the organization at Howard AFB, Panama. The advance team would deploy to Panama and establish a joint special operations task force. Normally, the JSOTF would prepare to receive the operational forces, but in this case the forces are already on-site, so they would simply be notified of the mission. The JSOTF would then establish and operate joint communications, develop plans to sustain the forces, and, at the same time, establish staff procedures and communications arrangements. Once the organizational joint tasks have been completed, the next step would be to identify and define the mission based on the commander's intent.²⁸

During the operational planning phase, planners from the operating forces would be notified of the commander's intent. The planners would conduct a joint analysis of the hostage rescue operations, to include intelligence estimates of the area of operations in Peru, infiltration and exfiltration routes based on that intelligence, and the operational and sustainment requirements of the force. Subsequently, courses of action would be developed for review by the JSOTF commander. Following course of action selection, subordinate commanders, crews, teams, and staff would be briefed. Lastly, the execution checklist would be prepared. Following these joint staff tasks, there would be a period of mission refinement and confirmation of support requirements (e.g., KC-10 refueling support). Joint planning refinement is a continuous process, but at this stage of the planning process, the most up-to-date joint plan available would be published in a joint special operations mission order. The joint staff would then conduct joint mission briefings for the participating units. These briefings would be followed by unit mission planning sessions and "briefbacks" on the mission.²⁹

The complexities of setting up the joint organization and planning process require prior joint training. Not only must the planning sometimes be conducted within time constraints, as in this mission, but also the planners from USSOCOM, USSOUTHCOM, and component staffs must understand the capabilities and limitations of the other components' forces and how best to integrate them into an effective force. A clear understanding of joint employment doctrine, procedures, and communications is also required. If the members of the advance team have not been trained in these areas, they are likely

to prove ineffective, if not detrimental, in the organizational and planning processes. These processes primarily involve the joint staff and unit planners.

It is also important that the joint planning tasks of unit-level aircrews and ground teams be identified. They include the following:

- Review and coordinate the communications plan. Common understanding of communication procedures and equipment and the need for communications discipline must exist.
- Develop a joint operational mission plan. Crews and teams must be familiar with each other's capabilities and how they integrate in the execution checklist. Crews also must be experienced in joint tactics and procedures because there is little room in this type of operation for service peculiarities.
- Plan primary and alternate infiltration and exfiltration activities. The crews and planners must develop and deconflict air routes, confirm checkpoints, identify primary and alternate drop zones and landing zone markings, and confirm refueling points.
- Develop emergency procedures and "what if" plans. Planners must provide points of no return; escape and evasion plans; en route, execution, and combat search and rescue procedures; and weather and equipment malfunction procedures.
- Conduct threat evaluation and write countermeasures plan.
- Develop primary and alternate aircraft load plans.³⁰

This list of joint planning tasks is certainly not all-inclusive, but it does indicate the complexity of the planning process. It also demonstrates that special operations staff officers and operators from USSOCOM and its components must be trained before the event if they are to carry out such short-notice planning effectively. At this writing, training programs for joint special operations staff officers are limited, and the planning processes are usually learned through experience (e.g., exercises and actual operations).

Discussions with field operators indicated general agreement that prior joint planning training in addition to face-to-face joint mission planning during operations is required, but during normal day-to-day training, such activities seem to be sacrificed for a number of reasons. The result is that in many exercises mission planning ends up being segregated on a component basis. This segregation was evident during Exercise Knife Blade 90, a JCS-coordinated, USSOCOM-scheduled, 1st Special Operations Command-sponsored exercise of USSOCOM component forces. Also during this exercise, the restricted training level of aircrews, Air Force aircrew misunderstanding of the restrictions that apply to the Army Special Forces, and Army Special Forces misunderstanding of Air Force restrictions and capabilities resulted in confusion and required changes to the air operations schedule. Observers also noted that Air Force crews did not arrive early to coordinate and brief teams on routes, procedures, and abort or escape and evasion plans. Additionally, JSOTF and AFSOC personnel were selected and organized on an ad hoc basis. Their lack of familiarity with SO air operations doctrine and procedures was evident.³¹

Once initial planning is completed, mission rehearsal would be the next important part of the first joint node. Ideally, time would be available to conduct full day and night dress rehearsals. In this scenario, time is limited so rehearsals would have to be kept to a minimum. There would be no time for rehearsal of the initial infiltration of the R&S team by the MC-130. Respondents to the author's survey expressed a range of opinions concerning mission rehearsals. Some believed the peacetime joint training program should be comprehensive enough to allow the conduct of the mission with minimum rehearsal time. Others thought that if there was no time for full mission rehearsal, the mission should not be attempted. The author believes the answer lies somewhere between these extremes. The joint planning staff should identify the time limitation and the mission areas that need full rehearsal versus those areas that can be "table talked." Whatever the answer, the problem again highlights the need for a comprehensive peacetime joint training plan. The more familiar each service is with the others' operational capabilities and procedures, the less rehearsal will be required.

This evaluation has only scratched the surface of the complexities involved in organizing, planning, and rehearsing for a clandestine night mission into a foreign country, but it should be sufficient to show the importance of prior joint staff planning and operational training. The lesson for the first JN is the need for this kind of training and education. Staffs, crews, and ground teams should participate in such joint training to ready them for operational activities. At this writing, there is no documented joint training requirement for staffs, crews, or teams on a periodic basis (e.g., a semiannual requirement). To be sure, certain SOF units do spend a great deal of time in such activities through the course of a year, but many other units seldom get the opportunity. Although component mission planning is a periodic requirement, the joint aspect of planning is not—and it should be. A training challenge still exists for the tasks identified in joint node 1.

Joint Node 2. This joint node contains infiltration of the Army Special Forces or Navy SEAL R&S team before the actual rescue operation. The infiltration would entail the boarding of the team in Panama, parachuting of five people into an unmarked drop zone, and return of the MC-130 to Panama once the R&S team is safely on the ground. As mentioned previously, joint planning and preparation for this portion of the operation are critical, but prior joint training of the Air Force aircrew and the ground team involved is also critical, because the scenario allows no time for full rehearsal of this portion of the mission.

Several joint tasks would be involved in the infiltration operation, and the aircrew and ground team should be thoroughly familiar with them.

- Conduct joint mission planning.
- Load the ground team and equipment on the MC-130 including coordination of seating, tie-down, and emergency procedures.
- Conduct low-altitude airdrop using blind-drop or navigator-directed procedures.

- Coordinate and conduct internal aircraft communications, drop-zone signals, and ground-to-air communications.
- Conduct joint analysis of the drop zone to include direction of approach, hazards and threats, alternate drop zones, altitude, authentication procedures, winds, cloud cover, and emergency procedures.³²

Respondents to the author's joint task survey on the training requirements for this node again voiced a wide range of opinions. At one extreme, some individuals thought very little joint training is required because the ground forces should just get on the airplane, sit down, and wait until the green light comes on. At the other extreme, some said there should be a comprehensive joint training program addressing all the joint tasks mentioned above so forces would be fully integrated at the start of the mission. The author leans toward the latter view even though some of the tasks mentioned seem simple. As Clausewitz stated, even the simple things are difficult in war. An MC-130 pilot said it best, "Even for the simple tasks there is no substitute for actual face-to-face, hands-on work by the people who will be doing the mission. Naturally, the more complicated the task, the more time and frequency of training are required."³³ The requirement for joint training is even more important in cases (illustrated by the scenario) in which there is scant rehearsal time.

An example of what can result from a lack of joint training occurred in National Training Center (NTC) Exercise 90-8. The exercise included a special operations scenario depicting a US contingency operation within a regional conflict. The contingency involved assisting a host nation in reestablishing control over areas occupied by invaders and separatist forces.³⁴

The special operations mission involved dropping an Army Special Forces team using high-altitude, low-opening (HALO) procedures but was complicated by the addition of a static-line jump team and a spare aircrew on the aircraft assigned the mission. The aircraft was not configured to handle this many personnel, and there was some confusion over mixing static-line and HALO procedures. For example, the static jumpers had wind-speed limitations of 13 knots while the HALO jumpers had a limitation of 18 knots. Thus, if the wind speed were between 13 and 18 knots, the static jumpers would have to cancel, but the HALO jumpers could go. Another problem was that the static jumpers had no oxygen equipment, so the HALO jump altitude had to be limited to 10,000 feet, which severely limited the usefulness of the training for the HALO team.

The crew and teams got together in the isolation facility before the flight to coordinate and brief the upcoming mission. The exercise report noted that "this [preflight coordination] is critical and has always been a part of Special Operations Air Operations doctrine." However, the report also noted that such activities are "often ignored on exercises."³⁵

Unfortunately, the value of the prebriefing was negated when the operation did not develop according to the briefing. The crew was forced to divert to the alternate drop zone but, because there was no intercom hookup between the

HALO team and aircrew (although procedures state communications is needed), the team did not receive the word. To complicate matters, the alternate drop zone was 500 feet higher than the primary drop zone. Thus the jumpers needed to reset their altimeters and the automatic opening devices on their parachutes. These changes were especially important because the jump was a blind drop at night, and visual determination of when to open chutes was impossible. In addition, knowledge of the change in drop zones was critical because jumpers must consider their height above ground in their emergency procedures if they experience parachute malfunctions. In this instance, one of the team members did have a malfunction and considered cutting away his primary chute but, fortunately, did not since he was 500 feet closer to the ground than he thought he was. All jumpers landed safely on the drop zone.

Beyond the obvious potential for a tragedy, perhaps the most important factor in this example is that the mistakes were discovered because joint training was occurring. This fact highlights the need for this type of training. If the same mistakes were made on an operation, the results could be disastrous for many more people than the jumpers. Currently, USSOCOM has no joint requirement for Air Force aircrews and other-component ground teams to practice the joint tasks mentioned above on a periodic basis.³⁶ The amount of joint training individuals receive in these joint tasks is dependent on the unit of assignment's particular exercise schedule and training priority. Once again, joint training seems to be on a catch-as-catch-can basis.

Joint Node 3. The third joint node involves MH-47E and MH-53J operations with Army Special Forces or Navy SEAL teams. In this part of the mission, both courses of action require pre-mission planning, loading of the forces onto the aircraft, and infiltration of the teams for insertion into Peru. The helicopters would insert the SEALs via inflatable boats and the Special Forces directly to the Eagle Point landing zone. Both operations would have to avoid leaving clues to the force's arrival. Upon rescue of the hostages, the helicopters would pick up the forces, exfiltrate the area, and recover to the ships off the coast.

Several joint tasks are associated with this segment of the mission:

- Conduct joint mission planning and prebrief with crew and teams on infiltration and exfiltration route information; survival, evasion, resistance, and escape (SERE) planning; and primary and alternate plans.
- Load ground teams and equipment onto the helicopters. This task would involve proper location of seating, tie-down of equipment, and knowledge of aircraft emergency procedures.
- Coordinate and conduct onboard and ground-to-air communications and hand signals.
- Insert the Army Special Forces at Eagle Point by landing or rappelling operations.
- Insert the Navy SEALs by deployment of their rubber raiding craft into the river.

- Select helicopter landing zones, establish parking configuration, sequence departure, and establish lighting requirements.
- Coordinate and conduct drop-zone pickup procedures and signals (e.g., chemical lights or strobes).³⁷

Even though the optimum choice of assets would involve use of a single source of helicopters (Army or Air Force) with the ground teams, the limited resources in USSOCOM may mean that the ideal is not attainable. In fact, operations could be even more difficult than illustrated in the scenario when one considers the potential use of the H-60s or H-58s (interoperability of service-unique helicopters is discussed further under joint node 6).

Discussion with the helicopter and ground-team communities revealed that again there is no joint requirement for either aircrews or ground teams to practice the tasks identified.³⁸ All the field respondents agreed that if they were to practice the tasks identified, cross flow of information would be extremely important, that current joint training is largely happenstance, and that there is a need for a periodic training requirement. Besides providing familiarity with other-service procedures, such training would identify differing and conflicting procedures. Such recognition could lead to standardization and documentation in the joint tactics, techniques, and procedures manuals of the SOF community. To be sure, some problems can be solved during rehearsals for operations, but time constraints are likely to limit solutions to fine-tuning of already-established procedures—not developing new ones.

A recent exercise in Panama illustrates the types of problems that can result from a lack of joint training. Army Special Forces and Navy SEAL personnel, who were accustomed to working with H-1s and H-60s, formed landing zone perimeters that were much too small for the larger Army MH-47s and Air Force MH-53s used in the exercise. After this problem was corrected, further problems occurred with covering fire procedures and the time required to collapse the perimeter. Thus one helicopter had to act as high bird to cover the others. This option subsequently led to problems between helicopters with dissimilar fire-support capabilities. (The helicopters had not trained for the fire-support mission.) Each type of aircraft had different firing fans, weapons, engagement ranges, and acceptable no-fire zones.³⁹ Ultimately, the aircrews and ground teams, through initiative and professionalism, were able to deal with all the procedural conflicts, but SOF may not be so fortunate in a real-world situation.

Joint Node 4. The fourth JN involves the AC-130 gunship providing top cover and fire support for the Army Special Forces or the Navy SEALs. In the scenario, the AC-130 would position itself near the area of operations so it could react quickly. It would also set up initial ground-to-air communications. The joint tasks involved in this node include the following:

- Conduct joint mission planning and prebriefing with ground teams.
- Coordinate and conduct communications procedures including authentication procedures, call for fire procedures, position identification procedures, and beacon operations (e.g., use of strobe and infrared lights).⁴⁰

- Coordinate and conduct protective fire operations and diversionary fire procedures.
- Discuss and coordinate chart usage and area analysis as well as target designation, marking, and validation procedures.
- Understand weapons capabilities, laser designation, and cones of safety.⁴¹

All respondents who commented on this joint node agreed that joint training was essential, but many also stated that the restricted availability of AC-130s is a limiting factor. Although the scarcity of AC-130s does limit the ability to accomplish joint training, component service understanding and appreciation of the complexity and proper use of this resource are paramount for mission accomplishment. Many users know the gunship's fire-support mission but do not realize that the aircraft can perform escort, surveillance, and command and control duties.⁴² Although there are gunship aircrew training requirements for the tasks mentioned above, there are no requirements that crews train jointly.⁴³ Fortunately, the AC-130 is in high demand and takes part in many exercises, which allows most Air Force aircrews to get some joint training. However, the exercises are not frequent enough to allow significant numbers of ground forces to become acquainted with the full range of AC-130 capabilities. Ground SOF have no joint training requirement with the gunship, and the difficulty in getting to work with one was reflected by one of the respondents who stated that he "had very little access to that kind of asset in CONUS."⁴⁴ (Some overseas units have ready access to the AC-130 for training.) Lack of ground team proficiency in the use of this resource could limit its effectiveness.

Joint Node 5. This node involves aerial refueling operations between the HC-130 and MC-130 tankers and the helicopters. The joint tasks involved in this portion of the mission are as follows:

- Conduct joint planning of infiltration and exfiltration routes, refueling track location, and emergency procedures.
- Plan primary and alternate on-load and off-load requirements.
- Coordinate and conduct communications procedures (both communications in and out, secure and antijam) and altitude, airspeed, rendezvous, and join-up procedures.

The requirement for unilateral Air Force training for air refueling has existed for years, but since USSOCOM is in the early stages of establishing its Army long-range helicopter capability (the MH-47E is air refuelable), there is presently no joint requirement. Some field operators believe no joint training is needed because "a hose is a hose." However, there have already been instances in which lack of standardization caused problems. In one case, an Army helicopter crew used an infrared spotlight to find the refueling drogue during a night operation. The spotlight shut down the night vision goggles of the Air Force tanker loadmaster who was monitoring the helicopter's distance from the tanker.⁴⁵ Another example of what a lack of proficiency can cause occurred at Kirtland AFB, New Mexico, during initial testing of MH-47E

refueling capability. While refueling, the helicopter hit the tanker's hose with its rotor blade. Fortunately, no one was hurt, and the helicopter safely accomplished an emergency recovery on the desert below.⁴⁶

The Army MH-47E refueling capability, although in the testing stages, will require joint training once the capability is fully fielded and Army aircrews are required to maintain proficiency. Although the joint tasks identified may seem simple, if the appropriate joint training is not provided, disaster may result. When the complexities of operating in a night, weather, low-level, hostile environment are added, a hose is not necessarily just a hose.

Joint Node 6. The last node highlights the type of joint tasks that will be involved in any scenario that requires the use of more than one service's aircraft (i.e., an Army and Air Force mix). The joint tasks in this node include the following:

- Conduct mission planning and preparation to include plotting infiltration and exfiltration routes and developing emergency procedures.
- Coordinate and conduct dissimilar formation procedures (day, night, weather) to include formation air-refueling procedures.
- Coordinate and conduct communications-out light signals and/or other communications procedures.
- Coordinate flight operations parameters to include air speed and altitudes and formation-landing procedures.
- Coordinate and conduct formation ground operations and fire-support procedures.
- Discuss threat-response procedures.
- Conduct face-to-face coordination of shipboard operations, if possible, including discussion between aircrews and Navy personnel of normal and emergency shipboard operations, communication procedures, safe-passage procedures, and light signals.⁴⁷

Although the scenario would allow a limited amount of rehearsal time, Army and Air Force aircrews and Navy ship personnel must already have a common understanding of and trust in each other's capabilities if that time is to be put to the best use. Dissimilar procedures for different service aircraft flying in formation can pose a problem. An example of the not-so-obvious problems that can affect helicopter formation flight is the presence or lack of blade-tip and formation lights. Use of these lights influences spacing of the aircraft in a formation. Moreover, altitude changes for acceleration and slow-down is different for each type of aircraft, and the differences can result in loss of visual contact or excessive overtake.⁴⁸ Such effects can be especially pronounced when operating with such smaller aircraft as H-60s. This type of dissimilar formation problem in fact occurred in Just Cause.

During this operation, many taskings required Air Force and Army aviation assets to operate together. Pre-mission briefings had to be comprehensive since there were procedural differences between the services. One of the most significant differences was in formation weather-flying procedures. Air Force aircrews, with their all-weather capable aircraft, were comfortable flying in

poor weather in mountainous terrain. Thus in this section of the mission briefing, Air Force aircrews saw no reason for discussion of what was to them standard procedures. Because Army crews were without all-weather capability (MH-47Es and MH-60Ks will receive this capability in the mid-1990s), they wanted to spend more time on discussions of weather penetration procedures.⁴⁹ Fortunately, time was available to discuss and agree on differing procedures, but such time may not always be available. Joint briefing guides are being established, but the point is that the problem arose during actual joint operations and probably should have been identified during peacetime training operations. Joint training requirements for dissimilar formation operations would have at least provided opportunities to identify these differences earlier.

Problems and differences between the Army and Air Force are further exacerbated when they have to perform shipboard operations. Problems with shipboard operations certainly made themselves evident in Urgent Fury, but a more recent example occurred during a night training mission. An Air Force helicopter, displaying what the pilot believed to be the standard lighting setup for an approach, neared a ship. The ship's personnel were unfamiliar with this lighting pattern and instructed the pilot to change to the Navy standard, which the pilot did not know. Post-mission analysis discovered that Army aviation used yet another lighting pattern.⁵⁰ During night, poor weather, or hostile conditions, such a lighting mix-up could result in catastrophe. At this writing, the Army and Air Force are working to standardize shipboard operations through the publication of a joint publication for shipboard operations, but it has taken years of joint training experience just to get to this point.

Although efforts made to standardize helicopter-to-helicopter as well as shipboard operations have been impressive, as yet there are no periodic joint training requirements. Until joint requirements are formalized, key areas affecting dissimilar formations such as conflicting crew rest rules and differing weather minimums will continue to hamper operations and plague the cohesiveness of the SOF community.⁵¹

Conclusion

A system exists to identify joint tasks, but it only functions fully at the USSOCOM level. This chapter has attempted to demonstrate that the system should extend through the component level to the operational units. This case was made by showing the need for identifying joint tasks via a plausible direct-action scenario. Scenario analysis identified joint nodes where service components would have to interact and the joint tasks that operators would have to perform. The author's research revealed that although many of these joint tasks are trained for on an ad hoc and often haphazard basis, there is no institutionalized joint training or education program requiring practice of

such tasks. As noted in the introduction, certain selected units of the SOF may participate in enough exercises to maintain their proficiency, but the majority of special operations forces certainly do not. The lack of a joint training program for such skills may lead to failure in contingency operations involving those forces, especially if the contingency allows little or no time for joint training or rehearsal before an operation must be launched. The next chapter makes recommendations to help solve this problem.

Notes

1. Maj Daniel P. Bolger, "Special Operations and the Grenada Campaign," *Parameters*, December 1988, 51.
2. A *joint node* is defined in this paper as two or more services operating together in the accomplishment of a mission.
3. Data for the scenario was provided by Maj Glenn Ferguson of the US Air Force Special Operations School, Hurlburt Field, Fla.
4. JCS MOP, no. 26, subject: Joint Training Program, 6 August 1990, 5.
5. Ibid.
6. USSOCOM FY 1991-96 Joint Training Plan Outline, MacDill AFB, Fla., Headquarters USSOCOM, 1.
7. Ibid., 4.
8. Ibid., tab B, 1.
9. Army Field Manual (FM) 25-100, *Training the Force*, 15 November 1988, 2-5.
10. Air Force Special Operations Command Mission Essential Task Lists, draft, n.d.; and Naval Special Warfare Command Mission Essential Task Lists, draft, n.d.
11. Ackerman & Palumbo, Inc., *Peru* (Miami Beach, Fla.: Riska Forecasts Service, 1989), 1.
12. David Palmer, "Peru's Persistent Problems," draft, prepared for the January 1990 issue of *Current History*, 1.
13. Ibid., 3.
14. Ibid., 2.
15. Ackerman & Palumbo, Inc., 1.
16. Palmer, 1.
17. Ibid., 8.
18. Ibid.
19. Gordon McCormick, "Shining Path and Peruvian Terrorism," unpublished paper, January 1987, 7.
20. Ackerman & Palumbo, Inc., 2.
21. Palmer, 7.
22. McCormick, 2.
23. Palmer, 1.
24. Ibid., 15.
25. Ibid., 17.
26. McCormick, 12.
27. At this writing only the MC-130 and the AC-130 have refueling capability. By the mid-1990s, the time of this scenario, the HC-130 should also have the capability.
28. Lt Col Curt Weimer, USAF, USSOCOM/J-3T, MacDill AFB, Fla., interview with author, 19 February 1991; and survey response.
29. Lt Col Ken Benway, USA, US Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School, Fort Bragg, N.C., telephone interview with author, 19 February 1991; and survey response.
30. Maj Dave Scott, USAF, USSOCOM, telephone interview with author, 1 February 1990; and survey response.

31. "Proponent Standardization and Evaluation Report of Knife Blade 90," record no. 00136 (Fort Bragg, N.C.: US Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School, November 1989), 17.
32. Lt Col Paul Davis, USAF, AUCADRE, Maxwell AFB, Ala., interview with author, 10 February 1991; and Scott.
33. Capt Dennis Fox, 1st Special Operations Wing, telephone interview with author, 14 February 1991; and survey response.
34. This story is taken from "Proponent Standardization and Evaluation Report of NTC 90-8 LT/HVY/SOF" (Fort Bragg, N.C.: US Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School, April 1990).
35. *Ibid.*, 23.
36. Air Force Special Operations Command Regulation (AFSOCR) 51-130, *MC-130 Semi-annual/Quarterly Mission Ready Flying Requirements*, 1 August 1989; Lt Comdr Tom Bunce, USN, USSOCOM/JMA, telephone interview with author, 15 February 1991; and Benway.
37. Scott; and Bunce.
38. Air Force Regulation (AFR) 51-2, *US Air Force Helicopter Aircrew Training*, June 1984, MAC Sub 1 (C2), attachment 5, "Operational Mission Training Requirements," 19 February 1986, 25; Benway; and Bunce.
39. Maj Jim Eustace, USAF, 1550th CCTW, telephone interview with author, 5 February 1991; survey response; and Lt Col Steve Connally, USAF, Air War College, Maxwell AFB, Ala., interview with author, 21 March 1991.
40. Maj Robert Gualtieri, USAF, 711th SOS, telephone interview with author, 5 February 1991; and survey response.
41. Davis.
42. Gualtieri.
43. AFSOCR 51-130, 36.
44. Bunce.
45. Capt Jean Pawlowski, 1st SOW/DOS, telephone interview with author, 15 October 1990.
46. Maj Ken Larson, USAF, 1550th CCTW, telephone interview with author, 4 March 1991; and survey response.
47. Eustace; and Weimer.
48. Eustace.
49. Capt Rob Schmaltz, USAF, AFSOCOM/DOX, telephone interview with author, 15 October 1990.
50. *Ibid.*
51. Connally.

Chapter 5

Conclusions and Recommendations

We train the way we intend to fight because our historical experiences amply show the direct correlation between realistic training and success on the battlefield.

—FM 25-100
Training the Force

Chapter 4 presented a direct-action scenario to demonstrate a lack of joint training at the unit level for the tasks in the scenario. All joint tasks identified at the joint nodes were critical to mission accomplishment, but there is presently no formal requirement to accomplish those tasks jointly. This lack of joint training requirements and the assertion made earlier in this report that joint training for special operations forces should be geared to minimal rehearsal time convince the author that USSOCOM does not have as effective a joint training program as it should have.

At the present time unified commands, under the direction of JCS MOP 26, are developing JMETLs; and further joint doctrine is being written in an effort to solve many of the problems highlighted in this paper. However, the problem of defining tasks, conditions, and standards at the component and unit level has still not been resolved. With that in mind, the author offers the following recommendations.

Unit-Level Recommendations

Although an effective joint training program must include activities at all levels of command, this report has stressed the need for joint training at the unit level. Thus the author begins with recommendations for action at that level.

The first recommendation is institutionalization of periodic joint training tasks at the unit level. As shown in chapter 4, most special operations units do not have to accomplish joint training during a calendar year to maintain qualifications. As examples, an MC-130 crew need only deploy Air Force combat controllers to maintain airdrop currency, an Air Force HC-130 tanker does not have to refuel Army helicopters to maintain qualification, a gunship crew need not work with SEALs or Army Special Forces to maintain currency,

and neither the Army Special Forces nor SEALs have to use Air Force or Army SOF aviation assets for infiltration and exfiltration training. Admittedly, through the course of a year, many joint training tasks are practiced within the SO community, but the point is such training is not presently mandatory and it should be.

Formal joint training tasks should require units to accomplish tasks on a specified periodic basis. An example, although simplistic, of an institutionalized joint task, might be an MC-130 aircrew having an annual requirement to train jointly with a SEAL or Special Forces team. This requirement should include joint planning, execution, and other tasks discussed in chapter 4. At the same time, the SEALs and the Special Forces should have an annual training requirement for infiltration and exfiltration operations via Air Force or Army aviation assets. There are, of course, many other tasks that should be identified as joint mission essential tasks at the unit level, and they should be formalized in this way.

Beyond the advantage of joint proficiency, formal joint training requirements would have several less obvious benefits. A requirement to train jointly on a periodic basis would make every training session advantageous to all involved since they would be completing tasks that they have to accomplish (e.g., Army MH-47s refueling with Air Force HC-130s would meet joint training requirements for both groups). This factor might also ease the difficulty some units have in obtaining assets for training, since the support assets would also benefit. Working together to accomplish joint training requirements would also benefit the capability of all special operations forces beyond the particular task practiced by enabling the components to better understand each other's capabilities and operational requirements. With better understanding, differences in regulations and procedures could be identified and documented. Additionally, USSOCOM sailors, airmen, and soldiers would learn early in their careers the capabilities of the other services and the benefits of joint force operations. It is an excellent idea to provide joint training for the senior staff, but it is more important to introduce the importance of the joint concept to lower ranking personnel who will be tomorrow's leaders.¹ Institutionalization of joint training requirements at the unit level would accomplish that goal.

Although the formalization of joint training tasks may seem difficult to implement, for all practical purposes each service has been doing this kind of training within its dissimilar components for years. For example, Army doctrine requires combined arms and services teamwork. Thus the Army regularly practices cross attachment of its forces² so they can train together.³ The Air Force, in the same way, requires its units to work with dissimilar Air Force units (e.g., air refueling and parachute deployment operations) on a regular basis to maintain proficiency. As a "unique" joint force, USSOCOM should require the same of its components. They must train together through joint tasks to a joint standard, because proficiency in service-unique training tasks is no guarantee of joint operational effectiveness.

The next recommendation is that units conduct evaluations of plausible scenarios, as illustrated in chapter 4, to aid in identifying critical joint tasks. Obviously, because of resource and fiscal constraints, all joint tasks cannot be identified as joint requirements, so commanders must identify the most essential. Scenario analysis is an appropriate method for such identification.

Although this report has stressed the need for joint training at the unit level, the reader must understand that while unit commanders can implement the actions just recommended, they do not have the authority to initiate the actions. If units are to act, enabling actions must be taken at the component level of USSOCOM.

Component Enabling Actions

Joint mission essential tasks should be identified at the component level as well as the unit level. As discussed in chapter 4, drafts of component mission essential task lists identify only service-unique requirements. They contain no joint tasks. The author recommends that the components identify joint tasks. This step would aid subsequent identification of joint tasks at the unit level.

As seen earlier, the JMETL system is now a "push" system with no joint requirements below the USSOCOM headquarters level. Joint doctrinal guidance from the Office of the JCS in MOP 26 directs USSOCOM to publish a joint training plan. The joint training plan includes the JMETs for USSOCOM forces. An example of an actual USSOCOM JMET reads:

Conduct all aspects of joint special operations training involving special operations, psychological operations, and civil affairs forces ensuring consistency with joint doctrine; tactics, techniques, and procedures; force interoperability; and overall combat readiness across the operational continuum.⁴

Based on this JMET, each component should develop its own JMET. An example of a US Army Special Operations Command JMET might read: "Provide jointly trained (as opposed to service-only trained) Army forces to operational commanders." (This task would include such subordinate tasks as providing joint training and education programs.)

Once components have identified their joint tasks in this manner, identification of joint mission essential tasks at the unit level, which has already been recommended, could proceed. It would then be the responsibility of the component and subordinate unit commanders to ensure that a joint training plan based on the joint tasks is established. Thus SOF units could gain and maintain joint operational proficiency for the most likely contingency operations. The aforementioned recommendations would, in effect, add a "pull" element to the "push" system regarding jointness. Unit and component levels, with their requirements for joint training, would be in position to request USSOCOM aid in solving disconnects identified by them. They would not

have to wait for problems to be identified and resolved by the unified command.

Command Enabling Actions

Recommendations for actions at the component and unit level are not enough, by themselves, to solve the joint training problems this study has identified. Just as units cannot implement solutions without component enabling action, the components cannot work for solutions without USSOCOM enabling actions. Before the author's recommendations for the command will make sense, the audience needs further background information having a direct effect on joint training at the unit level.

Background

Special operations forces are highly dependent on exercise participation to maintain joint operational proficiency. Presently, SOF units participate in four types of joint exercises. These are JCS/CINC-sponsored exercises, MAJCOM-sponsored exercises, joint readiness training (JRT) exercises, and bilateral unit training sponsored by unit-level organizations.⁵ These exercises are monitored by different offices at different levels of command. JCS/CINC and JRT exercises are monitored by two different offices in USSOCOM. MAJCOM exercises are monitored at the component level. Bilateral training is monitored at the unit level. Each type of exercise has advantages and disadvantages as to the amount and effectiveness of joint training it contains. It is presently up to each concerned office to monitor the effectiveness of its particular exercise in reaching the goal of joint training.

The goal of the JCS/CINC- and MAJCOM-sponsored exercises is primarily to support war plans using the forces assigned to those plans by the Joint Strategic Capabilities Plan. These exercises provide opportunities for units apportioned to specific missions to become accustomed to the geography of the region. In the past, a benefit of these exercises was that non-JSCP units could show up at such exercises to participate purely for training purposes, but because of fiscal constraints this practice is now prohibited.⁶ A drawback to these types of exercises is that they are usually mission driven as opposed to training driven. Thus whatever joint training is accomplished is coincidental. Another limitation of these exercises, as far as SOF are concerned, is that they do not generally mix Army and Air Force aviation elements which restricts joint training potential. This is not to say that these exercises are not useful, but they stress the SOF-conventional interface and only provide limited internal SOF joint training.

Most special operators believe that JRT exercises provide the best joint training available. These exercises are well funded, have enough resources to

accomplish tasks effectively, and concentrate on joint training of SOF components. The limitation of JRT exercises is that they concentrate efforts and resources on only a few select units.

Bilateral unit exercises are monitored at the unit and component level and provide an excellent opportunity for SOF components to train jointly. As an example, the SOF wings at Hurlburt Field, Florida, and Kirtland AFB, New Mexico, conduct periodic exercises involving Army and Navy SOF units. These interchanges provide excellent opportunities for joint training, but they suffer from a lack of resources (both funding and aircraft). Management of such exercises by different offices means that there is no central assessment to ensure maximum effectiveness in terms of a command exercise system.

Unit joint training is also dependent on the availability of resources from other services. The command's present resource allocation system involves two separate conferences competing for the use of SOF assets to accomplish joint training—the Training and Aviation Requirements Conference (TARC) and the Air Asset Allocation Conference (AAAC). The TARC meets quarterly to coordinate the limited resources available to most SOF units for joint training and exercises. It is seriously hindered by a shortage of assets and the relatively low priority of some unit training requirements.⁷ The AAAC has significantly higher priority for the use of assets. In fact, the AAAC's lowest priority is higher than the TARC's highest priority. With the AAAC using the majority of the assets available, few are left for the units represented by the TARC.⁸ As an example of what TARC-represented units face, an Army Special Forces commander noted that in his five years in command he had seldom seen an MC-130.⁹ While this example may be the extreme case, it is an indicator of how infrequently this particular asset is shared across the special operations community. The need for a single scheduling system is apparent.

An important means that any military unit should use to improve itself is a well-managed lessons-learned system. USSOCOM's present program has at least three different lessons-learned systems that are not managed by a common office, nor are the lessons learned fully documented or distributed to all components and units for action and review. The JCS exercise system uses the joint universal lessons-learned system; JRT lessons learned are documented on another format and, although potentially useful, are kept "close hold" as a result of classification; and component and unit-level exercise after-action reports are forwarded to different offices at the component level and may or may not be forwarded to USSOCOM. This nonstandard distribution system makes learning from the mistakes of others quite difficult.

Joint education is also important to ensuring the effectiveness of the command. Three facilities are assigned to USSOCOM to educate its forces: the US Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School, the USAF Special Operations School, and the Naval Special Warfare Center. The Army and Air Force schools emphasize professional development within their services, while the Navy school is structured to provide skill training. Attendance at certain of the Army school's courses is mandatory for specific specialties, but none of these courses stresses jointness. The Air Force school

does offer such courses as the Joint Planning Workshop and the Joint Special Operations Staff Officer Course, but these courses were designed only to prepare officers for assignment as SOF staff officers. Although some of the Air Force courses are mandatory, attendance by command personnel has historically been by chance and convenience. The author also found it unusual that USSOCOM staff officers were not all required to attend the DOD Joint Phase II course at the Naval Air Station, Norfolk.

In short, USSOCOM has no joint courses built to educate unit-level personnel in the capabilities of the sister services they must interact with. The joint courses that are available are designed to educate staff officers but are not mandatory. The Joint Phase II course that teaches the basics of DOD jointness is not a requirement.

With this background in mind, the author recommends changes be instituted at USSOCOM level to better facilitate joint training in the command. These recommendations cover the areas of joint exercises, central resource allocation, lessons-learned coordination, joint education, and standardization and interoperability teams.

Joint Exercises

The author recommends that USSOCOM establish a central authority to oversee all exercise programs. This authority would monitor and evaluate all joint exercise participation for overall effectiveness and benefit to component and unit joint training. This office should have the authority to expand or delete participation and to set priorities. It should also monitor and set priorities for simulation exercises so SOF can take advantage of current and future computer technology and use these resources more effectively. The central authority should provide oversight to ensure that all forces are given an equitable opportunity to train in their joint mission essential tasks.

Central Resource Allocation

Consistent and equitable allocation of USSOCOM resources is paramount to an effective component- and unit-level joint training program. Establishing resource priorities for exercises and training requirements should be a centralized function. The AAAC and TARC should be combined and managed on behalf of all members of the joint special operations community. Although there has been discussion for some time concerning the establishment of a single allocation system, there is still no effective single system to balance the joint training needs of all forces.

Lessons-Learned Coordination

Because of its diversity of forces, USSOCOM operations have the potential for serious and unexpected mistakes. Thus it is imperative that a central lessons-learned system be established so that mistakes in training are not repeated in operations. Such a system would also provide a common source for lessons learned and the ability to incorporate these lessons into joint

tactics, techniques, and procedures at the USSOCOM level. Moreover, USSOCOM's joint training program must have accountability, and a single-source lessons-learned process could provide accountability via objective evaluation of the effectiveness of the training program.

Joint Education

USSOCOM established the Joint Special Operations School Integration Committee to focus on curriculum review and individual training and education. It has made progress synthesizing the requirements of the command.¹⁰ This organization must continue its efforts and stress joint education of all levels of USSOCOM personnel.

USSOCOM should develop a "cradle-to-grave" educational system to teach all levels of special operations personnel the importance of jointness in the SOF community. Such individual education is as important as unit training, but there is presently no structured joint educational program.¹¹ All members of USSOCOM should be required to attend courses that increase individual appreciation of jointness and understanding of USSOCOM joint capabilities. The program should also include formal courses to teach staff officers and commanders the type of skills highlighted in the first joint node in chapter 4.¹²

Standardization and Interoperability Team

The last recommendation revisits the need for oversight of the effectiveness of the command's joint training program. To provide such oversight while avoiding the need for increased personnel authorizations, a standardization and interoperability team should be selected from within the USSOCOM staff. The team should be made up of operators from each service and should carry USSOCOM concerns and the single-source lessons learned to the field. This team should observe and evaluate four to five exercises a year and feed this information to USCINCSOC. Thus the CINC would have information on the effectiveness of the command's joint training program and would have the basis for needed corrections. The team could also provide a means to standardize service operational procedures and to ensure the interoperability of differing procedures. Through the lessons learned in exercises and the information obtained from its visits, the team could recommend which service procedures should be adopted for the command.

This recommendation is not new or unique to the author. Similar procedures were followed in adopting maritime and helicopter shipboard procedures, and the need for establishment of a centralized training organization has been identified in various forms ranging from a joint special operations center to a contractor-proposed alternative (a joint training and education center).¹³ These alternatives, although clearly needed, were too costly. The author's recommendation is an attempt to provide a cost-effective means to solve a widely recognized problem.

Conclusion

This report has attempted to analyze and assess the United States Special Operations Command joint training program, to see how far that training has advanced since the command's activation, and to determine steps USSOCOM still needs to take to meet the challenges of the future which predominantly lie in the low-intensity conflict realm. The premises of the report were that special operations forces should train the way they will fight and that there is a need for more effective joint training and interoperability between SOF components. A principle assertion of this report was that joint training for SOF should be geared to the assumption that minimum rehearsal time will be available for most contingency operations.

The author believes, and hopes the reader has been convinced, that both the premises and the assertion are supported by the evidence presented within this report. The report's recommendations are, of course, attempts to abate the perceived problems. The author does not insist that these recommendations are the only, complete, or final solutions. He will be more than satisfied if the audience acknowledges the problems by providing alternate solutions. Whatever the source, the point is to provide a military capability that almost surely will be needed in the next decade.

Notes

1. Gen Alfred M. Gray, Jr., Marine Corps commandant, speech at Maxwell AFB, Ala., 4 February 1991.
2. Cross attachment of forces is the means by which the Army attains full integration of the combined arms team. The commander controls and orchestrates combat, combat support, and service support elements.
3. Army FM 25-100, *Training the Force*, 15 November 1988, 1-3.
4. USSOCOM FY 1991-96 Joint Training Plan Outline, MacDill AFB, Fla., Headquarters USSOCOM, tab B.
5. Lt Col Max Friedauer, USAF, AFSOC/DOO, Hurlburt Field, Fla., interview with author, 27 July 1990.
6. Lt Col Unger, USAF, USSOCOM Exercise Branch, MacDill AFB, Fla., interview with author, 13 December 1990.
7. Sam Galloway, *Training Among Components*, USSOCOM Form 14, 25 October 1990, 3.
8. Col J. D. Elair, USAF, USSOCOM deputy J-3, MacDill AFB, Fla., interview with author, 12 December 1990.
9. Lt Col Richard Schaller to the author, letter, subject: SOF Aircrew Training, 6 November 1990.
10. Joint Special Operations School Integration Committee, report no. 90-3, MacDill AFB, Fla., USSOCOM, n.d., 1.
11. Richard F. Brauer, Jr., to Col David Barette, USSOCOM/SOJS, letter, subject: Thoughts on Special Ops Education—Where Do We Go From Here, 11 December 1987, 2.
12. Lt Col Curt Weimer, USAF, USSOCOM/J-3T, MacDill AFB, Fla., interview with author, 14 February 1991.
13. Lt Col Richard Schaller to AFSOC/CC, letter, subject: Joint Special Operations Training Center Proposal, 18 September 1990.