

Chapter Twelve: Strategic Lessons of the Conflict

History has not ended and does not threaten to end. The Gulf War shows that the problems of national security, arms control, deterrence, and war fighting are as real in the post-Cold War era as they were in the past, along with the broader level of conflict taking place in the world today. Some 15 to 25 civil and international conflicts took place every day of every year since the end of World War II, and the same number of regional crises and conflicts have gone on every day since the end of the Cold War. The central confrontation between superpowers may have ended, but there is no "new world order" and the world is not a more peaceful place.

The Gulf War is a lesson in the fact that what seem to be local tensions will continue to suddenly escalate to strategic proportions, and Iraq is scarcely the only regional power that can pose a major threat to peace. More than 15 Third World countries now have more than 1,000 main battle tanks and 300 modern combat aircraft, and virtually all of these countries have been involved in some form of combat in the last decade. North Korea has over one million men at arms, 3,000 tanks, and 730 combat aircraft. Iran has more than 500,000 men, 700 tanks, and 260 combat aircraft. More than 20 countries are developing or deploying weapons of mass destruction and are acquiring long range strike systems.

The previous chapters have shown that Gulf War teaches strategic and grand strategic lessons about the form that future regional conflicts may take, and what military action can and cannot be expected to accomplish. It teaches lessons about deterrence, the limits of coalition warfare, power projection, and the importance of countervailing strategy. It also teach lessons about the evolving importance of proliferation, and how future conflicts can limited and terminated. These are also lessons that have broad implications for the US, the West, and the friendly Gulf states at a time when hard choices have to be made between allocating resources to national security and to meeting domestic economic and social needs.

"Extended Deterrence" in the Post-Cold War Era

The most important lesson that the Gulf War teaches about conflict prevention is the value of deterrence, and that successful deterrence requires explicit action to define what is being deterred, backed by the threat of decisive force. It may be that no action to deter Saddam Hussein would have succeeded, but no one will ever know. Chapter Two has shown that few of the actions necessary to give deterrence tangible form and credibility

were taken. The West and Iraq's neighbors temporized and accommodated when they should have set limits and made them convincing.

If this lesson is valid, its implications must be fully understood. Deterrence only works where it is a product of the credible ability and willingness of nations to use unacceptable amounts of retaliatory or preemptive force. This does not mean that deterrence is the sole province of "super powers." A wide range of nations can exercise such deterrence in their own region, and some can extend a limited amount of deterrence elsewhere in the world. The Gulf war shows that national power is best exercised in the context of a UN or cooperative security effort.

Yet, the Gulf War also shows that deterrence without force is merely rhetoric, and that the United States is currently the only nation that can extend high levels of deterrence to many parts of the world.¹ The cost of failing to provide that deterrent before the Gulf War was Iraq's invasion of Kuwait. As was the case before the Korean War, the US failed to clearly define its strategic interests. While the messages it sent discouraged Iraqi aggression, they failed to make it clear that the US set firm limits to Iraqi military action, and would react to invasion with force. The vital interests of the US were never defined in deterrent terms, while diplomatic ambiguity encouraged aggression instead of moderating the crisis.

The Gulf War indicates that the US needs to redefine "extended deterrence" so that there is no ambiguity as to its vital strategic interests on a global basis. It needs to avoid leaving any doubt as to whether it will or will not act to defend such interests in Western Europe, Israel, Egypt, the Gulf, Northeast Asia, and the Pacific. In these regions, ambiguity can prove as dangerous as appeasement, and the risks of diplomatic incidents will always be minor compared to the risks of war.

At the same time, the scale and cost of the military effort required to fight in the Gulf War, and the need to build an enduring international political consensus, show that the US must treat any redefinition of extended deterrence in realistic terms. There are dangers in exaggerating US strategic interests in countries and conflicts where US interests are marginal and/or where the US capability to enforce deterrence is limited. Bosnia and Somalia are case examples of the fact that deterrence is only meaningful where there is a true commitment to use force. They are lessons in the dangers in trying to extend deterrence to low level crises and interests where the US will not make good on its threats to use force.

¹ For an interesting analysis of this issue, see Janice Gross Stein, "Deterrence and Compellence in the Gulf, 1990-1991, *International Security*, Fall, 1992, pp. 147-165.

A redefinition of extended deterrence must also recognize that fact that there are growing limits to US military power, and there are many areas of the world where the US cannot use military force effectively without years of military build-up -- if then. These areas include such strategic regions as most of the former Soviet Union, and China. Deterrent rhetoric which attempts to go beyond the limits of US military power will do nothing but discredit US commitments and capabilities.

The Warfighting Character of Cooperative Security and Coalition Warfare

These political and military limits to US action highlight the need to strengthen UN peace keeping activity, regional security efforts, and other cooperative international action. They highlight the need to emphasize the use of international diplomacy, moral persuasion, arms control, and embargoes and sanctions as substitutes for military power and as ways of reinforcing deterrence by non-military means. At the same time, the Gulf War is a lesson in the fact that if deterrence and peaceful means fail, the realities of war fighting capability become paramount. Once actual combat begins, cooperative security ceases to be a matter of meetings and rhetoric and requires forces that can actually fight.

The fact that 38 nations participated in the Coalition that fought in the Gulf War was politically important, but the previous chapters have shown that few of these nations made a real contribution to coalition warfare. Ultimately, only Britain, Egypt, France, Saudi Arabia, and the United States played any significant role in war fighting. Only two Coalition nations made decisive victory possible. Saudi Arabia provided the facilities, infrastructure, basing, and support necessary for theater-level high intensity conflict. The US provided virtually all of the technology and combat power -- flying over 90% of the strike/attack and special purpose sorties, and provided the ground forces for all of the major offensive actions to liberate Kuwait. No other nation in the Coalition even remotely approached the US ability to project power in terms of C⁴I/BM capability, overall technology, sustainability, air power, sea power, and armor.

War fight requires cohesive leadership. The UN Coalition was successful because its military leadership and forces were dominated by the US, and key national force components were willing to subordinate themselves to a US-led unity of command integrated with coherent US C⁴I/BM systems. Further, many of the smaller coalition military efforts in Desert Storm and Desert Shield were more costly in war fighting terms than they were beneficial. They provided important political benefits, but their military contribution was disproportionately expensive in terms of added training, special C⁴I/BM

costs, burden of battle management activity, and the special support costs coming from diseconomies of scale and a lack of interoperability.

The rhetoric of coalition building has tended to obscure these realities about war fighting capability. The fact is, however, that high intensity coalition warfare and cooperative security cannot be a substitute for American military power in the near or mid-term. Instead, their effectiveness will be dependent upon it. This is not true of cooperative security arrangements involving the reality or risk of low or mid-intensity conflicts -- where regional states may play an equal or dominant role. Even in these cases, however, Chapter Three has shown that such states cannot deploy the kind of technology and war fighting capabilities the US used to win a quick and decisive victory over Iraq.

This is not an argument that the US must dominate every coalition or cooperative security arrangement, or be the world's policeman. Once again, it is important to point out the special nature of the Gulf War. Iraq's actions united the world against it and gave the US unique freedom of action. Further, there are many parts of the world where the US is not a superpower because it cannot project or sustain the military power to be one. These include Russia and the other states of the former Soviet Union, China and Southeast Asia, and the Indian subcontinent. There are many other areas where the US will not project such power because political consensus is lacking or the cost of dealing with a given crisis is disproportionate to the benefits.

Rather, the key lesson is that a willingness to negotiate, and good intentions, are not enough to make cooperative security or coalition warfare work. Ultimately, they must be supported by the credible threat of force or its actual use. Like successful deterrence, successful cooperative security depends on war fighting capability based on specific forces and contingency capabilities.

The Gulf War repeats a strategic lesson that is as old as time: War is not simply an extension of diplomacy by other means. It is a matter of killing people as efficiently, in as one-sided a manner as possible, and often in large numbers. Every effort at cooperative security, coalition warfare, peace enforcement, counter-proliferation and all the other politically correct euphemisms of the post-Cold War era must be judged by whether sufficient war fighting and killing capability exists to make it work.

The Role of the "AirLand Battle," "Combined Operations," and the "Revolution in Military Affairs"

The Gulf War provided an important lesson in the fact that strategic capabilities cannot be measured in terms of numbers of combat units, numbers of military manpower and weapons, or even in terms of weapons qualities. The disparities between the various

Coalition forces, and between the best Coalition forces and Iraq, indicate that force quality is becoming progressively more important than force quantity -- at least when the disparity in quality is as great as the disparity between the forces of Britain, France, and the US and a nation like Iraq.

The issue of whether the Gulf War introduced a "revolution in military affairs" will always be a matter of opinion. There is no doubt, however, that it showed that any military force that can make major advances in the integration of new tactics, training methods and technologies, that can successfully integrate of air and land forces into joint operations, that can deploy vastly superior C⁴I/BM capabilities, and that can fight at new tempos of combat for twenty-four hours a day, strike to new depths behind enemy forward combat positions, has an overwhelming advantage over an enemy that does not.

The advantage that the Coalition enjoyed over Iraq are summarized in Table 12.1, and it is clear that many of these advantages are advantages that the US, other major Western states, and Western equipped and trained Third World states, may benefit from in many future contingencies.

Table 12.1

Western Military Advantages and the "Revolution in military affairs"

- o Decoupling of political and military responsibility:* No war is ever free of command controversy or friction between political and military leadership. However, Coalition forces fought the Gulf War with an exceptionally effective delegation of responsibility for military decisions to military commanders. The fact that this system worked was partly a matter of individual personalities, but it also reflected important changes in the way national command authority was exercised in the US in comparison with Korea and Vietnam and from the nature of coalition command in past wars.
- o Unity of command:* In spite of the formal Coalition command structure, effective unity of command took place at the level of USCINCENT. The planning and operational control of all Coalition forces, regardless of service, had a high degree of central coordination. There was no division of command by military service, or separation of operations and intelligence. National forces preserved a high degree of autonomy because they were assigned specific functions, areas, and responsibilities, but Coalition commanders supported de facto unit of command -- largely due to the support that Saudi Arabia, Britain, Egypt, and France were will to give the US. The level of unity of command, and "fusion," achieved during the Gulf War was scarcely perfect, but it was far more functional than in previous military conflicts.
- o Decisive force:* There is nothing new about the desirability of seizing the initiative and concentrating decisive force in critical areas of the battle. The problem is in

achieving this goal. Coalition forces had parity with Iraq in forces, but "decisive force" in the form of superior tactics, training, and technology.

- o Combined operations, combined arms, and the "AirLand Battle":* While US doctrine had always placed a pro forma emphasis on combined operations, many US operations in Vietnam did not properly integrate combined arms, common inter-service training in combined operations was limited, and air operations were not properly integrated into land operations. In the years that followed, the US reorganized to place far more emphasis on combined arms and combined operations. It greatly strengthened combined operations training and career rotations into joint commands. At the same time, it developed tactics that closely integrated air and land operations into what the US came to call the "AirLand battle". These tactics were critical to the success of the ground battle.
- o Emphasis on maneuver:* The US had emphasized firepower and attrition during the end of the Vietnam War. In the years that followed, it converted its force structure to place an equal emphasis on maneuver and deception. This emphasis was supported by Britain and France, and was adopted by Saudi Arabia.
- o Emphasis on deception and strategic/tactical innovation:* No country has a monopoly on the use of deception and strategic/tactical innovation. The Coalition, however, demonstrated capabilities that were far superior to those of Iraq.
- o "24 hour war" - Superior night, all-weather, and beyond visual range warfare:* "Visibility" is always relative in combat. There is no such thing as a perfect night vision or all-weather combat system, or way of acquiring perfect information at long ranges. US and British air and land forces, however, had far better training and technology for such combat than they had ever had in the past, and were the first forces designed to wage warfare continuously at night and in poor weather. Equally important, they were far more capable of taking advantage of the margin of extra range and tactical information provided by superior technology.
- o Near Real-Time Integration of C³I/BM/T/BDA:* The Coalition took advantage of major US C³I/BM/T/BDA organization, technology, and software to integrate various aspects of command, control, communications, and intelligence (C³I; battle management (BM), targeting (T), and battle damage assessment (BDA) to achieve a near real time integration and decision making-execution cycle.
- o Integration of space warfare:* The Coalition integrated US space-based intelligence, communications, and command and control assets into its tactics and organization. This "space advantage" would have been even greater if space-based imagery had been better disseminated at the theater and tactical levels.
- o A new tempo of operations:* The Coalition exploited a superiority in every aspect of targeting, intelligence gathering and dissemination, integration of combined arms, multi-service forces, and night and all-weather warfare to achieve both a new tempo of operations and one far superior to that of Iraq.

- o A new tempo of sustainability:* The Coalition forces had maintainability, reliability, reparability, and the speed and overall mobility of logistic, service support, and combat support force activity that broadly matched their maneuver and firepower capabilities. The benefits of these new capabilities were reflected in such critical areas as the extraordinarily high operational availability and sortie rates of US aircraft, and the ability to support the movement of heliborne and armored forces during the long thrust into Iraq from the West.
- o Beyond visual range air combat, air defense suppression, air base attacks, and airborne C⁴I/BM:* The Coalition had a decisive advantage in air combat training, in beyond visual range air combat capability, in anti-radiation missiles, in electronic warfare, in air base and shelter and kill capability, in stealth and unmanned long-range strike systems, in IFF and air control capability, and in airborne C⁴I/BM systems like the E-3 and ABCCC. These advantages allowed the Coalition to win early and decisive air supremacy.
- o Focused and effective interdiction bombing:* While the Coalition strategic bombing effort had limitations, most aspects of offensive air power highly successful. The interdiction effort was successful in most respects. The Coalition organized effectively to use its deep strike capabilities to carry out a rapid and effective pattern of focus strategic bombing where planning was sufficiently well coupled to intelligence and meaningful strategic objectives so that such strikes achieved the major military objectives that the planner set. At the same time, targeting, force allocation, and precision kill capabilities had advanced to the point where interdiction bombing and strikes were far more lethal and strategically useful than in previous conflicts.
- o Expansion of the battle field: "Deep Strike":* As part of its effort to offset the Warsaw Pact's superiority, US tactics and technology emphasized using AirLand battle capabilities to extend the battlefield far beyond the immediate forward edge of the battle area (FEBA). The Coalition exploited the resulting mix of targeting capability, improved air strike capabilities, and land force capabilities in ways that played an important role in attriting Iraqi ground forces during the air phase of the war, and which helped the Coalition break through Iraqi defenses and exploit the breakthrough. This achievement is particularly striking in view of the fact that the US was not yet ready to employ some "deep strike" targeting technologies and precision strike systems designed to fight the Warsaw Pact that were still in development.
- o Technological superiority in many critical areas of weaponry:* The Coalition scarcely had a monopoly on effective weapons, but it had a critical edge in key weapons like tanks, other armored fighting vehicles, artillery systems, long range strike systems, attack aircraft, air defense aircraft, surface-to-air missiles, space, attack helicopters, naval systems, sensors, battle management and a host of other areas. As has been discussed in Chapter One, this superiority went far beyond the technical "edge" revealed by "weapon on weapon" comparisons. Coalition forces exploited technology in "systems" that integrated weapons into other aspects of force capability and into the

overall force structures of the US, Britain, France, and the Saudi Air Force to a far greater degree than Iraq and most military forces in Third World states.

- o Integration of precision-guided weapons into tactics and force structures:* The Coalition exploited a decisive US technical edge in the capability of most of its precision-guided weapons over Iraq, had far more realistic training in using them, and the ability to link their employment to far superior reconnaissance and targeting capability.
- o Realistic combat training and use of technology and simulation:* The US and Britain used training methods based on realistic combined arms and AirLand training, large-scale training, and adversary training. These efforts were far superior to previous methods and were coupled to a far more realistic and demanding system for ensuring the readiness of the forces involved. Equally important, they emphasized the need for the kinds of additional training than allowed US forces to adapt to the special desert warfare conditions of Desert Storm.
- o All volunteer military/higher entry and career standards:* British, French, US, and Saudi forces were all-volunteer professional forces. They had a decisive advantage in professional standards, training levels, and merit-based promotion.²
- o Emphasis on forward leadership and delegation:* Virtually all of the successful Coalition forces were aggressively led from the front. Iraqi forces were led from the rear.
- o Heavy reliance on NCOs and enlisted personnel:* There was nothing new about the heavy reliance that Western forces placed on the technical skills, leadership quality, and initiative of non-commissioned officers (NCOs) and experienced enlisted personnel. This is a reliance which is common to virtually every Western military force, and which has given them a major advantage over Soviet and those Third world forces which do not give the same authority and expertise to NCOs and career enlisted personnel. However, better educated, trained, and experienced NCOs and enlisted personnel were critical to the British, French, and US ability to exploit technology, and sustain high tempo operations.
- o High degree of overall readiness:* Military readiness is a difficult term to define since it involves so many aspects of force capability. Western forces entered the Gulf War, however, with two great advantages. The first was far more realistic standards for measuring readiness and ensuring proper reporting. The second was adequate funding over a sustained period of time.
- o Clear Doctrine for Collateral Damage:* The Coalition entered the Gulf War with explicit criteria for limiting collateral damage to Iraq's population and civilian facilities, and with the ability to prosecute the war within those limits. It avoided

² Brigadier General Robert H. Scales, Certain Victory: The United States Army in the Gulf War, Washington, Office of the Chief of Staff, US Army, 1993, p. 6.

significant direct damage to Iraqi civilians and tailored its strikes against civil facilities to sharply reduce damage to civilian buildings, plants, and infrastructure. This proved to be an important part of shaping the political side of the battlefield.

- o Management of Media Relations:* While the Coalition was often criticized after the war, for placing limits on the press and manipulating the information provided to the media, the fact remains that modern war is inevitably a struggle to shape media opinion. The Coalition showed superior capability to use the media access to achieve military goals.

Table 12.1 shows that the Gulf War reflects a fundamental disparity between the limited number of nations who can use new methods of warfare, and the vast majority of nations who cannot. This is an important strategic reality that no nation can ignore. It raises serious questions about the value of many of the force structures and weapons systems in the Third World, and about the ability of Third World states to engage First World states in mid to high intensity conflict. While such tactics, training, and technology may well prove less decisive in dealing with unconventional warfare, politically dominated low-intensity and guerrilla conflicts, urban warfare, and other specialized types of conflict, they represent a significant change in the balance of power.

Some aspects of this change may increase the military advantage of nations like the US in the near-term. US air power was severely limited by a lack of adequate tactical-level battle management systems, "smarter" stand-off weapons, and night and poor visibility warfare systems, and by broad problems in battle damage assessment capability. These are weaknesses that are likely to be corrected over the next few years. Similar weaknesses in the battle management capability of US ground forces, and in tactical intelligence and targeting systems, are also likely to be corrected -- as are many of the detailed technical and tactical problems in air and land forces discussed in previous chapters.

Only a few Third World states have the human and financial resources to begin to compete. Even those nations that can buy advanced weapons can rarely integrate them effectively into force-wide war fighting capabilities. Buying modern firepower and maneuver capability serves little purpose unless it is matched to equally modern training, tactics, sustainability, and C⁴I/BM capability.

The Importance of Countervailing Strategy

This disparity in the qualitative capabilities of First and Third World military forces has other strategic implications. The Coalition only made a limited attempt to deliberately exploit the weaknesses in Iraq's forces. Nevertheless, Iraq's weaknesses played a major role in the success of Coalition strategy, even when it failed to correctly characterize them.

Table 12.2 expands upon the list of Iraqi weaknesses provided in Chapter Three to suggest a number of areas where it may be possible to exploit the "revolution in military affairs" through a countervailing regional strategy based on exploiting similar qualitative weaknesses that occur in most Third World and regional forces.

This list is not intended to suggest that a countervailing regional strategy, and integrating the accurate assessment of the strengths and weakness of regional forces into the revolution in military affairs, is a panacea. Table 12.2 is a list of areas for exploration in developing a countervailing strategy, rather than a set of definitive answers. In some of these areas, the West may not be able to measure the weaknesses in regional threat forces with sufficient accuracy to alter plans and operations. Each of these suggestions raises significant issues about intelligence collection and analysis, net assessment, and how to integrate a possible area of enemy weakness more effectively into plans and operations. None of these areas applies to every Third World country, or always offers the US and its Western and regional allies an asymmetric advantage. At the same time, the Gulf War strongly indicates that efforts to exploit such weaknesses will often be successful and will often affect the balance of power.

Table 12.2

Countervailing Limitations in Third World Armed Forces

o Authoritarianism and over-centralization of the effective command structure: Many Third world states have rigid, compartmented, and over-centralized C³I/BM systems. Their forces are structured so that each service reports through a separate chain of command. C⁴I/BM systems often are structured to separate the activity of regular forces from elite, regime security, and ideological forces. Systems often ensure major sectors and corps commanders report to the political leadership, and separations occur within the branches of a given service. Intelligence is compartmented and poorly disseminated. Combined operations and combined arms coordination is poor, and command interference is common at the political level.

o Lack of strategic assessment capability: Many Third World nations lack sufficient understanding of Western war fighting capabilities to understand the impact of the revolution in military affairs, the role of high technology systems, and the impact of the new tempo of war.

o Major Weaknesses in battle management, command, control, communications, intelligence, targeting, and battle damage assessment. No Third World country has meaningful access to space-based systems, or advanced theater reconnaissance and intelligence systems. Most have no sophisticated reconnaissance, intelligence, and targeting assets, other than some RPVs. Most are limited to commercial level communications security and dissemination, and cannot provide the software and

connectivity necessary to exploit even commercial or ordinary military systems. They lack the C⁴I/BM capability for deep strikes, effective electronic intelligence, and rapid cycles of reaction.

o Lack of cohesive force quality: Virtually all Third World forces have major land combat units and squadrons with very different levels of proficiency. Political, equipment supply, and historical factors often mean that even high priority units exhibit very different levels of real-world combat effectiveness. Further, imbalances in combat support, service support, and logistic support mean that significant differences will exist in sustainability, operational effectiveness, defenses, and other activities by sector, and many states encourage a lack of cohesion by creating elite, politicized, or ideological divisions within their forces.

o Shallow offensive battlefields: Most Third World states cannot extend the depth of the battlefield because they lack the survivable platforms and sensors, communications, and data processing to do so. These problems will be compounded in wars of maneuver, or where growing strain is placed on force cohesion.

o Manpower quality: The Iraqi Army is typical of many Third World forces in its reliance on the mass use of poorly trained conscripts, and the failure to provide adequate status, pay, and training for NCOs and technicians. Many forces fail to provide for professional career development for officers and joint and combined arms training.

o Slow tempo of operations: Most Third World military forces have not fought a high intensity air or armored battle. They are at best capable of medium tempo operations, and their pace of operations is often dependent on the survival of some critical mix of facilities or capabilities.

o Lack of Sustainability, Recovery, and Repair: These initial problems in the tempo of operations are often exacerbated by a failure to provide for sustained air operations and high sortie rates, long range sustained maneuver, and battlefield/combat unit recovery and repair. Many Third World states are heavily dependent on re-supply to deal with combat attrition where the US can use field recovery, maintenance, and repair.

o Inability to prevent air superiority: Many Third World states have far greater air defense capability on paper than they do in practice. Most have not fought any kind of meaningful air action in the last decade, and many have never fought any significant air action in their history. The effort to transfer experience from other nations often leaves critical gaps in national capability, even where some capabilities are effective.

o Problems in air-to-air combat: Iraq's weaknesses in air-to-air combat are typical of the problems of most Third World air forces. Air combat training levels are low and unrealistic. AWACS and ABCCC capabilities are lacking. EW capabilities are modified commercial grade capabilities. Most aircraft lack effective air battle

management systems, and have limited beyond-visual-range and look down shoot down capability. Most Soviet/Communist supplied air forces depend heavy on obsolete ground controlled vectoring for intercepts. Key radar and control centers are static and vulnerable to corridor blasting.

o Problems in land-based air defense: Most Third World states must borrow or adapt air defense battle management capabilities from supplier states, and have limited independent capability for systems integration -- particularly at the software level. They lacked the mix of heavy surface-to-air missile systems to cover broad areas, or must rely on obsolete systems which can be killed, countered by EW, and/or bypassed. Most Third World short-range air defense systems do not protect against attacks with stand-off precision weapons or using stealth.

o Lack of effective survivable long range strike systems: Many Third World nations have the capability to launch long range air and missile strikes, but also have severe operational problems. Refueling capabilities do not exist or are present in such small numbers as to be highly vulnerable. Long range targeting and BDA capabilities are lacking. Training is limited and unrealistic in terms of penetrating effective air defenses. Platforms are export systems without the full range of supplier avionics or missile warheads. Assets are not survivable, or lose much of their effective strike capability once dispersed.

o Combined (Joint) Operations, Combined Arms, and the AirLand Battle: Most Third World states do not provide an adequate emphasis on any of the key advances in the integration of Western war fighting capabilities during the last decade. When they do, serious individual gaps exist in national warfighting capability.

o Rough/Special terrain warfare: Although many Third World forces have armed helicopters and large numbers of tracked vehicles, and can create effective rough terrain defenses if given time, they have severe problems in such operations in high tempo operations. Many tend to be road-bound for critical support and combined arms functions, and lack training for long range, high intensity engagements in rough terrain. Many do not properly train to exploit the potential advantages of their own region, and are either garrison forces, or they rely on relatively static operations in pre-determined field positions. These problems are often compounded by a lack of combat engineering and barrier crossing equipment.

o Night and All-Weather Warfare: Most Third World forces lack adequate equipment for night and poor weather warfare, and particularly for long range direct and indirect fire engagement, and cohesive, sustainable, large scale maneuver.

o Failure to defend in the proper depth - the shallow defensive battlefield: Many Third World states have doctrines and defense concepts that attempt to hold fairly long forward lines, and that use only one major belt of barrier and mine defenses. Many keep artillery and immediate support units too close to the forward line -- enhancing vulnerability to air operations and armored penetration. They are

vulnerable to Western forces and rely on swift deep penetrations armored, modern combat engineering, and air power.

o Misuse and maldeployment of reserves: Iraq is scarcely unique in relying on uses of reserve forces which assume adequate air cover and sufficient time to react. The problems in Third World tempos of maneuver, combined with improving US and other Western "look deep/strike deep" capabilities provide added capability to disrupt the enemy concept of battle.

o Infantry operations: Many Third World units maintain low quality infantry units which they use for defensive purposes. Many of these forces lack training, and the capability to maintain cohesion in the event of disruptive air attacks, or outflanking maneuver. Many differ sharply in actual manning and equipment levels between individual units. Exploiting the character of individual units, as distinguished from relying on generalized OB/TO&E analysis, allows the West to exploit these weaknesses effectively.

o Armored operations: Third World forces generally have sharply different levels of armored warfare proficiency within their armored and mechanized forces. None have advanced training and simulation facilities. Many have severe interoperability and standardization problems within their force structure -- particularly in the case of other armored fighting vehicles where they often deploy a very wide range of types. Many are very tank heavy, without the mix of other capabilities necessary to deploy infantry, supporting artillery, and anti-tank capabilities at the same speed and maneuver proficiency as tank units. Most have poor training for night and poor weather warfare, and for maneuver and overall battle management at the force -- as distinguished from the major combat unit level.

o Artillery operations: Many Third World states have large numbers of artillery weapons, but serious problems in training and tactics. They lack long range targeting capability and the ability to rapidly shift and effectively allocate fire. Many rely on towed weapons with limited mobility, or lack off-road support vehicles. Many are only effective in using mass fire against enemies that maneuver more slowly than they do.

o Combat training: Third World military training generally has serious problems and gaps, which vary by countries. Units or force elements differ sharply in training quality, and have training problems complicated by conversion and expansion, conscript turnover, and a lack of advanced technical support for realistic armored, artillery, air-to-air, surface-to-air, and offensive air training. Mass sometimes compensates, but major weaknesses remain..

o Inability to use weapons of mass destruction effectively: Arguably, Third World states are acquiring long range missiles and weapons of mass destruction with very limited exercise and test and evaluation capabilities. Many will have to improvise deployments, doctrine, and war fighting capabilities. In many cases, they will leave

weaknesses and vulnerabilities, or only be able to exploit a limited amount of the potential lethality of such systems..

The Gulf War indicates that there are three other aspects of countervailing strategy that need to be pursued in more depth. First, many of the weaknesses in Western capabilities for regional warfare can be offset by strengthening friendly and allied states, and providing the UN with a pre-crisis capability to effectively exploit Western military capabilities. In some ways, Western nations have long sought to do this with their military assistance planning, with pre-positioning, and through joint exercises and training. Desert Storm demonstrated, however, that peacetime efforts were not adequate in preparing for cooperation with Saudi Arabia or in providing rapidly deployable and effective capabilities for coalition warfare. The West also needs to fully understand the new interoperability problems that are of the "revolution in military affairs" with allied capabilities. Managing arms sales and preparing for cooperative warfare are very different, and the West needs to review its present assistance plans in this light.

Second, arms control is often viewed as a means of stabilizing the military balance, or the growth of military forces, but only limited attention is paid to the impact of arms control on regional war fighting strategy and the "revolution in military affairs." The West understood and emphasized the war fighting implications of START or CFE, but it has not done so with many aspects of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, Chemical Weapons Convention, Biological Weapons Convention, Missile Technology Control Regime -- or in later efforts to deal with conventional arms transfers. A more explicit effort to examine regional and global arms control agreements to see how they can aid countervailing strategy, and the exploitation of the revolution in military affairs against aggressor states might improve the Western negotiating position without in any way affecting the fairness or negotiability of such agreements.

Third, the Western debate over technology transfer has generally been decoupled from specific assessments of regional war fighting capability, impacts on the revolution in military affairs, and countervailing strategy. Assessments of the risk of military and dual use items have often been unstructured, and based on broad discussions of risk, rather than on regional net assessments and analyses of their impact on specific threat countries. The West will obviously benefit from any technology transfer limits that increase or sustain the advantages offered by the revolution in military affairs, and from limits that deny aggressor states access to the key technologies that might correct their present weaknesses or limit their ability to exploit them in offensive combat. At the same time, broad efforts at technology denial will fail either because of foreign sales or economic pressures to expand

trade. Once again, a more effort tied to countervailing strategy might significantly aid the Western strategic position.

The Strategic Impact of Weaknesses in Western Military Capabilities

The other side of the coin is that Gulf War and its aftermath raise equally important questions about exploitable weaknesses in Western military forces: These weaknesses are summarized in Table 12.3 and they include vulnerability to the use of weapons of mass destruction, an inability to take serious casualties, the timeliness of power projection capabilities, and the willingness to maintain the levels of military capability that proved so decisive in Desert Storm.

Regardless of how the "revolution in military affairs" is structured at the operational level, countervailing strategy works two ways. An intelligent enemy can focus on such Western weaknesses and exploit them. This happened to the US in Vietnam, Beirut, and Somalia, and it has happened to the West in Bosnia.

Table 12.3

The Other Side of Countervailing Strategy:
Weaknesses in US and Western Capabilities for Regional Warfare

- o Accepting the true politics of war:* Much of the writing on the "revolution in military affairs" still assumes that the West will only have to use military force where there is clear popular and legislative support, and tacitly assumes that any action by the US and/or its allies will have broad international support. There are two problems with this approach. The first is that the defense of strategic interests cannot always be tied to an act of naked aggression like Iraq's invasion of Kuwait. The second is that popular, legislative, and international support is always conditional and often volatile. Beginning a conflict or peace action is only the start of the political nature of war. If the enemy can exploit the political situation, there will be no contract between the military and society that will guarantee continued support.
- o Low intensity realism:* Low intensity wars are almost invariably fought in confused political circumstances against people, not things. Such wars are highly political and focus on killing rather than on destroying weapons and facilities. Western preparation for using the revolution in military affairs in peace-keeping and low intensity conflict sometimes tacitly denies this political reality, while policy makers often commit military forces on the basis of expectations of success without fully assessing the risks. While it may be argued that the West has learned from Somalia, it is not clear what or how. The current peacekeeping effort in Bosnia, for example, still presents similar risks, and a characterization of Serbian, Croatian, and Muslim

- forces during the crisis has scarcely been a model that can support a countervailing strategy.
- o Taking casualties:* Rightly or wrongly, many potential threat nations believe that the US and other Western states face the same problem as Israel: They cannot take serious casualties in any war other than an existential threat. While such expectations may be exaggerated, efforts to exploit this weakness and produce the kind of retreat the US made from Beirut and Somalia can be taken for granted, and Western success in any future major regional contingency may be dependent on relatively quick, decisive, and low casualty success.
 - o Inflicting casualties:* The West must increasingly plan to fight at least low and mid-intensity conflicts in ways that both limit enemy casualties and show that the West is actively attempting to do so. At the same time, the "revolution in military affairs" has often avoided coming to grips with the prospect of extending combat with enemy forces where manpower is the principal target and killing people, as distinguished from things, dominates the tactical situation. The assumption is often tacitly made that the US will not engage in such fighting -- an assumption that has already help lead to the US defeat in Somalia.
 - o Collateral damage:* Western states will operate under growing and even more severe constraints regarding inflicting damage on enemy civilians and civilian facilities.
 - o Urban and Built-Up Area Warfare:* Western military forces never fully come to grips with the issue of urban warfare in NATO, assuming that it would either exploit largely evacuated urban/ areas or could largely bypass these areas. The reluctance to fight in populated areas was at least a passing factor shaping the nature of conflict termination during the Gulf War. Western forces are not trained or equipped to deal with sustained urban warfare in populated areas in regional combat -- particularly when the fighting may affect large civilian populations on friendly soil.
 - o Mountain Warfare and Warfare in Forested or Jungle Areas:* Many of the systems and tactics that the Coalition exploited in the Gulf War were only possible because of the relatively flat terrain and open nature of that terrain. They would be much less decisive if better cover was available.
 - o Hostage taking and terrorism:* Western governments still tend to sharply overreact to hostage taking, often making deals or concessions for political or humanitarian reasons, when long experience had shown that hostages deals almost inevitably fail. Similarly, the West still has uncertain military capabilities to deal with terrorism and unconventional warfare.
 - o Sudden attack:* One of the key lessons that future threats are likely to draw from Desert Storm is the potential advantage of sudden and decisive action, and the potential value of exploiting the problems in the power projection capabilities of the

- US and other Western military forces. Western strength may often deter war, but when deterrence fails, it is important to understand that threat powers are likely to escalate suddenly and stress surprise. It is equally important to understand that threat nations actively exploit reporting on shifts in Western defense spending and force levels, and will focus on the problems in Western power projection capabilities revealed in budget documents, legislative debates and the media.
- o Extended deterrence and battles of intimidation:* At present, the West is better prepared for war fighting than it is in defining a clear structure of regional deterrence based on exploiting the weaknesses of threat nations, and reassuring and strengthening allies. Many crises and regional issues, however, are decided by "no intensity" conflict. They are the product of whether one nation can intimidate another, often to win limited victories that do not threaten the survival or ruling elite in neighboring states. The current Iranian build-up in the Gulf seems to have this focus. So do some aspects of North Korea's manipulation of its nuclear threat, (or threat or nuclear), and the Chinese build-up of capabilities that may affect decisions on control of the South China Sea. The problem the US faces in countering such pressures and in extending deterrence to a regional level is one that it is only beginning to address.
 - o Weapons of mass destruction:* The Coalition emerged from Desert Storm claiming a victory over Iraq in destroying its weapons of mass destruction that it never achieved. It had firmly identified only two of 21 major Iraqi nuclear facilities before the war, struck only 8 by the time the war ended, did not properly characterize the functions of more than half the facilities it struck, and never completed effective BDA. Coalition strikes on Iraqi chemical facilities left 150,000 munitions intact -- most of which suffered far more from design defects than Coalition attacks. Iraq's biological warfare capabilities seemed to have been evacuated, and remain largely intact. The Coalition "Scud Hunt" failed and never produced a confirmed kill. Future wars are certain to present far more serious and time urgent threats, and involve far more developed threat nation planning to try to exploit possession of such weapons.
 - o Ecological and environmental warfare; Water and infrastructure warfare:* The burning oil fields and oil spills of the Gulf War did not materially affect the ecology of Kuwait and the Gulf. They did, however, set a precedent for environmental warfare that may be more important in the future. There is often only a narrow line between military actions that affect the environment, and actions that affect key aspects of human survival like attacks on water facilities and power facilities that affect key human services and attacks on fuel facilities. Weapons of mass destruction are not the only way of achieving large-scale damage or high civilian casualties.
 - o Limits of UN/cooperative/Coalition warfare:* While coalition warfare offers many potential advantages, it also confronts the West with the practical problem of understanding the strengths and weaknesses of potential and actual allied nations and forces, and integrating them into the "revolution in military affairs". Britain,

France, and the US deployed to Saudi Arabia in Desert Storm under conditions where it took several months to realistically assess Saudi forces and begin efforts to develop more interoperable war fighting capabilities. The fact that Egypt and Syria were reluctant to execute an offensive into Kuwait came as a surprise to USCINCENT, although this should scarcely have been a surprise in the case of Syria.

o Extended conflict and occupation warfare: Not all wars can be quickly terminated, and many forms of warfare -- particularly those involving peace-keeping and peace-enforcement -- require prolonged military occupations. Western states, and certainly the US, are increasingly reluctant to engage in extended conflict at any level of warfare, and have shown little interest in prolonged military occupations and in dealing with the politico-military aftermath of conflict and peacekeeping exercises.

The Gulf War does not teach that there is anything inevitable about Western military superiority, or that the "revolution in military affairs" is a proper solution to all of the problems in exercising global military power. There will be cases where the West cannot exploit regional weaknesses in ways that compensate for its own strength. At the same time, the list of weaknesses in Table 12.3 is a strong argument to re-think many aspects of tactics, technology, and training to broaden the "revolution in military affairs," and to broaden the Post Cold War strategic focus on regional security to deal with additional risks and threats.

The Importance Of Rapid Power Projection Capabilities and Readiness

The West cannot exploit or broaden its "revolution in military affairs" if it does not retain strong power projection capabilities. Almost every aspect of the Gulf War teaches the critical importance of power projection, and the impact that time and distance can have on military capability. There is no doubt that the Gulf War would have been very different if Iraq had swiftly invaded Saudi Arabia, or aggressively challenged the US and Coalition build-up during Desert Storm. All of the strategic advantages that the Coalition enjoyed during the Gulf War were driven by the ability of the US to project a massive war fighting capability into Saudi Arabia and the Gulf. There is no question that several months elapsed before the US could deploy sufficient air and heavy land forces to ensure the forward defense of Saudi Arabia, and several more months elapsed before the US could deploy large enough land forces to liberate Kuwait.

Future enemies are not likely to wait for the US and other states to deploy their power projection forces, and there is a clear need to develop better forms of strategic mobility, prepositioning, and interoperability. The US is already acting on many of these lessons, but they require sustained funding over a decade at a time when US defense

expenditures are uncertain. They also require a firm understanding that readiness is as important a strategic asset as force size and power projection capability.

It is easy to talk about major regional contingencies. It is easy to set goals for force improvement, force levels, and readiness. Wars, however, are not fought with rhetoric, doctrine, or standards based on service politics and bureaucratic and political convenience. The Gulf War showed that it took nearly six months to prepare for a major regional conflict, not simply because of lift problems, but because of defects in virtually every aspect of US and allied military capability -- often in areas rated as fully combat capability. It shows that real-world capability is determined by a merciless and demanding standard of readiness, and that military illusions can be a more serious enemy than opposing forces.

The Gulf War also provides many demonstrations of the potential limits of coalitions where US power projection capabilities do not make US forces available. It is fine to talk about cooperative security, regional alliances, and the UN. It is fine to praise the limited contributions of other powers. There is no question that the forces of other powers like Britain, Egypt, France and Saudi Arabia played a major role in the fighting during the Gulf War. The fact is, however, that it was the US which did the critical war fighting and that it was only the US that could have performed mission after mission. The fact is that Saudi host nation support capabilities were critical to making it possible for the US to perform these missions even after five and one-half months of build-up. Victory has many causes, but one of them is that the side usually wins whose rhetoric and illusions interfere least with actual war fighting capability.

The lesson for the US, the West -- and powers dependent upon the US -- is that the US must improve its capability for rapid power projection. The US effort to improve prepositioning and strategic lift for the rapid deployment of heavy land forces is a critical priority, but it is only one aspect of rapid power projection capability. The Gulf War has shown that power projection must be treated as an integrated system that is only as strong as its weakest element. It requires forward presence and prepositioning. It requires the cooperation and support of host nations and regional powers. It requires all of the forces involved to be configured for rapid deployment as expeditionary forces, tailored to fight in the specific region where a contingency takes place. It requires jointness and integrated arms, and it requires high quality forces that are combat ready in every element from forward combat arms to service support, with suitable in theater lift and sustainment capability.

At the same time, the Gulf War shows that regional powers must make an equally serious effort to prepare for US and other Western power projection and to support one another once war begins. This involves providing political support for prepositioning and

forward presence, it means offsetting the cost of forward deployed forces dedicated to regional defense, it means standardization and interoperability with US power projection forces, and it means sizing facilities and host nation support to minimize the burden placed on US power projection capabilities.

The Importance of the Edge in Training, Tactics, and Technology

Another major strategic lesson of the Gulf War is that modern war fighting capability is heavily influenced by the relative balance of technology, and related training and tactics. The preceding chapters have listed case after case where the Coalition translated an "edge" in technology into superior war fighting capability. At the same time, they are filled with examples of cases where adequate tactics and training enhanced and integrated various forms of technical superiority in synergistic ways, and cases where technology was limited by inadequate tactics and training. They are filled with examples where developmental or new weapons systems and technologies did not function properly, or required modification and adaptation during Desert Shield or even Desert Storm to become militarily effective.

An "edge" in technology is critical to winning modern wars. It is only critical, however, if that technology is deployed and integrated into the force structure, and supported by proven tactics and training. It is only critical if it can be supported and sustained. Some of the writing since the Gulf War has confused having superior technology with having superior forces. It has even been argued that the Gulf War indicates that it may be enough to bring new weapons and technologies to production readiness. These are not valid lessons to draw from the Gulf War or any other aspect of recent military history.

Even the most realistic test and evaluation and simulation systems are incapable of making technology ready for war fighting. The entire history of recent weapons systems is that it takes a minimum of three to five years after they began to actively enter the force structure to modify and de-bug such systems, to develop suitable training and sustainment methods, and the kind of joint tactics necessary to properly implement the AirLand battle. Nothing can be more pointless in terms of future war than an investment in research and development, technology, or the industrial base that is not translated smoothly and effectively into tactics and training.

The Importance of Weapons of Mass Destruction

The Gulf War is a warning that the nature of war and regional conflict may change radically in the years ahead. Lesson after lesson of the Gulf War would change if an adversary had nuclear weapons. Many lessons would change if an adversary had advanced

biological capabilities, and some lessons would change if Iraq had aggressively used chemical weapons. Arms control and deterrence can reduce the prospects that such wars will take place, but they cannot eliminate them.

Lurking behind the various elements of the "revolution in military affairs" in the Gulf War is another and far more dangerous military revolution: A potential shift from conventional regional wars to wars involving nuclear, biological, and/or chemical weapons. Many of the major proliferating nations in the Third World are still half a decade away from the time at which their ability to use weapons of mass destruction can force the same kind of change in regional warfare produced by the machine gun and the airplane. Iraq was very close to this point when the Gulf War began, and North Korea seems likely to follow. Nations like China, India, and Pakistan already have the capability to use weapons of mass destruction, and nations like Iran are moving in this direction.

Iraq's use of Scud missiles and the deployment of chemical weapons during the Gulf War is a warning that modern military forces must plan for two revolutions in military affairs and not just one. Forces cannot be shaped around the prospect that arms control and deterrence will succeed. They must be shaped around the need to fight in at least a chemical-biological environment, and one where long range missiles and the steady improvement of strike aircraft are changing the nature of war.

Political Versus Military Action and "Decisive Force"

The Gulf War provides important lessons regarding the potential value of UN resolutions, sanctions, and embargo measures relative to the use of military force, and the need for "decisive force." Chapter Two has shown that the combination of UN resolutions, sanctions, and embargo measures almost certainly played a major role in shaping Iraq's political attitudes once war began and in limiting Iraq's capabilities to build up its forces during Desert Shield. At the same time, it is virtually certain that peaceful international action alone would not have driven Iraq to leave Kuwait, or protected the Kuwaitis still in Kuwait. It also clear that years of post war UN resolutions, sanctions, and embargo measures -- carried out after Iraq's military defeat -- have not forced it to implement all of the terms of the cease-fire or caused the collapse of its regime.

If war is scarcely the road to international political reform, the Gulf War shows that war avoidance can be just as ineffective and dangerous. This too is scarcely a new grand strategic lesson, but it is one that the Gulf War indicates that only strong military powers can act upon. The history of Desert Shield is not the history of indecisive action or the limited use of military force. It is a history of the fact that the UN effort to bring force to bear on Iraq required sustained and decisive action.

The use of "decisive force", however, has led many to talk about an excessive military build-up, the excessive use of force, and the cost of the war to the Iraqi people. These are criticisms that deserve careful thought before they are acted upon to limit the size of the military forces the UN, the West, or regional powers employ in future contingencies.

There is no way to define how much force makes up "decisive force," and it is possible that the Coalition could have won an equally decisive victory with fewer forces. The previous chapters strongly indicate, however, that President Bush made a wise decision when he decided to massively reinforce US forces in November, 1990, and that the Gulf War would have lasted substantially longer and produced substantially higher the casualties if the Coalition had not continued to build-up its air power, and if the US had not built up for a two corps attack. Similarly, one has only to speculate on what might have happened if the UN or key members of the Coalition had wavered in initiating the air and land campaigns to see the merit of decisive action.

It is very easy after a massive victory to speculate over how lower levels of force might have achieved that victory. It is particularly easy for politicians and civilian analysts to talk about doing more with less, at a time when efforts to expand international peacekeeping activity come into conflict with national desires for defense cuts. The other side of the coin, is to consider the cost of prolonged air and land campaigns and high casualties. Neither international peace keeping forces or democratic states are well suited to bloody wars of attrition, defeats and reversals, or high casualties. Decisive force is the price of effective action. If it some times leads to the use of excessive force, or to the deployment of excessive forces, this is still a far better road to success than inadequate force and strategic paralysis.

Conflict Escalation and Conflict Control

The Gulf War indicates that careful efforts to limit the type, scale, and area of conflict are also important strategic priorities. The Coalition was largely successful in setting the limits of escalation during the Gulf War and in controlling the scope of the conflict. The Coalition was able to limit the geographic scope of the war, and deliberately limit the scope of the air war to military targets and the Iraqi infrastructure directly supporting the war. The Coalition succeeded in preventing significant Iraqi air and land attacks on neighboring states, and in limiting collateral damage and damage to Iraqi troops.

Yet, Iraq succeeded in taking the initiative in two important ways that still threatened to broaden and escalate the conflict. Its long-range missile strikes gave it an unanticipated capability to threaten Israel, and potentially change the political-strategic character of the war. Similarly, spilling oil into the Gulf, and setting many of Kuwait's oil

wells on fire, approached the threshold of environmental warfare -- a risk that has also never been considered in-depth before the war began. It also presented a continuing threat of escalation to biological and chemical warfare until the end of war.

The Gulf War demonstrates the need to take every possible step before and during a conflict to contain the level and scope of the conflict involved. It also shows the need for careful planning to prevent other powers from pursuing Iraq's path in trying to broaden the war. The Gulf War is a lesson that enough force must be used to deny any benefits from conflict escalation by placing limits on how an opponent can use its conventional forces. It shows that limiting a conflict is as important as winning one, and that careful consideration must also be given to escalation, to an opponent's use of weapons of mass destruction and/or environmental warfare.

At the same time, efforts to limit the escalation of conflict should not be confused with placing unrealistic limits on military operations. The Coalition forces scarcely made excessive use of force against civilian populations and facilities, or made efforts to maximize Iraqi military casualties. If anything, the Gulf War demonstrated that modern technology, high tempos of war, and efforts to limit collateral damage can greatly reduce the cost of war fighting without inhibiting the effective use of force.

Efforts to reduce enemy casualties and collateral damage must not undercut the strategic goal of winning the war, protecting friendly forces, and reducing their casualties. The policy makers of democratic states must never forget that their military forces are composed of volunteers who take on military risks for their nation. Soldiers are not saints or martyrs, they are citizens. War is not a morality play, it is an exercise in violence and killing. Once nations go to war, their primary obligation must be to achieve the objectives they fight for and to protect the lives of their own troops. If war is justified or necessary, and if decisive force is available, then decisive force should be used.

Conflict Termination

As has been discussed in Chapter Eight, the Gulf War provides an important lesson that conflict termination cannot be left as an ad hoc matter to be resolved in the field and at the last minute. Regardless of how the Gulf War should have been terminated, the decision as to when and how to terminate the conflict was one of the most important single decisions in the war. The fact that this decision seems to have been taken with little detailed planning, and under conditions where the political leadership may not have fully understood the military conditions in the field, is not atypical of events in past wars. Nevertheless, it indicates that the Coalition's leaders ignored the fact that battles may end wars, but peace negotiations win them.

A deliberate and well-defined plan for conflict termination -- coupled to a clear system for ensuring suitable intelligence and operational data are available to support the execution and modification of that plan -- and should be given the highest priority in future conflicts. The strategic decision to terminate a conflict cannot be divorced from an adequate understanding of the tactical and technical problems in continuing the conflict. While the lesson is an old one, grand strategy and strategy must always be examined in terms of their military feasibility and cost.

It is unclear that the failure to explicitly understand this during the Gulf War radically changed its grand strategic outcome. Nevertheless, conflict termination should never again be treated as casually or be given so little prior detailed planning and coordination. Cease-fire negotiations and settlements and peace negotiations should be treated as the most critical grand strategic actions that can be taken in a military conflict once victory is probable.

Grand Strategy and Conflict Outcomes

These issues affecting conflict termination have broader implications. Another strategic lesson of the Gulf conflict is that limited wars, fought for limited objectives, have limited consequences. The UN Coalition won one of the most decisive military battles in history, and achieved all of the original strategic goals for which it was fought. By most historical standards, the Gulf War was a grand strategic victory and should be viewed as such. The UN Coalition did not, however, transform its military victory into new grand strategic goals. It did not eliminate the threat from Iraq, change the Iraqi regime, and create a new regional security structure that brought lasting security and stability to the entire region.

As a result, the Gulf War has triggered a debate as to whether the purpose of the Gulf War should have been expanded to restructure the basic character of an aggressor state and create a new and more democratic regime. This debate only began after the cease-fire, a poor time to reconsider war fighting objectives. It began only after the scale of the Coalition victory became fully apparent, and uprisings in Iraq made Saddam Hussein and the Ba'ath regime seem vulnerable. It also has focused almost solely on whether extending the length and intensity of the war would have brought down Saddam Hussein, and has largely excluded the problems an occupying force would have encountered in ensuring that Iraq emerged as a stable democracy and in enhancing regional security.

In fact, the Gulf War has led some observers to see the Gulf War as a paradigm for collective military action and international peacekeeping as a method of achieving political and cultural reform. Ironically, many who initially opposed the Gulf War, and who

normally oppose all war, have since seen the use of military force as a legitimate route to political change in other conflicts in Bosnia, Haiti, and Somalia. Such a view of the Gulf War misreads the lessons of history. Wars may or may not serve as a means of restructuring the political system of defeated states, but there is no "invisible hand" that automatically transforms military victory into political and economic progress.

Germany and Japan changed as the result of defeat in total war -- not limited war of the kind that took place in the Gulf. Military victory alone did not change the political character of either state. Victory had to be followed by years of occupation and political control of both states. This occupation involved a massive effort to restructure the government, economy, and legal system of both states, and grand strategic action was enforced over nearly a decade. Further, Germany and Japan had been democracies and capitalist states before they were dominated by a dictator and warlords. Occupation did not mean transforming a fundamentally different political structure, or overcoming massive cultural and ethnic barriers. It did not mean trying to overcome deep ethnic and political divisions, dealing with religious issues, or trying to enforce alien concepts of law and economic behavior.

A massive military defeat does not inevitably trigger forces that change the political character of a dictatorship like Iraq, any more than occupying a state like Somalia reverses its tribal character and conflicts. In fact, much of the argument that broadening or lengthening the Gulf War would have produced national political reform in Iraq ignores the history and character of Iraq and the pattern of events that followed the war. Iraq had no serious democratic or moderate national opposition before the Gulf War, and its politics have long been the politics of political extremists and ethnic and religious factions.

The politics of the uprisings that followed the initial cease-fire soon became the politics of these factions.³ The uprisings began on the last day of February, 1989 and began in the Sunni towns of Abul Khasib and Zubair, about 60-70 kilometers south of Basra. The uprisings were started by regular military officers and conscripts who felt that they had been betrayed and abandoned by Saddam Hussein while he took care to protect the retreat of the Republican Guards. It is important to note that the uprisings began after most of the surviving Republican Guards forces were already well north of Basra and in a position to strike against them.

The uprisings quickly became pro-Shi'ite and pro-Iranian as they spread from south to north. They began in Basra on March 1, in Suq al-Shuyukh on March 2, and in Nasiryya,

³ For further details, see the description of the uprisings in Faleh Abd al-Jabbar, "Why the Uprisings Failed," Middle East Report, May/June 1992, pp. 2-11.

Najaf, and Kufa on March 4. They took began in Karbala on March 7, and then spread to Amara, Hilla, Kut and other southern cities. By the time they reached Basra, they had already become a struggle for Shi'ite separatism, although one without clear political structure and with little military strength. They were then joined by the marsh tribes of the Hawr al-Hammar, led by the chieftains of the Albu Hijam and Albu Gassid tribes.

As the uprisings expanded, Shi'ite radicals took a clearer role in leading the revolts in the south. Groups like the Supreme Council of the Islamic Revolution in Iraq (SAIRI) led by Muhammed Bakr al-Hakim, the Islamic Action Organization, the Islamic Masses Movement, and the al-Dawa al-Islamiyya (Islamic Call) took an increasingly dominating role. Al-Hakim made himself the spokesman for the uprisings, and while he talked of elections, his propaganda not only attempted to transform the uprisings into a Shi'ite movement, but one he led with support from Iran. SAIRI began to issue military orders, circulated photos of the Ayatollah Khomeini and welcomed the return of Shi'ite dissidents from Iran. Al-Hakim also concentrated his efforts on Najaf and Karbala.

The end result was to alienate many of the Iraqi military, Sunnis, Arab nationalists, socialists, and secularists who had joined the uprising or who might have supported it. If the uprising in the south had succeeded, it would have undermined Saddam Hussein, but it would scarcely have replaced him with a moderate democratic regime. It might well have led to a civil war between a pro-Iranian Shi'ite movement and the result of the nation.

The Kurdish uprisings only began on March 5, after the uprisings in the south had demonstrated the potential weakness of the Ba'ath regime. They started in Raniyya and Chawar Qurna. They spread to Koi Snjaq on March 6, to Sulimaniyya on March 7 and 8, to Halabjah and Arabat on March 9, to Arbil on March 11, and to smaller towns like D'hok and Zakhu during March 10-13. They did not reach Kirkuk until March 20.

The uprisings in the north took on a different character. The Kurds had long reacted to virtually every major blow to the ruling regime in Baghdad with revolt. Some of the key Iraqi military forces that had secured the Kurdish area in the past had taken heavy losses during the Gulf War, and the Mukhabarat initially seemed paralyzed by Iraq's defeat. There already was considerable tension within the Kurdish areas because the Ba'ath regime had used force to hunt down deserters, and had done little to ensure the continued support of the pro-regime Kurdish militia -- the Salah al-Din Forces, which the Kurdish people called "jash" or "donkeys".

By the time the Iraqi military and security forces mobilized to fight back, the revolt had been taken over by long standing separatist movements, including the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (Talabani faction), Kurdish Democratic Party (Barzani faction) and Kurdish communists. Masoud Barzani had been able to persuade many in the Salah al-Din forces to

join the revolt, and establish ties with some of the high ranking officers from the six regular Iraqi Army divisions remaining in the North. Many Iraqi troops deserted or remained neutral.

The divisions within various Kurdish movements, however, prevented the early emergence of a single leader. At the same time, the Kurdish revolt became oriented towards the establishment of a separate Kurdish state or enclave which would include the oil city of Kirkuk and possibly Mosul. While there were Iraqi Kurds who sincerely saw the revolt as part of a broader effort to change Iraq's political character, the uprisings in the north took on the character of a massive ethnic revolt. Like the revolt in the south, this created a growing risk of prolonged civil and ethnic conflict, rather than a force that moved towards the democratic reform of the Iraqi nation.

The religious and ethnic character of both the Shi'ite and Kurdish revolts produced an inevitable counter-reaction among secular, nationalist, and Sunni Iraqis. It reduced the risk of an uprising in the Sunni areas around Baghdad and in the middle of the country. At the same time, the revolts had no real military strength -- even of a kind that could have fought Iraq's paramilitary security forces. This was fatal in the face of Iraq's surviving military forces. It was not the Iraqi helicopters that General Schwarzkopf had allowed to keep flying that defeated the uprisings, it was Tikriti-officered full divisions. The Republican Guards and several key regular army divisions remained loyal in the south, and the Ba'ath regime was able to use six divisions stations in the area around Mosul in the north. Saddam Hussein had large forces in the area around Baghdad and Takrit, and it was able to exploit the fact that there had been massacres of Ba'ath officials to motivate the military and government officials remaining in the south and north to gradually rally to the regime.

If the outcome of the Gulf teaches anything about war, it is that the use of military force to achieve specific grand strategic objectives requires deliberate and well chosen grand strategic efforts. This lesson has been taught many times in the past. There have been at least 300 significant conflicts, civil wars, and armed interventions since World War II. A study of 269 of these conflicts between 1945 and 1988 shows little indication that war is a force for political order or positive political change.⁴ In most recent cases, war instead has triggered a process of continuing civil or regional conflict. Even in the case of international peace keeping missions, there is little about their history to date to argue that they quickly heal the tensions or causes of war that led to their deployment. Limited war is limited war, and only sheer chance will make it a means of achieving broader political goals.

⁴ Herbert K. Tillema, International Armed Conflict Since 1945, Boulder, Westview, 1991.

Finally, it is far from clear that the US or Coalition had direct responsibility for the revolts or their outcome. A few scattered radio broadcasts, and President Bush's call upon the Iraqi people to overthrow Saddam Hussein during a television speech, scarcely can be called a major covert action program, or be said to imply any obligation on the part of the US. Psychological warfare is a reality of modern war that losing sides simply have to live with. Further, there is no real evidence that such US and Coalition efforts caused the uprisings in the south or north. The leaders of the revolts made no mention of such encouragement from the West when the uprisings started or appeared to have some chance of success. Such claims only began once the uprisings begun to fail or after they collapsed.

Strategic Warning and Strategic Trade-Offs

In summary, the Gulf War has shown that many of the changes in western military forces that originally took place because of the Cold War can have great strategic value in future regional conflicts. These changes include the emphasis on immediate combat readiness, high quality professional forces, high technology forces, the uses of space, improved air mobility, maneuver oriented armored operations, night warfare and digital battlefield and C⁴I/BM systems.

At the same time, the Gulf War exposes a fundamental problem in strategic trade-offs. On the one hand, the West is seeking to reduce its forces and international commitments as much as it can to meet domestic economic and social needs. On the other hand, the Gulf War demonstrates that the West cannot ignore the need for effective military forces. Studies by the Center for Naval Analysis indicate that the US alone has used military force well over 240 times since 1945. Apart from the Gulf War, more than 210 of these cases did not involve either the former Soviet Union or the former Warsaw Pact. More than 75% of these cases involved uses of force that had not been considered in the intelligence studies and scenarios used for defense planning during the year before the use of force took place. More than two-thirds of these contingencies involved the use of military forces with less than 30 days of warning.

The lessons of the Gulf War offer some solutions to reshaping Western forces in ways in that allow the West to reduce the overall burden of its military efforts and retain the strategic commitments that it needs. The Gulf War indicates that the West can maximize its "peace dividend" if it makes the right trade-offs in reducing and reshaping its existing forces, and invests as efficiently as possible in the new forces that it needs for the post-war era. It indicates that the West can reduce the burden of its military efforts to the extent that it can take advantage of the kind of coalitions that were created during the Gulf

War, and integrate its use of military force with internal diplomatic and economic action, and efforts to strengthen the right kinds of arms control.

There will still, however, be severe limits to how much the West can continue to cut its military forces before it loses the capability to deter, defend, and engage in major peace enforcement activity. Decisive victory during the Gulf War took roughly half of the combat ready military resources of the United States, plus major contributions of British, Egyptian, French, and Saudi forces. The Gulf War provides strategic warning that there are very real limits to the cuts that can be made in US, Western, and regional defense efforts before these place severe limits on deterrence and war fighting capability. It also shows that the role of "superpower" has very real costs -- as do any efforts to make cooperative security more than rhetoric.

The Gulf War is not the end of history, but an avatar of the post-Cold War era. Further major defense cuts by the US and the other states that can deter or repel aggression may produce "peace dividends" in the short term, but they may be extraordinarily expensive in warfighting capability, in strategic outcomes, and in human life in the years that follow.