

JOURNAL OF U.S. ARMY SPECIAL OPERATIONS HISTORY

VERITAS

2022 ROUNDUP



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MESSAGE FROM THE COMMAND HISTORIAN



Welcome to the first digital-only issue of *Veritas*. Faced with rising printing and distribution costs, we arrived at the difficult decision to transition our flagship publication, *Veritas*, to this format. By leveraging the ever-increasing content of our website, <https://arsof-history.org>, we can reach a much broader audience with Army Special Operations Forces (ARSOF) history in a way that is both cost-effective and easily accessible. This new format is but the latest change for a publication with a long legacy. Produced by the U.S. Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School (USAJFKSWCS) in the 1960s-1970s, *Veritas* was originally a monthly command newsletter. Resurrected by the USASOC History Office in 2005 as a historical journal, the next iteration of *Veritas* featured highly researched, in-depth, operational histories of ARSOF.

Beginning with this issue, *Veritas* will be an annual roll-up of writings produced over the preceding calendar year. Some of these will have been published on our website or on other platforms throughout the year. Others will be prod-

ucts produced specifically for the command. *Veritas* will still feature lengthier articles covering various facets of ARSOF's rich history. One thing is a constant: we remain committed to providing the well-researched, high-quality content that our readers have come to expect.

An exciting initiative for the History Office in 2022, the implementation of a Unit Historical Officer (UHO) program, is explained in this issue. This program has the USASOC History Office working "by, with, and through" appointed UHOs at the battalion level and above to enhance historical collection and unit support. Other articles covering irregular warfare and the background of the Operational Detachment - Alpha structure, for example, began as USASOC-internal informational papers but have been reformatted here to give readers a behind-the-scenes view of recent priorities. Some articles represent longer-term research projects. "Triumph in the Desert" details a critical operation during the Cold War by the 160th Special Operations Aviation Group; "Building the Airplane in Flight" describes the deployment of Psychological Operations forces during the Persian Gulf War; and "SILENT EAGLE" highlights U.S. Army Special Forces (SF) training and inter-operability with a key partner force, representing an essential value-contribution of ARSOF.

This issue also features articles on the many key anniversaries we observed in 2022, including the 80th anniversary of the creation of the First Special Service Force and the 1st Ranger Battalion, and the 70th of the formal establishment of SF and the Psychological Warfare Center (today's USAJFKSWCS). These events feed into the rich tapestry that is ARSOF history. Next year will enjoy its own ARSOF milestones, with associated supporting historical projects. We encourage everyone to keep an eye on our recently redesigned website for new content. Finally, a special thank you to our readers for your continued support. We are pleased that ARSOF history is getting out there like never before.

-Sine Pari

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All USASOC History Office efforts, to include publication of *Veritas*, are a team effort. They would not be possible without participation and support from our graphic and web designers, archivists, marketing and video production experts, and digitization specialists.

GENERAL QUESTIONS:

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Check out the ARSOF History website:
<https://arsof-history.org>

Answers to frequently asked questions can be located at:
<https://arsof-history.org/about.html>



GENERAL INFORMATION

ABOUT THE USASOC HISTORY OFFICE:

MISSION STATEMENT

Preserve the institutional memory and organizational history of ARSOF; inform ARSOF leaders and soldiers, the Army, the DoD, and the nation on ARSOF legacy; and inspire ARSOF soldiers past, present, and future by connecting them with their rich heritage.

PRIORITIES

1. Execute a historical program in accordance with Commanding General, USASOC priorities and guidance.
2. Perform regulatory functions of a U.S. Army command history office, including production of the annual command history and execution of an oral history program.
3. Preserve the institutional knowledge of the command by collecting and safeguarding ARSOF historical assets.
4. Publish print and web-based historical products conveying ARSOF history and legacy.
5. Provide historical support to commanders and units across the ARSOF enterprise.

PUBLICATION INFORMATION

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2022 ROUNDUP



KEY ANNIVERSARIES IN -2022-

by Christopher E. Howard

With a rich heritage spanning more than a century, U.S. Army Special Operations Forces (ARSOF) have plenty of milestones to celebrate. Any given year, ARSOF commemorates unit and regimental birthdays, landmark operations and battles, and other formative moments in its organizational history. What made 2022 remarkable was the preponderance of such anniversaries, several of which are highlighted below.

The U.S. Army possessed no standing special operations capabilities or units when Japan attacked Pearl Harbor on 7 December 1941, drawing the United States into World War II. That began to change the following year – eighty years ago – with the activation of the 1st Ranger Battalion and First Special Service Force (FSSF). The campaign streamers adorning the colors of today’s Special Forces (SF) and Ranger units bear witness to the valorous deeds of these early ARSOF units, performed in places such as North Africa, Sicily, Italy, the Aleutian Islands, France, the Rhineland, and Central Europe.

1st Ranger Battalion

Seeking to emulate the capability of British Commandos, in preparation for major combat operations in North Africa and Europe, U.S. Army Major William O. Darby recruited volunteers for a new American unit. Activated in Northern Ireland on 19 June 1942, the 1st Ranger Battalion was the first of six Ranger Battalions formed during WWII. That August, fifty of its members participated in the ill-fated Allied raid at Dieppe, France. By year’s end, the battalion had



earned the first of four arrowhead devices, signifying an amphibious assault, for the invasion of North Africa; others would follow for Sicily, Naples-Foggia, and Anzio. The 1st Ranger Battalion also earned two Presidential Unit Citations, the first for El Guetdar (Tunisia) and the second for Salerno (Italy), prior to being disbanded in 1944.

First Special Service Force

Back in Washington, D.C., the War Department seized on a British proposal to raise a combined American-Canadian commando force capable of conducting raids against key infrastructure in German-occupied Norway and elsewhere. This unique unit, the FSSF, was activated at Fort William Henry Harrison, Montana, on 9 July 1942. Commanded by

Brigadier General Lucian Truscott Jr (center with riding boots) and Major William O. Darby (pointing) inspect Company C, 1st Ranger Battalion on 2 September 1942 at Dundee, Scotland. The company commander, William Martin is on the left.

Colonel (COL) Robert T. Frederick, the Force trained to conduct airborne, mountain, and winter warfare. Undeterred by the cancellation of its intended mission in Norway, the FSSF distinguished itself in combat operations in the Aleutians, the Italian mountains, Anzio, Rome, and Southern France. Disbanded on 6 January 1945 in France, the FSSF's legacy lives on in many ways. Its lineage is perpetuated by today's SF Groups. Its crossed-arrow insignia, first worn by the U.S. Army Indian Scouts, then approved for wear by the FSSF in October 1942, is now the SF Branch insignia, and its arrowhead patch influenced both SF and USASOC shoulder sleeve insignia. For more information, refer to "Commemorating the First Special Service Force: Remembering ARSOF's Legacy and Heroes" article on page 4.

Unconventional Warfare in the Philippines

On the other side of the world, a small contingent of U.S. Army officers, including Donald D. Blackburn, Wendell W. Fertig, and Russell W. Volckmann, stayed behind after Japanese forces captured Bataan and Corregidor in the Philippines in April and May 1942, respectively. Eluding capture, they organized and led Philippine guerrillas, preparing for the eventual return of U.S. forces in October 1944, and aiding in the expulsion of the Japanese occupiers by mid-1945. After the war, these officers drew on their wartime experience to develop unconventional warfare (UW) doctrine and training programs for the Army's new SF units.

Additional 1942 Milestones

Meanwhile, in Charlottesville, Virginia, the Army opened the School of Military Government at the University of Virginia on 9 May 1942 to provide formal instruction in Civil Affairs (CA), a predecessor to today's CA training at the U.S. Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School (USAJFKSWCS). A month later, on 13 June 1942, the Office of Strategic

Services (OSS) was established in Washington, D.C. While not in the lineage of ARSOF, owing to its joint status, the OSS impacted the development of both SF and Psychological Warfare (Psywar) in the postwar period. Lastly, the 528th Quartermaster Service Battalion, the lineage predecessor of today's 528th Sustainment Brigade, was activated on 15 December 1942 at Camp McCain, Mississippi.

The Psywar Center

ARSOF continued to expand throughout WWII, but nearly all these units were inactivated after the war and their capabilities either lost or forgotten. However, it was not long before the Korean War and deepening Cold War rifts combined to renew the Army's interest in special operations during the early 1950s. ARSOF made significant advances during this period as it began taking shape as an organizing concept.

At the urging of Brigadier General Robert A. McClure, Chief of Psywar, the Army established the Psywar Center at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, on 10 April 1952. The Center, commanded by COL Charles H. Karlstad, assumed responsibility for commanding,

A Forceman in an abandoned Japanese defensive position on Kiska aims an enemy light machine gun. The hurried Japanese evacuation meant a wealth of souvenirs for the occupying troops.



training, and equipping psywar and UW units. It was renamed the U.S. Army Special Warfare Center and School in 1956 and, after a series of redesignations, became the U.S. Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School in 1986. For more information, refer to “USAJFKSWCS: Seventy Years and Counting” article on page 9.

10th Special Forces Group

It was under the Psywar Center that Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 10th Special Forces Group (SFG) was activated on 11 June 1952 at Fort Bragg. The first unit of its kind, it was commanded by COL Aaron Bank, an OSS veteran. A contingent of SF-trained soldiers deployed to Korea in 1953, while the bulk of 10th SFG transferred to Bad Tolz, Germany. Those remaining formed the 77th SFG, activated at Fort Bragg on 25 September 1953. The activation of other SFGs soon followed. However, thirty-five years passed between the activation of the first SFG in 1952 and the establishment of the SF Branch on 9 April 1987.

Conclusion

Although ARSOF was not all that it would eventually become, many of the pieces of the puzzle were in place by the end of 1952.

Ranger units were not a permanent fixture in the Army’s arsenal until 1974, but all Army Rangers can trace their lineage back eighty years, to 1942, as can all SF and 528th Sustainment Brigade soldiers. As the nation’s premier UW experts, the Army’s five active duty and two National Guard SF Groups continue to build on a legacy that began in 1942 in the steamy Philippine jungles and the wind-swept Montana hills. Finally, USAJFKSWCS, as the Army’s Special Operations Center of Excellence, continues to provide ARSOF units with superbly qualified soldiers, just as it did in 1952. Taken together, these milestones were more than enough to proclaim 2022 a “Year of ARSOF Anniversaries.”

Looking ahead, Army Special Operations will celebrate many anniversaries in 2023. Eighty years ago, in 1943, several ARSOF lineage and legacy units were activated, including four Ranger battalions, five Mobile Radio Broadcasting Companies, precursors to today’s Psychological Operations units, and the Civil Affairs Division, a Department of the Army-level staff section. In the summer of 1943, Rangers spearheaded the Allied invasions of Sicily and Italy. That December, the First Special Service Force performed seemingly impossible feats in the Italian mountains.

Twenty-five years later, in Vietnam, Special Forces soldiers demonstrated great acts of valor in the early days of the enemy’s Tet Offensive. In 1993, ARSOF supported Operation RESTORE HOPE in Somalia, and ten years later, were instrumental in the opening phase of Operation IRAQI FREEDOM. These are but a few key events and milestones that USASOC will commemorate in the coming year. 🇺🇸

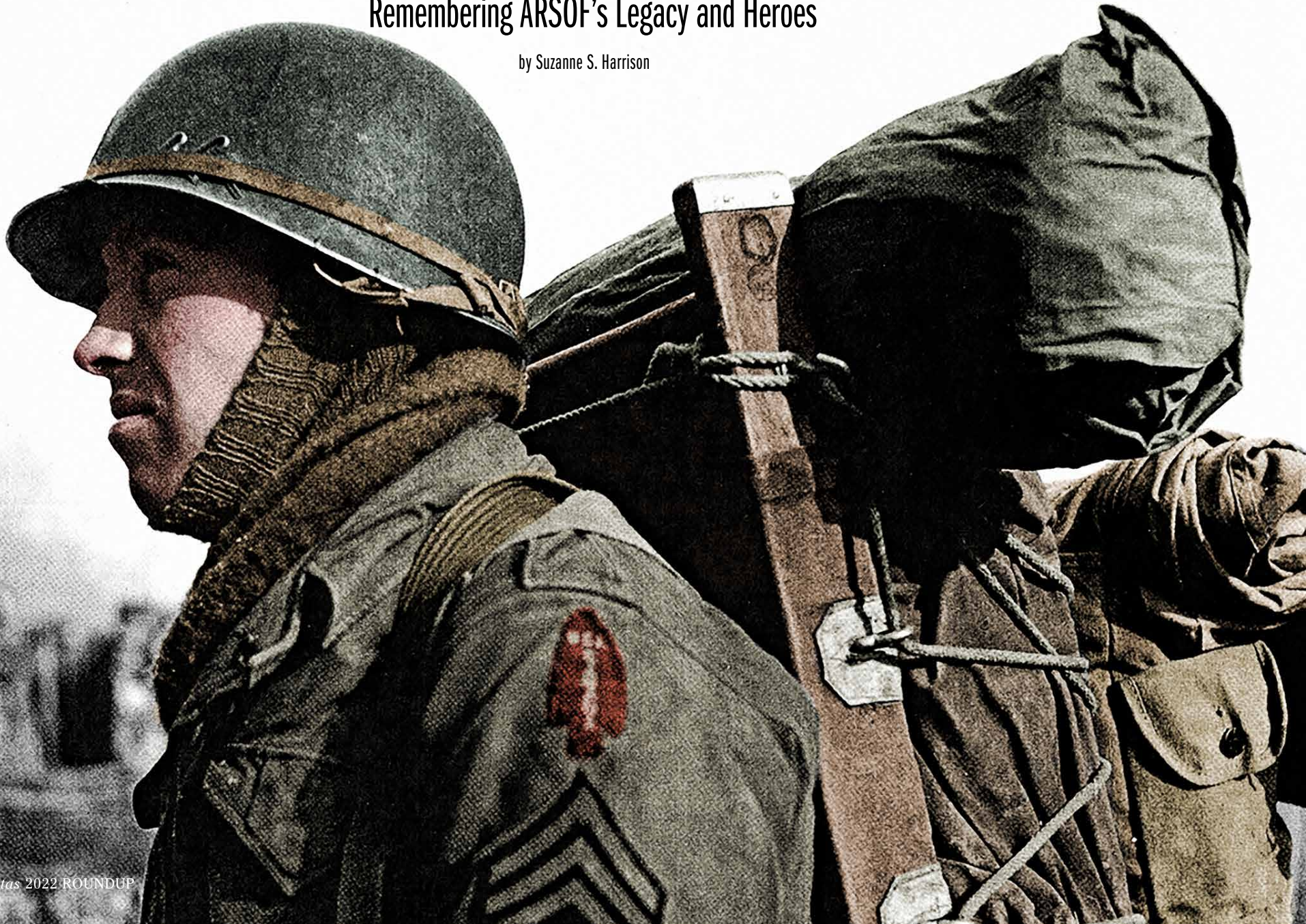


The 10th Special Forces Group's unit sign on Smoke Bomb Hill, Fort Bragg, NC. Until the current Special Forces shoulder sleeve insignia was approved on 22 August 1955, all Special Forces soldiers wore the WWII Airborne Command Patch.

COMMEMORATING THE **FIRST SPECIAL SERVICE FORCE**

Remembering ARSOF's Legacy and Heroes

by Suzanne S. Harrison





(Images credit: U.S. Army Photo)

This past year, the U.S. Army Special Operations Command (USASOC) commemorated the 80th anniversary of the First Special Service Force (FSSF), one of the foundational units upon which modern Army Special Operations Forces (ARSOF) are built. The FSSF served for a brief time during World War II (1942-1944), but during its incredible run, the soldiers of this combined American-Canadian unit exhibited extraordinary physical endurance, superior mental agility, and extreme courage.

On 9 July 1942, the all-volunteer force began a grueling fitness program at Fort William Henry Harrison, near Helena, Montana. It included close combat fighting, airborne, demolition, mountaineering, amphibious, and winter warfare training, specifically designed for a planned raiding mission against select targets in Nazi-occupied Europe. Numbering under 2,000 men – one third from Canada – the Force was divided into three 600-man regiments, a service battalion, and a headquarters. When the planned mission to attack targets in Europe was canceled, the Force was ordered to aid in the recapture of those Aleutian Islands held by the Japanese. The Force led an assault on Kiska Island on 15 August 1943, only to learn that the Japanese had already withdrawn.

This invaluable rehearsal, however, served the Force well when they deployed to Europe. The Force fought in the Italian mountains and around the Anzio beachhead, where they gained the nickname “Devil’s Brigade.” They went on to help liberate



FSSF SSI

TOP LEFT: Rigorous mountaineering and skiing were the cornerstone of the First Special Service Force training program at Fort William Henry Harrison, Montana. **BOTTOM LEFT:** Forcemen conduct airborne training at Fort William Henry Harrison, Montana. **BOTTOM RIGHT:** Members of the force practice winter training.



(Images credit: U.S. Army Photo)



(Images credit: U.S. Army Photo)



Rome in June 1944 and fight in southern France before being disbanded around the New Year 1945. In recognition of their superior service during WWII, the Force was presented with the Congressional Gold Medal in 2015.

USASOC's commitment to honoring and preserving the legacy of all our ARSOF veterans remains an enduring priority. As of this writing, there are fewer than 20 known living veterans of the Force, but the History Office has been fortunate to have interviewed several members of this distinguished unit over the years. In addition, this past year the USASOC History Office worked with the First Special Service Force Association to support the 80th anniversary commemoration in Helena, Montana, which was attended by the Command Historian.

Force veterans and their families reuniting at their old training ground in Helena each July has long been an annual tradition; unfortunately, fewer and fewer Force veterans are able to attend in person due to age and health. According to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), fewer

than 240,000 of the nearly 16 million World War II veterans survive today. By next year, the VA anticipates that half of that number will be living, as the youngest of those remaining are in their 90s. This past year, the First Special Service Force lost several of its own, including Walter F. Boryca, Graham W. Clapp, George J. Stiles, James R. Summersides, Felix J. Polito, and Eugene Gutierrez.

Boryca, whom the USASOC History Office spoke with earlier this year, was planning to attend the reunion in July, but unfortunately died on 19 May 2022, at age 98. His obituary highlighted: "He served proudly in the United States Army in World War II and was a member of the First Special Service Force 'Devil's Brigade.'" Clapp, who was 102, died 23 May 2022. At the age of seven, Clapp reportedly immigrated to Canada. He was 22 when he volunteered for the FSSF and participated in the Battles of Monte La Difensa and Anzio. Stiles died on 8 June 2022. He joined the Army in 1943. In addition to serving with the Force, he was part of the 1st Ranger Battalion. Summersides

TOP: The FSSF commemorated its 80th anniversary during its annual reunion in July 2022 at Fort William Henry Harrison near Helena, Montana. **MIDDLE:** First Special Service Force veterans and the families gather for their first reunion in 1949. **BOTTOM:** Another angle of the FSSF commemorating its 80th anniversary during its annual reunion in July 2022 at Fort William Henry Harrison near Helena, Montana.

was a Canadian volunteer who served with the FSSF until it disbanded, then with the 48th Highlanders of Canada as it helped liberate the Netherlands. Polito died 20 August 2022. He joined the FSSF from Louisiana, where he became a respected businessman after leaving the Army. His family celebrated his 100th birthday on 20 April 2022 and arranged for him to finally receive his unit's Congressional Gold Medal.

Eugene Gutierrez died on 25 August 2022, just a few weeks shy of his 101st birthday. Born in September 1921, he served in the Army from August 1941 to August 1945. He participated in the mission in Kiska, the Battle of Monte La Difensa, and the liberation of Rome. The History Office interviewed him earlier this year and he recorded a short video clip of himself wearing FSSF insignia while describing his experience in the Force. This video was played at the USASOC formal ball, held 5 May 2022. Gutierrez, like many of his fellow FSSF veterans, reflected humbly on his experience. "I was proud to serve my country and my God," he said. "Given the opportunity, I would do it again."

LEFT: Forceman Eugene Gutierrez Jr. pictured at age 20 during training in the summer of 1942 at Fort William Henry Harrison, Montana. **RIGHT:** Forceman Eugene Gutierrez Jr. proudly wears his decorations and FSSF unit insignia in a photo taken in 2022. Gutierrez died on 25 August 2022 just shy of his 101st birthday.



(Images credit: Family of the Gutierrez Family)



(Images credit: Family of the Gutierrez Family)

(Images credit: U.S. Army Photo)



Just as USASOC was honored to celebrate the 80th anniversary of the FSSF in 2022, it looks forward to commemorating many more significant milestones in the year to come. These include the 80th anniversaries of the activation of Merrill's Marauders and several World War II Ranger Battalions; the 35th birthday of USASOC's provisional activation; and key anniversaries of Operations RESTORE HOPE, GOTHIC SERPENT, and IRAQI FREEDOM.

Behind each of these events are brave and remarkable soldiers like those of the First Special Service Force, who have made indelible marks on ARSOF history. USASOC is committed to keeping their legacies alive. 🇺🇸

TOP: Current forcemen stand in formation during World War II. Canada did not begin using its maple leaf flag until 1965. **BOTTOM:** Members of the 5th Special Forces Group and a Canadian Special Operations Regiment Veteran bear the U.S., Canadian, and FSSF flag during opening ceremonies for the 2022 reunion.

(Images credit: U.S. Army Photo)





U.S. ARMY JOHN F. KENNEDY SPECIAL WARFARE CENTER AND SCHOOL:

Seventy Years and Counting

by Christopher E. Howard

The U.S. Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School (USAJFKSWCS) is the Army's Special Operations Center of Excellence, serving as the proponent for all U.S. Army Civil Affairs (CA), Psychological Operations (PSYOP), and Special Forces (SF) doctrine and training. In 2022, USAJFKSWCS celebrated its seventieth anniversary. What follows is a concise history of this storied organization. For more information, visit www.arsof-history.org.

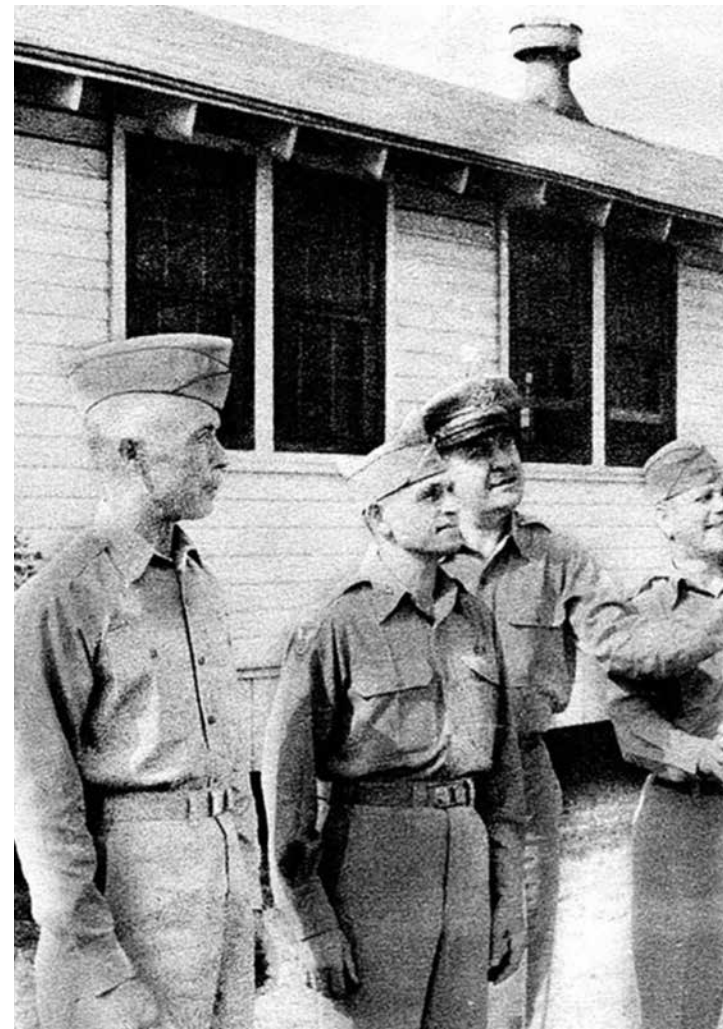
Brigadier General William P. Yarborough, U.S. Army Special Warfare Center Commander, met with President John F. Kennedy during the President's 12 October 1961, visit to Fort Bragg, NC. This moment inspired the statue of the two men that currently stands outside Kennedy Hall on the USAJFKSWCS campus.

In April 1952, with war raging on the Korean Peninsula and Cold War divides deepening globally, the U.S. Army formally established the Psychological Warfare (Psywar) Center at Fort Bragg, North Carolina. Assigned to the Third U.S. Army, the Psywar Center absorbed all psywar-related functions and personnel previously located at Fort Riley, Kansas. Then-Brigadier General (BG) Robert A. McClure, the Army's Chief of Psywar, selected Colonel Charles H. Karlstad as the Center's first commander. A combat veteran of two World Wars, and former Chief of Staff of the Infantry Center at Fort Benning, Georgia, Karlstad was the right man for the job.

Early Psywar Center missions included conducting individual training and supervising unit training for Psywar and SF; testing and evaluating equipment; and developing doctrine, tactics, techniques, and procedures for Psywar and SF, the Army's unconventional warfare (UW) specialists. Assigned units were the 6th Radio Broadcasting and Leaflet Group, the Psychological Warfare Board, and 10th SF Group. The latter was the first of its kind, having been activated 11 June 1952. That October, the Center added the Psychological Warfare School, consisting of Psywar and SF departments. The Army approved the Center and School's insignia design on 28 November 1952, which is still in use today. In December 1956, the Army renamed the Psywar Center and School as the Special Warfare Center and School.

During the early 1960s, the Special Warfare Center and School grew in response to the massive expansion of SF and increasing U.S. involvement in Vietnam. Much of this growth occurred under the leadership of BG William P. Yarborough. The Center added counterinsurgency operations courses and created an Advanced Training Committee to develop methods of infiltration and exfiltration, such as military freefall and underwater operations. In 1964, the Center was redesignated as the U.S. Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center. This was to memorialize the recently slain President, who was an avid supporter of Army Special Operations Forces (ARSOF). A year later, the Center consolidated all unit-level dive training into the SF Underwater Operations course, conducted at Key West, Florida. In May 1969, the Center was renamed the U.S. Army John F. Kennedy Center for Military Assistance, and the School was renamed the U.S. Army Institute for Military Assistance.

On 15 September 1971, the U.S. Army Civil Affairs School transferred from Fort Gordon, Georgia, to Fort Bragg, coming under the



(L to R) Colonels Charles H. Karlstad (Psychological Warfare Center and School Commandant) and Aaron Bank (Center Executive Officer), along with Lieutenant Colonels Lester L. Holmes (6th RB&L Group commander) and John O. Weaver (Chief of the Psywar Division of the Army General School at Fort Riley, Kansas) pose by the Headquarters sign on Smoke Bomb Hill, Fort Bragg, NC.

Center, alongside SF and PSYOP. A year later, the Center was assigned to the new U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC), becoming the Army's proponent for ARSOF. Meanwhile, SF regrouped amid post-Vietnam War force reductions, refining its mission and how it trained. One result of this was the implementation of the Robin Sage UW exercise in 1974, which replaced earlier UW exercises such as Operation Snowdrop, Cherokee Trail, and Gobbler's Woods.

The 1980s were a period of revitalization and transformation for ARSOF, and the Center was deeply involved in this process. In 1982, it became an independent TRADOC activity, under the name U.S. Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center. Concurrently, the Army activated 1st Special Operations Command, which assumed command of operational ARSOF units, allowing the Center to focus on special operations training and doctrine.

In 1986, the Center was redesignated once more, taking its current name of U.S. Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School. It reorganized into six training departments: SF; Special Operations Advanced Skills; Survival, Evasion, Resistance and Escape (SERE), based on the Vietnam-era POW experience of SF officer James N. 'Nick' Rowe; Foreign Area Officer; CA; and PSYOP. It established a Noncommissioned Officer Academy (NCOA) in 1987, later named in honor of Master Sergeant David K. Thuma. The following year, the Center initiated a three-week Special Forces Assessment and Selection (SFAS) course to test SF candidates physically and psychologically, prior to entering the SF Qualification Course. In 1989, 1st Special Warfare Training Group was activated, initially consisting of three training battalions and one support battalion.

In June 1990, USAJFKSWCS was reassigned from

TRADOC to the U.S. Army Special Operations Command (USASOC), activated on 1 December 1989 to control of all components of ARSOF, less forward deployed units. During this decade, the Special Operations Academic Facility (now Bank Hall) opened, military freefall training relocated from Fort Bragg to Yuma Proving Ground, Arizona, and foreign language training was instituted as part of CA, PSYOP, and SF qualification.

In the two decades since the 9/11 terrorist attacks on the United States, USAJFKSWCS expanded and evolved to meet the growing demand for ARSOF imposed by the Global War on Terrorism. Organizational changes included the activation of the Special Warfare Medical Group (SWMG); the creation of the Special Warfare Education Group and SF Warrant Officer Institute (SFWOI); and the activation of additional battalions under 1st SWTG. Additionally, CA and PSYOP instituted their own assessment and selection courses, modeled off SFAS. In 2012, the Army designated USAJFKSWCS as the U.S. Army Special Operations Center of Excellence.

Today, USAJFKSWCS consists of the Special Warfare Center, SFWOI, NCOA, and three training groups: 1st SWTG, 2nd SWTG, and SWMG. Combined, they offer over one hundred separate courses to CA, PSYOP, SF, Allied, and Sister Service students, from assessment and selection and military occupational specialty qualification, to foreign languages, advanced skills, and leader development. After seventy years, USAJFKSWCS continues to provide the nation with highly trained, educated, disciplined, and adaptive ARSOF soldiers, capable of operating in a complex, multi-dimensional world. 🔥

- Veritas et Libertas -



The John F. Kennedy Center for Military Assistance, Fort Bragg, North Carolina circa 1970



USAJFKSWCS INSIGNIA



Device

Motto: *VERITAS ET LIBERTAS* (Truth and Freedom).

Background: The device was originally approved for the Psychological Warfare School on 28 November 1952. It was redesignated for the U.S. Army Special Warfare School on 18 September 1957. On 23 March 1970 the device was redesignated for the U.S. Army Institute for Military Assistance. The device was redesignated for the USAJFKSWCS on 24 February 1984.



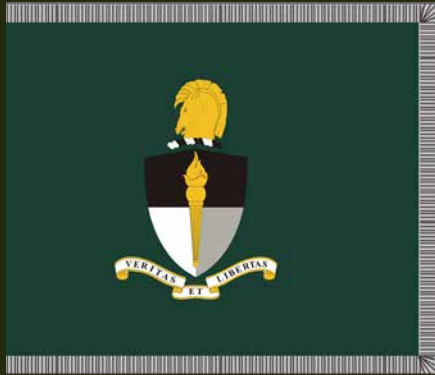
Distinctive Unit Insignia

Description: A gold color metal and enamel device 1 1/8 inches (2.86cm) in height overall consisting of the shield, crest, and motto of the device.

Symbolism: Black, white, and gray of the background are symbolic of the three different phases of activity. The black also refers to the subversive nature of Special Operations. The torch is the classic symbol of light, learning, liberty and truth. The Trojan horse is universally recognized as a symbol of subversive activity. A horse also represents the Knight in chess, the only piece capable of moving indirectly and of striking from and within the enemy territory.

Background: The distinctive unit insignia was originally approved for the Psychological Warfare School on 28 November 1952. It was redesignated on 18 September 1957 for the U.S. Army Special Warfare School. On 23 March 1970 it was redesignated for the U.S. Army Institute for Military Assistance. The insignia was amended on 26 August 1981 to extend authorization for wear to the personnel assigned to the U.S. Army John F. Kennedy Center for Military Assistance. On 21 February 1984 the distinctive unit insignia was redesignated for the U.S. Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center.





USAJFKSWCS Flag

Flag: The flag for the John F Kennedy Special Warfare Center is jungle green with silver gray fringe. The device of the John F Kennedy Special Warfare Center is centered on the flag.

Description: On a black shield within a 1/8 inch (.32cm) yellow (US Army yellow) border, three inches (7.62cm) overall in height, two yellow crossed arrows, points upward, surmounted by a white stylized antique lamp, the outline simulating the shape of the Greek letter "Psi," emitting three yellow and scarlet tongues of flame.

Symbolism: The lamp placed in the center of the shield refers to the U.S. Army Special Warfare Center (predecessor unit). The lamp also alludes to the U.S. Army Special Warfare School and the three tongues of flames to the three prime areas of instruction for which the School is responsible: Psychological Operations, Counterinsurgency, and Unconventional Warfare. The unconventional outline of the lamp, in simulating the shape of the Greek letter "Psi," re-



Shoulder Sleeve Insignia

fers symbolically to psychology - the traits, feelings, actions and attributes, collectively, of the mind; the tongues of flame implying the spoken and written words which are major tools of Psychological Warfare. The three flame sprouts at the top of the lamp simulate the heraldic delineation "embattled" - to array for battle. The two crossed arrows refer to the silence and stealth with which our early frontiersmen fought for the new found freedom in the New World, as well as the ingenuity, courage and survival by the usage of wasplike, yet devastating, attacks through the employment of irregular tactics, techniques and logistical support. The arrow, straight and true, thus characterizes the Special Forces of today. The color black signifies wisdom and prudence, the white perfection and faith, and the yellow constancy and inspiration. The black and

white also allude to the "degrees" of propaganda used by Special Warfare units, a "gray degree" resulting from the admixture of black and white.

Background: The shoulder sleeve insignia was originally approved for the U.S. Army Special Warfare Center on 22 October 1962. It was redesignated for the U.S. Army John F. Kennedy for Special Warfare Center on 3 August 1964. On 25 July 1969 it was redesignated for the U.S. Army John F. Kennedy Center for Military Assistance. The insignia was amended on 26 August 1981 to extend authorization for wear to personnel assigned to the U. S. Army Institute for Military Assistance. On 21 February 1984 the shoulder sleeve insignia was redesignated for the U.S. Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center.

“ANOTHER TYPE OF WARFARE”

JFK's Address to the West Point Class of 1962

by Jared M. Tracy



Final photo of JFK at USMA.

On 6 June 1962, U.S. President John F. Kennedy (JFK) gave the commencement address at the U.S. Military Academy (USMA) at West Point, New York. Just nine months earlier, on 12 October 1961, JFK had visited Fort Bragg, North Carolina, where he observed Special Warfare demonstrations near McKellar's Pond by Special Forces (SF) soldiers wearing their newly sanctioned green berets.¹ This visit was followed by a letter from the White House to the Army in April 1962, in which JFK wrote, “The green beret’ is . . . a symbol of excellence, a badge of courage, a mark of distinction in the fight for freedom.”² The President’s speech to the West Point Class of 1962 reiterated his view that there were more suitable ways to addressing Communist-inspired “wars

JFK meets Brigadier General William P. Yarborough, Commanding General, U.S. Army Special Warfare Center, during his visit to Fort Bragg, NC, in October 1961.





TOP LEFT: JFK lands on The Plain for his participation in West Point graduation exercises, 6 June 1962. **TOP MIDDLE:** Surrounded by the USMA Color Guard (rear), the Secretary of the Army, Elvis J. Stahr, Jr. (left front), and various senior leaders, JFK (center front) receives honors from the USMA band and a 21-gun. Facing the President in the foreground of the photo is the honor guard. **TOP RIGHT:** After the rendering of honors, the President reviews the honor guard on The Plain. **MIDDLE LEFT:** JFK proceeds from the honor guard area to meet other senior military leaders on The Plain. At the far right of the photo are retired MG Henry Clay Hodges, Jr., West Point Class of 1881, and three cadets who Kennedy had nominated to the Academy when he was a U.S. Senator: Peter J. Oldfield, David G. Binney, and Kevin G. Renaghan. **MIDDLE:** JFK speaks with MG (ret.) Hodges (in wheelchair) just before greeting his past USMA nominees, Cadets Oldfield, Binney, and Renaghan. Westmoreland is to Hodges' immediate right. **BOTTOM LEFT:** JFK and Westmoreland in the presidential limo for the short trip to Gillis Field House for the graduation ceremony. All images are credited to the JFK Presidential Library and Museum.

of national liberation” than with large-scale conventional warfare or nuclear retaliation. The U.S. Army’s leading unconventional warfare experts, Special Forces, were central to his security strategy.

On Wednesday morning, 6 June 1962, on the anniversary of the 1944 Allied invasion of Normandy (D-Day), the President landed aboard a Sikorsky S-61 helicopter onto The Plain (parade ground) at West Point. Followed by his Military Aide, General (GEN) Chester V. Clifton, Kennedy walked down the stairs onto the field and stood for a 21-gun salute and honors by the USMA Band. There, he was joined by Color Guard cadets; the Secretary of the Army, Elvis J. Stahr, Jr.; Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, GEN Lyman L. Lemnitzer; Chief of Staff of the United States Army, GEN George H. Decker; and Superintendent of the USMA and future senior commander in Vietnam, Major General (MG) William C. Westmoreland.³

Accompanied by Westmoreland and escorted by honor guard commander, Cadet Captain Paul J. Kirkegaard, JFK proceeded to review the honor guard; greet other military leaders; pay his respects to the elderly MG (retired) Henry Clay Hodges, Jr., West Point Class of 1881; and meet three cadets, Peter J. Oldfield, David G. Binney, and Kevin G. Renaghan, whom he had nominated to the Academy during his time as a U.S. Senator. Kennedy and West-



moreland then loaded into the back seat of the presidential Lincoln Continental convertible to make the half-mile trip to Gillis Field House, where the graduation ceremony was to take place.⁴

The presidential entourage proceeded to the packed arena, and commencement was soon underway. Following the invocation by Chaplain Theodore C. Speers and MG Westmoreland's introductory remarks, the Combined Chapel Choirs sang the West Point hymn, "The Corps." The Superintendent then returned to the microphone to introduce the President as the keynote speaker.⁵ Originally drafted by White House Special Counsel and speechwriter, Theodore Sorensen, and with handwritten edits by JFK himself, the [speech](#) began at 10:01 am and lasted just over seventeen minutes.⁶ His overarching

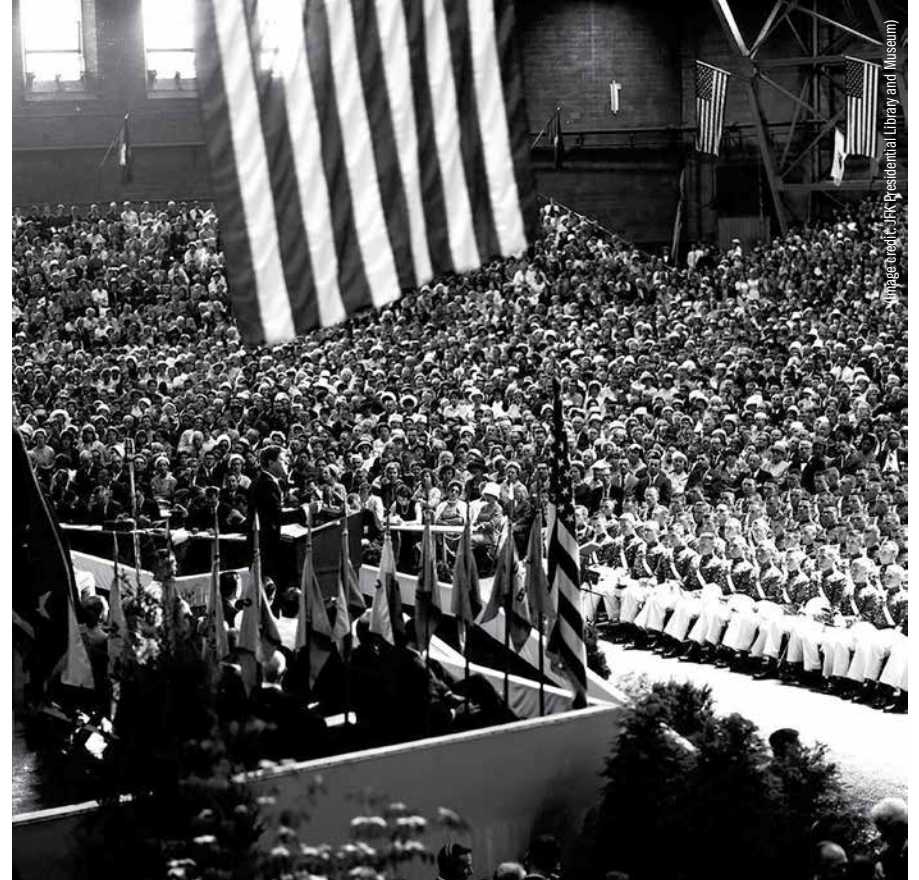
TOP LEFT & RIGHT: Views inside Gillis Field House for the graduation ceremony on 6 June 1962. **BOTTOM LEFT:** During the graduation ceremony, Superintendent MG Westmoreland addressed the graduates, introduced the President as the guest speaker, called up Cadet George W. Kirschenbauer to present JFK with the class gift, and administered the oath of office to graduates. All images are credited to the JFK Presidential Library and Museum.

message was that the world was constantly changing; that some of the challenges facing the nation had historic precedents, while others were entirely unique; and that, as part of the larger profession of arms, the graduates must be prepared, adaptable, and constantly learning in order to meet them.

The highlight for U.S. Army Special Warfare, and SF in particular, came at about seven minutes into his remarks. According to the Commander-in-Chief:

*To cite one final example of the range of responsibilities that will fall upon you; **you may hold a position of command with our special forces, forces which are too unconventional to be called conventional, forces which are growing in number and importance** and significance, for we now know that it is wholly misleading to call this the "nuclear age," or to say that our security rests only on the doctrine of massive retaliation. Korea has not been the only battleground since the end of the Second World War. Men have fought and died in Malaya, in Greece, in the Philippines, in Algeria, and Cuba and Cyprus, and almost continuously on the Indo-Chinese peninsula. No nuclear weapons have been fired. No massive nuclear retaliation has been considered appropriate. This is **another type of warfare, new in its intensity, ancient in its origins**, war by guerrillas, subversives, insurgents, assassins, war by ambush instead of by combat; by infiltration instead of aggression, seeking victory by eroding and exhausting the enemy instead of engaging him. It is a form of warfare uniquely adapted to what has been strangely called "wars of liberation," to undermine the efforts of new and poor countries to maintain the freedom that they have finally achieved. It preys on economic unrest and ethnic conflicts. It requires in those situations where we must counter it, and these are the kinds of challeng-*

TOP: Different view of President Kennedy addressing the West Point Class of 1962.
BOTTOM: Sorensen's draft of the USMA speech (left) and the President's marked-up read copy (right).



(Image credit: JFK Presidential Library and Museum)

-3-

To cite one final example of the range of military responsibilities: you may hold a position of command with our Special Forces -- forces which are too unconventional to be called conventional -- forces which are now growing in number and importance. For we now know ^{that} it is wholly misleading to call this "the nuclear age" or to say that our security rests on our capacity for "massive retaliation". Korea has not been the only battleground since the close of the Second World War -- men have also fought and died in Malaya, in Greece, in the Philippines, in Algeria and Cuba and Cyprus, and almost continuously on the Indo-Chinese peninsula. No nuclear weapons have been fired -- no massive ^{nuclear} retaliation ~~has been considered appropriate~~. This is another type of warfare -- new in its intensity, ancient in its origin -- war by guerrillas, subversives, insurgents, and assassins -- war by ambush instead of combat, by infiltration instead of aggression -- seeking victory by eroding and exhausting the enemy instead of engaging him.

It is a form of warfare uniquely adapted to what Mr. Khrushchev calls "wars of liberation", to undermining the efforts of the newer and poorer countries to achieve both progress ^{and} freedom. It preys on economic unrest and ethnic distrust. It requires, in those situations where we must counter it if freedom is to be saved, a wholly new kind of strategy, a wholly different kind of force, and therefore a wholly new and different kind of military leadership and training.

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the service to our country which is rendered, or the pain of the casualties which are suffered.

To cite one final example of the range of military responsibilities: you may hold a position of command with our Special Forces -- forces which are too unconventional to be called conventional -- forces which are now growing in number and importance. For we now know that it is wholly misleading to call this "the nuclear age" or to say that our security rests ^{only} on our capacity for "massive retaliation." Korea has not been the only battleground since the close of the Second World War -- men have also fought and died in Malaya,

(Image credit: JFK Presidential Library and Museum)



Different view of President Kennedy addressing the West Point Class of 1962

es that will be before us in the next decade if freedom is to be saved, a whole new kind of strategy, a wholly different kind of force, and therefore a new and wholly different kind of military training.

But I have spoken thus far only of the military challenges which your education must prepare you for. The nonmilitary problems which you will face will also be most demanding, diplomatic, political, and economic. In the years ahead, some of you will serve as advisers to foreign aid missions or even to foreign governments. Some will negotiate terms of a cease-fire with broad political as well as military ramifications. Some of you will

go to the far corners of the earth, and to the far reaches of space. Some of you will sit in the highest councils of the Pentagon. Others will hold delicate command posts which are international in character. Still others will advise on plans to abolish arms instead of using them to abolish others. Whatever your position, the scope of your decisions will not be confined to the traditional tenets of military competence and training.

You will need to know and understand not only the foreign policy of the United States but the foreign policy of all countries scattered around the world who 20 years ago were the most

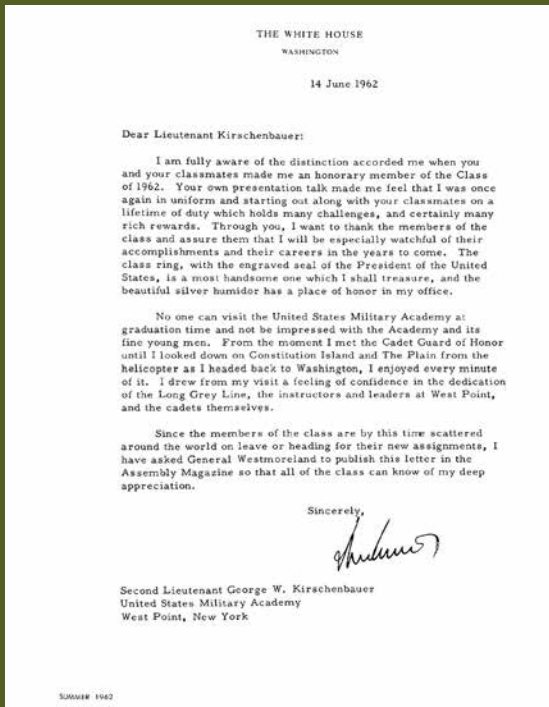
distant names to us. You will need to give orders in different tongues and read maps by different systems. You will be involved in economic judgments which most economists would hesitate to make. At what point, for example, does military aid become burdensome to a country and make its freedom endangered rather than helping to secure it. To what extent can the gold and dollar cost of our overseas deployments be offset by foreign procurement? Or at what stage can a new weapons system be considered sufficiently advanced to justify large dollar appropriations?

In many countries, your posture and performance will provide the local population with the only evidence of what our country is really like. In other countries, your military mission, its advice and action, will play a key role in determining whether those people will remain free. You will need to understand the importance of military power and also the limits of military power, to decide what arms should be used to fight and when they should be used to prevent a fight, to determine what represents our vital interests and what interests are only marginal.

Above all, you will have a responsibility to deter war as well as to fight it. For the basic problems facing the world today are not susceptible of a final military solution. While we will long require the services and admire the dedication and commitment of the fighting men of this country, neither our strategy nor our psychology as a nation, and certainly not our economy, must become permanently dependent upon an ever-increasing military establishment.

Our forces, therefore, must fulfill a broader role as a complement to our diplomacy, as an arm of our diplomacy, as a deterrent to our adversaries, and as a symbol to our allies of our determination to support them.

These words captured the tone of the U.S. commitment to, and SF-led advisory efforts in, Southeast Asia and elsewhere across the globe in the 1960s.



Kennedy's 14 June 1962 letter to 2LT Kirshenbauer, thanking him and the Class of 1962 for the gift.

A GIFT FOR THE PRESIDENT

At the conclusion of JFK's speech, Class of 1962 President Cadet George W. Kirshenbauer presented the Commander-in-Chief with a 14-karat gold class ring and a scroll designating him as an honorary class member, "the first time a commencement speaker has been so honored."⁷ In gratitude, the White House sent a letter to newly commissioned Second Lieutenant (2LT) Kirshenbauer on 14 June 1962, writing, "I am fully aware of the distinction accorded me when you and your classmates made me an Honorary Member of the Class of 1962. . . The class ring, with the engraved seal of the President of the United States, is a most handsome

one which I shall treasure, and the beautiful silver humidor has a place of honor in my office."⁸ After the President's assassination in November 1963, the ring ended up with a private collector. Forty-three years after JFK's appearance at West Point, the ring was auctioned and sold for \$42,000. Eventually, the ring made its way back to the Academy and was placed on display on the second floor of the Jefferson Hall library.⁹

After Kennedy's speech and gifting of a class ring, Kennedy personally awarded diplomas to the top 30 Distinguished Cadets, culminating with Cadet John H. Fagan, Jr., first in his class of 598. The pressures of his office forced JFK to depart the ceremony before completion. As Kennedy and his party exited Gillis Field House, the USMA band played Ruffles and Flourishes and "Hail to the Chief."¹⁰ He bade farewell to Westmoreland and departed in the presidential limousine.¹¹ The President's time at West Point entered the pages of history.

Kennedy's words at the Academy echoed long after the event and his tragic assassination in Novem-

LEFT: Top graduate Cadet John H. Fagan, Jr., receives his diploma and congratulations from Westmoreland and Kennedy. **RIGHT:** Kennedy bids Westmoreland farewell as he leaves Gillis Field House, with the graduation ceremony resuming shortly afterward.



THE CEREMONY RESUMES

Once the President and his party had departed, the remaining graduates received their diplomas. Among them was future four-star general Wayne A. Downing, who later commanded the 75th Ranger Regiment, Joint Special Op-

erations Command, U.S. Army Special Operations Command, and U.S. Special Operations Command, prior to his passing in 2007.¹² Another was Frank S. Reasoner, “the only cadet to win four Brigade Boxing Championships in four different weight classes.”¹³ Commissioned into the U.S. Marine Corps, Reasoner was killed in Vietnam on 12 July 1965, while commanding Company A, 3rd Reconnaissance Battalion, 3rd Marine Division, posthumously receiving the Medal of Honor.¹⁴ Still another graduate was James V. Kimsey, future co-founder,

Chairman, and Chief Executive Officer of America Online (AOL), and founder of the non-profit Kimsey Foundation. He is the namesake of today’s four-story, 120,000-square-foot Kimsey Athletic Center, home of West Point’s football program.¹⁵ After diplomas were presented, the Corps of the Cadets sang the West Point anthem, “Alma Mater.” The National Anthem was then played before the administration of the oath of office by MG Westmoreland and, finally, the benediction by Catholic Chaplain Joseph P. Moore.¹⁶

(Image credit: Assembly)



West Point Class of 1962 celebrates at the conclusion of the graduation ceremony.



ber 1963. Operation WHITE STAR, the U.S. Army Special Warfare mission in Laos, shut down in July 1962, the month after his speech. However, the SF-led advisory effort in Vietnam that began in 1957 continued to mount, culminating with the deployment of 5th Special Forces Group (SFG) to Nha Trang in late 1964. While a large conventional presence served as a bulwark against Soviet aggression in Europe, JFK's belief in SF as the antidote for enemy insurgencies and other non-conventional challenges shaped the American approach in other locations. Examples of these included Thailand, where the 46th SF Company trained elements of the Royal Thai Army into the early 1970s, and Bolivia, where an 8th SFG team trained Bolivian Rangers, who in turn captured international Communist agitator Ernesto 'Che' Guevara in late 1967.¹⁷ Kennedy's depiction of Special Forces as "too unconventional to be called conventional" and as "growing in number and importance" rang true long after they were first spoken at Gillis Field House at West Point in June 1962.

While not intended to be prophetic, President John F. Kennedy's remarks have, in many respects,



TOP LEFT: SF soldiers work with counterparts in the central highland village of Buon Enao, Republic of Vietnam, in early 1962. **TOP RIGHT:** 8th SFG Sergeant Alvin E. Graham (right) trains Bolivian infantrymen on the Browning .30 caliber light machinegun. SF efforts in Bolivia helped that nation's military neutralize infamous Communist agitator Ernesto 'Che' Guevara in late 1967. **BOTTOM:** Members of 46th SF Company pose with their Royal Thai Army counterparts.




ENDNOTES

- 1 See Charles H. Briscoe, "JFK Visits Fort Bragg: A Photo Essay," *Veritas: Journal of Army Special Operations History* 14/2 (2018): 32-42, https://arsof-history.org/articles/v14n2_jfk_fort_bragg_visit_page_1.html.
- 2 Letter from the White House to the U.S. Army, 11 April 1962, copy in Department of the Army, *U.S. Army Special Warfare* (Washington, DC: Office of the Chief of Information, Department of the Army, 1962).
- 3 John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum, "Commencement Address at United States Military Academy, West Point (New York), 10:01 AM," <https://www.jfklibrary.org/asset-viewer/archives/JFKWHP/1962/Month%2006/Day%2006/JFKWHP-1962-06-06-A>, hereafter "Commencement Address"; West Point Alumni Foundation, "June Week," *Assembly* (Summer 1962): 10, hereafter "June Week."
- 4 "Commencement Address."
- 5 USMA, Program, "Graduation Exercises, 1962," 6 June 1962, copy in USASOC History Office, Fort Bragg, NC, hereafter Graduation Program.
- 6 "Commencement Address."
- 7 "June Week," 11.
- 8 Letter from the White House to Second Lieutenant George W. Kirschenbauer, 14 June 1962, copy in "June Week," 3.
- 9 50th Reunion Digest, 19.
- 10 "June Week," 11.
- 11 "Commencement Address."
- 12 "Class of 6 June 1962."
- 13 West Point Association of Graduates, "Wristband Provides Motivational Punch," 3 March 2015, <https://www.westpointaog.org/firstcallmarch32015>.
- 14 West Point Class of 1962, We Did!: 50th Reunion Digest, May 2012, 12, <https://www.slide-share.net/frebo3/west-point-class-of-1962-50th-reunion-digest>, hereafter *50th Reunion Digest*; USMA, "Class of 6 June 1962, Arranged According to General Merit," copy in USASOC History Office, Fort Bragg, NC, hereafter "Class of 6 June 1962."
- 15 *50th Reunion Digest*, 13; "Class of 6 June 1962"; USMA, "Notable Graduates," n.d., <https://www.westpoint.edu/about/history-of-west-point/notable-graduates>; Kimsey Foundation, <https://www.kimseyfoundation.org/>. *Kimsey passed away in 2016.*
- 16 Graduation Program.
- 17 For information about SF's role in these and other locations, see USASOC History Office, "Special Forces," https://arsof-history.org/branch_special_forces.html, and "ARSOF Timeline," https://arsof-history.org/arsof_timeline/index.html.

JFK's words in June 1962 continue to reverberate in the 21st century. Here, 10th SFG soldiers and their Lithuanian counterparts wait to board a U.S. Army UH-60 Blackhawk during Exercise Combined Resolve XVI on 6 December 2021, in Hohenfels, Germany. The exercise assessed the readiness of the 1st Armored Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, and helped Ukrainian and Lithuanian Special Operations Forces hone their irregular warfare skills.

remained timeless, as evident in America's present-day Great Power Competition with its former Cold War adversaries, China and Russia. The world has witnessed firsthand "another type of warfare" following the large-scale Russian invasion of Ukraine in February 2022. With myriad threats ema-

nating from peer and near-peer competitors, Kennedy's words about the Army's role remain remarkably salient: "Our forces, therefore, must fulfill a broader role as . . . an arm of our diplomacy, as a deterrent to our adversaries, and as a symbol to our allies of our determination to support them." 

THE EVOLUTION OF THE SPECIAL FORCES ODA

by Troy J. Sacquety



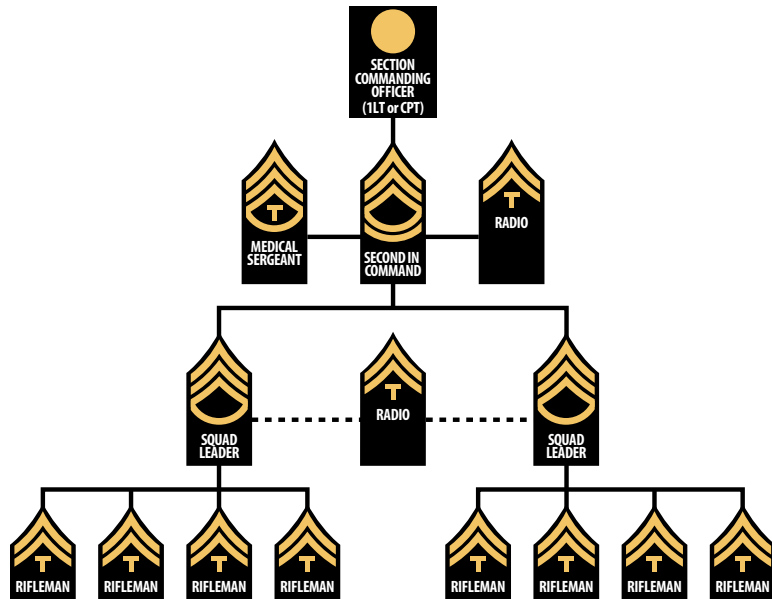
A 1960s recruiting poster highlights the 12-soldier ODA. However, it has had organizational models of up to 15 soldiers.

Today, the Special Forces (SF) Operational Detachment-Alpha (ODA) consists of twelve soldiers. However, that has not always been the case. Its number of personnel has ranged from twelve to fifteen, depending upon era and contemporary doctrine and force structure requirements. What follows is a brief look at the historic organization of the lowest SF unit of action, the ODA. This study starts even before the creation of SF in 1952 by going back to World War II, specifically, the Office of Strategic Services (OSS) Operational Group (OG) section.

Created on 13 June 1942, the OSS was a separate, joint military service that reported directly to the Joint Chiefs of Staff. Its primary mission was to collect, analyze, and disseminate intelligence. The second was to conduct unconventional warfare (UW). The OG was one of the key OSS UW elements.

On 4 May 1943, the OSS activated the OG Branch as a “separate tactical unit” within the OSS.¹ Al-

OSS Operations Group Section, 1945



though it was not a U.S. Army element, it was manned almost exclusively with Army personnel detailed to the OSS who possessed the cultural background and spoke the languages of the areas to be infiltrated. The OGs trained and were employed as small groups. Their mission was to infiltrate enemy-occupied areas to harass the enemy and to be the “operational nuclei of guerrilla units” through organizing, training, equipping, and advising them.² OGs operated in France, Norway, Yugoslavia, Italy, Greece, Burma, and China.

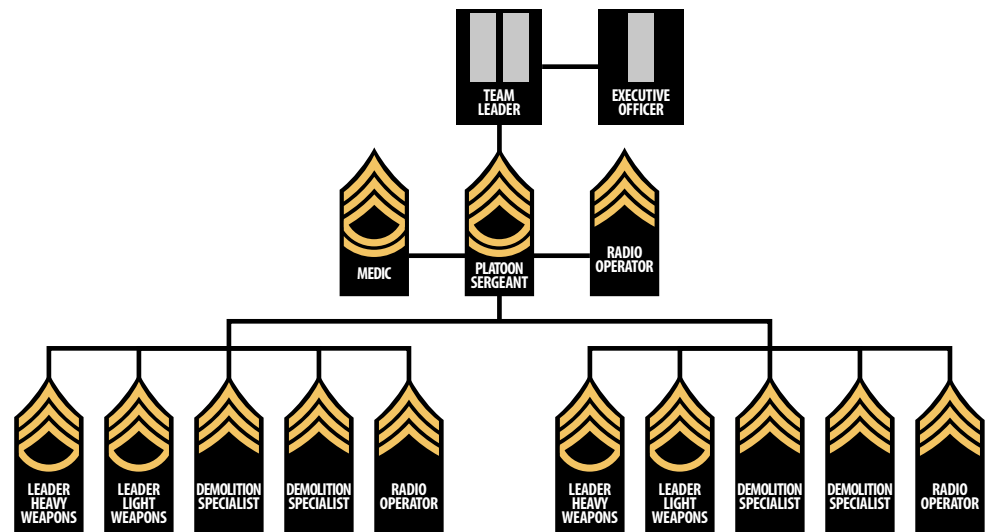
The basic organizational unit in the OG Branch was an Operational Group. An OG fluctuated in size throughout the war but was designed to operate in two independent sections. The main structure for how the OG operated in the field, was the section which could be further divided into two semi-independent squads. The final OG table of organization

and equipment (TO&E), dated 20 February 1945, had a fifteen-man section comprised of a commanding officer (usually a Lieutenant), a senior non-commissioned officer (NCO), a medical sergeant, two radio operators, two squad sergeants, and eight riflemen.³ This structure later became the basis for the ODA.

After World War II, the OSS disbanded on 1 October 1945, and the Army similarly deactivated its special operations units. Within five years, however, the U.S. was again at war. Korea, the first major flare-up of the Cold War, highlighted that the Army needed to recreate special operations units. Therefore, U.S. Army leaders looked to create an unconventional warfare element to work with guerrilla forces. Rather than invent a new structure, they looked at the OG section as a model.

One of the earliest field manuals (FM) on unconventional warfare, which provided the doctrinal

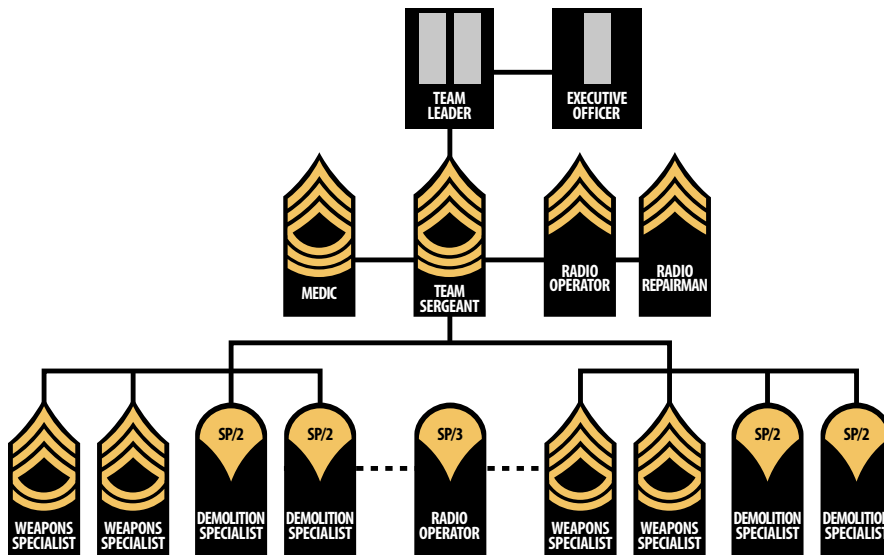
FA Team, 1952



foundation for Army SF, was *FM 31-21: Organization and Conduct of Guerrilla Warfare*, dated October 1951. Its author was Colonel (COL) Russell W. Volckmann, leader of Philippine guerrillas on Luzon during World War II. Although COL Volckmann had extensive UW experience, his Philippine formations did not have a codified structure. He therefore looked to the OSS OG, a TO&E element that did. COL Volckmann even borrowed the OSS nomenclature in *FM 31-21*, when he called for an “Operational Group” of unspecified size, composed of “specially qualified military personnel in uniform, organized, trained, and equipped to operate as teams within enemy territory,” to be the main element to form and assist guerrilla forces.⁴

The proposed *TO&E 33-510*, dated 14 May 1952, set the organization for an FA Team (no acronym assigned but in current parlance, an ODA). Like the OSS

FA Team, 1958

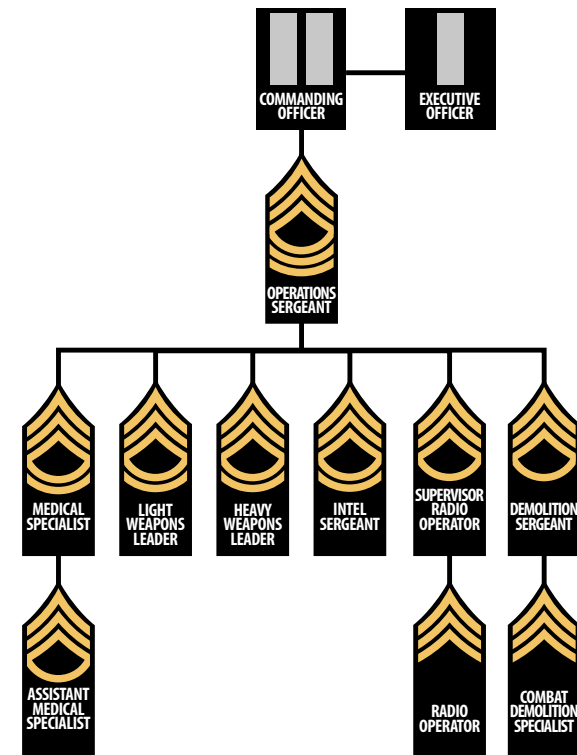


SF SSI

OG section, it was fifteen personnel comprised as follows: a Detachment Commander (O-3), Executive Officer (XO) (Lieutenant), Platoon Sergeant (E-7), Medic (E-7), two Leader Heavy Weapons (E-6), two Leader Light Weapons (E-6), four Demolition Specialists (E-5), and three Radio Operators (E-5).⁵ This same organization was reflected in *FM 31-20: U.S. Army Special Forces Group (Airborne)*, dated August 1955.⁶

The first change to the ODA structure came in Army *FM 31-21: Guerrilla Warfare and Special Forces Operations*, dated 8 May 1958. This manual retained the fifteen-man construct but changed the rank structure and job descriptions of the FA team. It now had a commander (O-3), XO (Lieutenant), Team Sergeant (E-8), Medic (E-8), four Weapons Specialists (E-7), four Demolition Specialists (Specialist 2), one Radio Repairman (E-5), one Radio Operator (E-5),

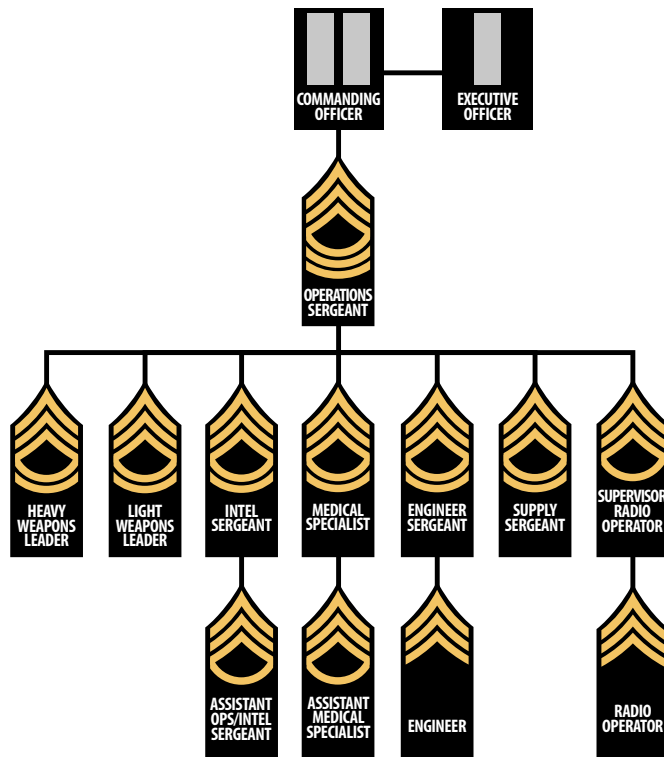
ODA, 1963



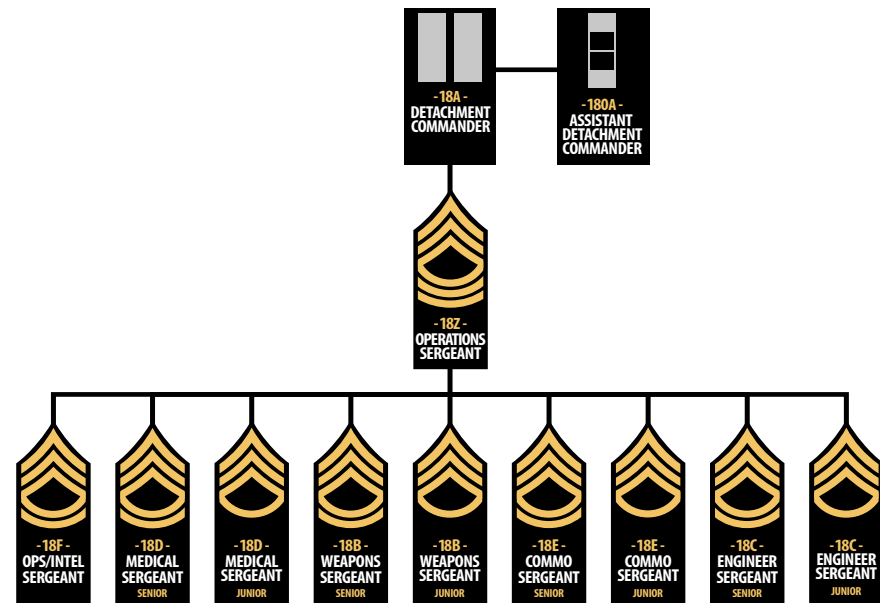
and one Radio Operator (Specialist 3).⁷

The first personnel reduction came with *TO&E 31-107E*, dated 25 September 1963. The FA team, renamed to ODA, was changed to twelve soldiers and restructured the ranks. It had a commander (O-3), an XO (Lieutenant), an Operations Sergeant (E-8), a Heavy Weapons Leader (E-7), an Intelligence Sergeant (E-7), a Light Weapons Leader (E-7), a Medical Specialist (E-7), and Radio Operator Supervisor (E-7), an Assistant Medical Specialist and Demolitions Sergeant (E-6), and a Chief Radio Operator and Combat Demolition Specialist (E-5).⁸ *TO&E 31-107G*, dated 28 June 1968, kept the same gener-

ODA, 1971



ODA, 2014



al organization as the 1963 version but increased the rank of the Demolitions Sergeant, now called a Special Forces Engineer Sergeant, to an E-7, and renamed the E-5 Combat Demolition Specialist to a Special Forces Engineer.⁹

The twelve-man ODA lasted until *TO&E 31-107H*, dated 10 June 1970. This document increased the ODA structure to fourteen by adding a Supply Sergeant (E-7) and an Assistant Operations/Intelligence Sergeant (E-6).¹⁰ A subsequent change to this TO&E on 1 March 1974 reduced the ODA to thirteen men by removing the E-7 Radio Operations Supervisor.¹¹ Another change on 1 September 1974 brought

the ODA back down to twelve by removing the E-7 Supply Sergeant (E-7) and Assistant Operations/Intelligence Sergeant (E-6) but bringing back the Radio Operations Supervisor (E-7). It also changed the Intelligence Sergeant position to an Assistant Operations Sergeant.¹²

The final significant change occurred in 1984 when the first SF warrant officers (WO) began to replace lieutenants on ODAs. This change was motivated by a study conducted by COLs Charles A. Beckwith and J.H. “Scotty” Crerar, who were concerned about the lack of continuity and competency within the ODAs. In their estimation, the seconds-in-command, being lieutenants, were still learning their profession; had spent little time on the team; and did not have enough team time to gain adequate experience and knowledge to become an ODA commander. In COL



SF DUI

Crerar's words, "justly or not [lieutenants] were viewed as burdens on their detachments," necessitating replacing them with a more experienced warrant officer that could provide more seasoned leadership to the ODA.¹³

The ODA structure has not changed since 1984. Currently it is as follows: Detachment Commander (O-3), Assistant Detachment Commander (Chief Warrant Officer 2), Operations Sergeant (E-8), Operations/Intelligence Sergeant, Senior Weapons Sergeant, Senior Engineer Sergeant, Senior Medical Sergeant, Senior Communications Sergeant (E-7), and Weapons Sergeant, Engineer Sergeant, Medical Sergeant, and Communications Sergeant (E-6).¹⁴

As this brief article has detailed, the ODA structure has its roots in the final version of the OSS OG section, which developed based on personnel availability and operational requirements. Since 1952, the SF ODA has had numerous changes to its personnel and rank structure, albeit with a few constants: a captain as commander, a second-in-command (lieutenant and then warrant officer), a senior NCO, and medical, communications, weapons, and demolition (engineer) personnel. With the ODA having fluctuated between twelve and fifteen soldiers, it has historically been treated as a "living" structure and subject to change based on existing requirements. 🇺🇸

ENDNOTES

- 1 William J. Donovan, "Office of Strategic Services Special Order 21," 13 May 1943, Folder 1460, Box 140, Entry 136, Record Group (RG) 226, National Archives and Records Administration (NARA), College Park, MD. [The order was effective 4 May 1943.](#)
- 2 Kermit Roosevelt, War Report of the OSS (New York: Walker and Company, ca. 1976), 223.
- 3 Operational Group Command, "Table of Organization," 20 February 1945, Folder 1461, Box 140, Entry 136, RG 226, NARA.
- 4 Headquarters, Department of the Army (HQDA), *FM 31-21: Organization and Conduct of Guerrilla Warfare* (Washington DC: United States Government Printing Office, October 1951), 39-40.
- 5 HQDA, *Table of Organization and Equipment 33-510 (proposed)*, 14 May 1952, contained in David R. Lawler et al., eds., *A Critique of the US Army Special Forces Tests and Field Exercises: 15 June to 3 July 1953* (Chevy Chase, Maryland: Operations Research Office, Johns Hopkins University, 1953), 75-92.
- 6 HQDA, *FM 31-20: U.S. Army Special Forces Group (Airborne)* (Washington DC: U.S. Government, 10 August 1955), 130.
- 7 HQDA, *FM 31-21: Guerrilla Warfare and Special Forces Operations* (Washington DC: Headquarters, Department of the Army, 8 May 1958), 29.
- 8 HQDA, *Table of Organization and Equipment 31-107E* (Washington DC: Department of the Army, 25 September 1963), 8.
- 9 HQDA, *Table of Organization and Equipment 31-107G* (Washington DC: Department of the Army, 28 June 1968), 10.
- 10 HQDA, *Table of Organization and Equipment 31-107H* (Washington DC: Department of the Army, 10 June 1970), 9-10.
- 11 HQDA, *Table of Organization and Equipment 31-107H: Change Number 3* (Washington DC: Department of the Army, 1 March 1974), 3.
- 12 HQDA, *Table of Organization and Equipment 31-107H: Change Number 4* (Washington DC: Department of the Army, 1 September 1974), 6-7.
- 13 J.H. Crerar, "The Special Forces Warrant Officer, the Beginnings," *Warrant Officer Historical Foundation*, https://warrantofficehistory.org/Hist_SF_WO.htm.
- 14 U.S. Army JFK Special Warfare Center, "Proposed SF Standard METL: Special Forces Company (31817K000), copy in USASOC History Office, Fort Bragg, NC. Also see HQDA, *FM 3-18: Special Forces Operations* (Washington DC: Department of the Army, 28 May 2014), section 4-56 and figure 4-13.

A more recent version of the 12-soldier ODA mimics the 1960s recruiting poster.



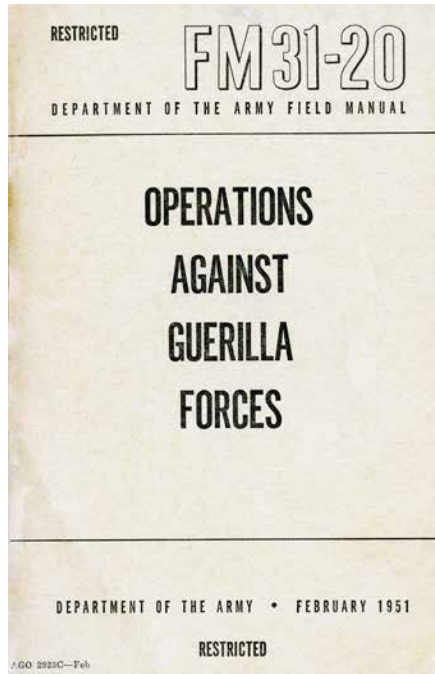
A photograph of soldiers in a field with a large explosion in the background. The soldiers are seen from behind, walking away from the viewer. The explosion is a large, billowing cloud of white and grey smoke, rising into the sky. The ground is covered in green grass and some small plants. The overall scene is dramatic and suggests a military operation or conflict.

From irregular warfare to **IRREGULAR WARFARE**

History of a Term

by Jared M. Tracy

Training, advising, and assisting South Vietnamese partners was a key component of U.S. efforts to defeat the Communist insurgency in Vietnam, in accordance with contemporary Army doctrine on counter-irregular warfare.



Army FM 31-20 (1951) linked irregular warfare with guerrilla warfare, namely Communist insurgencies.



Captain Joseph Ulatoski (far left), commander Task Force KIRKLAND, a U.S.-led anti-Communist partisan unit headquartered off the Korean east coast, addresses a formation of recent airborne graduates on the island of Nan-do, 1952.

The term Irregular Warfare (IW) is pervasive in the modern Department of Defense (DoD) lexicon, but it has a lengthy history. In Cold War-era military publications, IW was not defined but its meaning was generally fixed. After 9/11, it gained popularity and formal definitions, but its meaning became more ambiguous, largely because of its connection to other concepts, especially in the special operations forces (SOF) arena.¹ This was evident when the U.S. shifted from Counter-Violent Extremist Operations (C-VEO) to Great Power Competition (GPC) in recent years. This brief history of the term IW begins during the Korean War (1950-1953).

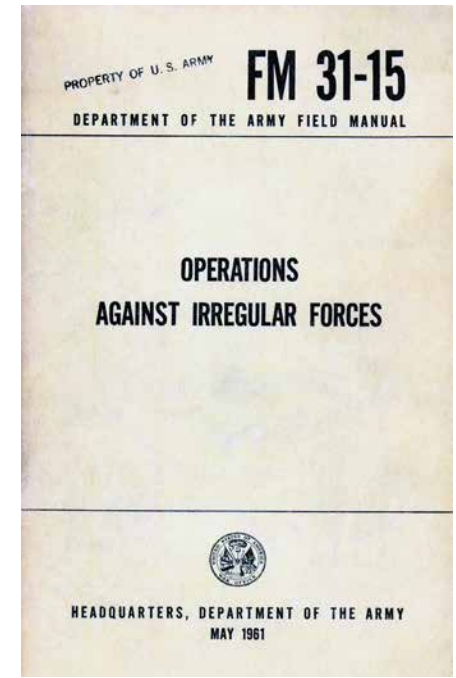
In February 1951, the Army published *Field Manual (FM) 31-20: Operations Against Guerrilla Forces*. It relayed that the “term ‘guerilla warfare’ is used loosely to describe all kinds of irregular warfare.”² Though undefined, IW was synonymous with guerrilla warfare. *FM 31-21: Organization and Conduct of Guerrilla Warfare*

(October 1951) defined guerrillas as an “irregular force, organized on a military basis, supported chiefly by sympathetic elements of the population, and operating against established . . . authority.”³ IW was linked primarily to Communist-inspired insurgencies, with connotations of being a duplicitous form of warfare.

In the 1960s, terms such as Unconventional Warfare (UW), Counterinsurgency (COIN), and Special Warfare gained traction. Though seldom used by comparison, IW remained tied to Communist revolutionary doctrine. The U.S. Army Special Warfare Center’s “Readings in Counter-Guerrilla Operations” (1961) described IW as central to Mao Zedong’s philosophy.⁴ In 1961, the Army published *FM 31-15: Operations Against Irregular Forces*, in which “irregular forces” were synonymous with Communist adversaries who were to be operated against and destroyed, an idea also found in *FM 31-21: Guerrilla Warfare and Special Forces Operations* (1961).⁵ In 1962, scholar Raymond L. Garthoff ar-



This image from *U.S. Army Special Warfare* (1962) depicted how farmers may become soldiers in order to wage or counter a guerrilla warfare campaign.



Army *FM 31-20* (1961) reinforced the connection between enemy guerrilla forces and “irregular” forces.

gued that IW was “the essence of Marxist-Leninist theory [and] the base of Communist strategy.”⁶ Also in 1962, Hugh H. Gardner published *Guerrilla and Counter guerrilla Warfare in Greece, 1941-1945* (through the Office of the Chief of Military History). According to Gardner, Communist Greek partisans “employed irregular methods and their behavior cannot be judged by conventional standards.”⁷ While IW remained minimally or not defined, it was widely understood as the non-conventional approach used mainly by Communist guerrilla forces.

Comparatively few sources claimed that the U.S. might use IW. A 1961 Office of the Secretary of Defense report advocated additional research into IW to “improve our allies’ ability to resist Communist aggression” and “provide the U.S. with increased understanding of and general capability in irregular warfare.”⁸ This idea was also in Joseph P. Kutger’s 1963 article, “Irregular Warfare in Transition.” Further, Kutger offered a definition of IW: “[it] com-

prises all those types of warfare alien to the conventional warfare. . . . It is usually employed against an adversary as a means of minimizing his relative advantages, either in numerical strength or in the technology of his weaponry.”⁹ This article did not relegate IW to just enemy forces.

After Vietnam, IW’s meaning seemingly changed little, though it remained sporadically used and not defined. For example, *FM 90-8: Counter guerrilla Operations* (1986) made no mention of IW.¹⁰ However, things changed after the 9/11 terrorist attacks. U.S. military operations in Afghanistan and Iraq led to a spike in popularity for such terms as UW, COIN, Foreign Internal Defense (FID), stability operations (SO), nation-building, and full-spectrum operations. The term IW resurfaced and gained new prominence within the Army and DoD lexicon.

In 2005, the U.S. Joint Forces Command (USJFCOM) issued a briefing called “Historic Analysis of Lessons Learned from Mod-

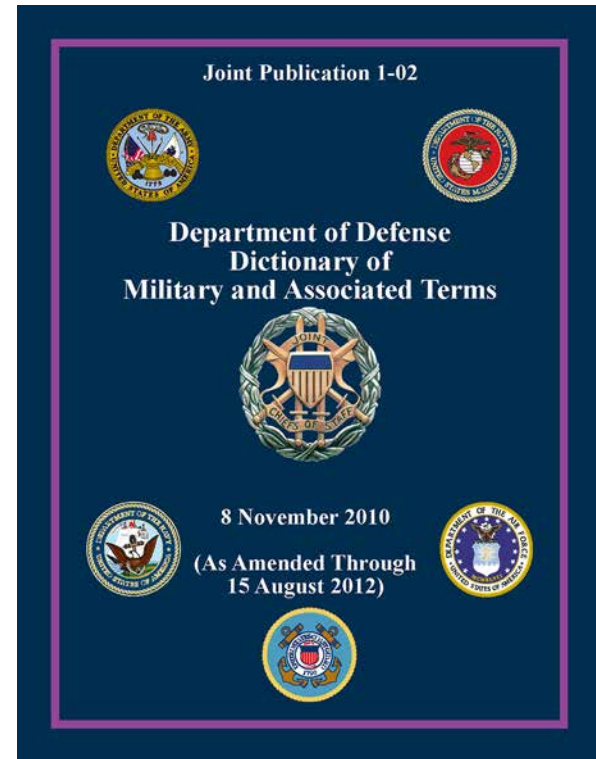
ern Irregular Warfare.” It explained that IW lacked a definition but was related to such terms as COIN, UW, FID, and terrorism. It also clarified that IW was something that the U.S. might do and not just counter.¹¹ Months later, the U.S. Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) and the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low-Intensity Conflict held a workshop to draft a definition of IW, compile a list of IW activities, and build the basis for a “consensus on what [IW] is and a roadmap to incorporate IW in DoD strategic thinking.” It linked IW with UW, COIN, FID, SO, Civil-Military Operations (CMO), Psychological Operations, terrorism/counter-terrorism (CT), Information Operations, intelligence/counterintelligence, Internal Defense and Development, and even transnational crime. IW’s proposed definition was: “a warfighting philosophy aimed at achieving strategic objectives by applying or countering an approach to war that seeks to erode an adversary’s power and will, primarily through the use of indirect, non-traditional means.”¹² As the DoD worked toward a definition, IW’s historic link to enemy insurgencies was eroding.

In 2006, the Deputy Secretary of Defense approved a working definition of IW: “A form of warfare that has as its objective the credibility and/or the legitimacy of . . . political authority with the goal of undermining or supporting that authority. [IW] favors indirect approaches, though it may employ the full range of . . . capabilities to seek asymmetric advantages [to] erode an adversary’s power, influence, and will.” IW’s key elements were: (a) undermining or supporting an existing political authority; (b) mostly “indirect approaches”; and (c) eroding the power, influence, and will of adversaries. This definition paved the way for future refinements.

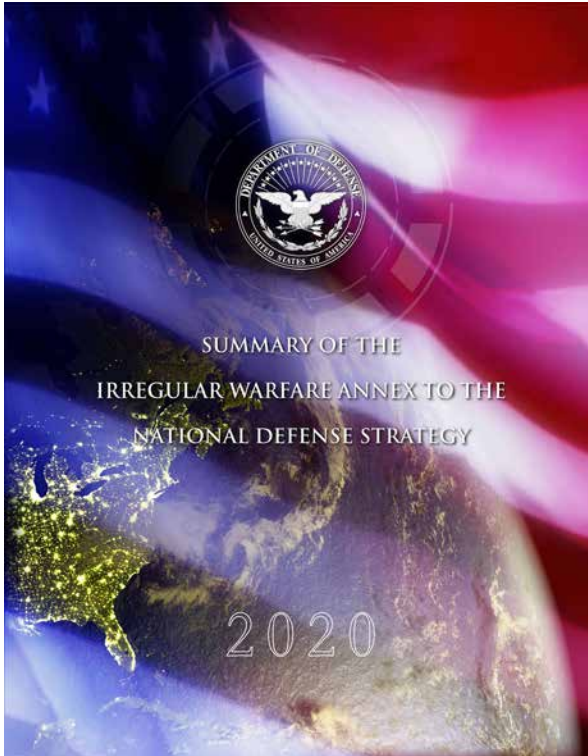
The same year, the USMC and USSOCOM collaborated on the latest “Multi-Service Concept for Irregular Warfare,” which argued that IW aims to maintain or undermine “the legitimacy of a political authori-

ty [through] indirect approaches and nonconventional means to defeat an enemy by subversion, attrition, or exhaustion rather than direct military confrontation.” It employs “the full range of military and non-military capabilities to gain asymmetric advantages that erode an adversary’s power, influence and will until he is neutralized or defeated. IW is the preferred approach of insurgents, terrorists, and others who lack substantial conventional warfare capability as well as of nation-states who must mask their actions or whose national troops use IW in fighting irregular warriors.” This product argued that the key to U.S. victory “in the global long war in the years ahead is development of a . . . multi-agency capacity for irregular warfare,” one of the clearest endorsements of the need to embrace IW so far.¹³

Within a decade after 9/11, IW had a formal definition. DoD Directive 3000.07 (2008) and *Joint Publication (JP) 1-02: Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms* (2010) defined IW as: “A violent struggle among state and non-state actors for legitimacy and influence over the relevant population(s).”¹⁴ This definition had three noteworthy aspects. First, it hearkened back to the earlier meaning by describing IW as a “violent struggle.” Second, it included state and non-state actors, meaning that virtually anyone could conduct IW. Finally, it broadened potential targets to “relevant population(s).” In other words, IW is a violent struggle between potentially anyone



On the heels of the 2008 DoD Directive 3000.07, the 2010 edition of *JP 1-02* included an IW definition for the first time. Its inclusion of the qualifier “violent struggle” did not last long.



In the IW annex to the 2018 *National Defense Strategy*, IW is explained as “a struggle among state and non-state actors to influence populations and affect legitimacy,” a marked departure from the term’s Cold War-era roots.

for legitimacy and influence over others. IW now had a definition, but its meaning was so broad as to be arguably useless.

The 2017 change to *JP 1: Doctrine for the Armed Forces of the United States* (2013) upheld the definition in *JP 1-02* and continued to contrast IW with traditional warfare. However, it introduced a slight contradiction when it stated that in IW, “a less powerful adversary seeks to disrupt or negate the . . . capabilities and advantages of a more powerful military force,” but also that “most U.S. operations since the [9/11] terrorist attacks have been irregular.”¹⁵ By this description, the U.S. was the “less powerful adversary seek[ing] to disrupt or negate the . . . capabilities and advantages of a more powerful military force,” which was not true in Afghanistan or Iraq. This was indicative of the challenge of stabilizing IW’s meaning after 9/11.

By the 2010s, the U.S. had entered a new era of strategic competition. The 2018 *National Defense Strategy* (NDS) signaled the pivot away from C-VEO to Great (or Global) Power Competition with other major powers, namely China and Russia. The NDS led to the *Irregular Warfare Annex to the National Defense Strategy* in February 2019, followed by the more widely publicized *Summary of the Irregular Warfare Annex to the National Defense Strategy*. These explained IW as “a struggle among state and non-state actors to influence populations and affect legitimacy” (dropping the qualifier “violent struggle”). According to the summary, “IW favors indirect and asymmetric approaches, though it may employ the full range of military and other capabilities” against an adversary. The list of IW-related activities had broadened further to include such activities as UW, FID, CT, COIN, CMO, stabilization, military information support operations (MISO), cyber operations, countering threat networks (CTN), and counter-threat finance (CTF).¹⁶ IW’s entanglement with other terms continued to complicate things (adding to the potential confusion with Information Warfare,

also shortened to IW). IW had reached peak importance, but its meaning was broad, vague, and fluid; it could mean anything (mostly non-conventional) done by anyone to influence, delegitimize, or defeat anyone else.

In 2021, the J-7, Joint Staff, published its “Irregular Warfare Mission Analysis,” the “first comprehensive review of [IW] since 2007. The global strategic environment has significantly shifted . . . and the [DoD’s concept] of what [IW] is and how to employ it must shift also.” Contrary to older characterizations of IW, this report argued that IW “is as strategically important as traditional warfare.” It conceded that “IW is . . . complex, messy, and ambiguous,” and “does not lend itself to clean, neat, concise, or precise definition.” Though it did not define IW, it reiterated its ties with CT, UW, FID, COIN, and SO. Ironically, it called this association “confusing and counterproductive” before listing even more IW-related activities, such as UW, FID, CT, COIN, CTN, CTF, CMO, stability activities, MISO, and Civil Affairs, among others.¹⁷ This mission analysis did little to clarify IW’s meaning, but it was a major step toward reimagining IW in GPC and initiating what has been described as a DoD-wide “mind-set shift” toward IW.

Fittingly, the Army G-3/5/7 assigned the U.S. Army Special Operations Command as the IW proponent in February 2022. It was to develop “the necessary doctrine, training, leadership and education, personnel concepts and tenets for [UW], [CT], [COIN],



(Image credit: U.S. Army)
 A Ukrainian Special Forces (SF) soldier and a U.S. Army 10th SFG soldier move to an observation post during Exercise COMBINED RESOLVE 16 in Hohenfels, Germany, 8 December 2021. The exercise was designed to assess the readiness of the 1st Armored Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, while providing opportunities for SOF soldiers from the Ukraine, U.S., and Lithuania to hone irregular warfare skills.



(Image credit: U.S. Army)
 Members of the 320th Special Tactics Squadron, Royal Thai Army, share mountaineering techniques with their U.S. Army 1st Special Forces Group (SFG) counterpartners in Thailand, 20 April 2022. A strong, forward-looking American-Thai defense alliance bolsters the U.S. national defense strategy of countering near-peer threats in the Indo-Pacific region.

and [FID].¹⁸ Meanwhile, IW would retain flexible meaning across the DoD. For example, USSOCOM’s *Special Operations Forces Vision and Strategy* (2022) frequently used but did not clarify such terms as “irregular threats,” IW capabilities, nor IW writ large.¹⁹

In conclusion, over time, IW has become more popular and well-defined, but its meaning has become more fluid and ambiguous since 9/11. It went from describing Communist-inspired guerrilla insurgencies in the Cold War to a broad military-governmental approach against peer threats in GPC into the 2020s. It has expanded from a tactical focus to a strategic focus. It remains inseparable from such popular terms as UW, COIN, and FID, while its definition remains sufficiently vague to allow for great variances in interpretation. The question remains—will the popularity of the term IW force the DoD to further refine its meaning, or will it remain nebulous to allow greater flexibility in discussing and ad-

ressing the challenges of the modern international environment?

Epilogue

As this article was being finalized for publication in *Veritas*, the Army released the latest edition of *FM 3-0: Operations* (October 2022). This manual continued the post-9/11 trend of refining the definition of IW while leaving actual meaning up for interpretation. According to this manual, IW is the “overt, clandestine, and covert employment of military and non-military capabilities across multiple domains by state and non-state actors through methods other than military domination of an adversary, either as the primary approach or in concert with conventional warfare.”²⁰ The most concrete aspect of this description is that IW is something other than “military domination of an adversary.” Otherwise, it remains flexible enough to accommodate a variety of interpretations and applications. 🇺🇸

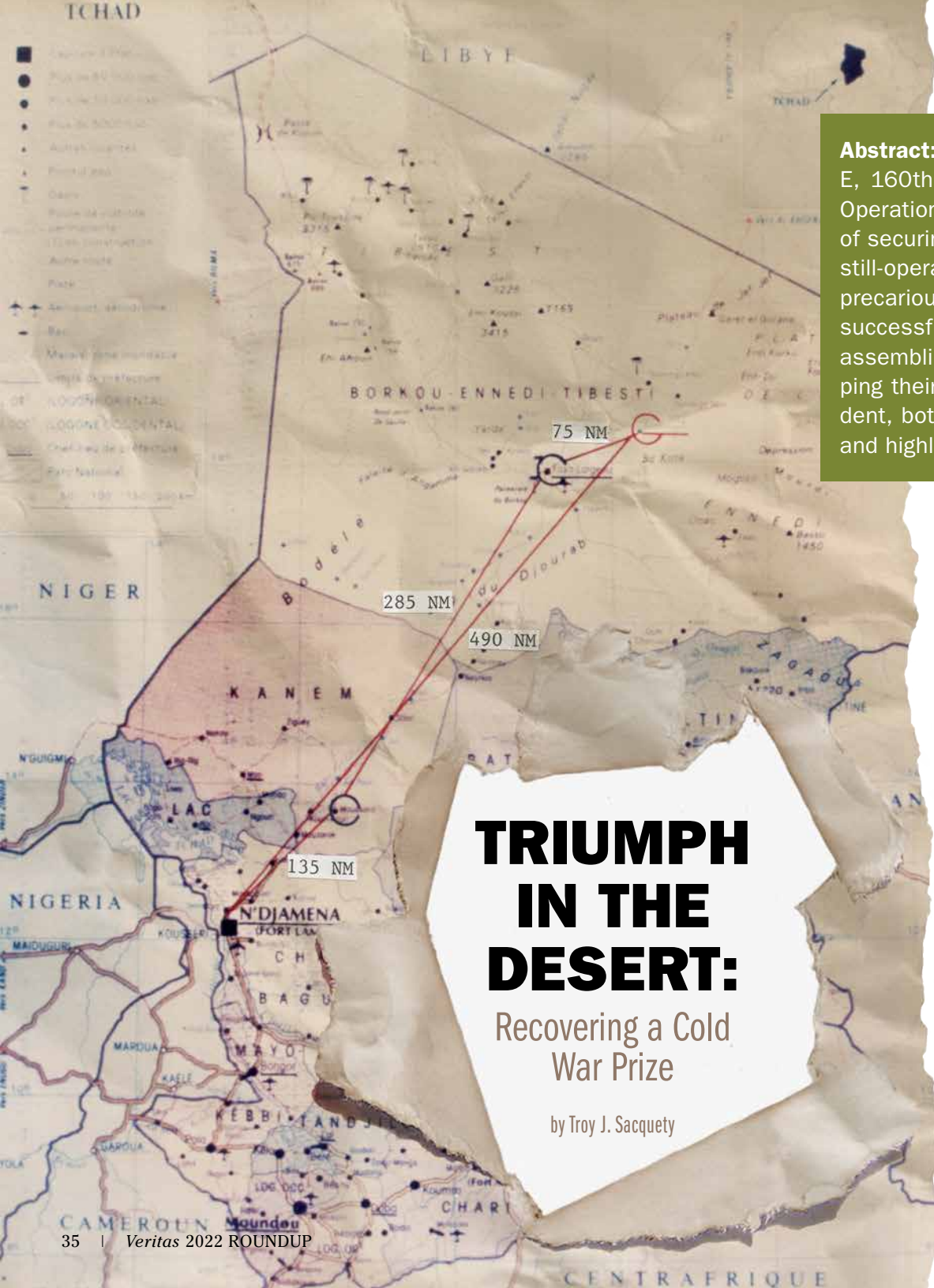
ENDNOTES

- 1 This article lists only a representative sample of official documents since the early 1950s. There were dozens of others researched that made little or no mention of IW or “irregular” in general and which therefore have been omitted. The author acknowledges that the interpretations within this article, while based on relevant evidence, are tentative since not all official documents have been researched. It is possible, though unlikely, that further investigation into additional DoD documents may yield significantly different results and change the overall conclusion of this paper. In addition, although the abbreviation IW is used throughout this article, it should be noted that until relatively recently, publications typically used the term “irregular warfare” in a more general sense (not capitalized) as opposed to its later formal codification as Irregular Warfare (capitalized).
- 2 Headquarters, Department of the Army (HQDA), *FM 31-20: Operations Against Guerrilla Forces* (Washington, DC: HQDA, February 1951), iii.
- 3 HQDA, *FM 31-21: Organization and Conduct of Guerrilla Warfare* (Washington, DC: HQDA, October 1951), 2.
- 4 USASWCS, “Readings in Counter-Guerrilla Operations” (17 January 1961), copy in USASOC History Office, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 5 HQDA, *FM 31-15: Operations Against Irregular Forces* (Washington, DC: HQDA, May 1961), 3; HQDA, *FM 31-21: Guerrilla Warfare and Special Forces Operations* (Washington, DC: HQDA, 29 September 1961), 9.

- 6 School of Resident Studies, Industrial College of the Armed Forces, “Insurgency and Counterinsurgency: An Anthology” (October 1962), 151-152, copy in USASOC History Office, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 7 Hugh H. Gardner, Office of the Chief of Military History, *Guerrilla and Counterinsurgency Warfare in Greece, 1941-1945* (Washington, DC: HQDA, 1962), 145.
- 8 Director of Defense Research and Engineering, Office of the Secretary of Defense, *Report of the RDT&E Limited War Task Group* (15 August 1961), 31-32, copy in USASOC History Office, Fort Bragg, NC, emphasis added.
- 9 Air Training Command, U.S. Air Force, “Anthology of Related Topics on Counterinsurgency, Volume I: Irregular Warfare in Transition” (1 March 1963), 1, copy in USASOC History Office, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 10 HQDA, *FM 90-8: Counterinsurgency Operations* (Washington, DC: HQDA, August 1986), copy in USASOC History Office, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 11 U.S. Joint Forces Command, “Historic Analysis of Lessons Learned from Modern Irregular Warfare” (10 June 2005), copy in USASOC History Office, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 12 USSOCOM and ASD (SO/LIC), “Irregular Warfare Workshop Outbrief” (September 2005), copy in USASOC History Office, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 13 U.S. Marine Corps Combat Development Command and USSOCOM Center for Knowledge and Futures, “Multi-Service Concept for Irregular Warfare” (2 August 2006), 7, copy in USASOC History Office, Fort Bragg, NC.

- 14 DoDD 3000.07, “SUBJECT: Irregular Warfare” (1 December 2008), <https://www.tecom.marines.mil/Portals/162/Docs/DOD%20Directive%203000.07%20IW.pdf>; Joint Staff, *JP 1-02: Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms* (Washington, DC: Joint Staff, 8 November 2010, as amended through 15 November 2014), 130
- 15 Joint Staff, *JP 1: Doctrine for the Armed Forces of the United States* (Washington, DC: Joint Staff, 25 March 2013, Incorporating Change 1, 12 July 2017), x, 1-5.
- 16 Department of Defense, *Summary of the Irregular Warfare Annex to the [2018] National Defense Strategy* (2020), 2, [https://media.defense.gov/2020/Oct/02/2002510472/-1/-1/0/IrregularWarfareAnnex-to-the-National-Defense-Strategy-Summary.PDF#:~:text=This%20summary%20of%20the%20Irregular%20Warfare%20Annex%20to%20the%20NDS](https://media.defense.gov/2020/Oct/02/2002510472/-1/-1/0/IrregularWarfareAnnex-to-the-National-Defense-Strategy-Summary.PDF#:~:text=This%20summary%20of%20the%20Irregular%20Warfare%20Annex%20to%20the%20NDS,https://media.defense.gov/2020/Oct/02/2002510472/-1/-1/0/IrregularWarfareAnnex-to-the-National-Defense-Strategy-Summary.PDF#:~:text=This%20summary%20of%20the%20Irregular%20Warfare%20Annex%20to%20the%20NDS).
- 17 Office of Irregular Warfare and Competition, Joint Force Development and Design Directorate (J-7), Joint Staff, “Irregular Warfare Mission Analysis” (19 October 2021), Foreword, 3, 6, copy in USASOC History Office, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 18 Department of the Army G-3/5/7, “SUBJECT: Designation of Commander, U.S. Army Special Operations Command as the Army Functional Proponent for Irregular Warfare,” 28 February 2022, copy in USASOC History Office, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 19 USSOCOM, *Special Operations Forces Vision and Strategy* (MacDill AFB, FL: USSOCOM, 2022), 1, 5-6.
- 20 HQDA, *FM 3-0: Operations* (Washington, DC: HQDA, October 2022), Glossary-8, https://armypubs.army.mil/epubs/DR_pubs/DR_a/ARN36290-FM_3-0-00-WEB-2.pdf.





Abstract: In 1985, the professionalism of the soldiers of Company E, 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment, stood out during Operation MOUNT HOPE III. The unit received the sensitive mission of securing a key piece of Soviet combat technology, a downed but still-operational Mi-24 Hind attack helicopter, from Chad, near the precarious Libyan border. The crews and maintenance personnel successfully executed the challenging recovery, which included disassembling, transporting, reassembling, and dismantling and shipping their MH-47D Chinooks. This mission, performed without incident, both secured a working Hind for evaluation by the U.S. Army and highlighted the capability of Army Special Operations Aviation.

TRIUMPH IN THE DESERT:

Recovering a Cold
War Prize

by Troy J. Sacquety

Just forty-five minutes of flight time from their destination of an airfield at N'Djamena, Chad, the crews of two MH-47D Chinook heavy lift helicopters encountered a critical situation: they were about to be engulfed by a great wall of sand. The Air Mission Commander of the lead aircraft, Major (MAJ) Gary S. Hasselbach*, recalled that he could “almost see [the airfield] when we were swallowed by the sandstorm.”¹ Normally, the pilots would simply fly above the storm. On this occasion, doing so was impossible. Sling-loaded below MAJ Hasselbach’s* Chinook was a massive Mi-24 ‘Hind’ Russian-made attack helicopter.

For safety, the pilots of the two Chinooks reduced speed and separated their aircraft by a mile. They quickly lost radio contact and sight of one another. Suddenly Hasselbach’s* MH-47D “popped out of the wall of sand. We could see the airfield about twelve miles away.”² The crew could not spot the other Chinook, but saw the sand rising up to nearly 3,000 feet behind them. Hasselbach* decided to race to the airfield, set the Hind down, and land before the storm once again overtook the aircraft. After completing that action, the other Chinook emerged from the wall. That pilot only had enough time to set down, and, as Hasselbach* related, he “did not even turn into the wind.”³ Once down, the crews sat in their helicopters for the next twenty minutes as sand blasted the airframes. When they finally emerged, grit covered everything. But, they had succeeded in securing their Cold War prize, a working Hind.

[A name followed by a * indicates a pseudonym.]



This article explains the 1988 MOUNT HOPE III operation to recover a Soviet-made Hind helicopter. It was a critically important early mission for Company E, 160th Special Operations Aviation Group (SOAG), at Fort Campbell, Kentucky, which later became 2nd Battalion, 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment (SOAR). The recovery in Chad showcased the operational capabilities of the Chinook airframe in an austere environment at a time when the nascent 160th viewed the helicopter primarily as a gasoline hauler for refueling other helicopters.⁴

The context of the mission was the Cold War (roughly 1947-1991), in which the United States and its allies faced off in a war of ideologies against the Soviet Union and its satellite nations; a contest between Democracy and Communism. In an almost constant state of tension, one of the ways that each side spread their influence was through weapons sales and use of proxies. Libya, then anti-western



TOP: The flight from Moussoro to N'Djamena. At the time, the temperature was well over 100 degrees Fahrenheit.
BOTTOM: The lead Chinook attempts to set the Hind down at N'Djamena prior to being overtaken by the sandstorm. The wall of sand rose more than 3,000 feet into the air.

and armed with Soviet military equipment, put those weapons to use in its territorial dispute with Chad.⁵

The Toyota War (1986-1987), the last of a series of border clashes that took place from 1978 to 1987, decided which country would control the Aouzou Strip, a 100-kilometer deep section of northern Chad that runs along the Libyan border. Using armed Toyota pickup trucks, or ‘technicals,’ for mobility, Chadian forces soundly defeated the Libyans. Suffering heavy losses, the Libyans abandoned large amounts of equipment as they fled Chad. The material left behind presented the West with a unique opportunity to study Soviet battlefield technology, including the formidable Mi-24 ‘Hind’ attack helicopter.⁶

Acquiring a Hind had long been a U.S. priority because the military did not fully understand its capabilities and limitations.⁷ Following months of negotiations, U.S. and Chadian officials reached a settlement that allowed U.S. military forces to recover one of the abandoned helicopters. A previous attempt to recover another Mi-24 in Chad by cutting it up and transporting it by truck failed to deliver an operational platform. The best solution to successfully recover an intact aircraft seemed to be by airlifting it to an airfield where it could be packed and transported to the U.S. The mission fell to Company E, 160th SOAG.

In April 1988, Company E prepared for the operation with a stateside test simulating lifting and flying with a sling-loaded helicopter. The unit disassembled and loaded two MH-47Ds into a U.S. Air Force C-5 Galaxy and transported them to Roswell, New

- ① Two MH-47D Chinooks depart N'Djamena with additional internal fueling tanks to make the long flight to Ouadi Doum.
- ② At Ouadi Doum, the MH-47Ds jettison their internal fuel tanks and the lead Chinook sling loads an intact Mi-24 Hind for transport back to N'Djamena.
- ③ The MH-47Ds make their first refueling from a C-130 at a FARP established at Faya-Largeau.
- ④ The MH-47Ds conduct a second refueling at a French Foreign Legion base at Moussoro.
- ⑤ The MD-47Ds arrive back at N'Djamena and manage to set down just ahead of a sandstorm that engulfs the airfield.





A Grove model RT41AA 4-ton Self Propelled Crane for Aircraft Maintenance and Positioning (SCAMP) is being used to remove a component from one of the Chinooks. A single SCAMP serviced both airframes.

Mexico. To replicate the distance in Chad, the re-assembled Chinooks flew to Biggs Army Air Field (AAF), El Paso, Texas. There, the first MH-47D sling loaded six full 500-gallon water blivets to simulate the weight of a Mi-24. Flying at night around White Sands, New Mexico, both helicopters had to twice land and refuel from C-130s staged along the route. Having successfully completed the simulation, Company E was ready when it received the execution order on 21 May 1988.⁸

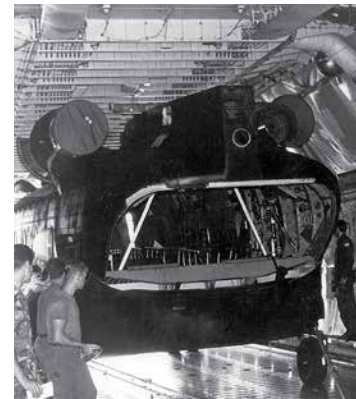
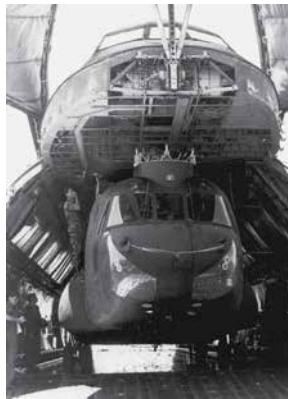
Careful preparation did not mean that all went smoothly. Led by Hasselbach*, the advanced par-

ty flew to U.S. European Command (USEUCOM) Headquarters in Stuttgart, Germany. As soon as they got off the plane, the USEUCOM J-3 demanded that the party give him a briefing. Hasselbach* recalled, "We looked like crap because we flew all night."⁹ During the brief, the colonel in charge of the J-3 interrupted to demand that the 160th perform the mission during daylight hours just like a Regular Army Chinook unit. The advanced party then asked why one of the Chinook units already in Germany could not perform the mission. Receiving no response from the J-3, on the spot they called Major General

(MG) Gary E. Luck, the commanding general of the Joint Special Operations Command. MAJ Hasselbach* explained the situation to MG Luck, who in turn asked to speak to the J-3 colonel. After speaking with MG Luck, the colonel said, "proceed with the briefing," and offered no other resistance to the plan.¹⁰ Four days later, the group flew from Paris to N'Djamena, Chad, landing on 31 May. There they made billeting arrangements with the U.S. Embassy for the remainder of the group (a total of 67 soldiers) that would arrive two weeks later.

The main body at Fort Campbell prepared two MH-47Ds for shipment aboard a single U.S. Air Force C-5A Galaxy strategic airlifter. Staff Sergeant (SSG) Robert H. Wilson*, a Maintenance Team Chief in charge of nine soldiers, received the mission notification when his beeper went off. His instructions were simple: "come in with a bag packed."¹¹ Once at the hangar, the mechanics began the eight-hour process of preparing the Chinooks to fit into the C-5A's cargo bay. The maintainers positioned the helicopters side by side but facing in opposite directions. This allowed a Grove model RT41AA 4-ton Self Propelled Crane for Aircraft Maintenance and Positioning (SCAMP) to move between and service both airframes. In this manner, both crews could work on the same portion of their respective helicopters without getting in each other's way, said Wilson*.¹²

Before squeezing the Chinooks into the cargo bay, the maintenance crews had to remove the blades, the rotor heads, the forward and aft transmission pylons, driveshafts, and transmissions. But, they did not just remove the components. SSG Bradley Arnold* noted that the standard practice was to "inspect [each piece] as we took it off because we don't want to put a bad part on at the other end."¹³ All of the hardware was installed onto a threaded template that the unit made specifically for that purpose. This procedure ensured that no hardware was missing and no parts fell out in transit. Still, they "always took an extra set



TOP LEFT: The rear pylon being removed from one of the two Chinooks. The maintenance crew had to ensure that each removed item, to include nuts and bolts, stayed with the airframe. **TOP MIDDLE:** The rear pylon after being removed from one of the MH-47Ds. The maintenance crew is placing it on a specially-constructed cradle that will accompany the helicopter onto the C-5A. **TOP RIGHT:** The two Chinooks have been disassembled prior to loading on a C-5A Galaxy. Both pylons and rotors had to be removed on each aircraft, to allow them to fit into the cargo bay. **BOTTOM LEFT:** The first of two Chinooks loading onto the C-5A for transport to Chad. The nose of the airplane pivots upward to allow access to the cargo bay. **BOTTOM MIDDLE** This photo demonstrates the tight fit for each MH-47D in the C-5A. The front and rear pylons had to be removed to provide enough clearance. **BOTTOM RIGHT:** One of the Chinooks is backed into the C-5A. A single Galaxy transported both helicopters and the 160th crew to Chad.

of hardware. If a mechanic dropped it or lost it, that was not mission failure,” recalled Arnold*.¹⁴ Major components went onto stands that were tied down on the plane to prevent damage in transit. In addition, all the parts removed from a particular airframe remained with that airframe. “You don’t cross parts,” explained Wilson*.¹⁵

Commanders also stressed the sensitivity of the mission, so as not to tip off the Libyans. Arnold* recalled that participants “had to go sterile and leave all your [unit] stuff at home.”¹⁶ With all preparations complete, the C-5A left Fort Campbell, Kentucky, in the second week of June to deliver the two MH-47Ds and more than sixty crew and maintenance personnel on a non-stop flight to N’Djamena. Arriving at dusk, the maintenance personnel took advantage

of the cooler night time temperatures and immediately sprang to work to rebuild the Chinooks.

Facilities and conditions in Chad, however, were not as optimal as back at Fort Campbell. “The hangars were terrible,” explained SSG Wilson*.¹⁷ In addition to the decrepit condition of the buildings, the lights did not work, forcing the 160th maintenance crews to set up temporary lights so that they could see. The high humidity and lingering heat also made work harder. “Some of the guys started to doze off, so I got them coffee to wake them up. We had to keep it up. We were not on a vacation and had to meet a schedule,” remembered Wilson*.¹⁸

Reassembling the Chinooks was not just a reversal of the teardown. It is “a lot easier taking them apart than putting

them back together,” said Wilson*.¹⁹ In contrast to the eight hours it took to tear down the Chinooks, it took almost fourteen to rebuild them, since assembly had more steps. For instance, during reassembly, the maintenance crews torqued the bolts to the proper tolerances to ensure that the aircraft remained safe in flight. Finally, there was one last task. Crew Chief, SSG Chris G. Rogers*, said that the maintenance crew “took everything off the helicopters to make it lighter but still function safely.” This included removing things like soundproofing.²⁰ All these things took time to do properly. Arnold* remembered that “they worked through the night. You could see the sun coming up when we pushed the helicopters out” onto the tarmac. After having two pilots test fly the helicopters to ensure that they were flight ready, the mission was “good to go.” But, “after having been up for a day and a half, we were pretty much cooked,” said Arnold* in describing the condition of the maintenance crew.²¹

With their tasks done, the maintenance personnel went to the Marine Security Guard Detachment at the U.S. Embassy to get some well-deserved rest. Wilson* said that “they made us as comfortable as they could but we were everywhere you could put a body.”²² Arnold* added: “There were eight guys to a room, and some had to sleep on the floor. We were just wore out because of the heat.”²³ In contrast, the six pilots, four crewmembers, and two Air Force pararescuemen (known as PJs) scheduled to fly on the mission had stayed in the home of an embassy employee to be as well rested as possible.²⁴

At midnight, on 11 June 1988, the two MH-47Ds and their crews departed from N’Djamena on the 550 mile direct flight to Ouadi Doum.²⁵ The crews had planned no refuel stops during the initial leg. Although the helicopters were not equipped with an air-to-air refueling capability, they carried an internal system devised by Company E. This consisted of fuel tanks rolled into the aircraft via the ramp, connected to one another, and then filled. When full, the system added an additional 600 gallons of fuel and more than 5,000 pounds to the aircraft.²⁶

In a true test of skill, the crews flew over the trackless Saharan desert at night with only the use of then-sophisticated, but now rudimentary navigational aids. The first of these was OMEGA, a global long-range radio navigational system that sent very low range frequencies from fixed locations to help ships and aircraft navigate. The second was Doppler radar. While neither was perfect, Rogers*, the Crew Chief in Hasselbach’s* helicopter, said, “OMEGA was better. [It] said we were there, [Doppler] said we were not there.”²⁷ However, as dawn approached, the crew spotted the early rays of sun reflecting off the



TOP: The Hind as the Libyans left it at Ouadi Doum. In this photograph, it has not yet been prepped for sling-load as the Soviet helicopter still retains its rotor blades. **MIDDLE:** The Hind in the process of being prepped at Ouadi Doum. The C-130 was there to transport the Hind’s rotor blades and the discarded internal fuel tanks from the Chinooks. **BOTTOM:** U.S. personnel prepare the Hind for sling-load. The Russian helicopter was already prepared and rigged by the time the 160th Chinooks arrived.



airfield at Ouadi Doum and vectored in to the waiting Hind. SSG Oscar Waters*, the crew chief on the second Chinook, described the scene. “The sun was coming up and all kinds of [Soviet] equipment was laying out. It looked like a battle had been fought.”²⁸

Both MH-47Ds landed as close to the Mi-24 as possible and pushed out the internal fuel tank which, by this time, were empty. The first Chinook could not pick up the Hind with the added weight of the extra fuel tanks. The backup helicopter also jettisoned its internal system because it had to be prepared to pick up the Hind in case the first craft suffered mechanical problems. Because the operation was on a tight schedule, lest the Libyans be tipped off to the extraction and try to bomb the helicopter, other U.S. personnel had already rigged the Hind in such a way that it could withstand a minimum of a 90-knot forward speed (about 104 miles per hour).

SSG Rogers* described how they attached the Hind to the Chinook. Each of the U.S. helicopters had dual

TOP LEFT: The Hind on its initial leg to Faya Largeau. This photo shows how well the Hind ‘flew’ beneath the Chinook. **TOP RIGHT:** The Chinook and the sling-loaded Hind come into the Forward Arming and Refueling Point (FARP) at Faya Largeau, the first of two refueling stops. **BOTTOM:** The Hind at Faya Largeau with SSG Oscar Waters* in front. This photo shows how the helicopter was rigged for sling load.

hooks under the airframe to better balance the load. Although there was a ground guide, the Crew Chief would lay on the floor and look through a hole in the Chinook's deck to determine their location and relay the information to the pilots via a headset intercom. "I told the pilot where to go . . . and called off the height of the load. I did it all visually," said Rogers*.²⁹ Once the Hind was hooked up, the crew determined that the load was stable, and said "It hung like a rock,

even at 110 knots [127 miles per hour]. It was rigged perfectly . . . [We almost] did not know it was down there."³⁰ From the trailing Chinook, Waters* observed, "It flew perfectly."³¹ With the Mi-24 slung, the two helicopters began their journey back to N'Djamena. With no internal fuel system, the flight had to conduct two refueling stops.

At the first stop at Faya Largeau, a waiting Air Force C-130 had established a Forward Arming and Refueling Point (FARP). Done

MAJ Hasselbach's* (third from left, standing) crew in front of the Hind at Faya Largeau. A refueling delay allowed them to check out the Soviet helicopter.





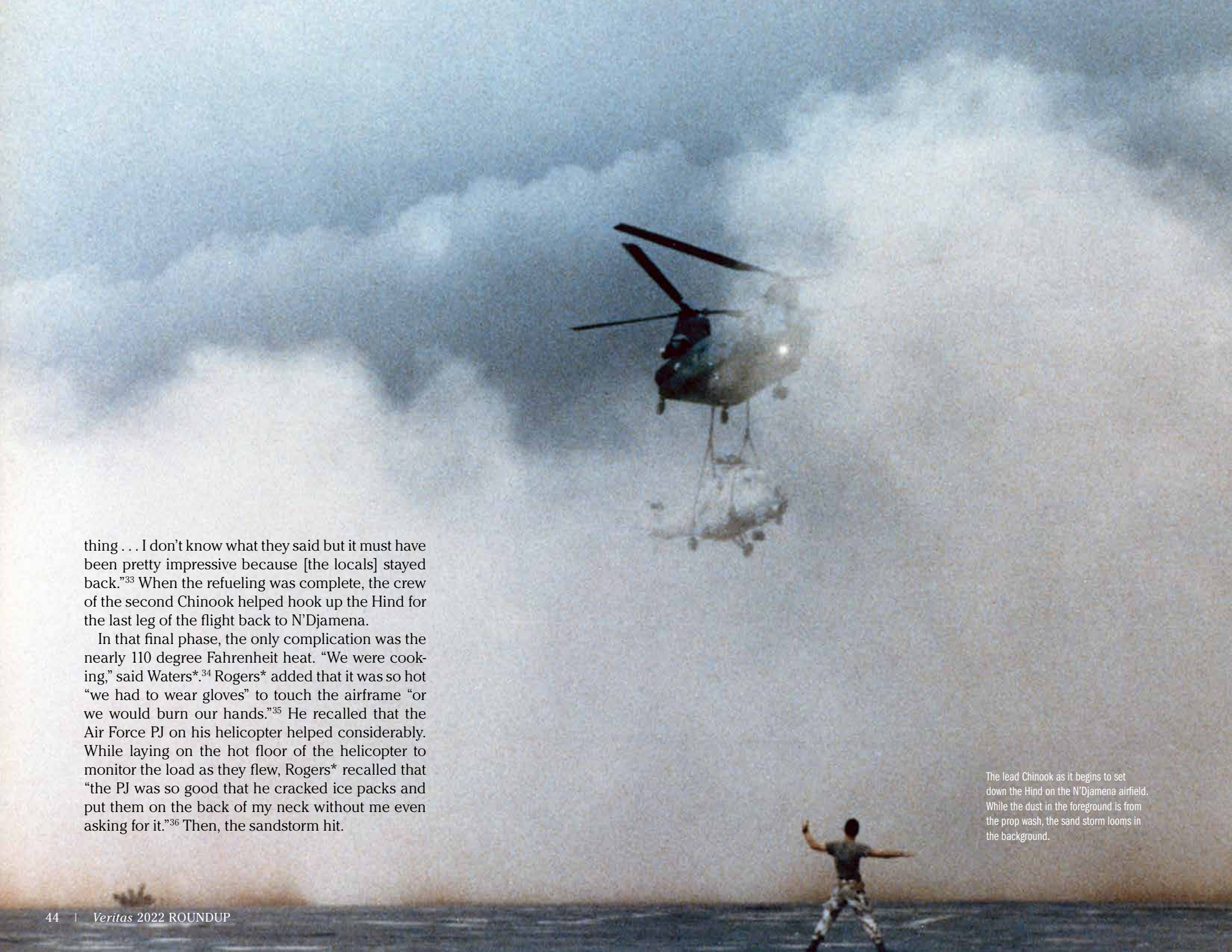
The MH-47D and Hind on the flight from Faya Largeau to Moussoro. During this stretch, temperatures began to climb.

in stages, the Chinook first had to set down the Mi-24, unhook it, land to refuel, and then re-hook the load when both helicopters had refueled. Unfortunately, the refueling system on the C-130 had broken and the Chinook crews had to shut down while awaiting a solution. Instead of waiting for someone to come fix the C-130's fuel system, a 160th crewman worked with the Air Force crew to get it working. The delay allowed the Army crew to briefly inspect their prize for the first time.

Back in the air, the Chinooks headed to their next FARP, located at an airfield at Moussoro, and manned by the French Foreign

Legion. The pilots set the Hind down inside a fenced compound, but both MH-47Ds had to land outside of the wire to refuel. The Legionnaires passed refueling hoses to them through the fence. "The French were supporters" of what Company E was doing because "everybody wanted to get their hands on a Hind," reminisced Hasselbach*.³²

A potential problem was avoided when the locals came to investigate the unarmed helicopters and crews. Being very interested, they approached close enough to touch the aircraft. Then, according to Rogers*, "The French sent jeeps out and said some-

A Chinook helicopter is shown in the center of the frame, hoisting a Hind helicopter. The scene is set against a backdrop of a sandstorm, with a thick layer of dust and sand filling the air. The Chinook's rotors are visible, and the Hind is suspended below it. In the foreground, a person is seen from behind, standing on a dark surface, possibly a runway or airfield, with their arms raised. The overall atmosphere is one of a high-stakes, dusty operation.

thing . . . I don't know what they said but it must have been pretty impressive because [the locals] stayed back.”³³ When the refueling was complete, the crew of the second Chinook helped hook up the Hind for the last leg of the flight back to N'Djamena.

In that final phase, the only complication was the nearly 110 degree Fahrenheit heat. “We were cooking,” said Waters*.³⁴ Rogers* added that it was so hot “we had to wear gloves” to touch the airframe “or we would burn our hands.”³⁵ He recalled that the Air Force PJ on his helicopter helped considerably. While laying on the hot floor of the helicopter to monitor the load as they flew, Rogers* recalled that “the PJ was so good that he cracked ice packs and put them on the back of my neck without me even asking for it.”³⁶ Then, the sandstorm hit.

The lead Chinook as it begins to set down the Hind on the N'Djamena airfield. While the dust in the foreground is from the prop wash, the sand storm looms in the background.

Their extensive training allowed the crews to pass through this challenging situation with ease. Rogers* said that “we buttoned every door we could but dust was everywhere . . . the sand came up from below,” through the hole in the floor. Despite the difficulties, the helicopters landed at N’Djamena just in time to be engulfed. While they were on the ground, Rogers* saw that the wind was blowing so hard that it picked up a tent and wrapped it around the nose of a C-130.³⁷ After twenty minutes the storm passed, the pilots shut down their aircraft, and the crews exited the helicopters following the long flight.

Meanwhile, the rest of the maintenance crew at

the embassy was unaware of the situation at the airfield. Arnold* said that he and the maintenance crew slept right through the sandstorm because they were so tired. As he recalled it, “I was dead.” When the maintainers did get up they saw that the storm had blown a tree right into the barracks pool and had covered everything with sand. But, they did not have time to gawk at the damage or look at the sand-blasted Mi-24 because they had to get the Chinooks ready for loading. The biggest challenge was to get all the sand out of the airframes since it had collected wherever there was moisture or oil.³⁸ Otherwise, the grit would have acted like sandpaper and worn

MAJ Hasselbach* sets the Hind down on the tarmac at N’Djamena as the sand storm swallows hangars at the far end of the field. As soon as the Hind was released, the Chinook landed alongside.



Takeaways:

- 1 Securing the Mi-24 allowed the U.S. to examine the capabilities of a key piece of Soviet combat technology.
- 2 In a short timeframe, Company E was able to accomplish the mission of recovering a working Hind from a remote and potentially dangerous location near the Libyan border to a safer location where it could be shipped to the United States.
- 3 The stellar performance of Company E's soldier allowed for a successful mission that understood the unique capabilities of Army Special Operations Aviation.

down the moving parts. The maintenance crews towed the helicopters to the hangar to again disassemble them for transport.

Ironically, the most difficult aspect of the mission proved to be getting back to Fort Campbell. While the Hind was loaded and flown out separately, the Company E maintenance crew prepared the MH-47Ds for loading.³⁹ The problem lay with the U.S. Air Force C-5 that was to bring them back. At their first refueling stop, at Ascension Island in the Atlantic Ocean, they had a hard landing that was so violent the ceiling panels shook loose from the aircraft.⁴⁰ Only after landing at the second stop at Antigua did the Air Force crew find a crack in the fuselage near the forward section, grounding the aircraft

until that particular part was replaced. The 160th soldiers, with no money and arriving out of season, spent the night at a nearly vacant resort. Wearing whatever spare clothes they had, Arnold* said that “we all looked funny” as they enjoyed an impromptu luau. Once another C-5A landed with the spare part, the group was soon on its way back to Fort Campbell.⁴¹

The mission was a complete success thanks to Company E's professionals, despite the challenging deployment, austere environment, and working in temperatures as high as 110 degrees Fahrenheit.⁴² Not only had the crews navigated deep into a country to bring back a desperately wanted example of front-line Soviet combat aviation, but the maintenance crews had excelled in preparing the aircraft and keeping them mission capable. They twice had dismantled and once rebuilt two MH-47D helicopters all without incident to accomplish the mission in 67 hours, according to a post-mission brief.⁴³

The mission had long-term implications for Company E. For Hasselbach* the mission represented “the Chinook coming out” event for the 160th.⁴⁴ Wilson* summed it all up, saying the mission was “our big claim to fame. It was our glory moment . . . [before] we felt like the red-headed stepchild. It started to change a little after that.”⁴⁵ 🇺🇸



TOP: The Hind with MAJ Hasselbach's* Chinook just as the sand storm is about to engulf them. The Chinook's rotor blades are still turning as the crews could not shut the engines off for fear that the wind might bend the blades into the airframe. **BOTTOM:** The Hind is loaded on to a C-5A for transport to the United States. The Hind flew out before the 160th crews and helicopters.

WHAT HAPPENED TO THE HIND?

After the Mi-24 arrived in the United States via the C-5A, it was transported by flatbed to Fort Rucker, Alabama, for technical examination and to perform maintenance to bring it to a flyable condition. Six months later, MAJ Hasselbach* was surprised to get a call from a friend who said, “You will never believe what I saw—a Hind being trucked up the highway!” Hasselbach* decided to visit Fort Rucker to see the aircraft.

After getting special permission, he and another 160th aviator who had been on the mission followed an escort officer into the hangar where the Hind was located. After finally having a good look, Hasselbach* gave his impression; “It was built like a tank and very spartan. There were no creature comforts.” The two asked the escort officer where the helicopter came from, but were told that information

was classified. Hasselbach* and his comrade then turned to one another and said, “it looks better than the last time we saw it.” The escort officer asked where they saw it. Without missing a beat and with no elaboration, Hasselbach* said “that’s classified.”

After an initial evaluation, the Army sent the helicopter to Fort Bliss, Texas, where it joined other Russian helicopters in the Threat Systems Management Office (TSMO) to demonstrate its capabilities to the force at large. Burt MacAdoo, a former 160th aviator who flew the Mi-24, said that they would go four to five times a year to the Joint Readiness Training Center (JRTC) at Fort Polk, Louisiana. Previously JRTC employed UH-60 Blackhawks to simulate enemy aircraft. Employing actual Soviet aircraft like the Mi-24 added to the realism of the training. According to MacAdoo, some

of the soldiers on the ground said that when they heard the Hind coming “it made the hair on the back of their necks stand up.” Using the Mi-24 had other benefits as well. It allowed air defense units to see its actual radar profile so that they could better determine the differences between friendly and enemy aircraft. TSMO also used its helicopters to teach fellow aviators the real capabilities of enemy aircraft they might face. In the case of the Hind, it was big but unexpectedly fast. According to MacAdoo, “140 to 150 knots was no problem. It could outrun the Apaches.” TSMO also flew against U.S. Marine Corps and Air Force helicopters. MacAdoo “really enjoyed” dogfighting with the large aircraft.

However, based on its age, the Army decided to scrap the Hind. After hearing this, a Congressman intervened to save the helicopter from its planned fate. The Mi-24 now resides in the Southern Museum of Flight in Birmingham, Alabama, a worthy location for an aircraft with a unique story and a direct tie to ARSOF history.

The Mi-24 on display at the Southern Museum of Flight in Birmingham, Alabama. Most visitors probably do not realize the tremendous effort required to bring the Soviet helicopter to the United States or for what purpose.




ENDNOTES

- 1 Gary S. Hasselbach*, interview with Dr. Troy J. Sacquety, 31 March 2016, USASOC History Office, Fort Bragg, NC, hereafter Hasselbach* interview, 31 March 2016.
- 2 Hasselbach* interview, 31 March 2016.
- 3 Hasselbach* interview, 31 March 2016.
- 4 Burt MacAdoo, interview with Dr. Troy J. Sacquety, 16 August 2016, USASOC History Office, Fort Bragg, NC, hereafter MacAdoo interview, 16 August 2016. [MacAdoo flew the MH-60 Blackhawk Direct Action Penetrator \(DAP\) while in the 160th SOAR.](#)
- 5 MacAdoo interview, 16 August 2016.
- 6 MacAdoo interview, 16 August 2016.
- 7 Wayne Novy, Southern Museum of Flight curator, interview with Dr. Troy J. Sacquety, 17 August 2016, USASOC History Office, Fort Bragg, NC.

ENDNOTES

- 1 Gary S. Hasselbach* interview with Dr. Troy J. Sacquety, 31 March 2016, USASOC History Office, Fort Bragg, NC, hereafter Hasselback interview, 31 March 2016.
- 2 Hasselback* interview, 31 March 2016
- 3 Hasselback* interview, 31 March 2016
- 4 The official name of the country is the Republic of Chad.
- 5 Chad gained its independence from France in 1960.
- 6 While this particular Hind could fly, it had taken a bullet in the engine and flying it out was considered too risky.
- 7 "Mt. Hope III, Regimental Officer Professional Development 4th Quarter," p.15, included in USASOC FOIA request Case #11-012 (J) response to Mr. John Greenwald, 7 April 2011.
- 8 "Mt. Hope III, Regimental Officer Professional Development 4th Quarter," p.19.
- 9 Hasselback* interview, 31 March 2016
- 10 Hasselback* interview, 31 March 2016
- 11 Robert H. Wilson*, interview with Dr. Troy J. Sacquety, 6 September 2016, USASOC History Office, Fort Bragg, NC, hereafter Wilson* interview, 6 September 2016.
- 12 Wilson* interview, 6 September 2016
- 13 Bradley Arnold*, interview with Dr. Troy J. Sacquety, 25 May 2016, USASOC History Office, Fort Bragg, NC, hereafter Arnold* interview, 25 May 2016.
- 14 Arnold* interview, 25 May 2016.
- 15 Wilson* interview, 6 September 2016.
- 16 Arnold* interview, 25 May 2016.
- 17 Wilson* interview, 6 September 2016.
- 18 Wilson* interview, 6 September 2016.
- 19 Wilson* interview, 6 September 2016.
- 20 Chris G. Rogers*, interviewed by Dr. Troy J. Sacquety, 25 August 2016, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 21 Arnold* interview, 25 May 2016.
- 22 Wilson* interview, 6 September 2016.
- 23 Arnold* interview, 25 May 2016.
- 24 "Operation MOUNT HOPE III (June 1988), p.2, copy provided to the USASOC History Office by 2nd Battalion, 160th SOAR. The pararescuemen, also known as PJs, were there to provide medical assistance if needed.
- 25 The crews and helicopters flew unarmed.
- 26 Chris G. Rogers*, interview with Dr. Troy J. Sacquety, 25 August 2016, USASOC History Office, Fort Bragg, NC, hereafter Rogers* interview, 25 August 2016.
- 27 Rogers* interview, 25 August 2016.
- 28 Oscar Waters*, interview with Dr. Troy J. Sacquety, 1 September 2016, USASOC History Office, Fort Bragg, NC, hereafter Waters* interview, 1 September 2016.
- 29 Rogers* interview, 25 August 2016.
- 30 Hasselback* interview, 31 March 2016
- 31 Waters* interview, 1 September 2016.
- 32 Hasselback* interview, 31 March 2016
- 33 Rogers* interview, 25 August 2016.
- 34 Waters* interview, 1 September 2016.
- 35 Rogers* interview, 25 August 2016.
- 36 Rogers* interview, 25 August 2016.
- 37 Waters* interview, 1 September 2016.
- 38 Arnold* interview, 25 May 2016.
- 39 The Hind went out on the first plane, the Chinooks and 160th soldiers followed later.
- 40 Rogers* interview, 25 August 2016.
- 41 Arnold* interview, 25 May 2016.
- 42 "Mt. Hope III, Regimental Officer Professional Development 4th Quarter," p.34, included in USASOC FOIA request Case #11-012 (J) response to Mr. John Greenwald, 7 April 2011.
- 43 "Mt. Hope III, Regimental Officer Professional Development 4th Quarter," p.5, included in USASOC FOIA request Case #11-012 (J) response to Mr. John Greenwald, 7 April 2011.
- 44 Hasselback* interview, 31 March 2016
- 45 Wilson* interview, 6 September 2016.





“BUILDING THE AIRPLANE IN FLIGHT”

Iraqi soldiers surrender to U.S. Marines during Operation DESERT STORM in early 1991. In the preceding months, U.S. Army PSYOP loudspeaker teams had been attached to the Marines and other U.S. and coalition units for the purpose of encouraging enemy forces to cease resistance.

PSYOP in Operation DESERT SHIELD, Part 2

by Jared M. Tracy

Abstract: Though challenging, the first phase of U.S. Army Psychological Operations (PSYOP) deployments to Saudi Arabia was complete by mid-October 1990. The second phase was complicated by U.S. Army Reserve mobilizations, resulting in the delayed arrival of more PSYOP soldiers until the eve of war in January 1991. Getting a robust PSYOP structure in place was difficult, but in the end, the right soldiers, equipment, and relationships were in place to wage a large-scale PSYOP campaign during Operation DESERT STORM.

A previous article, “Rising from the Ashes: PSYOP in Operation DESERT SHIELD,” described the state of U.S. Army Psychological Operations (PSYOP) forces after Vietnam, the background to Operation DESERT SHIELD in the Middle East, and the difficulties of getting a theater PSYOP plan approved in late 1990. As that article explained, no PSYOP units were stationed in the area of operations when Iraq invaded Kuwait on 2 August 1990, although a handful of 8th PSYOP Battalion (POB) soldiers were on Temporary Duty (TDY) with the U.S. Military Training Mission (USMTM) in Saudi Arabia. During that month, they were joined by a few loudspeaker teams accompanying an 82nd Airborne Division rapid deployment force, as well as the theater-level Joint PSYOP Group (JPOG), led by Colonel (COL) Anthony H. Normand, commander of the Fort Bragg, North Carolina-based 4th PSYOP Group (POG). Behind the scenes, plans were underway for a much larger PSYOP presence in anticipation of a wider conflict.

This article details PSYOP deployments during Operation DESERT SHIELD. Between the invasion of Kuwait and the coalition’s initiation of hostilities on 17 January 1991, some 600 soldiers from across the active and reserve component PSYOP force deployed to Saudi Arabia. They were supported by EC-130 VOLANT SOLO aircraft from the 193rd Special Operations Group (SOG). Finally, one PSYOP team deployed to Bahrain to assist the U.S. Information

Service (USIS) with Voice of America (VOA) broadcasts, while another deployed to support Joint Task Force (JTF) Proven Force, headquartered at Incirlik, Turkey. Getting the organizational and technical infrastructure in place to wage a landmark PSYOP campaign in support of a massive multinational coalition was no small feat.

Initial Active-Duty PSYOP Deployments

A week after the Iraqi invasion, the Commander-in-Chief, U.S. Special Operations Command (USSOCOM), General (GEN) Carl W. Stiner, ordered the deployment of a PSYOP battalion no later than 24 August 1990, to coincide with conventional and special operations forces deployments. The U.S. Central Command (USCENTCOM)-aligned 8th POB, also based at Fort Bragg, was the clear choice, although the initial timeline proved to be ambitious. The 8th POB commander, Lieutenant Colonel (LTC) Jeffrey B. Jones, did deploy with the JPOG in late August, but the balance of his battalion did not begin overseas movement until 6 September (with planned completion by 4 Oc-

LTC Jeffrey B. Jones, commander of 8th POB/8th POTF during Operations DESERT SHIELD/DESERT STORM.



4th PSYOP Group
Distinctive Unit Insignia (DUI)



8th POB DUI

tober). Within a week of the start of 8th POB's deployments, 105 soldiers from across the PSYOP force had arrived in Saudi Arabia.¹

The 8th POB formed the core of the 8th PSYOP Task Force (POTF), an ad hoc, task-organized element consisting of soldiers and units from across the active-duty and U.S. Army Reserve (USAR) PSYOP force. Assigned to U.S. Army, Central (USARCENT), the 8th POTF headquarters (HQ) occupied space at

both the Gulf Cooperative Council (GCC) building (along with the JPOG) and at HQ, USARCENT, in Riyadh. On paper, 8th POTF was the higher headquarters for deployed PSYOP units; in reality, PSYOP forces would be arrayed throughout the entire coalition and were responsible to their supported combat arms units. This would result in a PSYOP effort that was centralized in its themes and intent, but decentralized in execution.

LTC Jones (front center) poses with other deployed PSYOP soldiers during the Persian Gulf War. Some are wearing the 1st Special Operations Command shoulder sleeve insignia while others wear the U.S. Army Civil Affairs and PSYOP Command (USACAPOC) patch. With USACAPOC activated in late 1990, this was a period of organizational transition.



As the 8th POTF commander, LTC Jones had general authority for executing the broad theater PSYOP plan; however, as explained in the previous article, that plan (BURNING HAWK) had been mired in the Pentagon bureaucracy for months awaiting approval. In addition, PSYOP-peculiar equipment arrived slowly and piecemeal, forcing reliance on host nation assets early on. While not an ideal or long-term solution, 8th POTF had access to Saudi TV Channel 2, Saudi Ministry of Defense (MoD) production studios, print facilities, and some Arabic linguists, much of this previously arranged by the PSYOP NCOs at USMTM.²

There was a spike in PSYOP deployments throughout September 1990. By mid-month, most 8th POB soldiers slated for deployment had arrived. They were joined in theater by soldiers from the Fort Bragg-based 9th POB, commanded by LTC Thomas D. Washburn. While the 9th POB deployed as a battalion, its soldiers would be broken into small tactical loudspeaker teams and attached to com-

bat units across the coalition. Also deploying was the newly activated PSYOP Dissemination Battalion (PDB) (later reflagged as the 3rd POB). The first PDB soldiers came from the Broadcast Company, commanded by Captain (CPT) Robert Simmons. Behind them were the PDB commander, LTC James P. Kelliher, his staff, and soldiers from the Print and Signal Companies (commanded by CPTs David Milani and Susan Forsythe, respectively). Upon arrival, the PDB commander, staff, and print elements occupied facilities at King Fahd International Airport (KFIA), near Dammam on the east coast of Saudi Arabia.³

With the JPOG and 8th POTF in Riyadh and the 9th POB spread out across the coalition, the PDB was the lone Army PSYOP unit at KFIA. While LTC Kelliher trekked back and forth to Riyadh—around 500 miles round-trip—to discuss plans with COL Normand and LTC Jones, his staff coordinated with local units for food, medical, and dental support. Another order of business was contracting to pave the print facility because “dust was everywhere,” said Kelliher.⁴ In ad-



9th POB DUI



DUI for the 3rd POB, successor to the DESERT SHIELD-era PSYOP Dissemination Battalion (PDB)

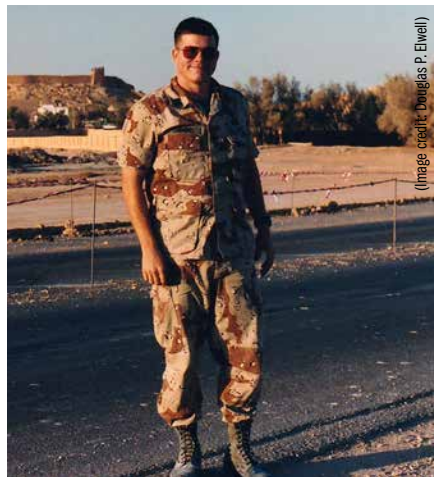


Aerial view of King Fahd International Airport (KFIA), home of the PDB and two EC-130 VOLANT SOLO aircraft from the 193rd SOG during Operations DESERT SHIELD/DESERT STORM.

(Image credit: Douglas P. Elwell)

“...dust was everywhere.”

—LTC Kelliher



CPT Robert Simmons, commander of the PDB Broadcast Company, takes time for a photo while enroute with his company to Al Qaisumah from Riyadh in December 1990 to install the TAMT-10 and PAMDIS systems.

dition, Signal Company soldiers helped establish a secure communications link between Riyadh, KFIA, and broadcasting outstations at Al Qaisumah and Abu Ali Island, Saudi Arabia, using secured telephone lines provided by the Saudi-owned Aramco oil company. Kelliher described these collective efforts as “building the airplane in flight.”⁵

By 6 October, there were 257 soldiers from PSYOP units deployed; another rush brought the number to 414 by 19 October, roughly the status quo for the next three months.⁶ Helping these units deploy from Fort Bragg was Major (MAJ) James A. Treadwell, the 4th POG S-3, who was aided by Staff Sergeant (SSG) Steven L. Carney, S-3 Air NCO. Since becoming the S-3 in February, Treadwell had been gathering after-action reviews from Operation JUST CAUSE in Panama, helping PSYOP soldiers redeploy from Panama, and assisting 4th POG reorganization efforts, including 9th POB’s transition to a tactical battalion and PDB’s activation. The frenzied first weeks of DESERT SHIELD forced him to focus instead on deploying PSYOP soldiers from Pope Air Force Base (AFB), North Carolina. Deployments were “fitful,” Treadwell recalled. “We didn’t get a lot of airflow initially,” with PSYOP units competing for seats with combat units.⁷ Compounding the challenges of deploying battalions’ worth of PSYOP soldiers, the Group S-3 team had to coordinate the transport



TOP: This photo was taken inside the PDB compound at KFIA, late 1990. The PDB was the only Army PSYOP unit permanently stationed at KFIA during the Persian Gulf War. **BOTTOM:** PDB soldiers fill sandbags for a bunker to protect against Scud missile attacks. As it turned out, within Saudi Arabia, KFIA would be spared from Scud missiles, unlike Riyadh, King Khalid Military City (KKMC), and Dhahran.



of PSYOP-peculiar equipment to Charleston, South Carolina, for maritime shipment to Saudi Arabia. “It was painful for us because we had never deployed our big equipment like that,” said Treadwell, “especially not in a hurry.”⁸

Getting PSYOP Equipment and Teams in Place

After the Iraqi invasion, radio was identified as a key medium to reach target audiences. On 16 August 1990, the Commander-in-Chief,

USCENTCOM (CINCCENT), GEN H. Norman Schwarzkopf, Jr., validated the requirement for multiple radio transmitters, although it took months for them to arrive in theater and to be emplaced. The three radio systems deployed during Operation DESERT SHIELD and operational during DESERT STORM were the Transportable AM Transmitter – 10 kw (TAMT-10); the PSYOP Airmobile Dissemination System (PAMDIS); and the 50 kw AN/TRT-22 (see “PSYOP Radio Systems” sidebar for system features and locations).

A C-5A Galaxy aircraft stands ready on the flight line at Pope Air Force Base, NC, during Operation DESERT SHIELD. PSYOP units had to compete with combat units for seats on airframes destined for Saudi Arabia, causing soldiers to arrive piecemeal.

PSYOP RADIO SYSTEMS IN OPERATION DESERT SHIELD

Owned by the Product Dissemination Battalion (PDB), the TAMT-10 was a radio production, transmission, and reception system, housed in an S-280 shelter and supported by a 125-foot antenna. Transporting the components required two M35 2½-ton trucks and a Commercial Utility Cargo Vehicle or High Mobility Multipurpose Wheeled Vehicle.¹ According to Douglas P. Elwell, an Army civilian from the Sacramento Army Depot (SAAD) who assisted with radio installation, Broadcast Company soldiers moved the TAMT-10 from King Fahd International Airport to Riyadh on 11 December 1990 and the next day to Al Qaisumah, its final destination, about 80 miles south of Kuwait and just southeast of Hafar Al Batin. The TAMT-10 was constructed, tuned, and operational within a week of arrival.² However, as explained by CPT Robert Simmons, Broadcast Company Commander, dry soil restricted the broadcasting range to, at best, 30 miles, resulting in target audiences limited to friendly Egyptian and Saudi forces north of King Khalid Military City. Creating an artificial ground plane around the transmitter using buried copper wire and salt expanded the range slightly, with hopes of reaching Iraqi troops near the border. Still, this later became nil when the coalition's high rate of advance during DESERT STORM outstripped the TAMT-10's maximum range.³

The interior console (left) and shelter (right) for the TAMT-10.



Joining the TAMT-10 in Al Qaisumah was a modular PAMDIS, also owned by the PDB. Transported and housed in rugged transportable cases and capable of being set up in five hours, the PAMDIS had two 40-foot antennas to facilitate broadcasting on television and FM radio.⁴ The TV system "was prepared to operate from [Al Qaisumah] but was never utilized due to the lack of a TV broadcast mission in that area."⁵ Therefore, according to CPT Simmons, "only the FM system was put into operation, targeting . . . Iraqi units in the tri-border area" utilizing programming feed from the TAMT-10 next door.⁶ The FM broadcast range was said to be as far as 60 miles, although that was likely a gracious estimate. Al Qaisumah was not the only location from which U.S. Army PSYOP radio broadcasts would emanate.

Elsewhere, construction of a 50 kw AN/TRT-22 system just north of Al Jubayl on Abu Ali Island, Saudi Arabia, began on 8 January 1991. According to CPT Simmons, this site was selected "due to the conductivity of the surrounding soil and the amount of water between the transmitter and the target audience," which gave the station a range of up to 250 miles, across the Persian Gulf and into Kuwait and southern Iraq.⁷ AN/TRT-22 transmitter components were housed in seven S-280 shelters, each with different contents and functions, with an AN/TRR-18 receiver in a separate S-280

shelter.⁸ PDB personnel would transport, assemble, operate, and maintain the AN/TRT-22 system (with initial assistance from SAAD employees). However, construction of the 250-foot antenna required outside expertise in the form of an eight-man team from the 1199th Signal Battalion at Fort Huachuca, Arizona, which arrived on 12 January 1991.⁹ Powering the station for round-the-clock operations were two 200-kw generators, each consuming 150-160 gallons of fuel daily. The transmitters at Abu Ali and Al Qaisumah, and the two EC-130 VOLANT SOLO aircraft from the 193rd SOG, would form the PSYOP-run radio network known as the Voice of the Gulf.¹⁰

The 125-foot antenna and transmitter shelter (right) for the TAMT-10 at Al Qaisumah, Saudi Arabia, December 1990.

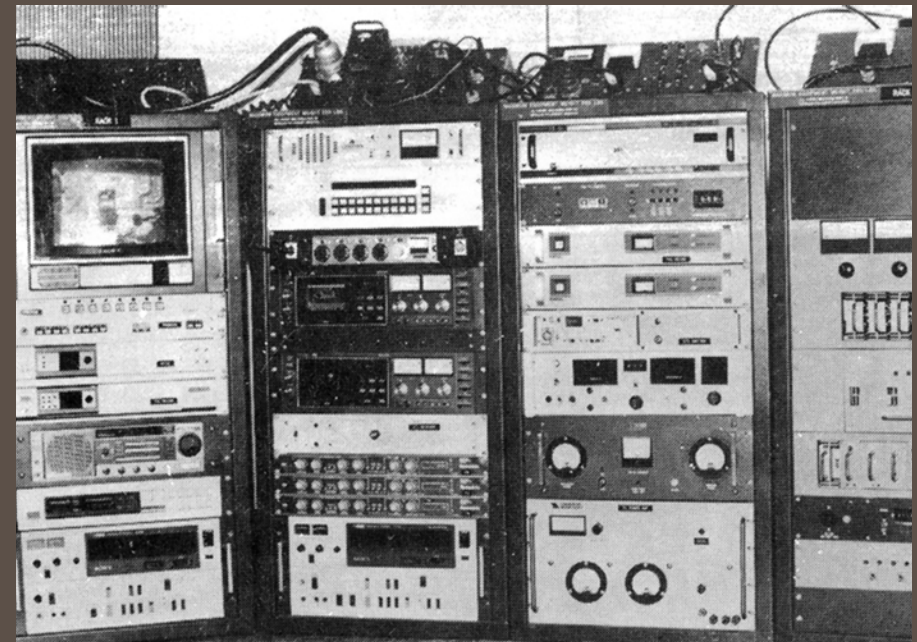


(Image credit: Douglas P. Elwell)

ENDNOTES

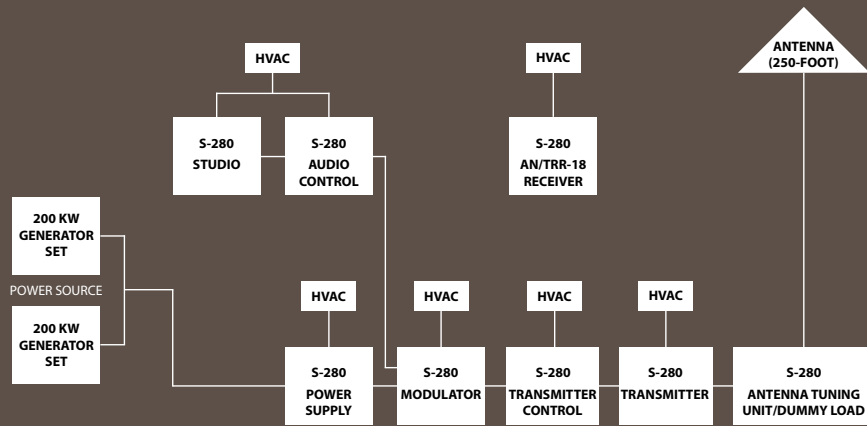
- 1 4th POG, *Capabilities Handbook* (Fort Bragg, NC: 4th POG, 1993), 36-37.
- 2 Douglas P. Elwell, interview with Jared M. Tracy, 12 January 2022, USASOC History Office, Fort Bragg, NC, hereafter Elwell interview, 12 January 2022.
- 3 Robert Simmons, "Broadcast Operations," n.d., 1, copy in USASOC History Office Fort Bragg, NC.
- 4 "Daily PSYOP Activities Report: Period Covered: 240001 to 242400C DEC 90," n.d., Folder 958, Box ADA-1, USASOC History Office, Fort Bragg, NC; "Daily PSYOP Activities Report: Period Covered: 270001 to 272400C DEC 90," 28 December 1990, Folder 958, Box ADA-1, USASOC History Office, Fort Bragg, NC, hereafter Daily PSYOP Activities Report, 27 December 1990; Jeffrey B. Jones and Jack N. Summe, "Psychological Operations in DESERT SHIELD, DESERT STORM, and URBAN FREEDOM," *Institute of Land Warfare: Landpower Essay Series*, No. 97-3 (August 1997): 5; 4th POG, *Capabilities Handbook*, 32-33.
- 5 Simmons, "Broadcast Operations," 1-2.
- 6 Simmons, "Broadcast Operations," 1-2.
- 7 Simmons, "Broadcast Operations," 1.
- 8 The audio control shelter remained in Riyadh and the studio shelter was used for storage. However, another shelter was present to house the AN/TRR-18 receiver, which was used with but not technically part of the AN/TRT-22. See attached graphic for details.
- 9 USASOC to HQDA, "SUBJECT: 1199th Sig Bn Antenna Team," 18 August 1990, 1-2, Folder 954, Box ADA-1, USASOC History Office, Fort Bragg, NC; Commander-in-Chief, U.S. Special Operations Command (USCINCSOC) to USASOC, "Message #RUCJAAA2511," 17 August 1990, Folder 954, Box ADA-1, USASOC History Office, Fort Bragg, NC; CG, U.S. Army Intelligence and Security Command, to HQDA, "SUBJECT: Antenna Team Support for 4th POG," 25 September 1990, Folder 954, Box ADA-1, USASOC History Office, Fort Bragg, NC; Elwell interview, 12 January 2022.
- 10 "Radio Dissemination Equipment: AN/TRT-22 Transportable Radio Transmitter and AN/TRR-18 Transportable Radio Receiver," n.d., Folder 283, Box 3-4A, USASOC History Office, Fort Bragg, NC; "Daily PSYOP Activities Report: Period Covered: 260001 to 262400C DEC 90," 27 December 1990, Folder 958, Box ADA-1, USASOC History Office, Fort Bragg, NC.

TOP RIGHT: The TV (left two), FM, and AM components of the PAMDIS. **BOTTOM:** The 40-foot FM (left) and TV (right) antennas for the PAMDIS at Al Qaisumah, Saudi Arabia, December 1990. Although the modular PAMDIS had AM broadcasting capability, it was not needed because the TAMT-10 was collocated with it at the site. Between that and the lack of a TV mission, only its FM capability was utilized.



(image credit: Douglas P. Elwell)

AN/TRT-22 Configuration



(Image credit: Douglas P. Elwell)



(Image credit: Douglas P. Elwell)



(Image credit: Douglas P. Elwell)

TOP LEFT: AN/TRT-22 diagram. **TOP RIGHT:** A PDB convoy transports the 50 kw AN/TRT-22 system from KFIA to Abu Ali Island, January 1991. **BOTTOM LEFT:** Row of S-280 shelters comprising the AN/TRT-22 system at Abu Ali. Note the HVAC cooling units behind them. **BOTTOM RIGHT:** The AN/TRT-22 Audio Control Shelter and AN/TRR-18 Receiver Shelter at Abu Ali.

Leaflets were expected to be another major aspect of the overall PSYOP effort. As previously mentioned, PDB print elements were located at KFIA. These included two Medium Print Systems and a Modular Print System. Each Medium Print System consisted of a Heidelberg press loaded into an early 1970s-era five-ton M820 Expansible Van truck. “Although dated,” according to one PDB report, “this truck provides the most mobile platform for our critical Heidelberg presses.”⁹ The Modular Print System consisted of three modules:

- “A”—one editorial and one print shelter, each mounted on a 2½-ton truck
- “B”—two dolly-mounted shelters with Heidelberg presses
- “C”—one dolly-mounted shelter with a paper cutter

The same PDB report noted that while the Modular Print System “demonstrated its efficiency,” its “mobility [as a system] is limited.”¹⁰

In addition to these printing systems, leaflet rolling machines (to facilitate loading into leaflet bombs) and hollowed 155mm artillery shells (modified to carry leaflets) began shipment to Saudi Arabia in August 1990. Also delivered were M129A1 leaflet bombs, each able to be filled with up to ten 14-inch-diameter leaflet rolls; capable of delivering up to 60,000 leaflets; and configured for B-52 Stratofortress and F-16 Fighting Falcon aircraft. The PDB had responsibility for loading and readying the leaflet bombs, and then arranging their transport to various airfields. The delayed approval of the PSYOP plan (BURNING HAWK) did not stop the production of leaflets. Developed by both the 8th POTF and the Combined PSYOP Cell in Riyadh, leaflets stressed Iraqi President



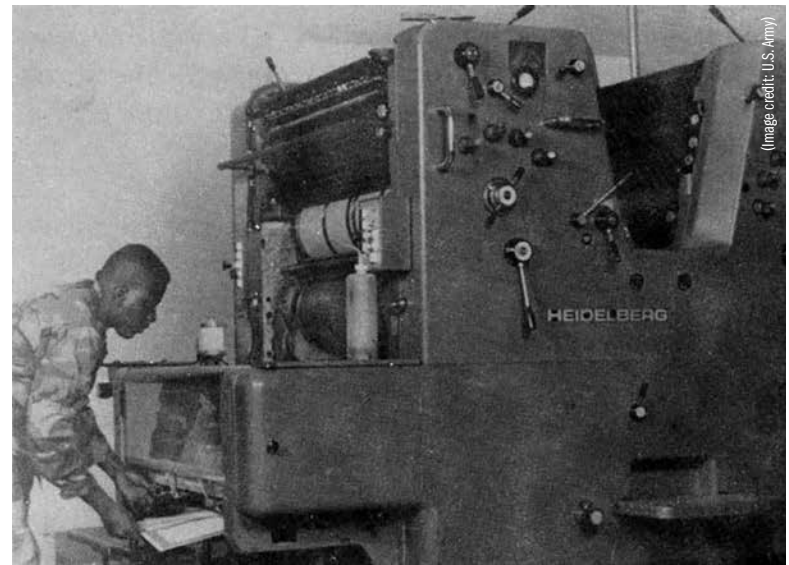
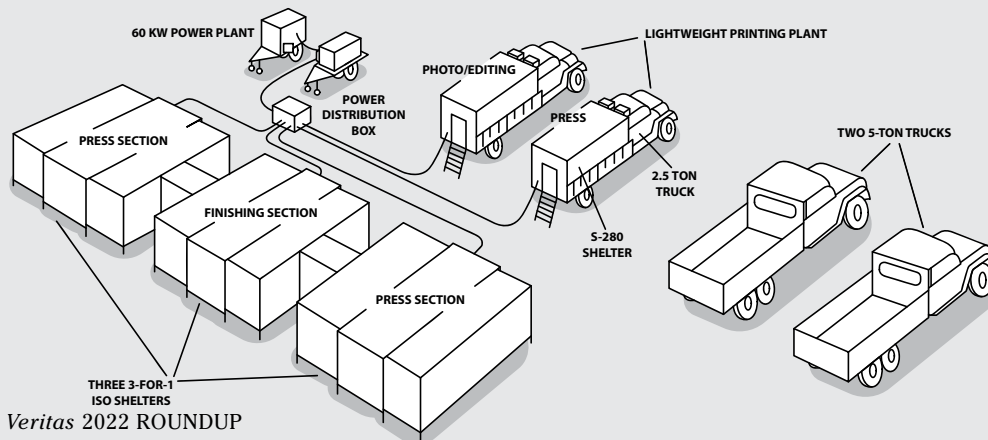
(Image credit: U.S. Army)



(Image credit: U.S. Army)

From top to bottom, two S-280 shelters mounted on 2½-ton trucks comprising the light print plant; the light print plant in operation; and the heavier Heidelberg press.

MODULAR PRINT SYSTEM



(Image credit: U.S. Army)

The B-52 Stratofortress (top) and F-16 Fighting Falcon (bottom) were the two delivery platforms for the M129A1 leaflet bombs during the Persian Gulf War.



(Image credit: Airman 1st Class Victor J. Caputo)

Saddam Hussein's responsibility for the crisis, world opposition to Iraq's actions, and the hopelessness of the Iraqi soldiers against overwhelming coalition firepower.¹¹

To complement radio broadcasts and leaflets, PSYOP soldiers also made plans for video products. However, the 8th POTF initially only had one system on-hand to produce videotapes, limiting its output to only two videos produced by mid-October. To avoid an overreliance on host-nation equipment and facilities and to give the POTF enhanced capability, on 19 October, USCENTCOM received a request from USARCENT to facilitate expedited shipment of a TSQ-171/Television – Transmitter 5 kw (TV-T5) mobile television and video production system to Saudi Arabia. Less than two weeks from the time of the request, ten soldiers and a civilian technician from 4th POG had deployed with the TSQ-171/TV-T5.¹² The system was slated for installation at Khafji in northeast Saudi Arabia just below the Kuwaiti border. However, the TSQ-171 remained at KFIA during combat operations, which later proved fortunate given Iraq's surprise, though ultimately unsuccessful, incursion into Khafji during Operation DESERT STORM three months later.¹³

As radio, leaflet, and video equipment trickled into theater, one to two-man loudspeaker teams from 9th POB began dispersing throughout the coalition (primarily XVIII Airborne Corps units). The 8th POTF allotted some Arabic speakers to the loudspeaker mission, but not enough for every team. The U.S. Army Special Operations Command (USASOC) at Fort Bragg also tried to identify



(Image credit: Department of Defense)

A ground crew prepares to load a leaflet bomb onto an F-16 in Dammam, Saudi Arabia.



(Image credit: ARMY magazine, used with permission)

Arabic speakers within its formations for this mission. However, there were never enough to go around, which forced PSYOP units to rely on pre-taped messages and Saudi Arabian and Kuwaiti interpreters.¹⁴ Another problem was a shortage of serviceable vehicle-mounted and man-pack loudspeaker systems. On 10 September 1990, Headquarters, Department of the Army (HQDA) directed USASOC and the U.S. Army Communications-Electronics Command, at Fort Monmouth, New Jersey, to procure enough loudspeaker systems for units in Saudi Arabia. Amidst efforts to increase the stockpile of loudspeaker systems through normal Army procurement channels, stateside USAR PSYOP units scrambled to locate unused loudspeakers, vehicles, and other equipment to lend to 4th POG for DESERT SHIELD.¹⁵

Into early 1991, the 8th POTF (with around fifty loudspeaker systems in its possession) shuffled loudspeaker teams around the coalition. By that point, loudspeaker teams had been attached to the 101st and 82nd Airborne Divisions, 1st Cavalry Division, 24th Infantry

Division (ID), 5th Special Forces Group (SFG), the 16th Military Police (MP) Brigade, the 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment (ACR), the 1st and 2nd Marine Divisions (MARDIVs), and other units from U.S. Marine Corps Central (MARCENT) (which alone would ultimately have around 25 teams). A 9th POB team was also attached to the 18th Aviation Brigade to man a 2,700-watt loudspeaker (with a two to three-mile range), mounted on a UH-1H Iroquois ('Huey') helicopter.¹⁶

To help integrate PSYOP into operational planning, including loudspeaker team assignments and activities, the 8th POTF seeded Liaison Officer (LNO) teams throughout the coalition. Like the loudspeaker teams, the LNO team requirement fell heavily on 9th POB. In early 1991, there were LNO teams at USARCENT, XVIII Airborne Corps, the Army Special Operations Task Force (ARSOTF) from Special Operations Command, Central (SOCCENT), MARCENT, the 101st and 82nd Airborne Divisions, the 1st Cavalry Division, the 24th ID, the 3rd ACR, and the 16th MP Brigade.¹⁷ Despite the in-theater presence of more than 400 soldiers from PSYOP units, there were still not enough to support the entire coalition.

Requirement and Request for Additional PSYOP Forces

When U.S. President George H.W. Bush ordered the deployment of VII Corps and an additional 200,000 troops to DESERT SHIELD in early November, it quickly became apparent that the existing PSYOP presence in Saudi Arabia would not suffice. At least another active-duty battalion was needed. In addition, before relinquishing command of 4th POG in

LEFT: A soldier mans a TSQ-171/TV-T5 mobile television and video production system, which remained at KFIA during combat operations. **MIDDLE:** A 9th POB team mounts a 2,700-watt loudspeaker onto a helicopter belonging to the 18th Aviation Brigade. **RIGHT:** On paper, a Tactical PSYOP Team (TPT) would consist of three NCOs for tactical loudspeaker operations. In reality, loudspeaker teams consisted of, at most, two NCOs. Those lacking an Arabic-speaking capability or an attached interpreter relied on pre-recorded tapes.



(Image credit: U.S. Army)



(Image credit: U.S. Army)



(Image credit: U.S. Army)

December 1990, COL Normand asked for 100 reserve component augmentees, citing the need for additional loudspeaker teams at the tactical level.¹⁸ This new force package would theoretically bring the total number of loudspeaker teams to 70, each with one or two PSYOP NCOs and, ideally, an Arabic speaker.¹⁹

On 1 December, USCENTCOM received the formal request for additional forces, which would consist of some 200 soldiers and equipment from the Fort Bragg-based 6th POB and select USAR units. Ten days later, GEN Schwarzkopf forwarded to the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) his request for these forces to deploy no later than 16 January 1991. In addition, 4th POG tasked the Europe-oriented 6th POB to deploy a cell to support the soon-to-be-activated JTF Proven Force in Turkey, which was slated to launch an air campaign against northern Iraq once hostilities started.²⁰

Approval for additional PSYOP forces happened quickly, though deployment less so. On 20 December, GEN Schwarzkopf learned that Secretary of Defense Richard B. Cheney had authorized this movement, which had prompted the Chairman of the JCS, GEN Colin L. Powell, to issue the deployment order. Commanded by LTC Jay R. Savage, the 6th POB would deploy approximately 95 soldiers, 12 High Mobility Multipurpose Wheeled Vehicles (HMMWVs), 26 Commercial Utility Cargo Vehicles (CUCVs), five M35 2½-ton trucks, a mobile print plant, trailers, and other equipment. Augmenting 6th POB would be soldiers and equipment from

the following USAR PSYOP Companies (POCs): 18th, 19th, 244th, 245th, and 362nd. Each company would deploy a 15-man detachment (four 3-man loudspeaker teams, an officer-in-charge, a noncommissioned officer-in-charge, and a maintenance technician), except for the 245th, with an 18-man detachment and five loudspeaker teams. Finally, for enemy prisoner-of-war (EPW) operations, the Army would mobilize 32 soldiers from the USAR 13th POB (EPW) from Fort Snelling, Minnesota, commanded by LTC James P. Noll. This second wave of PSYOP deployments, including challenges associated with USAR mobilizations, is described below.²¹

Deployment of National Guard and Reserve PSYOP Forces

The first non-active-duty PSYOP element deployed was not from the USAR, but from the Pennsylvania Air National Guard. Headquartered in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, the 193rd SOG utilized EC-130 VOLANT SOLO aircraft to provide radio jamming and broadcasting capabilities to PSYOP forces. With a lineage dating to the Vietnam War, the 193rd had recently supported PSYOP forces in Panama. Just after the Iraqi invasion, its VOLANT SOLO aircraft were again requested. In late August, two of these planes, one of them carrying COL Normand and the JPOG, arrived at Kfia, where they would ultimately be collocated with the PDB headquarters.²² The 193rd SOG contingent was assigned to USCENTCOM Air Forces

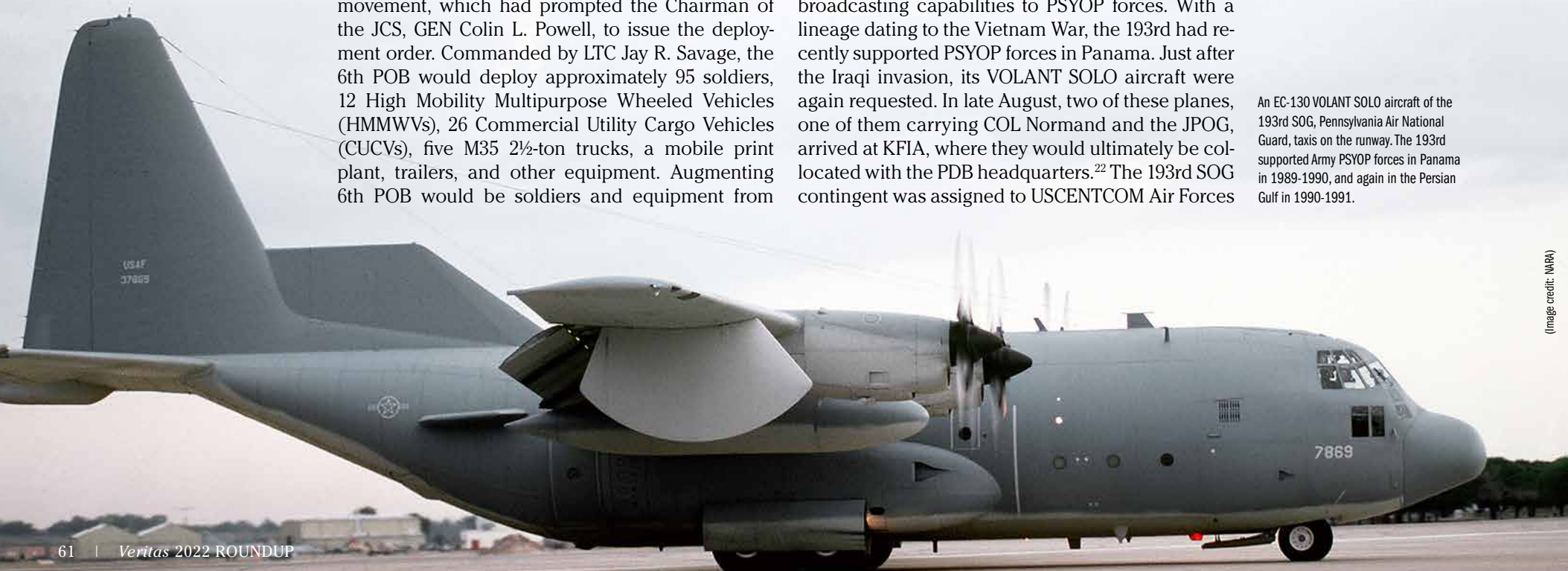


6th POB DUI



13th POB DUI

An EC-130 VOLANT SOLO aircraft of the 193rd SOG, Pennsylvania Air National Guard, taxis on the runway. The 193rd supported Army PSYOP forces in Panama in 1989-1990, and again in the Persian Gulf in 1990-1991.



(CENTAF), not the 8th POTF, but it had a close coordinating relationship with the task force.

Like the 8th POTF, the 193rd SOG crews had to wait for approval of the theater PSYOP plan (and for the 15 January deadline for Iraq to withdraw from Kuwait) before they could broadcast PSYOP messages. VOLANT SOLO crewmembers shared their Army PSYOP colleagues' frustration that this was time wasted (as explained in the previous article). According to one crewman, "In five months we could have been shaping the attitudes of the enemy and [the U.S.] . . . elected not to use the capability."²³ In the meantime, the 193rd SOG was authorized to retransmit VOA broadcasts into Kuwait and Iraq, and monitor and record Iraqi broadcasts, which it did until combat operations began on 17 January. After that, VOLANT SOLO became a key component of the Voice of the Gulf network.

The second aspect of reserve deployments involved PSYOP units for both EPW operations (the 13th POB) and tactical loudspeaker missions (18th, 19th, 244th, 245th, and 362nd POCs). The 13th POB had a running start prior to mobilization. In July 1990, just before Iraq invaded Kuwait, the 13th POB held its two-week annual training (AT) at Fort A.P. Hill, Virginia. Fortunately, during AT, it supported the USAR 800th Military Police (MP) Brigade, from Hempstead, New York, which it later supported in Saudi Arabia. LTC Noll, the 13th POB commander, stated that the exercise "showed that [we were] in a superior state of readiness, and with the exception of some missing or outdated equipment, could be mobilized immediately."²⁴ He was understating the problem with equipment. The battalion's vehicles and loudspeaker systems were obsolete or unserviceable, and its AN/MSQ-85 Audiovisual Unit was incomplete.

The USAR 13th POB was the only PSYOP unit with the Enemy Prisoner of War (EPW) mission. Here, 13th POB soldiers conduct annual training at a mock EPW camp, which it did routinely prior to 1990. Training exercises like this helped it prepare for real-world operations during the Persian Gulf War.

(Image credit: NARA)



Over the next few weeks, the battalion procured a new series of loudspeaker (AN/LSS-40), as well as AN/MSQ-85 parts and other equipment, thereby improving its overall deployment posture.²⁵

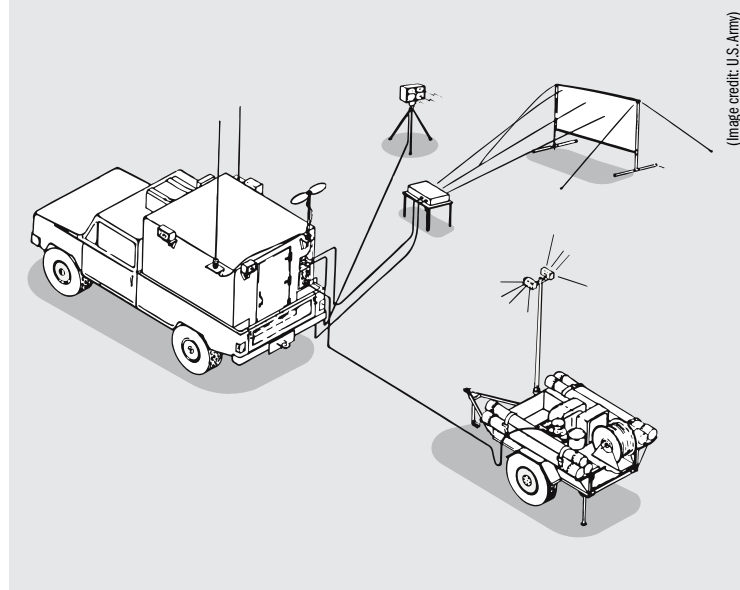
Fresh off its AT exercise and soon after the invasion of Kuwait, the 13th POB knew that it would likely deploy. On 6 August 1990, at Fort Bragg, LTC Daniel D. Devlin relinquished command of 6th POB to LTC Savage to assume PSYOP advisory and liaison duties in Cairo, Egypt. Among the attendees at the change of command ceremony was LTC Noll, who received a verbal warning order (WARNO) from local USASOC and PSYOP leaders in attendance that his battalion, the only one with an EPW mission, should expect to be deployed.²⁶ Within two weeks, USASOC officially informed USSOCOM that the 4th POG would need USAR augmentation, a message that quickly made it down to select PSYOP units, among them the 13th POB.²⁷ For the next few weeks, U.S. Army Forces Command (FORSCOM) worked on validation criteria, USAR time-phased force and deployment data (TPFDD), and issuing mobilization orders.²⁸ In effect, these notifications marked the beginning of a months-long mobilization process.

The 13th POB began to get organized for deployment, to include drafting its annex to the theater DESERT STORM Operation Order (OPORD). This annex specified the following. First, the 13th POB would attach camp teams to MP units to assist the “evacuation, administration, and internment of [EPWs and Civilian Internees (CIs)].” Second, its PSYOP priorities would include “pre-testing and post-testing of PSYOP products, identification of cooperative EPWs for PSYOP

The 350-watt AN/LSS-40s were utilized by dismantled loudspeaker teams. They had an effective range of 700 to 1000 meters and could sustain operations for up to three hours on a fully charged battery.



(Image credit: U.S. Army)



(Image credit: U.S. Army)

The 13th POB deployed with an AN/MSQ-85B Audiovisual Unit. The diagram depicts a typical AN/MSQ-85A setup.



USACAPOC SSI

exploitation, and collection of PSYOP specific information for use by PSYOP units employed within the AO.” Finally, the 13th POB would be assigned to the 8th POTF. It would deploy with loudspeakers and the AN/MSQ-85B system.²⁹ Housed in an S-280 shelter mounted on a HMMWV, the AN/MSQ-85 could produce and conduct A/V presentations, develop 35mm slides, make broadcasts from a 350-watt AN/LSS-40 loudspeaker system, and print a limited number of leaflets.³⁰

Meanwhile, USAR PSYOP soldiers were also needed for tactical loudspeaker operations. On 16 November 1990, USASOC tasked the soon-to-be-defunct U.S. Army Reserve Special Operations Command (USARSOC) to quantify the number of Arabic-speaking loudspeaker teams that it could deploy. After researching this question, USARSOC responded that it could field 49 loudspeaker teams, 36 man-pack loudspeaker systems, and 33 loudspeaker-mounted HMMWVs and jeeps, but provide only six Arabic speakers. (The 13th POB had two USCENTCOM linguists, Chief Warrant Officer 3 David L. Juba [Arabic] and Sergeant [SGT] Mark A. Felton [Farsi].)³¹ This input underscored the shortage of Arabic speakers, but also revealed that ample loudspeaker teams and valuable equipment resided in the reserve component.

On 27 November 1990, the U.S. Army Civil Affairs and Psychological Operations Command (USACAPOC) was activated under USASOC, replacing USARSOC and assuming command of all active and USAR CA and PSYOP units. An early priority for the USACAPOC



(Images credit: Department of Defense)

With cooperation from engineers, Military Police construct EPW camps in support of combat operations. During the war, the 13th POB would support the 800th MP Brigade, which ran two Eastern camps (called 'Bronx'), south of the Saudi Arabian town of An Nu-Arriyah, near Sarrar, and two Western camps (called 'Brooklyn'), south of Hafer Al Batin and north of KKMC.

Commanding General (CG), Brigadier General (BG) Joseph Hurteau, was a briefing from LTC Noll in Columbia, South Carolina, at the headquarters of the 306th Civil Affairs Command, about how the 13th POB would support four MP-run EPW camps in Saudi Arabia. Noll's initial plan, based on a whole-battalion deployment, fell into disarray when he learned that only 32 members of his unit (approximately 25 percent) would deploy. "This was shocking news . . . as our organization and training focused around PSYOP camp teams . . . of 12-15 soldiers."³² In addition to these camp teams, the standard 13th POB model was to deploy the command group, the headquarters and headquarters company (HHC), a research and development section, print and audiovisual sections, and illustrators. The 32-man cap would drastically reduce the 13th POB footprint and capabilities.

"My thoughts at this time were that the [U.S.] had reached the [USAR] cap, and that was the reason we were being severely limited in deployable soldiers," said LTC Noll. The briefing to Hurteau,

then, explained that each camp would instead have only five PSYOP-qualified soldiers, all supported by a skeletal staff of seven (commander, command sergeant major [CSM], the S-2, the S-3, an operations NCO, and two liaison officers [LNOs]), each with dual-hatted functions. Noll would have to be very selective about who would deploy. For instance, as Noll recounts:

"Because the 13th POB would be deployed . . . in a Moslem culture and be dealing directly with captured Moslem male prisoners, the unit was instructed not to include female PSYOP soldiers on the camp teams. Therefore, the battalion transferred a number of well-trained and capable female soldiers out of the camp teams and replaced them with males. This delicate situation was not popular with, but was accepted without incident by, the female soldiers involved."

Led by the battalion Executive Officer (XO), the rest of the 13th POB would remain at Fort Snelling, ready in case the force cap was lifted. Satisfied with Noll's modified plan, Hurteau directed him to prepare for this mission, although the battalion had nothing in writing yet. Meanwhile, the 13th POB identified 60 people for a two-week, pre-deployment training exercise at its home station starting on 17 December.³³

The administrative process to deploy USAR PSYOP forces accelerated in December. On 7 December, USSOCOM issued a WARNO to USASOC that the 13th POB soldiers would deploy to support the 800th MP Brigade, a message in turn relayed to USACAPOC. Collaboration between USACAPOC, USASOC, and FORSCOM resulted in the establishment of derivative unit identification codes (DUICs) for a five-man advanced echelon (ADVON) and the 27-man main body from the 13th POB, and for five USAR PSYOP detachments for loudspeaker operations. By 14 December, USAR PSYOP personnel numbers were locked in:

- 13th POB five-man ADVON, Fort Snelling, Minnesota
- 13th POB 27-man main body, Fort Snelling, Minnesota
- 18th POC, 15-man detachment, St. Louis, Missouri
- 19th POC, 15-man detachment, Fort Snelling, Minnesota
- 244th POC, 15-man detachment, Abilene, Texas
- 245th POC, 18-man detachment, Dallas, Texas
- 362nd POC, 15-man detachment, Fayetteville, Arkansas³⁴

Fort Bragg would be the mobilization station for all deploying USAR PSYOP soldiers.³⁵

Within days, USACAPOC issued Operation Plan (OPLAN) 03-91. According to this document, USACAPOC units would provide PSYOP teams "to deploy to Saudi Arabia in support of . . . assigned units. Teams will augment the PSYOP capability

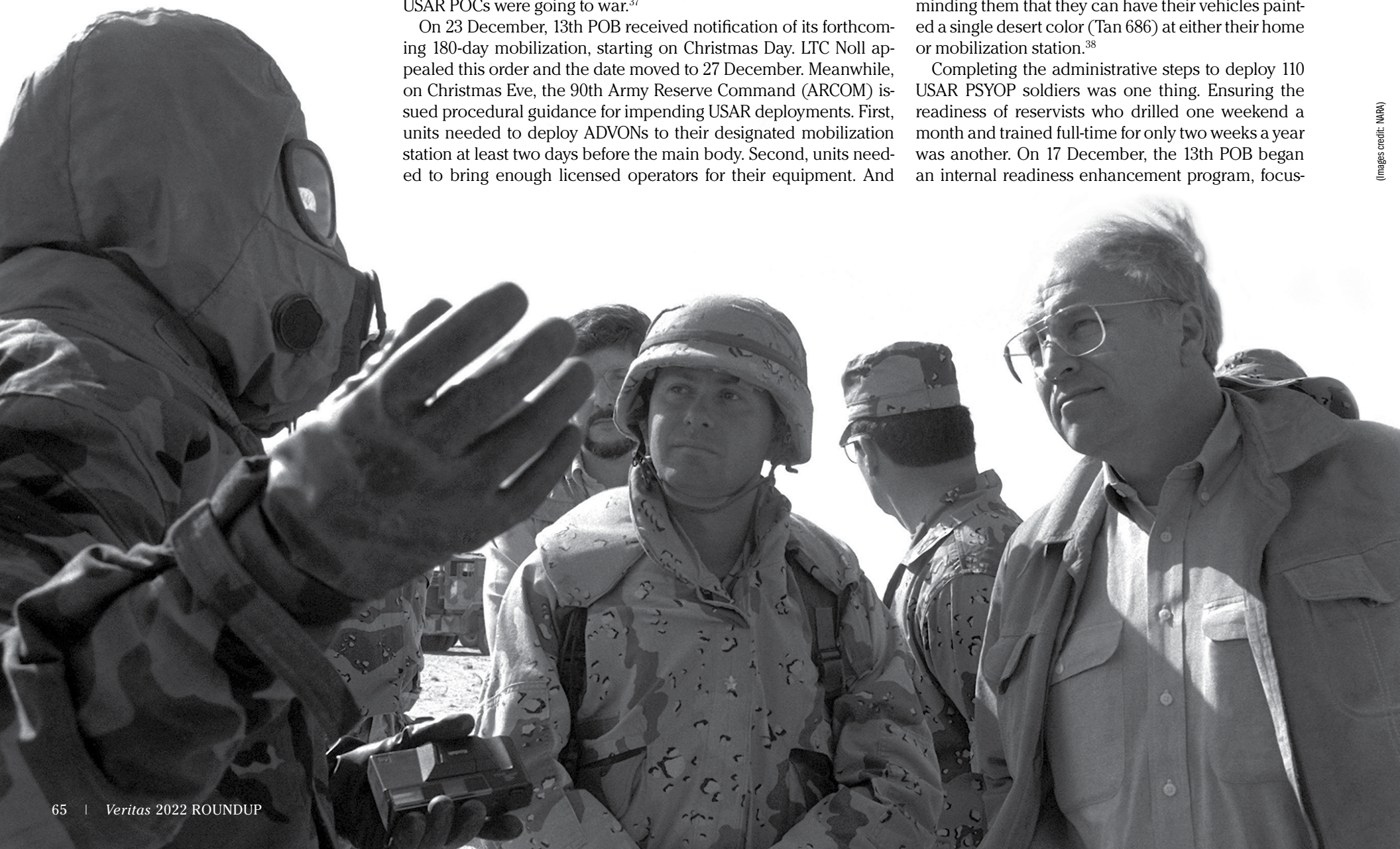
Concerns about Nuclear, Chemical, and Biological (NBC) attacks by Iraqi forces prompted the U.S. military to prioritize NBC countermeasures. Here a U.S. servicemember demonstrates Mission-Oriented Protective Posture level 4 (MOPP-4) to visiting Secretary of Defense Richard B. Cheney in December 1990, during Operation DESERT SHIELD. MOPP equipment and proficiency were required of deployed forces, including reservists.

of [other] units and prepare to act as advance parties and liaison elements for follow-on forces.” The broad intent was to “provide fully qualified and validated PSYOP teams and units to [USCENTCOM] in support of DESERT SHIELD.”³⁶ OPLAN 03-91 was soon followed by the 20 December JCS deployment order (DEPOD) for USAR PSYOP units. It was official; soldiers from the 13th POB and five USAR POCs were going to war.³⁷

On 23 December, 13th POB received notification of its forthcoming 180-day mobilization, starting on Christmas Day. LTC Noll appealed this order and the date moved to 27 December. Meanwhile, on Christmas Eve, the 90th Army Reserve Command (ARCOM) issued procedural guidance for impending USAR deployments. First, units needed to deploy ADVONs to their designated mobilization station at least two days before the main body. Second, units needed to bring enough licensed operators for their equipment. And

third, units needed to deploy with required modified table of organization and equipment (MTOE) and individual equipment (in serviceable condition), including Mission Oriented Protective Posture (MOPP) gear to protect from chemical agents. The same day, USACAPOC relayed this information to its units, reminding them that they can have their vehicles painted a single desert color (Tan 686) at either their home or mobilization station.³⁸

Completing the administrative steps to deploy 110 USAR PSYOP soldiers was one thing. Ensuring the readiness of reservists who drilled one weekend a month and trained full-time for only two weeks a year was another. On 17 December, the 13th POB began an internal readiness enhancement program, focus-



(Images credit: NARA)

ing on physical training (PT), common task training, and military occupational specialty (MOS) skills.³⁹ Three days later, USACAPOC informed its units of the official standards for deployment, since “there is less than a comprehensive understanding of mobilization procedures in some units.”⁴⁰ The most alarming part of this memorandum was the requirement for all deploying USACAPOC soldiers to meet Special Operations Forces (SOF) validation standards.

SOF validation standards were daunting for reservists, who had to earn at least 70 percent on each PT test event (push-ups, sit-ups, and two-mile run). They needed to finish a 10-kilometer march with a weapon, load-bearing equipment, and a 55-pound rucksack, in two hours, and a 10-kilometer land navigation course with combat gear and rucksack in four hours. They had to pass a swim test wearing the battle dress uniform and boots. And they needed to score at least 90 percent on a written MOS test and, for applicable soldiers, at least 90 percent on the CA/PSYOP Leader’s Test. Among those concerned was Noll, who had heard rumors of SOF validation but downplayed it until the official order came in. Wanting to lead from the front, Noll set about improving his own physical conditioning while USAR PSYOP units hurried to get deploying soldiers prepared for validation.⁴¹

On 29 December, the 13th POB ADVON and vehicles departed for Fort Bragg. They were followed two days later by the main body, which flew by commercial air from the Minneapolis International Airport. Upon arrival at Fort Bragg, the reservists were assigned billeting, which was teeming with transient personnel. It was then that LTC Noll learned that the recently arrived 78 soldiers from the five POCs would report to him until arrival in Saudi Arabia, when they would be attached to other coalition units. “With the assignment of all activated Reserve PSYOP units under my command, I decided to call a meeting that same evening, for the officers and senior NCOs.” After brief introductions, “My expectations for training

standards and personnel conduct were made emphatically clear. . . . No longer would the companies look to their peacetime chain [of command], but to my battalion and staff for guidance and direction . . . to avoid unnecessary confusion or problems in control issues.”⁴² Attention shifted to validation.

The first event was the SOF PT test, conducted first thing on New Year’s Day, 1991, with a temperature in the mid-30s. LTC Noll “was sympathetic to the soldiers from our two Texas PSYOP companies [244th and 245th] . . . I wondered if the Texas reservists would be as sympathetic for us when we arrived to face the heat in the Saudi Arabian desert.” Out of 110 soldiers, only two did not complete the SOF PT test for medical reasons: the S-3 and the CSM. “Neither soldier would recover in time to deploy,” recalled Noll.⁴³ CPT Sanderson Prescott, an LNO, assumed duties as the S-3. He was replaced as LNO by Second Lieutenant (2LT) David Cole, who flew in from Minnesota. The unit filled the S-3 and LNO positions using its own personnel; replacing the CSM position happened differently.

Fortuitously, Special Forces (SF) Sergeant Major (SGM) Robert S. McCarter knocked on the 13th POB orderly room door and requested the CSM job. He was already SOF validated and had a release from his present temporary duty in-hand. “My prayers had been answered,” remembered LTC Noll. “SGM McCarter was readily accepted by the soldiers of the battalion.” The reservists completed the SOF validation (minus the swim test due to a lack of time) and other administrative procedures without further loss. HMMWVs were “wired to accommodate the LSS-40 speaker systems that were being mounted . . . All vehicles were washed, dried, and painted the desert tan camouflage color scheme and new bumper markings added.” Unfortunately, XVIII Airborne Corps had exhausted the local supply of desert-camouflaged uniforms, meaning, “We were destined . . . to go to war in the wrong type of uniform.”⁴⁴

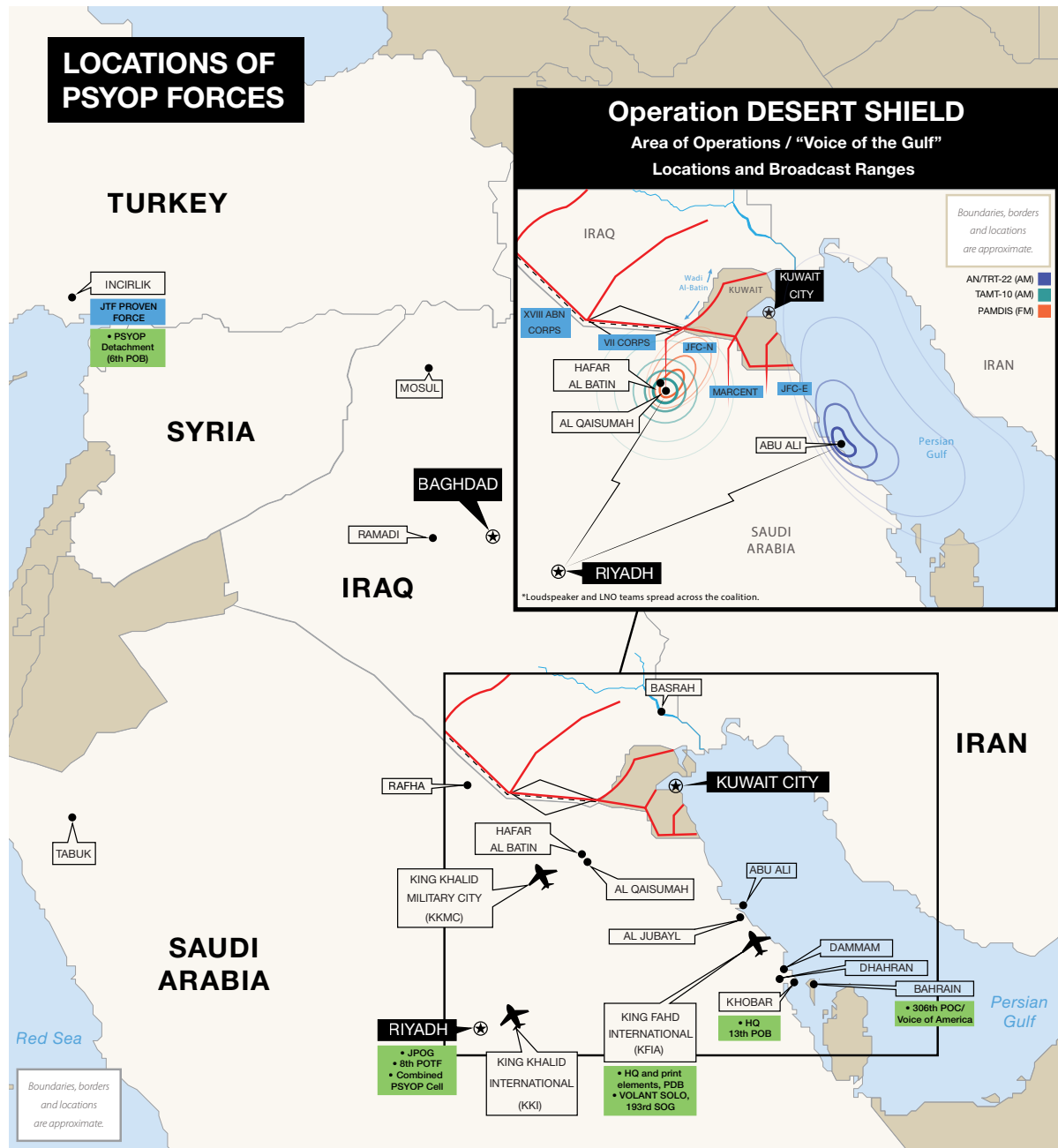


(Images credit: NARA)



(Images credit: NARA)

The rapid deployment of U.S. forces after the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait meant that not all personnel and equipment were fitted in time with desert-camouflage, as evidenced by these two photos. With XVIII Airborne Corps units having used the local supply of ‘chocolate chip’ uniforms, PSYOP reservists who mobilized through Fort Bragg had to deploy with the standard woodland-pattern Battle-Dress Uniforms (BDUs).



All that remained was deployment. On 8 January, Noll learned that his group would arrive in Saudi Arabia by 14 January, the day before Iraq's deadline to withdraw from Kuwait. The next day, the ADVON left Fayetteville via commercial air, arriving in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia, on 11 January. From there, it arranged for the battalion to occupy a building in Al-Khobar, Saudi Arabia, near Dhahran. At 0400 hours on 12 January, the 13th POB left Pope AFB via a C-141 Starlifter, for Saudi Arabia, with stops at McGuire AFB, New Jersey, and Ramstein, Germany. Noll remembered, "The combination of [PT], maximum stress, minimum sleep, and . . . inoculations was beginning to take its toll . . . The question foremost in my mind at this time was what condition . . . the soldiers [would] be in once we landed in Saudi Arabia." The main body arrived at Dhahran at 2200 hours on 13 January and rode to Al-Khobar. "Accommodations were beyond my expectations . . . A lot of credit was due our advance party for a job well done."⁴⁵ The 19th, 244th, and 245th POC soldiers departed from Pope AFB on 12 January; those from the 18th and 362nd POC left on 13 January.⁴⁶ Nearly five months after Noll received the verbal WARNO, USAR PSYOP soldiers were finally joining Operation DESERT SHIELD.

The day after arriving, the jet-lagged 13th POB commander and staff linked up with the leadership of the recently arrived 800th MP Brigade, commanded by BG Joseph F. Conlon, III. Following an intelligence and operations briefing, the 13th POB was ordered to continue unit-level training until four EPW camps were established. In addition to routine daily contact, LTC Noll or First Lieutenant (1LT) Donald E. Sinnwell, an LNO, were to attend evening intelligence briefings held by the brigade. Finally, at the meeting, Noll informed Conlon that "the PSYOP camp teams [must] have 24-hour access to the EPW," to which the general agreed. Things had gotten off on the right foot. "In retrospect, I feel the



Questioning Iraqi EPWs at the camps would be central to the 13th POB's mission. Information gleaned from Iraqi soldiers in pre- and post-testing of products proved invaluable to the overall PSYOP effort once combat operations were underway.

cooperation and sense of trust were the primary reasons for the superior results achieved by both units during the campaign.⁷⁴⁷

After their meeting with BG Conlon, LTC Noll, CPT Prescott, and 2LT Cole made the 250-mile drive to Riyadh to meet with the new 4th POG/JPOG commander, COL Layton G. 'Gerry' Dunbar. By chance, they came across two 4th POG officers en route, who escorted them to the GCC building. They met the 8th POTF commander, LTC Jones, before speaking with Dunbar. Topics discussed included pre- and post-testing products on EPWs, passing intelligence from EPWs to 4th POG and the 8th POTF, and attaching soldiers from the USAR detachments to the 6th and 9th POBs. The meeting broke, but LTCs Noll, Jones, and Devlin (visiting from Cairo) reconvened for dinner that night, where Noll learned that

Saudi Arabia had 'green lit' the U.S. PSYOP plan (though further host nation approval would not be needed once combat began).⁴⁸ Having met with the 800th MP Brigade, 8th POTF, and 4th POG/JPOG leadership, the 13th POB was ready to get to work.

The final aspect of USAR PSYOP deployments was the assignment of a standalone, six-man USAR PSYOP team from the 306th POC from Los Alamitos, California, to assist the U.S. Information Service (USIS) with operating a VOA transmitter in Bahrain.⁴⁹ On 18 December, the U.S. and Bahrain had agreed to emplace a radio station for VOA broadcasts. Ten days later, the JCS issued orders for this team to deploy for 45 days to get the VOA station operational no later than 14 January 1991.⁵⁰ The plan was for the Government of Bahrain to furnish the site and USIS to furnish the Transportable AM Transmitter – 50 kw (TAMT-50). Meanwhile, the DoD would furnish the remaining equipment (including the antenna, shelters, two 200 kw generator sets, repair parts, and manuals), and handle transport, installation, and training. Soldiers from the 1199th Signal Battalion, who had helped construct radio antennas elsewhere, would do the same in Bahrain.

Around the New Year, the requirement changed from USACAPOC completing USIS's TAMT-50 to the 306th POC deploying its own AN/TRT-22 system. The

306th POC would transport this heavy equipment about 400 miles away to Travis AFB, California. On 5 January 1991, the AR/TRT-22 and 200 kw generator left on board a C-141, later arriving at McGuire AFB. From there, it moved to Torrejón, Spain, then to KFIA, and finally to Bahrain.⁵¹ Before leaving the States, the PSYOP team got separated from its equipment. According to the 7th POG, the 306th's senior command, "During load procedures . . . it was discovered that there was not sufficient space for the [equipment] and the [soldiers]. The Air Force solution was to send [them] on another plane tomorrow, but this plane lands 60 miles away across the border." The 7th POG argued, "It is imperative that the [soldiers] land with the [equipment]."⁵² However, this was not possible due to airflow schedules. As a workaround solution, USACAPOC and USASOC arranged to fly the team into KFIA, and have them moved to Bahrain by ground.⁵³ Arriving by 8 January, the team proceeded to Bahrain to get the VOA station operational.

Conclusion

The process of deploying active-duty and USAR PSYOP units, personnel, and equipment in support of Operation DESERT SHIELD/DESERT STORM was complicated but ultimately successful. The initial wave of soldiers from the active-duty 4th POG, 8th POB, 9th POB, and PDB resulted in more than 400 personnel arriving in-country between late August and mid-October 1990. The mobilization and deployment of some 200 additional soldiers from the active-duty 6th POB and USAR 13th POB and 18th, 19th, 244th, 245th, and 362nd POCs took another three months. On the eve of war in mid-January 1991, the disposition of PSYOP forces in theater was as follows:

- The JPOG, 8th POTF, and Combined PSYOP Cell in Riyadh
- PDB headquarters and print elements at KFIA
- PDB teams manning TAMT-10 and PAMDIS transmitters in Al

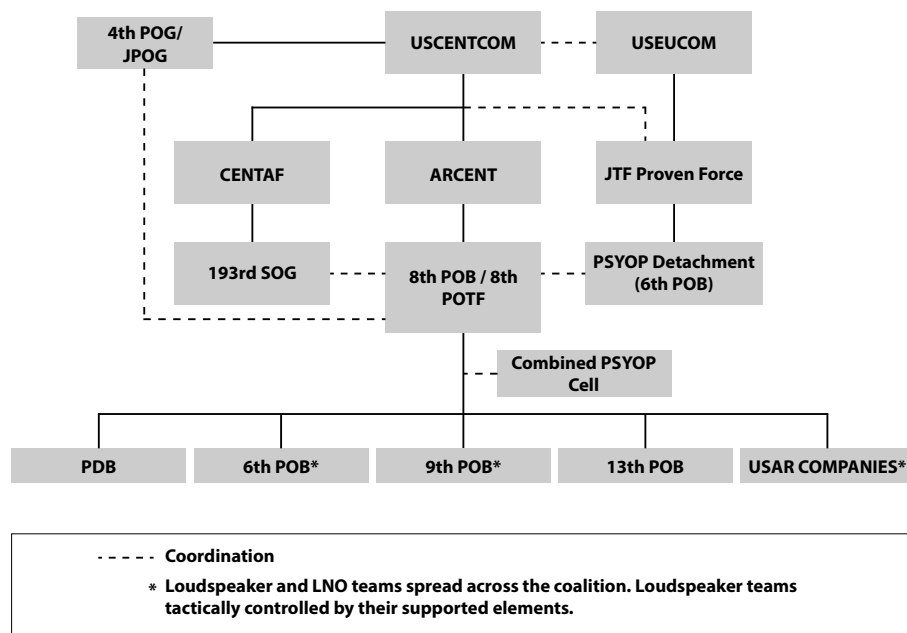
- Qaisumah and an AN/TRT-22 on Abu Ali Island
- Two EC-130 VOLANT SOLO from the 193rd SOG based at KFIA
- Approximately seventy loudspeaker teams from the 6th and 9th POBs and 18th, 19th, 244th, 245th, and 362nd POCs, plus LNO teams, spread across the coalition
- 13th POB (-) headquarters at Al-Khobar, ready to deploy camp teams
- A six-man team from the 306th POC in Bahrain supporting USIS/VOA
- A 17-man detachment from 6th POB attached to JTF Proven Force at Incirlik AFB, Turkey

It was this force that made such enormous and visible contributions to the U.S.-coalition victory in Operation DESERT STORM.

Several lessons emerged from these PSYOP deployments between August 1990 and January 1991. First, it was clear that the initial PSYOP presence would not suffice for a three corps-sized coalition in DESERT SHIELD/STORM. Rapidly deploying additional forces and equipment required significant effort and improvisation. Second, and related, USAR PSYOP mobilizations took time and might have fallen flat had the right people not been selected for deployment. Third, the dearth of Arabic speakers, and unavailability or unserviceability of equipment, forced an overreliance on host-nation assets early on. Finally, nearly one-third of the PSYOP force arrived in Saudi Arabia just before Operation DESERT STORM began. Obviously, scattering more than 200 jet-lagged soldiers, half of them reservists, across the coalition immediately prior to combat operations, and attaching most of them to units that they had likely never met before, was not ideal.

Still, there were number of positives. First, PSYOP had a running start when the U.S. initially responded to the Iraqi invasion. For example, the 4th POG, 8th, 9th, and 6th POBs, and the 193rd SOG had just recently supported Operation JUST CAUSE in Panama. Further, 8th POB soldiers had traveled on temporary duty (TDY) to USCENTCOM prior to the invasion, giving them first-hand familiarity with


Organization of PSYOP Forces in Operations DESERT SHIELD/DESERT STORM



the region.⁵⁴ Second, although USAR PSYOP mobilizations were rocky, those units had adequate advance notice, giving them ample time to plan, prepare, procure or repair equipment, and select the best soldiers for the mission.

Third, while many units arrived in theater at the last minute, PSYOP was nonetheless able to get its LNOs and loudspeaker teams integrated across the coalition in a quick and efficient manner. Finally, according to Dunbar, “The command and control relationships were exactly the way they should have been,” due to the fact that “PSYOP operates across the entire breadth and depth of the battlefield.”⁵⁵ In addition, the relationships within the

POTF were cordial and effective. LTC Kelliher called it a “coalition of equals,” with no commanders vying for supremacy and all of them supporting each other.⁵⁶ These positive relationships would prove essential when U.S. Army PSYOP set out to wage what became one of its most well-known and effective campaigns: Operation DESERT STORM.

Acknowledgments: The author would like to thank COL (ret.) James A. Treadwell, LTC (ret.) James P. Kelliher, and Mr. Douglas P. Elwell for their assistance to this article. 

TAKEAWAYS:

1 More than 400 soldiers from active-duty PSYOP units deployed to the theater of operations between August and October 1990; they were joined by roughly another 200 soldiers, many from USAR PSYOP units, in January 1991.

2 PSYOP units were assigned to the 8th POTF and would follow the same themes set forth in the overarching PSYOP plan; however, due to the unique mission sets (including radio, loudspeaker, print, and EPW operations) and the need to support units across the coalition, the PSYOP campaign itself would be executed in a decentralized manner.

3 Between frequent pre-war 8th POB TDYs to USCENCOM; 13th POB field training with the 800th MP Brigade at Fort A.P. Hill in mid-1990; and the recent combat mission in Panama (1989-1990), many PSYOP leaders and soldiers were well-prepared when it came time for Operations DESERT SHIELD/DESERT STORM.

ENDNOTES

- 1 USASOC, “Significant Activities/Events to Date,” n.d., Folder 104, Box 3-2B, USASOC History Office, Fort Bragg, NC; USASOC, “SOF Deployment Status – 181330ZSEP90,” n.d., Folder 101, Box 3-2B, USASOC History Office, Fort Bragg, NC, hereafter “SOF Deployment Status – 181330ZSEP90”; USASOC, “General Situation,” 12 September 1990, Folder 101, Box 3-2B, USASOC History Office, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 2 CDR, 4th POG, “SUBJECT: Informal PSYOP Update 10 Aug – 14 Sep 1990,” 14 September 1990, Folder 101, Box 3-2B, USASOC History Office, Fort Bragg, NC, hereafter “Informal PSYOP Update 10 Aug – 14 Sep 1990.”
- 3 LTC (ret.) James P. Kelliher, interview with Jared M. Tracy, 30 March 2021, USASOC History Office, Fort Bragg, NC, hereafter Kelliher interview, 30 March 2021.
- 4 Kelliher interview, 30 March 2021.
- 5 Kelliher interview, 30 March 2021.
- 6 “Informal PSYOP Update 10 Aug – 14 Sep 1990”; USSOCOM, *Psychological Operations During Desert Shield/Storm: A Post-Operational Analysis* (MacDill AFB, FL: USSOCOM, 1993), 3-6; USASOC, “General Situation,” 3 October 1990, Folder 102, Box 3-2B, USASOC History Office, Fort Bragg, NC; USASOC, “DESERT SHIELD Synopsis 070600R – 080600R OCT 90,” n.d., Folder 102, Box 3-2B, USASOC History Office, Fort Bragg, NC. *See also*, USASOC, “DESERT SHIELD Synopsis 220600R – 230600R OCT 90,” n.d., Folder 102, Box 3-2B, USASOC History Office, Fort Bragg, NC; CG, USARCENT to USCINCCENT, “SUBJECT: PSYOP Report No. 44 as of 210900Z OCT 90,” 21 October 1990, Folder 102, Box 3-2B, USASOC History Office, Fort Bragg, NC. *There were 10 soldiers at USCENCOM; 254 assigned to U.S. Army, Central (USARCENT) (98 in Riyadh, 156 at KFIA); 130 at XVIII Abn Corps (116 from 9th POB, 14 from 6th POB); and 20 supporting Special Operations Command, Central (SOCCENT).*
- 7 COL (ret.) James A. Treadwell, interview with Jared M. Tracy, 25 February 2021, USASOC History Office, Fort Bragg, NC, hereafter Treadwell interview, 25 February 2021.
- 8 Treadwell interview, 25 February 2021.
- 9 PDB, “Printing Operations,” n.d., copy in USASOC History Office, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 10 PDB, “Printing Operations.”
- 11 *Psychological Operations During Desert Shield/Storm: A Post-Operational Analysis*, 1-C-3; “Daily PSYOP Activities Report: Period Covered: 260001 to 262400C DEC 90,” 27 December 1990, Folder 958, Box ADA-1, USASOC History Office, Fort Bragg, NC; 4th POG, *Leaflets of the Persian Gulf War* (Fort Bragg, NC: 4th POG, 1991), 13; “Daily PSYOP Activities Report: Period Covered: 030001 to 032400C JAN 91,” n.d., Folder 958, Box ADA-1, USASOC History Office, Fort Bragg, NC; “Daily PSYOP Activities Report: Period Covered: 290001 to 292400C DEC 90,” n.d., Folder 958, Box ADA-1, USASOC History Office, Fort Bragg, NC; “Daily PSYOP Activities Report: Period Covered: 030001 to 032400C JAN 91,” n.d., Folder 958, Box ADA-1, USASOC History Office, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 12 CG, USARCENT to USCINCCENT, “SUBJECT: Request for Immediate Deployment of the TV-T5 Mobile TV System,” 19 October 1990, Folder 102, Box 3-2B, USASOC History Office, Fort Bragg, NC; USASOC, “General Situation,” 28 October 1990, Folder 102, Box 3-2B, USASOC History Office, Fort Bragg, NC; USASOC, “DESERT SHIELD Synopsis 010600R – 020600R NOV 90,” n.d., Folder 103, Box 3-2B, USASOC History Office, Fort Bragg, NC. *The TV-T5 had been in the original Time-Phase Force Deployment Document (TPFDD), but shipment was delayed due to modifications.*
- 13 Douglas P. Elwell, interview with Jared M. Tracy, 12 January 2022, USASOC History Office, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 14 USASOC, “DESERT SHIELD Synopsis, 050600R – 060600R DEC 90,” n.d., Folder 104, Box 3-2B, USASOC History Office, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 15 USASOC, “DESERT SHIELD Synopsis, 120600R – 130600R SEP 90,” n.d., Folder 101, Box 3-2B, USASOC History Office, Fort Bragg, NC; USASOC, “DESERT SHIELD Synopsis, 100600R – 110600R DEC 90,” n.d., Folder 104, Box 3-2B, USASOC History Office, Fort Bragg, NC; CG, USACAPOC to CDRs, 5th POG, 7th POG, and 321st CA Group, “Equipment Requirement,”

- 22 December 1990, Folder 104, Box 3-2B, USASOC History Office, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 16 Jeffrey B. Jones and Jack N. Summe, "Psychological Operations in DESERT SHIELD, DESERT STORM, and URBAN FREEDOM," *Institute of Land Warfare: Landpower Essay Series*, No. 97-3 (August 1997): 5; *Leaflets of the Persian Gulf War*, 13; and "Daily PSYOP Activities Report: Period Covered: 220001 to 222400C DEC 90," 23 December 1990, "Daily PSYOP Activities Report: Period Covered: 240001 to 242400C DEC 90," n.d., "Daily PSYOP Activities Report: Period Covered: 260001 to 262400C DEC 90," 27 December 1990, "Daily PSYOP Activities Report: Period Covered: 290001 to 292400C DEC 90," n.d., "Daily PSYOP Activities Report: Period Covered: 030001 to 032400C JAN 91," n.d., "Daily PSYOP Activities Report: Period Covered: 080001C to 082400C JAN 91," n.d., and "Daily PSYOP Activities Report: Period Covered: 260001 to 262400C DEC 90," 27 December 1990, all in Folder 958, Box ADA-1, USASOC History Office, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 17 See daily reports in Folder 958, Box ADA-1, USASOC History Office, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 18 COL (ret.) Anthony H. Normand, interview with Richard D. Stewart, 10 October 1991, Folder 957, Box ADA-1, USASOC History Office, Fort Bragg, NC, hereafter Normand interview, 10 October 1991.
- 19 Institute for National Strategic Studies, National Defense University, *PSYOP at War: The Management of Strategic Information in Panama and the Persian Gulf* (Washington, DC: NDU, 1993), 15.
- 20 ARCENT to CINCCENT, "SUBJECT: Deployment of Additional PSYOP Support," 30 November 1990, and "SUBJECT: Deployment of Additional PSYOP Support," 1 December 1990, both in Folder 959, Box ADA-1, USASOC History Office, Fort Bragg, NC; USASOC, "DESERT SHIELD Synopsis, 060600R - 070600R," n.d., Folder 104, Box 3-2B, USASOC History Office, Fort Bragg, NC; USCINCCENT to Joint Staff, "SUBJECT: Request for Additional Forces Operation DESERT SHIELD," 8 December 1990, Folder 244, Box 3-3B, USASOC History Office, Fort Bragg, NC; CDR, 4th POG to CG, USASOC, "SUBJECT: Request for Equipment in Excess of LTOE," 6 December 1990, Folder 104, Box 3-2B, USASOC History Office, Fort Bragg, NC; USASOC, "DESERT SHIELD Synopsis, 190600R - 200600R DEC 90," n.d., Folder 104, Box 3-2B, USASOC History Office, Fort Bragg, NC. **The 4th POG submitted its request for USASOC approval to deploy additional soldiers and equipment, including 26 vehicles, on 6 December 1990.**
- 21 CJCS to USCINCCENT, "SUBJECT: Deployment Order for Additional PSYOP Units for Operation DESERT SHIELD," 20 December 1990, Folder 959, Box ADA-1, USASOC History Office, Fort Bragg, NC, hereafter "Deployment Order for Additional PSYOP Units," 20 December 1990; 90th ARCOM to 97th and 120th ARCOM, "SUBJECT: Admin/Log Order 4," 24 December 1990, Folder 959, Box ADA-1, USASOC History Office, Fort Bragg, NC; memorandum for CG, USASOC, "SUBJECT: PSYOP Unit PAX and Equipment Information," 20 December 1990, Folder 959, Box ADA-1, USASOC History Office, Fort Bragg, NC. **Breakdown of USAR personnel in each unit in OPLAN 03-91 and in various USAR PSYOP deployment rosters in Folder 959, Box ADA-1, USASOC History Office, Fort Bragg, NC. There is conflicting data whether 6th POB deployed with 96 or 92 personnel; regardless, it was nearly 100.**
- 22 *Psychological Operations During Desert Shield/Storm: A Post-Operational Analysis*, 1-C-3; "SOF Deployment Status - 181330ZSEP90."
- 23 Richard W. Stewart, Information Paper, "VOLANT SOLO and DESERT STORM," n.d., 1-2, Folder 960, Box ADA-1, USASOC History Office, Fort Bragg, NC, hereafter "VOLANT SOLO and DESERT STORM."
- 24 COL James P. Noll, "The 13th Psychological Operations Battalion (EPW) during Mobilization, DESERT SHIELD/DESERT STORM, and Demobilization" (Carlisle, PA: U.S. Army War College, 1993), 2-3.
- 25 "The 13th Psychological Operations Battalion (EPW)," 2-3.
- 26 "The 13th Psychological Operations Battalion (EPW)," 1-2.
- 27 USASOC to USSOCOM, "SUBJECT: Psychological Operations Support to DESERT SHIELD," 18 August 1990, Folder 963, Box ADA-1, USASOC History Office, Fort Bragg, NC. **See also**, CG, USASOC to USCINCSOC, "SUBJECT: Sustainment of ARSOF in Protracted DESERT SHIELD Operations," 8 October 1990, 5, Folder 955, Box ADA-1, USASOC History Office, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 28 USASOC, "DESERT SHIELD Synopsis, 160600 - 170600R SEP 90," n.d., Folder 101, Box 3-2B, USASOC History Office, Fort Bragg, NC, hereafter "SOF Deployment Status - 181330ZSEP90."
- 29 HQ, 13th PSYOP Battalion, "ANNEX _____ (Psychological Operations) to Operation Order No _____," 15 October 1990, Folder 244, Box 3-3B, USASOC History Office, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 30 HQ, 13th PSYOP Battalion, "ANNEX _____ (Psychological Operations) to Operation Order No _____," 15; 13th PSYOP Battalion, "Briefing Paper," n.d., Folder 244, Box 3-3B, USASOC History Office, Fort Bragg, NC; 4th POG, Capabilities Handbook (Fort Bragg, NC: 1993), 16-17, 46-47; "The 13th Psychological Operations Battalion (EPW)," 4. **The 13th POB also owned a modular printing system, but it did not deploy with it.**
- 31 USARSOC to USASOC, "SUBJECT: PSYOP Loudspeaker Teams," 1 December 1990, Folder 959, Box ADA-1, USASOC History Office, Fort Bragg, NC. **USACAPOC observed in Lessons learned that "The CENTCOM-oriented USAR Civil Affairs and PSYOP units have very few personnel knowledgeable in KTO area languages and cultures." See USACAPOC, "DESERT STORM Observations [Languages]," n.d., Folder 235, Box 3-3B, USASOC History Office, Fort Bragg, NC. For the 13th POB, see "The 13th Psychological Operations Battalion (EPW)," 5-6. **For the need to activate USAR units to backfill active-duty PSYOP units for other contingency operations, see USSOCOM, no subject, 21 February 1991, Folder 240, Box 3-3B, USASOC****
- History Office, Fort Bragg, NC; USACAPOC, "DESERT STORM Observations [Mobilizations of USAR SOF Forces]," n.d., Folder 235, Box 3-3B, USASOC History Office, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 32 "The 13th Psychological Operations Battalion (EPW)," 9.
- 33 "The 13th Psychological Operations Battalion (EPW)," 9-11.
- 34 **The DUICs were as follows: 13th POB 5-man ADVON (WTLWA1); 13th POB 27-man main body (WTLWA2); 18th POC (WTMAA1); 19th POC (WTMDA1); 244th POC (WTMBA1); 245th POC (WTMCA1); and 362nd POC (WSQWA1). The purpose of a DUIC is to 'carve out' a subordinate (or derivative) unit from a parent unit in cases when the entire parent unit is not needed, particularly for deployment. See Cain E. Roberts, "Force Registration and Role of the Unit Identification Code Information Officer (UICIO)," 7 November 2017, <https://www.dvidshub.net/news/printable/254393>.**
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- 36 USACAPOC to 2nd POG et al., "SUBJECT: USACAPOC OPLAN 03-91," 17 December 1990, Folder 959, Box ADA-1, USASOC History Office, Fort Bragg, NC, hereafter OPLAN 03-91.
- 37 USASOC to USACAPOC, "SUBJECT: Alert Order—Select PSYOP Units," 21 December 1990, Folder 959, Box ADA-1, USASOC History Office, Fort Bragg, NC.
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- 39 "The 13th Psychological Operations Battalion (EPW)," 11.
- 40 USACAPOC, "DESERT STORM Observations [USAR Mobilization]," n.d., Folder 235, Box 3-35, USASOC History Office, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 41 "The 13th Psychological Operations Battalion (EPW)," 6-9.
- 42 "The 13th Psychological Operations Battalion (EPW)," 12, 14-16.
- 43 "The 13th Psychological Operations Battalion (EPW)," 16-17.
- 44 "The 13th Psychological Operations Battalion (EPW)," 16-20, 22.
- 45 "The 13th Psychological Operations Battalion (EPW)," 21-25.
- 46 Deployment Reports for 19th POC, 12 January 1991, 244th POC, 12 January 1991, and 245th POC, 12 January 1991, all in Folder 959, Box ADA-1, USASOC History Office, Fort Bragg, NC; deployment Reports for 18th POC, 13 January 1991, and 362nd POC, 13 January 1991, both in Folder 959, Box ADA-1, USASOC History Office, Fort Bragg, NC; USACAPOC, "DESERT STORM Observations [Insufficient Communication]," n.d., Folder 235, Box 3-3B, USASOC History Office, Fort Bragg, NC; USACAPOC, "DESERT SHIELD Observation Sheet [USACAPOC Contact with Deployed Units]," n.d., USASOC History Office, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 47 "The 13th Psychological Operations Battalion (EPW)," 25-26.
- 48 "The 13th Psychological Operations Battalion (EPW)," 27-29.
- 49 "DoD/VOA Requirements List for Bahrain Medium-Wave Radio Relay Station in Support of Desert Shield," n.d., Folder 283, Box 3-4A, USASOC History Office, Fort Bragg, NC; USACAPOC to CG, PERSCOM, "SUBJECT: Conversion of Voice of America Desert Shield ADSW to TTD," 9 January 1991, Folder 283, Box 3-4A, USASOC History Office, Fort Bragg, NC. **The team consisted of MAJ James A. Stronach, CW2 Donald L. Urista, SGT Harold A. Ford, and Specialists (SPCs) Everett B. Cooley, Matthew M. Martin, and Theodore A. Vagenas.**
- 50 *Psychological Operations During Desert Shield/Storm: A Post-Operational Analysis*, 1-C-5; CJCS to HQDA et al., "SUBJECT: Deployment Order in Support of Voice of America," 28 December 1990, Folder 283, Box 3-4A, USASOC History Office, Fort Bragg, NC; USCINCSOC to CG, USASOC, "SUBJECT: Deployment Order in Support of Voice of America," 30 December 1990, Folder 283, Box 3-4A, USASOC History Office, Fort Bragg, NC, and HQDA to CG, USASOC, "SUBJECT: Assembly and Training Support to VOA-Bahrain," 28 December 1990, Folder 283, Box 3-4A, USASOC History Office, Fort Bragg, NC.
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53 Conversation Record, "SUBJECT: Update on VOA Equipment/PAX," 5 January 1991, Folder 283, Box 3-4A, USASOC History Office, Fort Bragg, NC; Conversation Record, "SUBJECT: VOA Equip & PAX," 5 January 1991, Folder 283, Box 3-4A, USASOC History Office, Fort Bragg, NC.

54 "PSYOP in DESERT SHIELD, DESERT STORM, and URBAN FREEDOM," 9.

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56 Kelliher interview, 30 March 2021.





SILENT EAGLE

Strengthening the U.S. - Japan Partnership
by Troy J. Saquey

2011

Abstract: Coming out of the devastation of WWII, Japan reluctantly established a security force capable of protecting the island nation from external threats. Since 2004, the Japanese Special Forces Group has embraced that mission set and its skills have been enhanced through regular combined training exercises with U.S. Army Special Operations Forces. Exercises like SILENT EAGLE have proven critically important to improving ties and interoperability between U.S. and Japanese forces.

A balmy September Hawaiian day at sea level turned chilly as a CH-47 Chinook from the 25th Infantry Division's Combat Aviation Brigade (CAB) ascended rapidly to 12,900 feet.¹ Land slipped away as the helicopter flew several miles out over the Pacific. Given a two-minute warning, more than a dozen soldiers from the Japanese Special Forces Group (SFGp) stood up in preparation for their exit. Thirty seconds out, the two U.S. Special Forces (SF) jumpmasters conducted a final check and directed the parachutists towards the ramp at the back of the aircraft. Then, accompanied by the two SF instructors, the SFGp members exited. At 4,000 feet they deployed their main parachutes to glide back to the Drop Zone (DZ) on Marine Corps Base Hawaii (MCBH) at Kaneohe Bay on Oahu, Hawaii. This Military Freefall (MFF) jump, the final one conducted in the exercise, represented a rare opportunity for the Japanese and a highlight of Exercise SILENT EAGLE 2011, a bilateral exercise between the U.S. Army 1st Special Forces Group (SFG) and the SFGp from 19 August to 15 September 2011.

[A name followed by a * indicates a pseudonym and Japanese soldiers are only identified by initials.]

This article explains the SFGp, its mission, and its partnership with 1st SFG in SILENT EAGLE, specifically the 2011 iteration. That bilateral exercise highlighted a critical SF mission: training and improving interoperability with foreign military forces.² The U.S. relationship with the Japanese is particularly important because it is one of its most capable Pacific allies. However, to understand the depth of that relationship and the purpose of the Japanese Self Defense Force (JSDF), one must go back to Japan's defeat in World War II.

Following their 1945 victory, the Allies prohibited Japan from maintaining a military force. The post-war occupation ended in 1952, but by then the security environment had drastically changed. With the U.S. engaged in the Korean War, the Japanese felt defenseless against territorial threats posed by the Soviet Union and created the JSDF in 1954, which has existed ever since. As of 2022, its roughly 250,000 personnel handle internal threats, respond to national disasters, and defend sovereign territory.³



TOP: The 25th Infantry Division provided the CH-47s that SILENT EAGLE 2011 used for its HALO jumps. This helicopter is arriving for the culminating exercise. **BOTTOM:** Fully-kitted members of the Japanese Military Freefall team await as the 25th ID CH-47 ascends to nearly 13,000 feet for the last HALO jump of SILENT EAGLE 2011.



TOP: Marine Corps Base Hawaii from nearly 13,000 feet. The jumpers glided over the ocean to land near the airfield. **BOTTOM:** The legs of the SF soldier barely show as he parachutes out of the CH-47 after having served as the jumpmaster for the Japanese contingent.

From its founding, the JSDF was not a traditional military force. World War II left many Japanese citizens strongly opposed to war. The Japanese government codified that pacifist mentality in Article 9 of the 1947 Japanese Constitution, which forbade war as an instrument of foreign policy. It also prevented the nation from maintaining offensive military forces. In fact, only in July 2014 did Japan authorize deploying its military forces overseas to defend allies in the case of a declaration of war. Japan does maintain a robust defensive capability. The Army is the JSDF's largest element, and the SFGp is its most elite unit and foremost counter-terrorism force.⁴

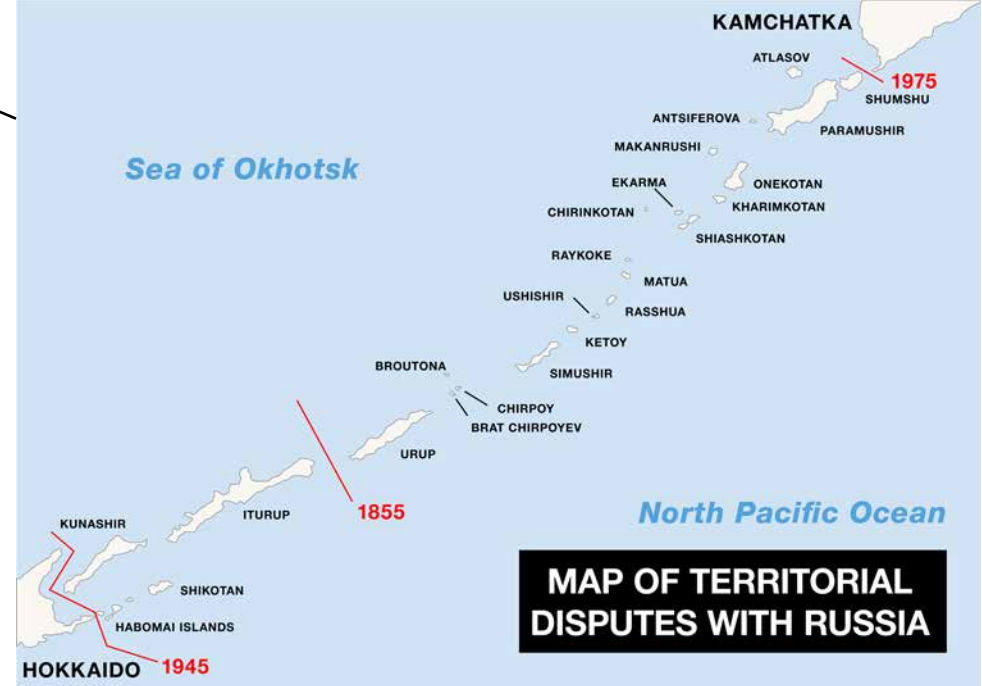
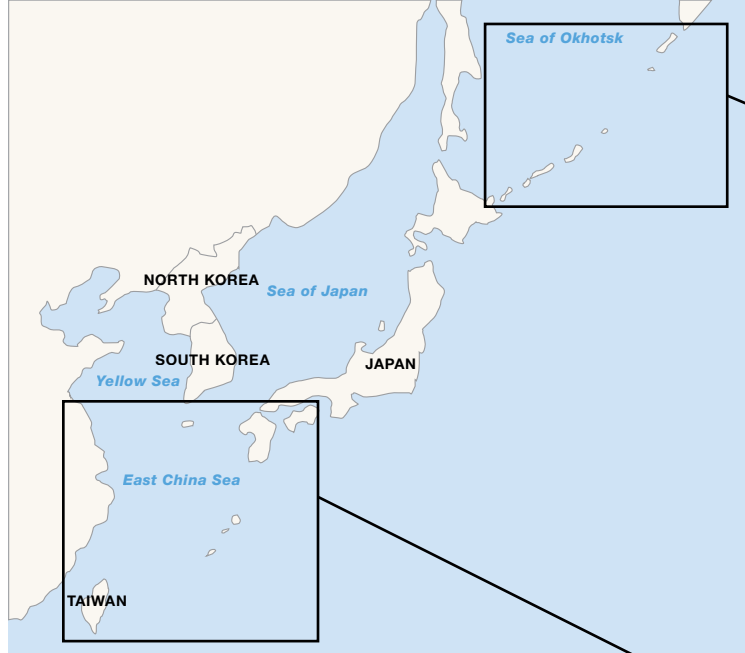
SFGp members are required to be airborne qualified, according to Colonel S.H., the SFGp commander.⁵ Therefore, the majority of SFGp candidates came from the Japanese 1st Airborne Brigade, collocated at Camp Narashino in Chiba Prefecture. The SFGp mod-

eled its difficult selection criteria on the U.S. Army Special Forces Qualification Course (SFQC). Much of their program of instruction came from SFGp members who were SFQC graduates, explained SFGp Captain (CPT) Y.H., who completed the course in 2004.⁶

Commanded by a colonel, the SFGp generally consists of a headquarters, three companies, and several smaller components. Organizationally, the SFGp is a component of the Central Readiness Force (CRF), whose mission is to address "international peace cooperation activities and diverse domestic contingencies," including disaster relief, evacuation of Japanese nationals, anti-piracy, and combating attacks or guerrilla activities in Japan by foreign powers.⁷ Even in 2022, the latter mission remains a special concern for Japan, which has long-standing territorial disputes with neighboring countries. Two of these disputes have taken precedence.

Organization of the Central Readiness Force (CRF)



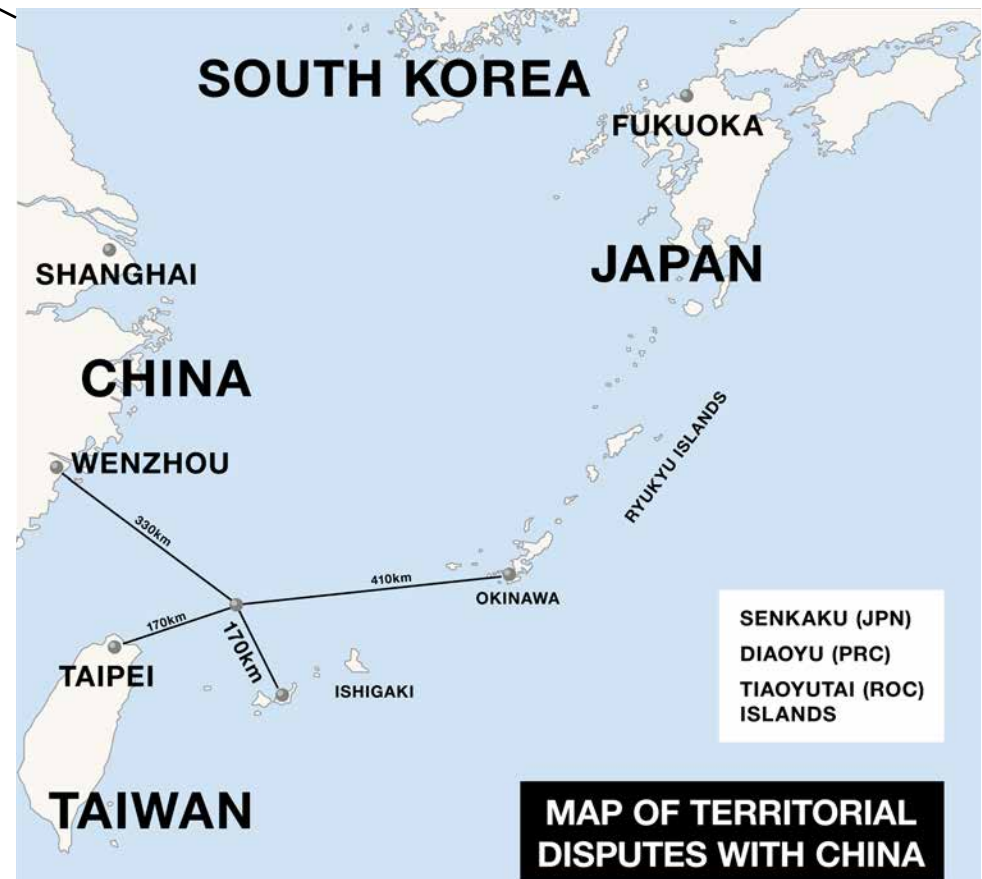


The first dispute centers on the Kuril Islands to the north of Japan. In the last days of World War II, the Soviet Union declared war on Japan and occupied the Kuril Islands, including the four southernmost islands of Etorofu, Kunashiri, Shikotan, and the Habomai islands. Moscow has since governed the islands as sovereign Russian territory despite Japan's protests that they were illegally annexed. Because of the dispute, Japan and Russia have never signed a peace treaty formally ending WWII, although they have periodically conducted talks regarding the islands.⁸

The second territorial dispute concerns the Senkaku Islands at the southern terminus of the Ryukyu chain. The surrounding economic zone has rich fishing grounds and potential oil reserves. Japan formally annexed the islands in 1895, but China and South

Korea have also claimed ownership. Despite protests from China, Tokyo purchased the islands outright from private Japanese owners on 11 September 1912. The Chinese continue to protest the purchase and regularly send military aircraft and naval forces near the islands to contest Japanese sovereignty.

Japan considers these two territorial disputes among its greatest security threats. Accordingly, the Japanese Army staff chose Oahu for SILENT EAGLE 2011 because it replicated an environment similar to what the SFGp would experience if it had to repel an invading enemy force from a disputed island.⁹ Therefore, approximately 40 SFGp members arrived on Oahu to learn skills that they could in turn impart to the rest of the unit.¹⁰ An Operational Detachment Alpha (ODA) from Company A of the then-provisional



4th Battalion, 1st SFG, hosted the exercise.

The MFF-qualified team was well-suited to conduct SILENT EAGLE 2011.¹¹ The Operations Sergeant, Master Sergeant (MSG) Roger H. McSweep*, said that many of the detachment's soldiers entered SF through the 18X (X-Ray) program and were younger than the SFGp soldiers that they were going to train with. However, "they have been in a while . . . all [but one] has a CENTCOM [U.S. Central Command] deployment under their belt."¹² SFGp members later

commented that hearing the SF soldiers tell stories about their combat experiences was one of the best aspects of their training.¹³

The ODA's planning for SILENT EAGLE 2011 began in May 2011. "At first we thought that it would be canceled because of the [11 March 2011] tsunami, but the training just got pushed back," explained MSG McSweep*.¹⁴ The magnitude 9.0 Tōhoku earthquake and subsequent tsunami had killed more than 20,000 Japanese and caused extensive damage. De-

spite the disaster, the SFGp pushed to continue with the training. They especially sought additional training in MFF operations and long-distance shooting techniques. The ODA had to prepare training events for both skill sets.

Prior to SILENT EAGLE 2011, the detachment spent three days refreshing their long-range shooting skills.¹⁵ Then, the entire team underwent intensive MFF training at the Yuma Proving Ground, Arizona. To cap it off, the ODA conducted a MFF jump from

On 11 March 2011 a 9.1 earthquake rocked Japan and the resulting tsunami flooded coastal areas. The loss of life and property meant that 1st SFG did not know if SILENT EAGLE 2011 would be canceled.



a C-17 upon their arrival in Hawaii. “It was the best jump I have ever had . . . When the ramp opened up, all I [saw were] the beautiful Hawaiian Islands,” exclaimed Sergeant First Class (SFC) Bill J. Macks*, the Team Intelligence Sergeant (18F).¹⁶

The ODA then conducted final preparations for the exercise by dividing into groups. Two experienced MFF jumpmasters would conduct that portion of the training. Another group would be the primary instructors for sniper and firearms training. Finally, the ODA ensured that it had enough personnel to facilitate all training phases. The ODA was already fully staffed with two Medical Sergeants (18D) to provide medical coverage, but also brought an additional 18D to cover all the training events.¹⁷ The detachment also brought two riggers (one for MFF and one for the reserve parachutes) to inspect parachutes for the team and for the SFGp.¹⁸

The ODA organized the training into three segments: advanced marksmanship, MFF operations; and a culminating exercise to evaluate how well the participants employed the skills that they learned. These training segments dictated how the SFGp personnel organized. The SFGp divided themselves into two main operations sections, a MFF team and a ground team, each

with about ten men. The rest performed supporting command and control and administrative functions. With those preparations done, the SFGp members arrived. As a prelude to the training, the ODA and the SFGp broke the ice by hosting a barbecue. SILENT EAGLE 2011 kicked off early the next morning with firearms training.

Advanced firearms training was particularly important to the SFGp, because it does not have rifle ranges greater than 300 meters and noise restrictions limit the amount of shooting practice. To maximize training, the ODA soldiers coordinated range safety with U.S. Marine Corps Range Control. The impact area of the rifle range was in restricted open water, and range control personnel monitored water traffic to make sure that all boats stayed out of the impact area. The SF team also provided spotters that were posted at both sides of the range. “If a boat drifted in [the impact area] we had to radio that in.” Such an occurrence stopped the firing until the boat left the area, explained rigger Sergeant (SGT) James K. Guinness*.¹⁹

The instruction included advanced sniper training.²⁰ The group climbed high ridges bordering the range, where the SF instructors utilized Mk 17 Special Operations Forces Combat Assault Rifle (SCAR) and M110



TOP RIGHT: In order to get better acquainted prior to training, the ODA and SFGp hosted a cookout. Training began the next day.

BOTTOM: The ODA instructed the SFGp in sniper techniques. Here, a Japanese shooter uses the M24 Sniper Weapons System while another calls out hits with a spotting scope.



rifles to show their Japanese counterparts how to engage long-distance targets from a steep angle. Using their 7.62mm M24 sniper rifles, the SFGp practiced high-angle precision shots in excess of 400 meters (more than 1,300 feet). The Japanese shooters fondly recalled this as a training highlight.

The SFGp also trained in close quarters battle (CQB) tactics; because they were already proficient, the Japanese operators excelled. American Special Forces Weapons Sergeant Staff Sergeant (SSG) Thomas Sofa* said that the SFGp “knew their stuff. Their [Standard Operating Procedures] are

similar to ours . . . but they would ask for opinions like ‘what would we do different?’”²¹ SSG Wilson S. Segar*, the Junior Engineer Sergeant, commented that the SFGp “shot group was so tight we had to constantly move targets around” lest they punch holes in the wall.²² ODA leader CPT Anderson H. Dow* summed up this aspect of the training with a compliment, saying: “these guys are phenomenal shooters.”²³

Providing the SFGp with the desired MFF training proved to be harder than the ODA originally thought. CPT Dow* explained that the Japanese desired the training



TOP: The ODA used their Mk 17 Special Operations Forces Combat Assault Rifle (SCAR) and M110 rifles to demonstrate plunging fire techniques. The Japanese shooters considered this a highlight because they do not have such training facilities. **BOTTOM:** The Japanese excelled at Close Quarter Combat training. This is because the SFGp can easily practice this type of training.



because “their version of [Federal Aviation Administration restrictions] is even stricter than our own.”²⁴ The height of a MFF jump required air traffic within a large area to be suspended to prevent accidental collisions. Because of Japan’s dense population and high-volume flight corridors, halting air traffic for training jumps was nearly impossible, leaving few training opportunities. Ironically, the ODA also found MFF training in Hawaii difficult for similar reasons.

First, the ODA coordinated with the FAA for airspace usage. In planning, the SFGp had requested MFF jumps from 25,000 feet. The ODA agreed because jumping from that height is routinely done on various U.S. military bases, which also happened to be far from commercial air traffic. However, like Japan, Oahu had heavy commercial air traffic. Each jump meant that the FAA had to halt all air traffic within the airspace for up to twenty minutes to eliminate the possibility of a mid-air collision. Fortunately, MSG McSweep* was a pilot-in-training and “could speak the FAA’s language,” said CPT Dow*.²⁵ “I was told that I was a godsend because I knew the issues and hurdles,” recalled MSG McSweep*.²⁶ The

FAA finally approved the mission schedule, but from then on, the ODA could only cancel jumps, not add new ones.²⁷ At that point, the ODA looked to secure aircraft.

The main obstacle was finding military aircraft that could support a jump from 25,000 feet. Flying at that altitude required that all jumpers, aircrew, and passengers utilize oxygen bottles and masks. The Coast Guard had previously agreed to provide a C-130, but at the last minute, the ODA discovered that it lacked onboard oxygen and was not rated to drop jumpers above 10,000 feet.²⁸ The ODA scrambled to line up suitable U.S. Air Force aircraft and crews. “We called every fixed wing group in the U.S. to get platforms, but it was always an issue of money and crew time,” MSG McSweep* explained.²⁹ The ODA feared that they might have to cut the MFF portion entirely.

Fortunately, the 25th Combat Aviation Brigade, based at Schofield Barracks, Hawaii, was preparing for a deployment. One of their pre-mission training requirements was proficiency working with Special Operations Forces. Therefore, the 25th CAB agreed to support SILENT EAGLE 2011 with their CH-47 Chinook helicopters,

BOTTOM LEFT: The SFGp MFF Team prepares for the HALO jump leading into the final exercise. They made the 13,000 foot jump from a 25th Infantry Division CH-47, landed at Marine Corps Base Hawaii, and then went by vehicle to the exercise area at Bellows Field.

BOTTOM RIGHT: To ensure that all the jumps were conducted as safely as possible, the ODA ensured that a rigger and medic were present on the landing field to relay information concerning the ground conditions and to handle any injuries.



even though the airframes could only accommodate jumps up to 13,000 feet above sea-level (ASL). Although disappointed, the Japanese also realized that the ODA had done everything it could do and agreed to the solution. Thirty jumps were planned, but ten had to be scrubbed. Still, the jumps dramatically added to the SFGp level of experience, said its MFF team leader CPT I.S.³⁰ The SFGp soon put both their MFF and ground teams to the test in a culminating exercise simulating an attack on a Japanese island by an unnamed aggressor force.

In the scenario, the enemy infiltrated by fishing boats and occupied a facility on the island. The SFGp countered the enemy force by having the MFF team make a night parachute insertion on the island. That team would then guide the SO team's infiltration by CH-47. Together, they would conduct a reconnaissance of the island that would help them plan for a course of action.³¹



One component of the SFGp set up a Tactical Operations Center in the back of a rented truck for the final exercise. There, the team practiced communicating with the ground elements.

BELLOWS FIELD



Named for Second Lieutenant Franklin Barney Bellows, an aviator killed in World War I, Bellows Field served as the location of the three-day culmination exercise. That location has its own historical connection to the Japanese military. During the attack on Pearl Harbor on 7 December 1941, Japanese aircraft strafed the airfield and destroyed several U.S. airplanes. In the days after the attack, a disabled Type A *Ko-hyoteki* Japanese midget submarine, *HA. 19*, washed ashore on the beach at Bellows Field. One of its two crew members, Ensign Kazuo Sakamaki, made it to shore and became the first Japanese prisoner of war captured by the United States during WWII.³²

TOP: Bellows Field is named after Second Lieutenant Franklin Barney Bellows, an Army aviator killed on 13 September 1918 in France during World War I. **RIGHT:** The Japanese destroyed numerous aircraft on Bellows Field as part of the attack on Pearl Harbor, such as this Curtiss P-40 Warhawk.

BOTTOM: *HA. 19* was one of five midget submarines that participated in the 7 December 1941 attack on Pearl Harbor. It washed ashore at Bellows Beach and is now displayed at the National Museum of the Pacific War, Fredericksburg, Texas.



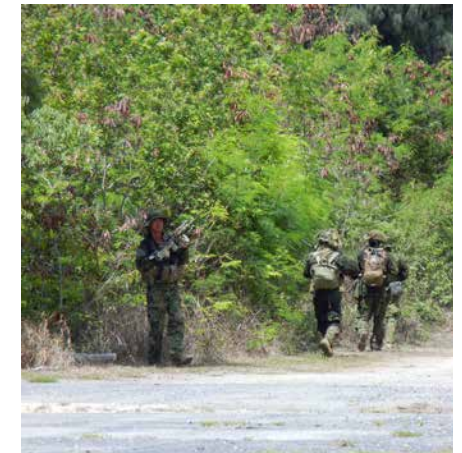


Due to the strict FAA schedule, the MFF Team made an evening jump on 12 September over Kaneohe Bay, then drove to Bellows Field to prepare for the helicopter insertion. Night vision goggles assisted the two teams in linking up. Together, they moved a couple of hundred yards into the brush to set up a patrol base from where they could conduct an area reconnaissance. The SFGp discovered that the enemy was located in an abandoned U.S. Air Force Nike missile facility.³³

To avoid confusion, the Japanese provided colorful uniforms to the American and Japanese role players acting as aggressors. We all “looked like Mario” from the Mario Brothers video game, said SGT Brady K.

O’Malley*.³⁴ From a concealed location several hundred yards away, the SFGp personnel and ODA members surveilled the target, noted the number of enemy personnel, and observed activities. Additionally, the enemy force conducted vehicle patrols every three hours. From under cover, the SFGp took photos to ascertain the number of enemy personnel.³⁵ The SFGp gathered enough information to plan an attack to capture the facility.

At 0300 hours, wearing night vision goggles, the combined force crept up



LEFT: One of the SFGp Team Members prepares to board the CH-47 that will infiltrate them at Bellows Field. **MIDDLE:** Once the two teams linked up, they established a hide site. From there, they conducted patrols to determine the location and size of the ‘enemy’ force. **RIGHT:** The patrols determined that the ‘enemy’ force had taken over an abandoned Nike Missile compound. They then planned for how to assault the location.

to the front gate of the enemy-held facility. Snipers eliminated the gate guards while others cut the lock. An assault team then swept the compound's buildings and surprised the defenders. "We were notified by the cadre that we would be [attacked] . . . in order to give the most training effect for the guys coming through the door." But the warning did not suffice. "I could not tell there was anyone in the room until they were halfway across. . . I laid down fire in the open bay and moved into a side room. Then, they shot me," said 'enemy soldier' SGT Guinness*.³⁶

The after-action review of the final exercise provided additional benefits. After observing the ODA in the field, SFC Macks* noted that the Japanese were interested in learning how the ODA functioned, its tactics, and equipment.³⁷ After years of combat experience, "we are compact and have lessons learned concerning improvements in our gear." The Japanese contingent had brought with them several medical doctors and they were very interested in the ODA's field medical kits. As team medic SSG Sam D. Parks* explained it, "in ten years of war, we have boiled down [our equipment] to handle trauma."³⁸

With the training and culminating exercise complete, everyone could relax. To express appreciation, the Japanese contingent purchased a small pig and cooked it in the ground, kalua-style. During the luau, each group exchanged gifts and their nation's airborne wings. The ODA presented the Japanese a wooden plaque commemorating SILENT EAGLE 2011. The Jap-

TOP: One of the 'dead' enemy soldiers displaying the 'Mario Brothers'-type uniform worn by the role players. **MIDDLE:** One of the unintended benefits of SILENT EAGLE 2011 was the sharing of experiences. Here, medical personnel discuss different ways to stabilize wounds. **BOTTOM:** After the exercise, a final after-action review evaluated how well the SFGp did and ways to improve.





Japanese gave each ODA member a SFGp ballcap and also presented a miniature metal samurai helmet.

Working with the SFGp highlighted the capabilities of a partner-SOF unit and impressed the ODA members. SSG Sofa* said that often training “was crawl, walk, run. With [the Japanese] it was run.”³⁹ Finally, SFC Macks* provided the best compliment, “I would totally feel comfortable going on real world operations with these guys.”⁴⁰

Although training missions like SILENT EAGLE 2011 appear routine, they remain vital. Building personal relationships, enhancing the capabilities of, and improving interoperability with, allied SOF improves the overall security situation within the Pacific region and pays dividends. Such exercises allow partner forces to share experiences and earn mutual respect. In the event of real-world conflict, when time is of the essence, the learning curve of interoperability will be less and understanding each other’s capabilities will occur quicker, both of which will help streamline operations. 🇺🇸

TAKEAWAYS:

- 1** After World War II, Japan evolved into a key U.S. ally in the Pacific region. Joint exercises allow the U.S. to maintain and expand this relationship.
- 2** Japan has several international territorial disputes with its neighbors and a need to protect the homeland, requiring it to maintain a capable and ready force to counter regional aggression.
- 3** Exercises like SILENT EAGLE 2011 build bonds with partner forces and are a critical component to sharing lessons, experience, and fostering cooperation.

TOP LEFT: At the luau, each group presented tokens to the participating soldiers, including certificates and a jump wing exchange. **TOP RIGHT:** After the final exercise the SF and SFGp members celebrated by having a luau. The pig was slow cooked in the ground. **BOTTOM LEFT:** The SFGp presented the ODA 1414 with a miniature Samurai helmet, which is now on display at the 4th Battalion headquarters at Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Washington.

ENDNOTES

- 1 CW2 Andrew Hawk*, interview by Troy J. Sacquety, 14 September 2011, USASOC History Office, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 2 SILENT EAGLE 2011 was funded by the Department of State's Military Sales Program, which introduces U.S. military equipment to potential foreign buyers. It was not a Joint Combined Exchange Training (JCET). The SF role in Foreign Internal Defense is in FM 3-18, Special Forces Operations, dated May 2014.
- 3 Overview of Japan's Defense Policy, Ministry of Defense, Japan, <http://www.mod.go.jp/e/index.html>.
- 4 When formed in 2004 it was originally named the Special Operations Group. It is now called the Japanese Special Forces Group or SFGp.
- 5 Colonel S.H., interview by Troy J. Sacquety, 13 September 2011, USASOC History Office, Fort Bragg, NC. He is a U.S. Army Special Forces Qualification Course graduate. Because of sensitivities, SFGp members will only be identified by initials.
- 6 Captain Y.H., interview by Troy J. Sacquety, 13 September 2011, USASOC History Office, Fort Bragg, NC, hereafter Y.H. interview.
- 7 Japanese Ground Self Defense Force/Central Readiness Force Mission page, <http://www.mod.go.jp/gsdff/crff/pa/Englishv/framepage2.html>.
- 8 Anna Malpas, "Russia, Japan Vow New Push to end Islands Dispute," AFP news, 29 April 2013, <http://ph.news.yahoo.com/japan-pm-set-putin-talks-062842025.html>.
- 9 Colonel K.Y., interview by Troy J. Sacquety, 14 September 2011, USASOC History Office, Fort Bragg, NC., hereafter K.Y. interview.
- 10 Y.H. interview.
- 11 4th Battalion was not formally activated until 26 August 2011. For more information, see Jared M. Tracy, "Victoria Ex Umbra: Activating 4th Battalion, 1st Special Forces Group (Airborne)," 2018, https://arsof-history.org/articles/v14n2_victoria_ex_umbra_page_1.html.
- 12 MSG Roger H. McSweep*, interview by Troy J. Sacquety, 15 September 2011, USASOC History Office, Fort Bragg, NC., hereafter McSweep* interview. The 18X program allowed recruits to enlist into SF and attend SF selection after basic combat training and advanced individual training. It is commonly called the 'X-Ray' program.
- 13 K.Y. interview; SSG Wilson S. Segar*, interview by Troy J. Sacquety, 14 September 2011, USASOC History Office, Fort Bragg, NC., hereafter Segar* interview.
- 14 McSweep* interview. On 11 March 2011, a magnitude 9.0 earthquake occurred off the east coast of Honshu, Japan. According to the United States Geological Survey (USGS) the earthquake and resulting tsunami resulted in "at least 15,703 people killed, 4,647 missing, 5,314 injured, 130,927 displaced and at least 332,395 buildings, 2,126 roads, 56 bridges and 26 railways destroyed or damaged by the earthquake and tsunami along the entire east coast of Honshu from Chiba to Aomori." See "Magnitude 9.0-NEAR THE EAST COAST OF HONSHU, JAPAN," <http://earthquake.usgs.gov/earthquakes/eqinthenews/2011/usc0001xgp/#summary>.
- 15 SSG Thomas Sofa*, interview by Troy J. Sacquety, 13 September 2011, USASOC History Office, Fort Bragg, NC., hereafter Sofa interview; SFC Bill J. Macks*, interview by Troy J. Sacquety, 14 September 2011, USASOC History Office, Fort Bragg, NC., hereafter Macks interview..
- 16 Macks* interview.
- 17 SFC Samuel Tinker*, interview by Troy J. Sacquety, 13 September 2011, USASOC History Office, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 18 SGT Brady K. O'Malley*, interview by Troy J. Sacquety, 16 September 2011, USASOC History Office, Fort Bragg, NC, hereafter O'Malley interview. The MFF qualified rigger had more high altitude jumps than even the most-experienced jumpers in the SFGp contingent.
- 19 SGT James K. Guinness*, interview by Troy J. Sacquety, 16 September 2011, USASOC History Office, Fort Bragg, NC, hereafter Guinness interview.
- 20 Japan has severe controls on firearms ownership, meaning that unlike many U.S. soldiers, the Japanese do not grow up with a familiarity with firearms.
- 21 Sofa* interview.
- 22 Segar* interview.
- 23 CPT Anderson H. Dow*, interview by Troy J. Sacquety, 13 September 2011, USASOC History Office, hereafter Dow interview.
- 24 Dow* interview.
- 25 Dow* interview.
- 26 McSweep* interview.
- 27 That is when the ODA then found out that then-Vice President Joseph R. Biden was coming to Oahu, which led to Temporary Flight Restrictions, further hampering MFF training. McSweep* interview.
- 28 Dow* interview.
- 29 McSweep* interview.
- 30 Captain I.S., interview by Troy J. Sacquety, 14 September 2011, USASOC History Office, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 31 Additionally, the SFGp established a Tactical Operations Center (TOC) to oversee the entire operation SFGp Mission brief, 13 September 2011, copy in USASOC History Office, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 32 Richard Goldstein, "Kazuo Sakamaki, 81, Pacific POW. No.1," The New York Times, 21 December 1999, <http://www.nytimes.com/1999/12/21/world/kazuo-sakamaki-81-pacific-pow-no-1.html>.
- 33 Nike missiles were an air defense system employed from the 1950s to the 1970s.
- 34 O'Malley* interview.
- 35 Segar* interview.
- 36 Guinness* interview.
- 37 Macks* interview.
- 38 SSG Sam D. Parks*, interview by Troy J. Sacquety, 14 September 2011, USASOC History Office, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 39 Sofa* interview.
- 40 Macks* interview.

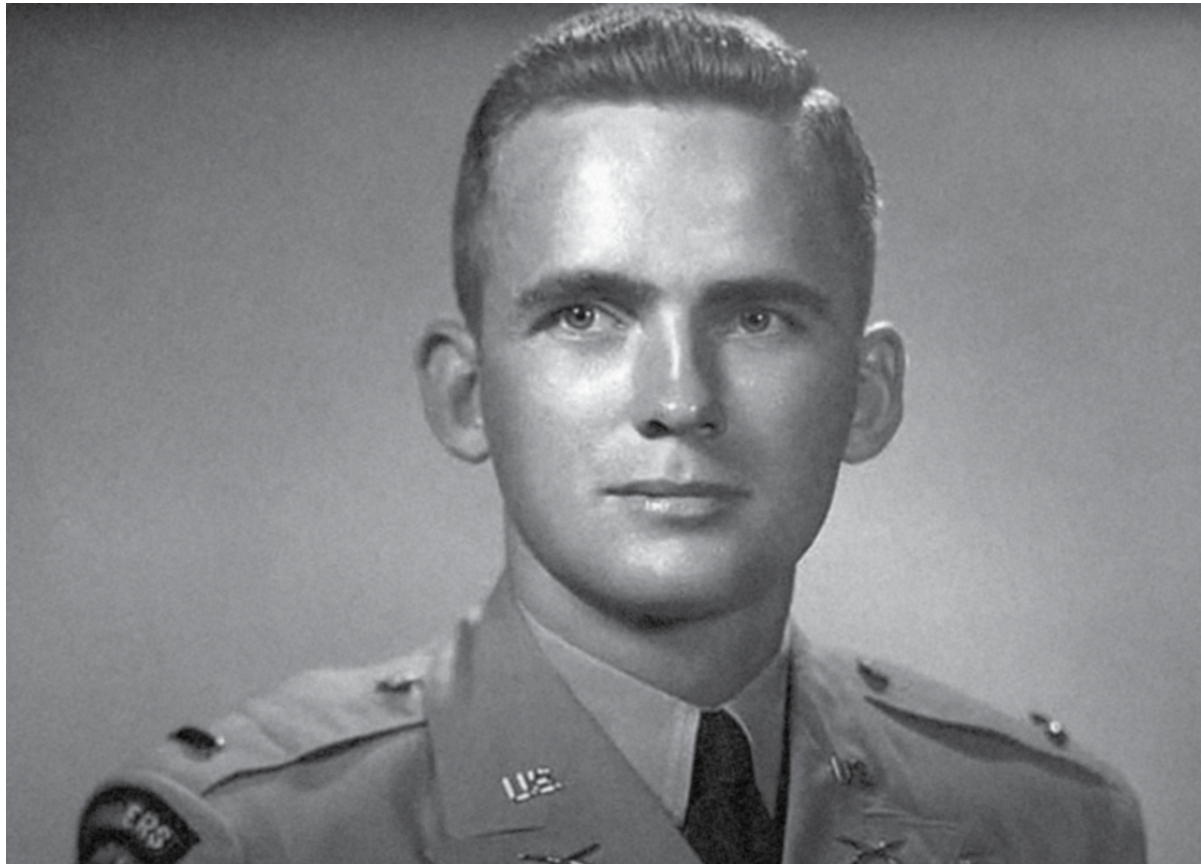




LATEST ARSOF MEDAL OF HONOR RECIPIENTS

by the USASOC History Office

*For conspicuous gallantry and
intrepidity at the risk of their life
above and beyond the call of duty*



1LT RALPH PUCKETT, JR.

Born: 1926, Tifton, Georgia

Entered Service: 1949

Unit: Eighth Army Ranger Company, 8213th Army Unit, Eighth U.S. Army

MoH Event

Date of Action: 25-26 November 1950

Date of Issue: 21 May 2021

DA GO 2021-07: 20 September 2021

Conflict: Korean War

Location: Hill 205, near Chongch'on River, North Korea

Military Service

» PEBD Army: June 1949

» Officer Basic Course, Branch Immaterial, Fort Riley, Kansas, 1949, Infantry Officer Basic, Airborne Courses, Fort Benning, Georgia, 1950

» Eighth Army Ranger Company, 8213th Army Unit, Eighth U.S. Army, Korea, 2LT to 1LT

» Patient, Various Hospitals, Korea, Japan, and Fort Benning, Georgia, 1950-1951

» Staff Officer, Instructor, Company Executive Officer, and Company Commander, Ranger Department, Academic Department, U.S. Army Infantry School, Fort Benning, Georgia, 1951-1953

» Platoon Leader, Mortar Platoon, Heavy Mortar Company, 296th Infantry, U.S. Army Caribbean Command, Henry Barracks, Puerto Rico, 1LT to CPT, 1953-1954

» Battalion S4, and Company Commander, 1st Battalion, 296th Infantry, U.S. Army Caribbean Command, Camp Losey, Puerto Rico, 1954

» Company Commander and Assistant Regimental S3, 1st Battalion, 65th Infantry, U.S. Army Caribbean Command, Camp Losey, Puerto Rico, 1954-1955

» Ranger Advisor, US Army Mission Colombia, Lancero School, Colombia, 1955-1956

» Infantry Officers Advanced Course, US Army Infantry School, Fort Benning, Georgia, 1956-1957, Training Officer, and Assistant Commandant, US Military Academy Preparatory School, Stewart Field, New York, CPT to MAJ, 1956-1959

» Student, Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, 1959-1960

» Student, Special Forces Officer Course, Fort Bragg, North Carolina, Commander, Operational Detachment B, Commander, Companies A and D, and Group S2, 10th Special Forces Group, Flint Kaserne, Bad Tolz, Germany, MAJ to LTC, 1959-1963

First Lieutenant Ralph Puckett, Jr., distinguished himself by acts of gallantry and intrepidity above and beyond the call of duty while serving as the commander Eighth U.S. Army Ranger Company during the period of 25 November 1950 through 26 November 1950, in Korea.

As his unit commenced a daylight attack on Hill 205, the enemy directed mortar, machine gun, and small-arms fire against the advancing force. To obtain fire, First Lieutenant Puckett mounted the closest tank, exposing himself to the deadly enemy fire. Leaping from the tank, he shouted words of encour-

agement to his men and began to lead the Rangers in the attack.

Almost immediately, enemy fire threatened the success of the attack by pinning down one platoon. Leaving the safety of his position, with full knowledge of the danger, First Lieutenant Puckett intentionally ran across an open area three times to draw enemy fire, thereby allowing the Rangers to locate and destroy the enemy positions and to seize Hill 205. During the night, the enemy launched a counterattack that lasted four hours.

Over the course of the counterattack, the Rangers were inspired and motivated by the extraordinary

- » Student, Armed Forces Staff College, Norfolk, Virginia, 1963-1964
- » Personnel Management Officer, Personnel Actions Section, Infantry Branch, Combat Arms Division, Office of Personnel Division, Office of Personnel Operations, Deputy Chief of Staff for Military Operations, Army General Staff, and Staff Officer, Special Operations Directorate, Department of Defense, Washington, District of Columbia, 1964-1966
- » Student, US Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania, 1966-1967
- » Commander, 2nd Battalion, 502nd Infantry Regiment, 1st Brigade (Separate), 101st Airborne Division, Commander, 1st Battalion, 506th Infantry Regiment, 101st Airborne Division, Republic of Vietnam, 1967-1968
- » Regimental Tactical Officer, US Military Academy, West Point, New York, LTC to COL, 1968-1970
- » Commander, 2nd Brigade, 5th Infantry Division (Mechanized), later 4th Infantry Division (Mechanized), Fort Carson, Colorado, 1970-1971
- » Retirement, June 1971

leadership and courageous example exhibited by First Lieutenant Puckett. As a result, five human-wave attacks by a battalion-strength enemy element were repulsed. During the first attack, First Lieutenant Puckett was wounded by grenade fragments, but refused evacuation and continually directed artillery support that decimated attacking enemy formations.

He repeatedly abandoned positions of relative safety to make his way from foxhole to foxhole, to check the company's perimeter and to distribute ammunition amongst the Rangers. When the enemy launched a sixth attack, it became clear to First Lieutenant Puckett that the position was untenable due to the unavailability of supporting artillery fire. During this attack, two enemy mortar rounds landed in his foxhole, inflicting grievous wounds, which limited his mobility.

Knowing his men were in a precarious situation, First Lieutenant Puckett commanded the Rangers to leave him behind and evacuate the area. Feeling a sense of duty to aid him, the Rangers refused the order and staged an effort to retrieve him from the foxhole while still under fire from the enemy.

Ultimately, the Rangers succeeded in retrieving First Lieutenant Puckett and they moved to the bottom of the hill, where First Lieutenant Puckett called for devastating artillery fire on the top of the enemy-controlled hill. First Lieutenant Puckett's extraordinary heroism and selflessness above and beyond the call of duty were in keeping with the highest traditions of military service and reflect great credit upon himself, his unit, and the United States Army.



(Image credit: U.S. Army)

Retired U.S. Army COL Ralph Puckett stands alongside troops as they prepare to start a foot march during the 2021 David E. Grange Jr. Best Ranger Competition (BRC) on Fort Benning, GA., April 16th, 2021. The BRC is a three-day combat-focused military skills competition that challenges the physical and mental endurance of the competitor, highlighting tasks that Rangers routinely conduct in times of peace and war.



SFC CHRISTOPHER A. CELIZ

Born: 1986, Summerville, South Carolina

Entered Service: 2006

Unit: Company D, 1st Battalion, 75th Ranger Regiment, Combined Joint Task Force -
Operation FREEDOM'S SENTINEL

MoH Event

Date of Action: 12 July 2018

Date of Issue: 17 December 2021

DA GO 2022-02: 2 February 2022

Conflict: Operation FREEDOM'S SENTINEL- Afghanistan

Location: Zurmat, Pakiya Province, Afghanistan

Sergeant First Class Christopher A. Celiz distinguished himself by conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity above and beyond the call of duty while engaged with the enemy in Paktia Province, Afghanistan on 12 July 2018. As the leader of a special operations unit comprised of partnered forces and members of the 1st Battalion, 75th Ranger Regiment, Sergeant First Class Celiz led an operation to clear an area of enemy forces and thereby disrupt future attacks against the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and allied forces. Shortly after his team reached their initial objectives, a large enemy force attacked, placing effective fire on him and his team, thus preventing them from maneuvering to counterattack. Realizing the danger the attack posed to his team and the operation, Sergeant First Class Celiz voluntarily exposed himself to intense enemy machine gun and small arms fire to retrieve and employ a heavy weapon system, thereby allowing U.S. and partnered forces to regain the initiative, maneuver to a secure location, and begin treatment of a critically wounded partnered force member. As the medical evacuation helicopter arrived, it was immediately engaged by accurate and sustained enemy fire. Knowing how critical it was to quickly load the casualty, Sergeant First Class Celiz willingly exposed himself to heavy and effective enemy fire to direct and lead the evacuation. As the casualty moved from a position of cover and out into intense, accurate enemy fire, Ser-

geant First Class Celiz made a conscious effort to ensure his body acted as a physical shield to his team carrying the casualty and the crew of the aircraft. As the casualty was loaded and Sergeant First Class Celiz's team returned to cover, he alone remained at the aircraft, returning a high volume of fire and constantly repositioning himself to act as a physical shield to the aircraft and its crew. With his final reposition, Sergeant First Class Celiz placed himself directly between the cockpit and the enemy, ensuring the aircraft was able to depart. As the helicopter lifted off, Sergeant First Class Celiz was hit by enemy fire. Fully aware of his own injury, but understanding the peril to the aircraft from the intense enemy machinegun fire, Sergeant First Class Celiz motioned to the aircraft to depart rather than remain to load him. His selfless actions saved the life of the evacuated partnered force member and almost certainly prevented further casualties among other members of his team and the aircrew. Throughout the entire engagement, Sergeant First Class Celiz significantly changed the course of the battle by repeatedly placing himself in extreme danger to protect his team and defeat the enemy. Sergeant First Class Celiz's extraordinary heroism and selflessness above and beyond the call of duty were in keeping with the highest traditions of military service and reflect great credit upon himself, his unit, and the United States Army.

Military Service

- » PEBD Army: September 2006
- » Basic Combat Training, Advanced Individual Training, Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri, 2008
- » Combat Engineer and Team Leader, Company E, 2nd Battalion, 7th Cavalry, 3rd Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, Fort Hood, Texas, 2008 to 2009
- » Team Leader, Company C, Special Troops Battalion, 4th Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, Fort Hood, Texas, 2009 to 2010
- » Sapper Squad Leader and Platoon Sergeant, 530th Engineer Clearance Company, 92nd Engineer Battalion, 3rd Infantry Division, Fort Stewart, Georgia, 2010 to 2013
- » Graduate, Airborne Course, Fort Benning, Georgia, 2013
- » Graduate Ranger Indoctrination Program, Fort Benning, Georgia, 2013
- » Graduate Ranger School; Basic Leader Course; Route Reconnaissance/Combat Leaders Reconnaissance-Sapper; Advanced Leader Course; Jumpmaster Course; Sapper Leader Course; Senior Leader Course; Infantry Mortar Leader Course
- » Section Leader and Battalion Master Breacher and Engineer, Company D, and Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 75th Ranger Regiment, 2013-2018



SFC Class Christopher Celiz helping clear debris with fellow soldiers in the aftermath of a hurricane.

SSG EARL D. PLUMLEE

Born: 1982, Clinton, Oklahoma

Entered Service: 1998

Unit: Company C, 4th Battalion, 1st Special Forces Group, Operation ENDURING FREEDOM

MoH Event

Date of Action: 28 August 2013

Date of Issue: 16 December 2021

DA GO 2022-03: 9 February 2022

Conflict: Operation ENDURING FREEDOM - Afghanistan

Location: FOB Ghazni, Ghazni Province, Afghanistan

Military Service

» PEBD Army: October 1998

» Basic Combat Training, Advanced Individual Training, Fort Sill, Oklahoma, 1999

» High Mobility Artillery Rocket System Crewmember, 45th Field Artillery Brigade, Oklahoma National Guard, 1998 to 2000

» Enlisted in the U.S. Marine Corps, Recruit and School of Infantry Training, San Diego California, 2000

» Rifleman, Company A, 1st Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment, 3rd Marine Division, Marine Corps Base, Hawaii, 2000 to 2004

» Graduate, USMC Reconnaissance Indoctrination Program, Kaneohe Bay, Hawaii, 2004

» Recon Marine and Team Leader, 4th Force Reconnaissance, and 2nd Reconnaissance Companies, Alameda, California, Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, 2004 to 2009

» Graduate, Survival, Escape, Resistance, Evasion, Airborne, Combat Diver, Free Fall Parachutist Courses, Various Locations, 2004-2006

» Graduate Special Forces Assessment and Selection, SF Weapon Sergeant courses, Fort Bragg, NC, 2009

» Weapons Sergeant and Senior Weapons Sergeant, Company C, 4th Battalion, 1st Special Forces Group, Joint Base Lewis McChord, Washington, 2010-2015

» Senior Weapons Sergeant, Assistant Operations Sergeant, and Force Modernization Sergeant, Company C, 1st Battalion, 1st Special Forces Group, Torii Station, Okinawa, Japan, 2015-2018



(Image credit: U.S. Army)

Then-SSG Earl Plumlee, poses for a photo during pre-deployment training, 2013, Yakima, Wash.

Then-Staff Sergeant Earl D. Plumlee distinguished himself by acts of gallantry and intrepidity above and beyond the call of duty while engaging with the enemy in support of Operation Enduring Freedom in Ghazni Province, Afghanistan, on 28 August 2013. Plumlee served as a weapons sergeant assigned to Charlie Company, 4th Battalion, 1st Special Forces Group (Airborne), at Forward Operating Base Ghazni, when the complex was attacked. Plumlee instantly responded to a massive explosion that caused a 60-foot breach

in the base's perimeter wall. Ten insurgents wearing Afghan National Army uniforms and suicide vests poured through the breach. Plumlee and five other special operations Soldiers, intent on defending the base, mounted two vehicles and raced toward the detonation site. Plumlee's driver purposefully maneuvered the vehicle into enemy fire to shield three dismounted teammates, two of whom were injured, placing the vehicle under effective enemy fire from the front and right side. Using his body to shield the driver from enemy fire, Plumlee exited

the vehicle while simultaneously drawing his pistol and engaging an insurgent 15 meters to the vehicle's right. Without cover and with complete disregard for his safety, he advanced toward the enemy force, engaging multiple insurgents with only his pistol. Upon reaching cover, he killed two insurgents. Plumlee left cover and continued to advance alone. Moving forward, he engaged several combatants at close range. Under intense enemy fire, Plumlee temporarily withdrew to cover, where he joined another soldier. Plumlee, ignoring his injuries, quickly regained his bearings and reengaged the enemy. Intense enemy fire once again forced the two soldiers to temporarily withdraw. Undeterred and resolute, Plumlee joined a small group of American and coalition

soldiers moving from cover to counterattack the infiltrators. As the coalition forces advanced, Plumlee engaged an insurgent to his front-left. Plumlee then ran to a wounded soldier, carried him to safety, and rendered first aid. Afterwards, he organized three coalition members in a defensive stance as he methodically cleared the area, remained in a security posture and continued to scan for any remaining threats. Throughout the entire engagement, Plumlee repeatedly placed himself in extreme danger to protect his team and the base, and to defeat the enemy. Plumlee's extraordinary heroism and selflessness beyond the call of duty were in keeping with the highest traditions of military service and reflect great credit upon himself, his unit, and the United States Army.

» Senior Weapons Sergeant, and Operations Sergeant, Headquarters Company, and Company C, 3rd Battalion, 1st Special Forces Group, Joint Base Lewis McChord, Washington, 2018-present

» Graduate Airborne School; Basic Leader Course; Combat Diver; Free Fall Parachutist, Advanced Leader Course; Jumpmaster Course; Special Forces Advanced Reconnaissance Target Exploitation; Senior Leader Course; Army Special Operations Force Senior Noncommissioned Officer Fundamentals Course



Then-SFC Class Earl D. Plumlee, assigned to 1st Special Forces Group (Airborne), is presented the Silver Star Medal by MG Kenneth R. Dahl, I Corps Deputy Commanding General, during a ceremony at the 1st SFG, Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Washington.



Major John J. Duffy distinguished himself by acts of gallantry and intrepidity above and beyond the call of duty, while assigned to the 5th Special Forces Group and serving as a senior advisor to the 11th Airborne Battalion, 2nd Brigade, Airborne Division, Army of the Republic of Vietnam in the Republic of Vietnam, on 14-15 April 1972.

Two days earlier, the commander of the 11th Airborne Battalion was killed, the battalion command post was destroyed, and Duffy was twice wounded but refused to be evacuated. Then on 14 April, Duffy directed the defense of Fire Support Base Charlie, which was surrounded by a battalion-sized enemy element.

In the morning hours, after a failed effort to establish a landing zone for resupply aircraft, he moved close to enemy anti-aircraft positions to call in airstrikes. At this time, Duffy was again wounded by fragments from a recoilless rifle round and again refused evacuation.

Shortly after, the enemy began an artillery bombardment on the base and he remained in an exposed position to direct gunships onto the enemy positions, which eventually silenced the enemy fire.

Following the bombardment, Duffy assessed the conditions on the base and personally ensured that wounded friendly foreign forces were moved to positions of relative safety and the remaining ammunition was appropriately distributed to the remaining defenders.

The enemy resumed indirect fire on the base, expending an

MAJ JOHN J. DUFFY

Born: 1938, New York, New York
 Entered Service: March 1955
 Unit: 5th SFG

MoH Event

Date of Action: 14-15 April 1972
 Date of Issue: 5 July 2022 [PRESENTED]
 DA GO : 2022-26: 17 October 2022
 Conflict: Vietnam War
 Location: Central Highlands, Vietnam

Military Service

» PEBD Army: 18 March 1955

» BCT and Inf AIT, Ft Leonard Wood, MO, PVT to PV2, Abn training, 11th Abn Div, Ft Campbell, KY, PV2 to PFC, 1955
 » Lt Wpns Inf, B Co and Heavy Mortar Battery, 2nd Abn BG, 502nd Inf and HHC, 503rd Inf, 11th Abn Div, Warner Kaserne, Munich, Germany, PFC, 1956-1958
 » Honorably discharged, 26 February 1958
 » PEBD Army: 11 March 1960
 » Student, B Co, 10th BG, 3rd Bde, Ft Ord, CA, PV2, 1960
 » Pers Admin Spec, HHC, 2nd BG, 28th Inf, 24th Inf Div, Warner Kaserne, Munich, Germany, PV2 to PFC, 1960
 » Pers Fin Sec Clerk, HHC, 10th SFG, Bad Tolz, Germany, PFC to SP4, 1960-61
 » U.S. Seventh Army Noncommissioned Officer Academy, Bad

Toiz, Germany, SP4 to SGT, 1961
 » Lt Wpns Inf and Demo Sup, Co A and Co B, 10th SFG, Bad Toiz, Germany, SGT, 1961-1963
 » Infantry Off OCS, Ft Benning, GA, Commissioned as 2LT 11 September 1963
 » S-3, Det B-3 (Cinsgcy), A Co, 6th SFG, Ft Bragg, NC, 2LT, 1963
 » XO, Det A-8 (Cinsgcy), A Co, 6th SFG, Ft Bragg, NC, 2LT, 1963-1964
 » Order-of-Battle, Opns, and Interro Off, 801st Intel Corps Det, 6th SFG, Ft Bragg, NC, 2LT to 1LT, 1964-1965
 » Assistant S-1, XO, and CO, HHC, 2nd Bn, 6th Inf, Berlin Bde, U.S. Army Europe, 1LT to CPT, 1966
 » CO, Det A-101 (Lang Veil), C Co, 5th SFG, RVN, CPT, 1967

» XO Det A-113 (Mobile Strike Force), C Co, 5th SFG, RVN, CPT, 1967
 » S-2 and CO, Det B-55, HHC, 5th SFG, RVN, CPT, 1967-68
 » Inf Off Adv Crs, U.S. Army Inf School, Ft Benning, GA, CPT, 1968-1969
 » Stu Off, Univ of Nebraska – Omaha, NE, CPT, 1969
 » LNO (7th Air Force) and Asst Launch Off, SOA (CCN), 5th SFG, RVN, CPT, 1969-1970
 » Trng Off, HQ, U.S. Fifth Army, Ft Sheridan, IL, CPT to MAJ, 1970-1971
 » Opns Off, Military Assistance Command Vietnam Studies and Observation Group (MACV-SOG), RVN, MAJ, 1971-1972
 » Bn Combat Assistance Team Cmdr, 5th SFG / MACV Team 162, RVN, MAJ, 1972

» Advisor, A Co, 11th SFG, U.S. Army Advisor Group (USAR), Ft Devens, MA, MAJ, 1972-1973
 » Opns Off and Dep Cdr, Joint Casualty Resolution Center, USARPAC, Thailand, MAJ, 1973-1974
 » Director of Plans, Training, and Security, HHC, USAG, Ft Hamilton, NY, MAJ, 1974
 » HQ Commandant/Cdr of Troops, HHC, USAG, Ft Hamilton, New York, MAJ, 1975
 » Protocol Off, HHC, New York Area Command, Ft Hamilton, NY, MAJ, 1976-1977
 » Retirement, 31 May 1977



estimated 300 rounds. Nevertheless, Duffy remained in an exposed position to direct gunship fire on the enemy positions.

In the late afternoon hours, the enemy began a ground assault from all sides of the firebase, and Duffy moved from position to position to adjust fire, spot targets for artillery observers and, ultimately, to direct gunship fire on a friendly position which had been compromised.

During the early morning hours of 15 April, the enemy ambushed the battalion, inflicting additional casualties and scattering some of the able-bodied service members. After withstanding the ambush, Duffy led the evacuees - many of whom were significantly wounded - to an established evacuation area, despite being continually pursued by the enemy.

Upon reaching the exfiltration site, Duffy directed gunship fire on enemy positions and marked a landing zone for the helicopters. Only after ensuring all of the evacuees were aboard, did Duffy board while also assisting a wounded friendly foreign service member. Once on board, he administered aid to a helicopter door gunner who had been wounded during the evacuation.

Duffy's extraordinary heroism and selflessness beyond the call of duty were in keeping with the highest traditions of military service and reflect great credit upon himself, his unit, and the United States Army. 🇺🇸

Retired U.S. Army MAJ John J. Duffy receives the Medal of Honor from President Joseph R. Biden in the East Room of the White House on 5 July 2022.

MG John K. Singlaub



COL Louis G. Mason



COL Charles H. Fry



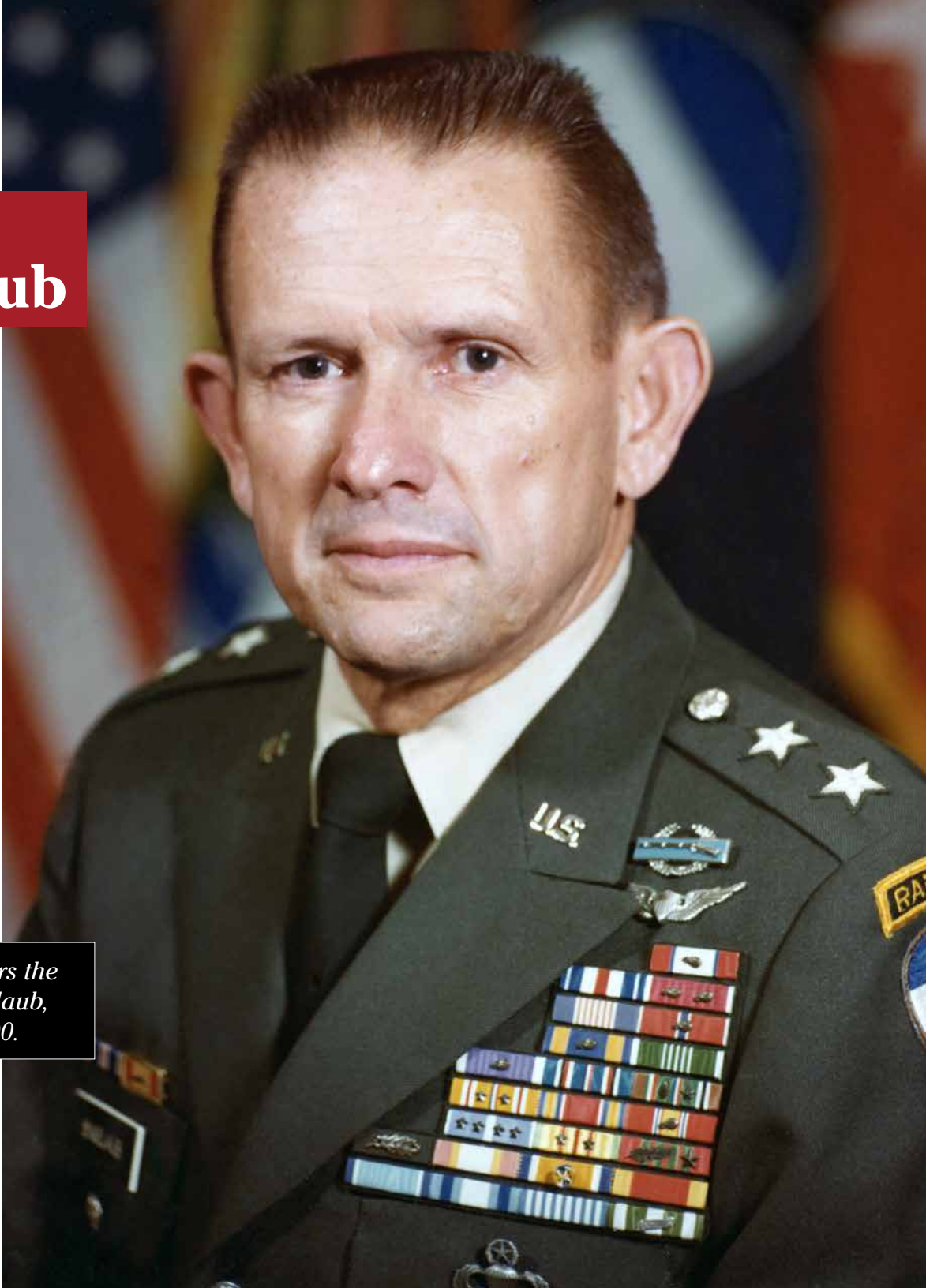
In Memoriam

In Memoriam
MG John K. Singlaub

1921-2022

by Troy J. Sacquety

U.S. Army Special Operations Command honors the life and legacy of Major General John K. Singlaub, who died 29 January 2022, at the age of 100.





Major General (MG) John K. Singlaub, an Army Special Operations Forces (ARSOF) Icon, passed away on 29 January 2022 at the age of 100. During his life and distinguished military career, he demonstrated unwavering commitment to serving the nation and had an immeasurable impact on the development of ARSOF. His legacy lives on in the special operations community.

Singlaub was born on 21 July 1921 in Independence, California. In 1943, he left his studies at the University of California in Los Angeles to commission as an Infantry Second Lieutenant in the U.S. Army Reserve. After completing Airborne training, he volunteered for duty with the Office of Strategic Services (OSS) in November 1943. In the OSS, he joined the Special Operations Branch and was selected for the JEDBURGH program. As commander of JEDBURGH Team JAMES, First Lieutenant (1LT) Singlaub jumped into France on 11 August 1944 to arm and advise the French Resistance.

His mission complete in France, Singlaub then volunteered for service in China, where he was assigned to OSS Detachment 202. There, as the war was ending, he was selected to command one of the hastily organized Mercy Mission teams, whose goal was to para-

chute near prisoner of war camps to secure the prisoners from Japanese retaliation. As the commander of Mercy Mission Team PIGEON, he parachuted onto Hainan Island on 27 August 1945. Team PIGEON successfully liberated hundreds of emaciated Dutch and Australian prisoners, most of whom had been held captive in deplorable conditions since 1942.

After the war, Captain (CPT) Singlaub was one of a few former OSS Special Operations Branch personnel retained in the postwar OSS successor, the Strategic Services Unit, which preceded Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). Singlaub served in Manchuria until 1949, when it fell to the Chinese Communists. Returning to the U.S., Major (MAJ) Singlaub attended the Infantry Advanced Course and served as the Executive Officer (XO) for the 505th Parachute Infantry Regiment. In the fall of 1950, he returned to special operations when he helped establish the Ranger Training Center at Fort Benning, Georgia.

MAJ Singlaub then served two tours in Korea, first with the CIA's Joint Advisory Commission, Korea (JACK), and second as the commander of 2nd Battalion, 15th Infantry Regiment, 3rd Infantry Division. Combat in Korea was followed by attendance at the Com-

1LT Singlaub, JEDBURGH Team JAMES commander, before parachuting into France in August 1944.



(Image credit: U.S. Army)



mand and General Staff College and service as the Operations Officer, G-3, 101st Airborne Division, during the Lebanon crisis of 1958. From 1960 to 1961, Colonel (COL) Singlaub commanded the 1st Battle Group, 16th Infantry, 8th Infantry Division, Germany, followed by a tour as a staff officer in the Pentagon.

COL Singlaub returned to special operations from 1966 to 1968, as commander of the Military Assistance Command, Vietnam, Studies and Observation Group (MACV-SOG). Promoted to brigadier general (BG), he became the Assistant Division Commander of the 8th Infantry Division. Understanding that air mobility was the future of the Army, in 1970 BG Singlaub volunteered for helicopter pilot instruction. He believed that an infantry commander lacking pilot wings was equivalent to a non-parachutist commanding an airborne unit. Therefore, he earned his Army Aviator Badge for completing the General Officer's Flight Course at the Army Aviation School, Fort Rucker, Alabama. Promoted to major general (MG) in 1972, Singlaub served in Korea as the Chief of Staff, United Nations Command and U.S. Forces Korea. Following the completion of his next assignment as Chief of Staff, U.S. Army Forces Command (FORSCOM), MG Singlaub retired in 1978.

After retirement, MG Singlaub remained active in the special operations community as a senior mentor, guest speaker, and board member for various

causes. In 1991, he co-wrote his autobiography with Malcolm McConnell, which was entitled *Hazardous Duty: An American Soldier in the Twentieth Century*. In 2007 he was named a Distinguished Member of the Special Forces Regiment by the U.S. Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School. The United States Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) honored him with the highly prestigious Arthur D. "Bull" Simons award in 2011.

Among his awards and decorations were the Distinguished Service Medal with Oak Leaf Cluster, the Silver Star, the Legion of Merit with two Oak Leaf Clusters, the Soldiers Medal, the Bronze Star with Oak Leaf Cluster, the Purple Heart with Oak Leaf Cluster, and numerous allied decorations from the United Kingdom, France, Republic of China, Netherlands, Republic of Korea, and the Republic of Vietnam. His lifetime of dedicated service and contributions to special operations guarantee that his legacy will remain strong in the ARSOF community. 🇺🇸

MG Singlaub wears his Army Aviator Badge, earned after instruction as a Brigade General in 1970.

In Memoriam
COL Louis G. Mason

1945-2022

by Christopher E. Howard

U.S. Army Special Operations Command honors the life and legacy of Colonel Louis G. Mason, who died 18 September 2022, at the age of 77.



Louis Mason was born at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, in May 1945. He was commissioned into the Quartermaster Corps upon graduation from the University of Southern Mississippi in 1967. Soon after, he deployed to the Republic of Vietnam, where he was assigned to Detachment B-55, 5th Special Forces Group, beginning his long association with ARSOF.

Following his Vietnam service, Mason held positions of increasing responsibility in the 82nd Airborne Division, the U.S. Army John F. Kennedy Institute for Military Assistance (IMA), and 1st Corps Support Command (1st COSCOM). He also deployed to Southeast Asia as the Aerial Delivery Supply Officer for the Military Equipment Delivery Team Cambodia, supporting the armed forces of the Kingdom of Cambodia in their fight against communist aggression.

In 1984, he became the G-4, U.S. Army 1st Special Operations Command. It was from this position that he made one of his most meaningful contributions to ARSOF. He advocated for a Special Operations Support Battalion capable of providing direct support to ARSOF units, both deployed and in garrison. His efforts culminated in the 2 June 1986 activation of the 13th Support Battalion (Special Operations), at Fort Bragg.

As its first commander, Mason nur-

tured this unique battalion through its first two years and persuaded the Army to reflag the unit as the 528th Support Battalion in May 1987. This change allowed it to perpetuate the honors earned by the 528th Quartermaster Battalion during World War II and Vietnam. He was also actively involved in designing the battalion's distinctive unit insignia and selecting its motto ("We Support to the Utmost!").

After leaving command in July 1988, Mason was assigned to the Defense Logistics Agency. He graduated from the U.S. Army War College in June 1991 and was subsequently named Chief of Operations for the Army Materiel Command. In 1993, Mason was an Army liaison with the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA), exploring technological initiatives and their future impact on operational logistics. He continued his professional relationship with DARPA after his retirement from the Army in September 1994.

In 2020, USASOC named Mason an ARSOF Icon, for his role as the "Father of Modern ARSOF Logistics." He was selected as a Distinguished Member of the Quartermaster Corps the following year, and then inducted into the Quartermaster Hall of Fame in 2022. He is survived by his wife, Beth, and two children. 🇺🇸



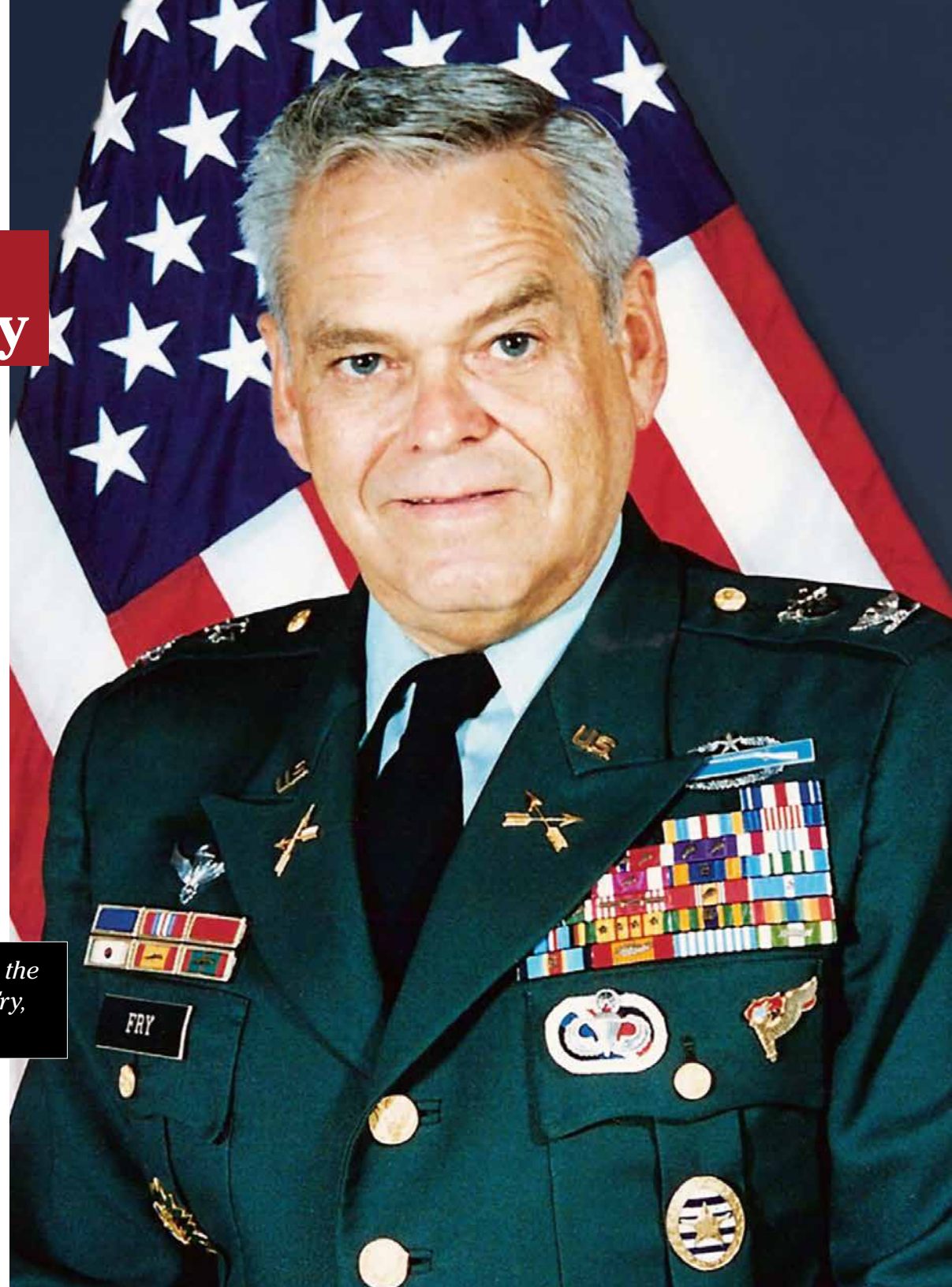
Then LTC Louis G. Mason inspects the troops of his new command, the 13th Support Battalion, at its 2 June 1986 activation ceremony on Fort Bragg, North Carolina.

In Memoriam
COL Charles H. Fry

1933-2022

by Suzanne S. Harrison

U.S. Army Special Operations Command honors the life and legacy of Colonel Charles H. "Chuck" Fry, who died 6 October 2022, at the age of 89.



A Special Forces icon and early SCUBA and Military Free Fall (MFF) pioneer, Fry enlisted in the Army in 1951 as an Infantryman. Upon completion of basic training, he served two tours in Korea, attaining the rank of Sergeant First Class.

In 1954 he completed Special Forces training and was assigned to the 77th Special Forces Group (SFG). He went on to serve with the 10th, 8th, 5th and 7th SFGs. In April 1961, ten years after he en-

listed, he graduated with honors from Officer Candidate School and was commissioned as a second lieutenant. Fry joined 8th SFG in Panama in July 1963 as a first lieutenant. It was there that he convinced fellow icon COL Arthur D. 'Bull' Simons that MFF was needed in the U.S. Southern Command. Fry and MSG Richard J. "Dick" Meadows, another ARSOF icon, became two of the Army's first MFF Instructor-Jumpmasters.

Fry served consecutive tours in Vietnam from 1968 to 1969 in both Special Forces and Infantry units. In 1971, he was assigned to Uruguay before serving a two-year term at the Pentagon. Following command of 3rd Battalion, 7th SFG, he served tours at the U.S. Embassies in Honduras, Paraguay and Venezuela. He then assumed command of the Special Operations Command, South (SOC SOUTH) in Panama from June 1987 to June 1989.

Fry had strong ties to 7th SFG long after his retirement on 31 July 1989 and was highly regarded in the Special Operations community, as noted by numerous tributes posted after his death. Lieutenant General (LTG) John F. Mullholland, former USASOC commander, wrote that Fry was "a true exemplar of the Special Forces Soldier, officer and leader. Arguably THE most effective and influential American leader throughout Latin America in his day ... It was Chuck Fry who coined the term Quiet Professional in an article decades ago outlining the core ethos of U.S. Army Special Forces. Now, all of USSOF - and most - if not all - of our international SOF partners - identify with this core concept and, hopefully, try to live up to it." 🇺🇸

In 1963, First Lieutenant Fry returned to Special Forces and was assigned to the 8th Special Forces Group in the Panama Canal Zone. Here, the Group Commander, Colonel Arthur D. "Bull" Simons, presents the Army Commendation Medal to Fry for his previous service with the Airborne Department. Simons became a valued mentor during his career.



(Image credit: U.S. Army)

7,290 Days

A Salute to the ARSOF Fallen of the Post-9/11 Era

by Christopher E. Howard

Following the devastating terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001, the nation turned to the U.S. Army Special Operations Command (USASOC) as its premier experts in irregular and unconventional warfare, to spearhead what came to be known as the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT). The overarching mission, in the words of President George W. Bush, was to “bring our enemies to justice or justice to our enemies.” From October 2001 forward, Army Special Operations Forces (ARSOF) have been continuously engaged in that fight. Perhaps no single formation has sacrificed more during the twenty-one years since 9/11. This essay reflects on that sacrifice and how we remember it.

Army Special Operations lost its first soldier of this new era when Major Wallace C. Hogan, a Special Forces (SF) officer, was killed when Al Qaeda hijackers crashed American Airlines Flight

77 into the Pentagon on 9/11. On 26 August 2021, 7,290 days later, Staff Sergeant (SSG) Ryan C. Knauss, a Psychological Operations (PSYOP) soldier, was mortally wounded in a suicide bombing at Hamid Karzai International Airport in Kabul, Afghanistan. The intervening 7,289 days of continuous warfare claimed 375 additional ARSOF soldiers. Collectively, they are the Fallen.

Just inside the main entrance to the USASOC Headquarters (Major General Robert A. McClure Building) on Fort Bragg, North Carolina, stands a forty-one-foot-tall digital memorial wall, dedicated to the memory of the ARSOF Fallen of the post-9/11 era. It represents the covenant between USASOC and its fallen soldiers that they will not be forgotten and signifies the enduring promise USASOC makes to its Gold Star families.

The 377 Fallen currently engraved

on this wall range in age from 18 to 58 years old. They hailed from forty-seven different U.S. states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and nine foreign countries. Forty-four native Californians made the ultimate sacrifice, as did thirty Texans, seventeen Pennsylvanians, sixteen Ohioans, and fourteen Washingtonians.

Five of the Fallen were female, three from Civil Affairs and two belonging to Cultural Support Teams, a GWOT-era innovation. Two of the Fallen, SSG Robert J. Miller of 3rd Special Forces Group (SFG) and Sergeant First Class Christopher A. Celiz of the 75th Ranger Regiment, were posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor.

All seven Special Forces Groups (SFGs) are represented on the wall – 200 soldiers in all – with 3rd SFG (58) and 7th SFG (51) accounting for over half this number. Seventy Fallen were assigned or attached to the 75th Ranger Regiment, 36 to the 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment, 33 to Civil Affairs, 15 to PSYOP, 22 to other Special Operations Task Forces or units, and one to the Headquarters, Department of the Army.

Of the twelve countries where ARSOF soldiers fell, Afghanistan was by far the deadliest,

accounting for 247 (67%) of the total number. Fighting in Iraq was also brutal, costing ARSOF 98 soldiers. Twelve fell in the Philippines, five in Pakistan, four in Niger, three in Jordan, two each in Syria and Mali, and one each in Somalia, Yemen, Kuwait, and the United States.

Of the 377 Fallen, 271 were lost between 2001 and 2010. The deadliest year for ARSOF was 2005, which claimed forty-three soldiers. The two years that followed cost ARSOF 35 and 36 lives, respectively. During this period, deadly insurgencies raged in both Iraq and Afghanistan.

On average, ARSOF lost one of its number every nineteen days. However, some days were costlier than others. On two occasions, 22 February 2002 and 25 June 2005, ARSOF lost eight soldiers in one day. Both involved helicopter crashes, one in the Philippines and one in Afghanistan. Two other days, 18 February 2007 and 26 October 2009, cost ARSOF seven soldiers. But each of the 273 days on which ARSOF lost one or more of its members made a lasting impact on the fallen soldiers' families, friends, and comrades.

It is for this reason that the digital memorial wall cannot be reduced to numbers. It is first



The digital memorial wall located inside the main entrance to the USASOC Headquarters serves as a living, interactive tribute to the ARSOF Fallen of the post-9/11 era.





MAJ Wallace C. Hogan 2001




SSG Robert J. Miller 2008

and foremost about people. Its most striking characteristic is 377 faces of the Fallen, each accompanied by a brief biography. These faces greet all who enter and leave the MG McClure Building. They are the constant reminder of the price of freedom, and of USASOC's enduring promise to its Fallen, and to their families. They recall the words of the Canadian soldier-poet, John McCrae from 1915:

**We are the Dead. Short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
Loved and were loved, and now we lie,
In Flanders fields.**

As part of the USASOC History Office, I have the privilege of briefing the digital memorial wall to distinguished visitors, to onboarding USASOC personnel, and, most importantly, to Gold Star families. Each time I do, I am reminded of Abraham Lincoln's closing remarks at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, in November 1863:

The world will little note, nor long remember what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here. It is for us the living, rather, to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us -- that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion.

The History Office encourages everyone who works at, or is able to visit, USASOC Headquarters to spend some time interacting with this memorial for yourself. For those unable to do so, you can access each Fallen soldier's photo and biography on the USASOC History website (arsof-history.org). Additional information about USASOC's memorialization efforts is available at Headquarters, USASOC: Honoring ARSOF History, Legacy, and Sacrifice. 

Never forget.



SFC Christopher A. Celiz 2018



SSG Ryan C. Knauss 2021

#ARSOFHISTORY

Finds Relevance on Social Media



by Suzanne S. Harrison

The U.S. Army Special Operations Command (USASOC) History Office is committed to promoting ARSOF history and legacy. That means expanding the message beyond traditional printed publications in order to reach the command's growing number of social media followers, including 686,000 on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter. In case you missed it, here are some of the notable ARSOF anniversaries that the History Office highlighted on USASOC social media channels in 2022.

Next year promises to be another stellar year of ARSOF anniversaries. You can follow #arssofhistory on social media at:



9 April 1942

After the fall of Bataan, Philippines, to the Japanese on 9 April 1942, hundreds of Americans and Filipinos refused to surrender, escaped into the jungle, and organized to fight the Japanese occupiers for the next three years. As surrender bonfires were lit around the U.S. perimeter, two notable guerrilla leaders, LTC Russell W. Volckmann and MAJ Donald D. Blackburn, crept through the perimeter lines and fled north with the intent of working their way into the mountains. Volckmann and Blackburn were both instrumental in the birth and development of Army Special Forces, drawing heavily on their unconventional warfare experiences in the Philippines.



BG Donald Blackburn, center, fought against the Japanese, evaded capture, and retreated into the mountains of Luzon after the fall of Bataan on 9 April 1942 to form a guerrilla force and carry on the fight. Blackburn was instrumental in the birth and development of Army Special Forces. For more on BG Donald Blackburn, visit: [Brigadier General Donald Dunwoody Blackburn](#).

SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS FROM APRIL



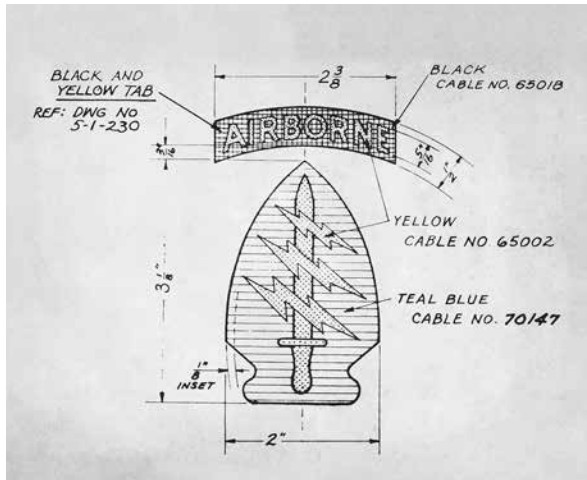
(L to R) COL Charles H. Karlstad, Commander, Psywar Center; COL Aaron Bank, Commander, 10th Special Forces Group (SFG); LTC Lester Holmes, Commander, 6th Radio Broadcasting & Leaflet Battalion; and COL John O. Weaver, Head, Psywar Division, at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, in front of the Psywar Center. For more on the Birth of the Psywar Center, visit: [Smoke Bomb Hill: Birth of the PSYWAR Center, Part I](#) and [The Psywar Center Part II: Creation of the 10th Special Forces Group](#)

10 April 1952

The Psychological Warfare (Psywar) Center was established at Fort Bragg, North Carolina. Commanded by COL Charles H. Karlstad, it was the forerunner of today's U.S. Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School. On 27 May 1952, Karlstad began work to get service school status for the Psywar Center. He produced quality Programs of Instruction, set high education standards, promulgated Psywar and Special Forces doctrine, established a qualification course, and prepared organizational documents to garner Army support. Karlstad was personally selected by BG Robert A. McClure, Army Chief of Psywar, to lead the new Army Psywar Center at Fort Bragg, North Carolina. Following these successful efforts, Karlstad retired on 31 July 1953.

9 April 1987

Drawing their lineage from the First Special Service Force of World War II, modern U.S. Army Special Forces Groups began with the activation of the 10th Special Forces Group in June 1952. Executing training and combat operations around the globe, including the Vietnam War, it took decades for Special Forces to be designated an official Army branch. But 35 years ago, on 9 April 1987, the Special Forces Branch was finally established as a basic branch of the U.S. Army by Department of the Army General Orders No. 35, which created the 18-series Military Occupational Specialty (MOS) and the 180A MOS for Special Forces Warrant Officers. Signed on 19 June 1987, by Army Chief of Staff, GEN John A. Wickham Jr. and Secretary of the Army John O. Marsh, the order states: "ARMY SPECIAL FORCES BRANCH. Pursuant to the authority contained in Title 10, United States Code, section 3063(a)(13), the Special Forces Branch is established as a basic branch of the Army effective 9 April 1987." To learn more, visit: [Special Forces](#).



December 1958 Department of the Army Quartermaster schematic drawing of the approved Shoulder Sleeve Insignia for SF Groups. The "arrowhead" design was originally approved in August 1955 and revised three years later with the addition of an airborne tab.

SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS FROM MAY



The famed "Monuments Men" of World War II, who were responsible for finding and safeguarding art, historic architecture, and archival records the battlefield, received Civil Affairs training prior to shipping to the European Theater of Operations. This photo of German loot stored in a church at Ellingen, Germany, was found by troops of the U.S. Third Army in 1945.

9 May 1942

The School of Military Government at the University of Virginia opened 80 years ago on 9 May 1942. The predecessor of today's Civil Affairs (CA) qualification course at the U.S. Army JFK Special Warfare Center and School, it was the first of many to convene in a civilian university during WWII. Its first commandant, Brigadier General Cornelius W. Wickersham, pioneered the U.S. Army's first professional CA education that continues today at Fort Bragg. To learn more, visit: [Branch Civil Affairs](#).



COL Aaron Bank, a veteran of the Office of Strategic Services during WWII, assumed command of the 10th SFG on 19 June 1952. For more on COL Aaron Bank, visit [COLONEL AARON BANK](#).

19 May 1952

Seventy years ago, on 19 May 1952, the 10th Special Forces Group was constituted at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, at the newly established Psychological Warfare (Psywar) Center on Smoke Bomb Hill. Initially authorized 122 officers and men, personnel authorizations for Special Forces came from the recently inactivated Ranger Infantry Companies. 10th SFG was formally activated the following month, under the command of Col. Aaron Bank. To learn more, visit: [The Psywar Center Part II: Creation of the 10th Special Forces Group](#).

SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS FROM JUNE

13 June 1942

Eighty years ago on 13 June 1942, the Office of Strategic Services (OSS) was established in Washington, D.C. The OSS impacted the development of both Special Forces and psychological warfare (psywar) in the postwar period. Many notable OSS veterans, including MG John Singlaub, COL Aaron Bank, and LTC Leif Bangsboll, integrated unconventional warfare tactics used by the OSS into Special Forces in the 1950s. Other OSS veterans such as LTC Herbert Avedon and COL Heber Blankenhorn had a profound impact on the development and organization of U.S. Army psywar. To learn more about OSS, visit [OSS: Office of Strategic Services](#).



TOP: LTC Leif Bangsboll; to learn more, visit [Lieutenant Colonel Leif Bangsboll](#). **BOTTOM:** MG John Singlaub; to learn more, visit [Major General John K. Singlaub](#).



The 1st Ranger Battalion on a training road march near Achnacarry, Scotland, July 1942. Road marches were a staple of Ranger training.

19 June 1942

Eighty years ago on 19 June 1942, the 1st Ranger Battalion was activated in Northern Ireland. MAJ William O. Darby, an artillery officer, was hand-picked to recruit volunteers for the new unit, designed to replicate the capability of British Commandos. The volunteers underwent a strenuous selection program designed to identify and train the best candidates for the unit. The Rangers were initially intended to be attached to British Commandos to gain experience raiding German-held countries in Europe, then return to the United States to provide valuable training for new American troops. Instead, the entire 1st Ranger Battalion participated in the U.S.-led invasion of North Africa. The unit was the first of six Ranger Battalions that saw combat during World War II, and would go on to earn two Presidential Unit Citations prior to being disbanded in 1944. To learn more, visit [Rangers in WWII Part I, The Formation and Early Days](#).

24 June 1957

Sixty-five years ago on 24 June 1957, the 1st Special Forces Group (Airborne) was activated at Camp Drake, Japan, near Tokyo, to address counterinsurgency challenges in Southeast Asia. The 1st SFG relocated to Okinawa in July 1957 and immediately began organizing mobile training teams to teach unconventional warfare tactics to training cadres in the armed forces of South Korea, the Philippines, Laos, Republic of Vietnam, Taiwan, and Thailand. Soon, 1st SFG teams, along with the 7th SFG teams, were also conducting Ranger courses for the South Vietnamese army. To learn more about SF growth, visit [SF Setup and Growth](#).



Upon relocating to Okinawa in July 1957, the 1st SFG stood up Mobile Training Teams (MTTs) to train South Vietnam Commandos in Nha Trang.

9 July 1942

This year marked the 80th anniversary of the First Special Service Force, one of the units upon which modern Army Special Operations was built. On 9 July 1942, this all-volunteer American-Canadian force of about 2,000 men assembled at Fort William Henry Harrison, Montana, and began a grueling training program that included close combat fighting, airborne, demolition, mountaineering, amphibious, and winter warfare training. After its planned raiding missions against targets in Nazi-occupied Europe were scrubbed, the Force instead led the assault on Kiska Island on 15 August 1943. It then transitioned to Europe to break through the German stronghold in the Italian mountains and to protect the Allied beachhead of Anzio, where it received the nickname the “Devil’s Brigade.” The Force went on to help liberate Rome and fight in southern France before being formally disbanded in January 1945. In recognition of its superior service during WWII, the Force was awarded the Congressional Gold Medal in 2015. To learn more, visit: [First Special Service Force](#).

SOCIAL MEDIA POSTS FROM JULY



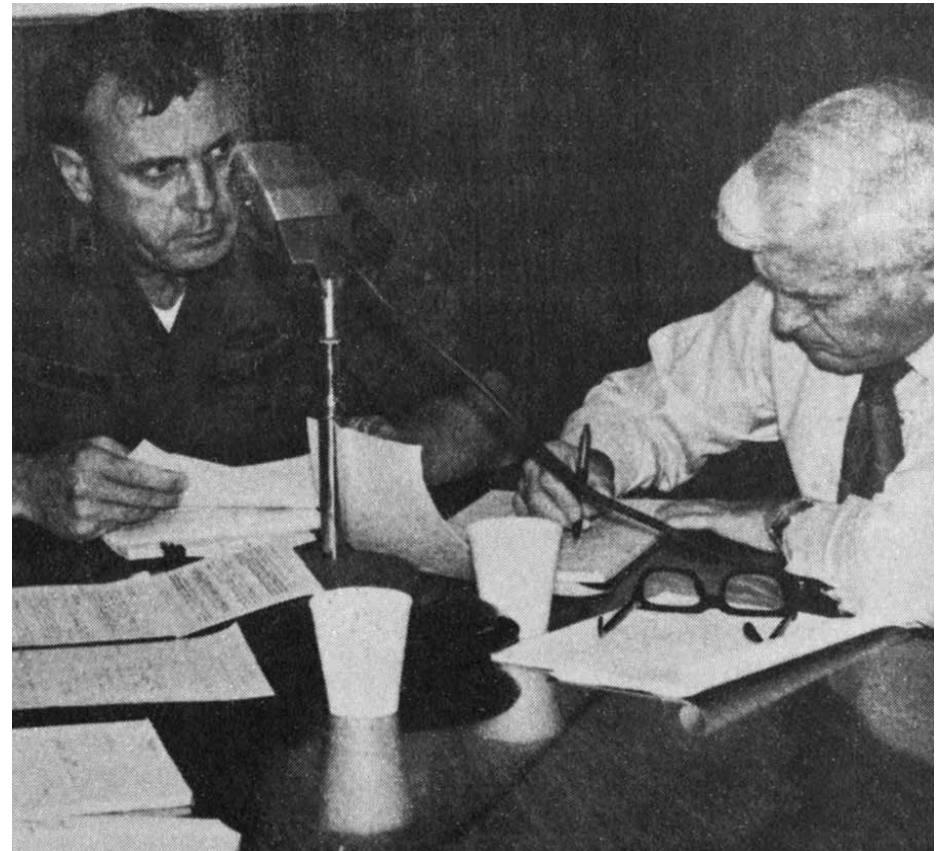
FSSF Commander, BG Robert T. Frederick, right, is pictured here with Fifth Army Commander LTG Mark W. Clark and others on 4 June 1944, during the drive into Rome. Frederick was wounded three times during the assault.

19 August 1942

Eighty years ago, on 19 August 1942, the Dieppe Raid marked the beginning of U.S. ground combat operations in Europe in World War II. Fifty-one men from the 1st Ranger Battalion were chosen to aid Canadian and British commandoes on a special mission to assault German artillery batteries at Dieppe, France, as part of OPERATION JUBILEE. The Rangers assisted in the destruction of one of the enemy batteries. Unfortunately, the mission was catastrophic for the Canadians, who suffered 3,400 casualties out of the 5,000 troops who landed. Three Rangers were also killed and several others captured. The lessons from that raid proved invaluable to the success in Normandy two years later. To learn more, visit: [Rangers in WWII Part I, The Formation and Early Days.](#)



CPT Roy Murray, far left on the front row, was the senior Ranger on the Dieppe Raid. In describing the raid, he said that difficult terrain and the loss of the element of surprise contributed greatly to allied losses. "The net result was that we awakened all the Germans and had them ready for us when we came in. The Canadians did a great job—very courageous. But they were enfiladed by the fire and by the mortars."



COL William A. Hudson, 4th POG Commander (left), and Harris Peel, U.S. Information Agency (right), conduct an interview about PSYOP at Fort Bragg, soon after the Group's reactivation on 13 September 1972. The 4th POG had been inactivated in late 1971 after spending roughly four years in Vietnam.

13 September 1972

Fifty years ago, on 13 September 1972, the 4th Psychological Operations Group (POG) reactivated at Fort Bragg, NC. Originally formed five years earlier in Vietnam, the 4th POG was one of three groups activated between 1965 and 1967, joining the 2nd and 7th POGs. After four years of distinguished service in Vietnam, the 4th POG's colors were cased in 1971 as part of a broader reduction in active-duty PSYOP units toward the end of the war. Fortunately, they didn't stay cased for long. The unit was reactivated in 1972, becoming a valued weapon in the U.S. Special Operations arsenal. For 40 years, the 4th POG operated globally as the Army's only active-duty POG until the 8th POG activated in 2013.

1 October 1982

On 1 October 1982, the Army provisionally activated the 1st Special Operations Command (1st SOCOM) on Fort Bragg, NC. as a higher headquarters for Special Forces, Ranger, PSYOP, and Civil Affairs. It was the first time the Army unified special operations forces under one command. 1st SOCOM was the predecessor to today's U.S. Army Special Operations Command and 1st Special Forces Command (Airborne). To learn more, visit: [U.S. Army Special Operations History](#).



In 1983, the Institute of Heraldry approved for the 1st Special Operations Command (Provisional) to begin using the Distinctive Unit Insignia (DUI) with Trojan Horse, lightning bolt and "Sine Pari." The order was rescinded by the Institute of Heraldry in 1991 when the current insignia, now used by 1st Special Forces Command, was adopted.



Landing craft carried the 1st Ranger Battalion to the port of Arzew, Algeria, in the early morning hours of 8 November 1942.

8 November 1942

On 8 November 1942, the 1st Ranger Battalion launched the Allied invasion of North Africa. In the early morning hours, Operation TORCH commenced with attacks on the Algerian port in Arzew. As two Ranger companies led by MAJ Herman Dammer assaulted the port, three others led by MAJ William O. Darby ascended on enemy cannons overlooking the harbor. It took only about 15 minutes for the "Dammer Force" and "Darby Force" to capture the fort and suppress the cannons. Two Rangers died and eight were wounded during the assault, but the Rangers' success helped pave the way for Allied victory on the continent. The Rangers remained in Arzew as the town's military government and security force for the next two months, where they prepared for six more months of grueling missions that earned them a Presidential Unit Citation. For more information, visit [Rangers in WWII Part I, The Formation and Early Days](#).

THE USASOC UNIT HISTORICAL OFFICER PROGRAM

THE FUTURE OF ARSOF HISTORY

by Christopher E. Howard

For much of the post-9/11 era, USASOC operated a robust History Office that centrally managed the command's historical program. The office consisted of as many as seven professional historians, most with doctoral degrees. They were supported by a combination of other Department of the Army Civilians and contracted personnel, including archivists, visual information specialists, and digitization technicians. Even at peak strength, the History Office could not perform the historical requirements for more than 80 battalion and above units falling under USASOC. For example, it was compelled to task units for Annual Command History (ACH) inputs to fulfill an Army and U.S. Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) requirement. Recent reductions in History Office manning led it to search for a better arrangement.

The History Office found the solution hiding in plain sight. *Army Regulation (AR) 870-5: Military History: Responsibilities, Policies, and Procedures* (September 16, 2021), calls for UHOs at the brigade, group, regiment, and battalion levels. USASOC had never attempted anything along these lines, although some units identified their own historical officers on an ad hoc basis or contracted for historical support, operating outside the purview of USASOC or the Army. This changed in May 2022 when the USASOC Chief of Staff signed Policy 22-20: USASOC Unit Historical Officers. Two months later, the USASOC G-3 tasked all subordinate units at the O-5 (battalion) level and above to appoint UHOs. With this, USASOC's UHO program was born.

Drawing from *AR 870-5*, the key UHO responsibilities include submitting unit-level ACH input, conducting oral history interviews, collecting historically significant documentation, maintaining a unit historical file, and transmitting copies of historical materials to the USASOC History Office for preservation. At their commander's discretion, or on their own initiative, UHOs may supply historical

The U.S. Army Special Operations Command (USASOC) History Office has long been called upon to perform many unit-level history functions for Army Special Operations Forces (ARSOF). However, recent reductions in History Office manning have limited its ability to support units, and impromptu unit-level arrangements cannot be relied upon to fill that gap. The newly launched Unit Historical Officer (UHO) initiative will empower units to take greater ownership of their own history, while better synchronizing historical efforts between USASOC and its subordinate elements.



input to decision-making, leader professional development, and unit morale-building activities.

Recognizing that these requirements may seem daunting to newly appointed UHOs, the History Office decided to implement the program in two phases. The focus in Fiscal Year (FY) 2023 will be the ACH, a standing Army and USSOCOM requirement, and identifying, collecting, and transmitting historically significant materials. Two additional requirements, unit history files and oral histories, are encouraged in FY23, but will be phased in the following year.

At each step in the process, the USASOC History Office personnel will be available to provide training, guidance, historical expertise, and access to historical assets preserved at the USASOC level. This support will be coordinated through the UHO Program Manager at the History Office.

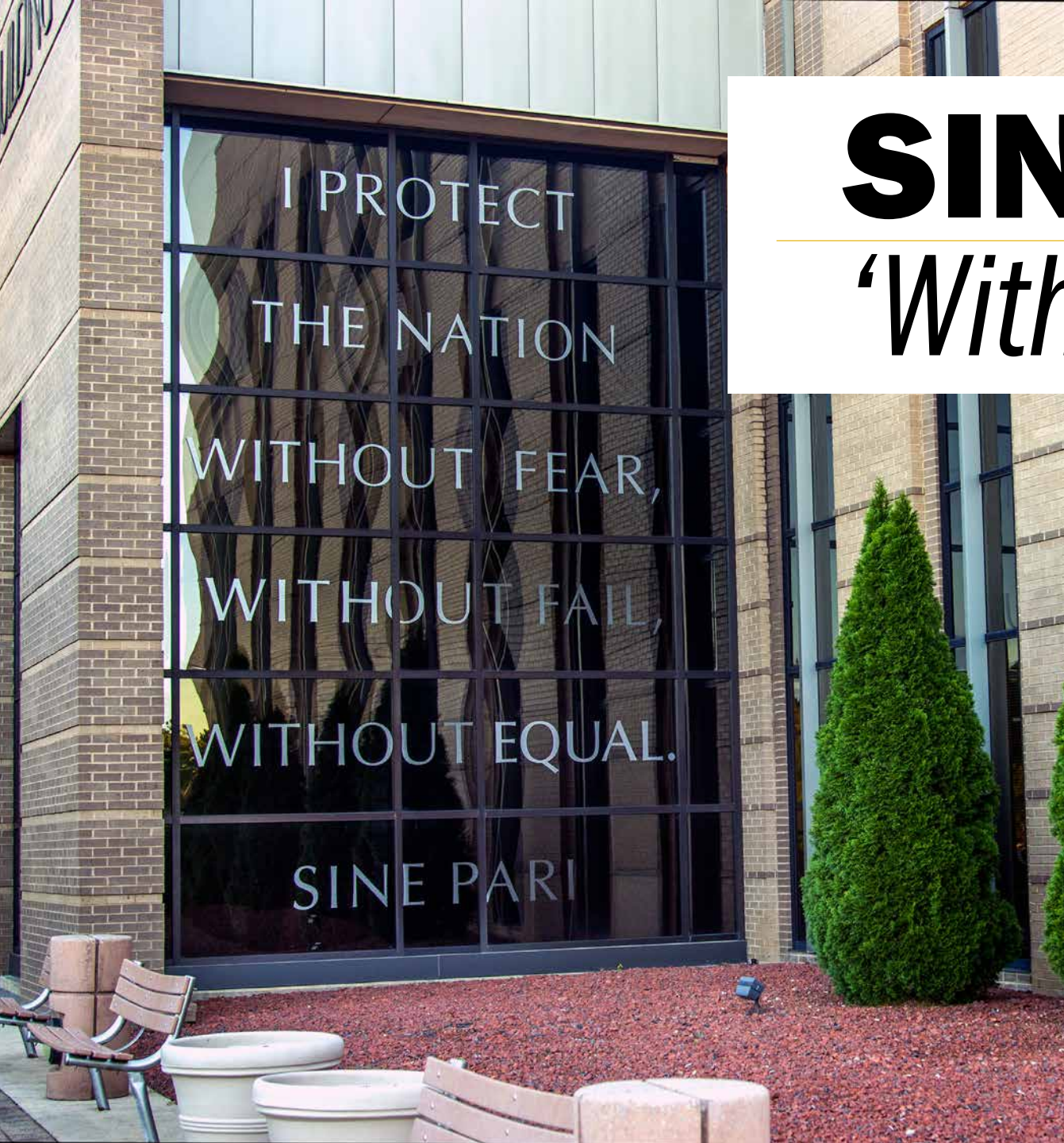
There are no educational requirements for UHOs, but they will be expected to be familiar with AR 870-5 and complete orientation training, conducted by the History Office. Additionally, UHOs should possess a detailed knowledge of his or her organization and have access to the historically relevant information needed to perform the assigned functions. Finally, while not required, UHOs will benefit from an innate interest in history, without which their UHO responsibilities will likely be treated as just another additional duty.

With the assignment of UHOs throughout the ARSOF enterprise, USASOC is adopting a “by, with, and through” approach to its historical program. The USASOC History Office is excited to partner with UHOs to fulfill Army and USSOCOM requirements and, more generally, to make history more relevant and responsive to the force. This approach encourages units to take greater responsibility for their own history, but also empowers them to do so.

Unit buy-in and participation is critical to the success of the program. Fortunately, as of this writing, the majority of USASOC units have appointed UHOs. As a result, over 60 UHOs, including commissioned officers, warrant officers, senior non-commissioned officers, and DA civilians, will be manning the front lines of ARSOF history starting in FY23. These UHOs, supported by the USASOC History Office, are uniquely situated to meet their unit’s historical needs. The future of ARSOF history is in their hands. 🇺🇸



Posing with Dr. Troy J. Sacquety, USASOC Command Historian, one recently appointed UHO (right) assisted a major historical collection effort this past year.



SINE PARI

‘Without Equal’

by Troy J. Sacquety

Army heraldic items and mottos are rich in symbolism, shape organizational identity, and bolster morale and unit esprit de corps. However, their origins are often unknown to those who showcase them. Enlisted soldiers assigned to Headquarters (HQ), U.S. Army Special Operations Command (USASOC), wear on their berets a Distinctive Unit Insignia (DUI) bearing the words SINE PARI (Latin for “Without Equal”). But when and how did the motto SINE PARI come about? The story begins in the early 1980s.

The immediate organizational predecessor to USASOC was the 1st Special Operations Command (1st SOCOM). Provisionally activated on 1 October 1982, 1st SOCOM served as the higher HQ for the 5th, 7th, and 10th Special Forces Groups (SFGs); 4th Psychological Operations (PSYOP) Group; 96th Civil Affairs (CA) Battalion; and the 1st and 2nd Ranger Battalions. On 14 December 1982, 1st SOCOM announced a contest for people to propose suggestions for such items as its Shoulder Sleeve Insignia (SSI) and motto. The winning motto, SINE PARI, was submitted by George Farris, an Army reservist from Washington, DC.

Along with USASOC’s creed, its motto adorns the entrance to the headquarters building.



Former USASOC DUI



Current USASOC DUI

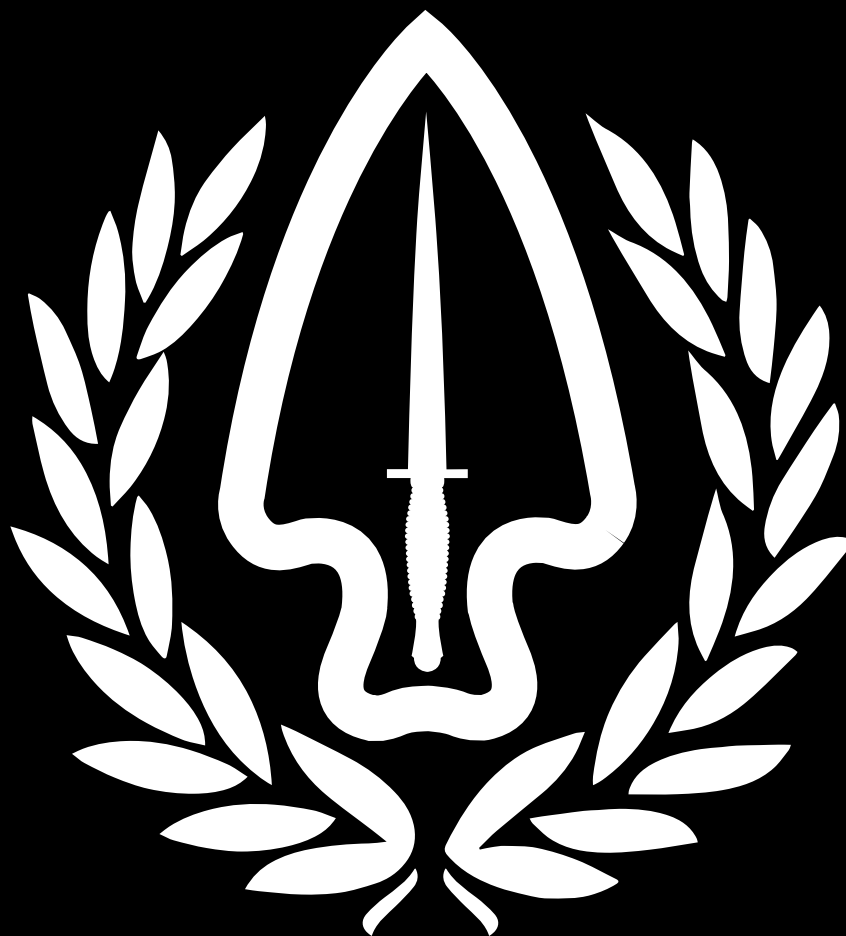
Seven years later, on 1 December 1989, USASOC was activated as the higher HQ for all active and reserve SF, PSYOP, CA, Ranger, and special operations aviation and sustainment elements. For a brief time, 1st SOCOM was subordinate to USASOC, but it transitioned to become the U.S. Army Special Forces Command (USASFC) on 27 November 1990 (which in turn became the 1st Special Forces Command in 2014). Because USASFC adopted the SF motto, DE OPPRESSO LIBER (Latin for “To Free the Oppressed”), SINE PARI was available as a motto for USASOC. However, others were considered before a final decision was made.

The English translation of SINE PARI, “Without Equal,” was already claimed by the 184th Ordnance Battalion. Since two organizations cannot have the same motto in the same language, that option was quickly eliminated. Other proposals included AUDE MUSE (Latin for “We Dare”), “To Dare,” TRODESSE (“We Serve”), and HAEC PRAESTAT MILITA (“This Warfare Excels”). In the end, USASOC elected to retain 1st SOCOM’s motto, SINE PARI.

The original USASOC DUI bearing the inscription SINE PARI was approved on 21 February 1990. Some 20 years later, on 5 October 2011, the Army approved a new USASOC DUI, which had been redesigned to depict ARSOF’s global ground combat domain and its connection to the World War II-era First Special Service Force, Ranger Battalions, and Office of Strategic Services. Representing merit and honor, the gold scroll at the bottom bears the inscribed motto carried over from 1st SOCOM and the original USASOC DUI: SINE PARI. 

Bearing the motto SINE PARI, the command DUI adorns the beret of all enlisted soldiers assigned to HQ, USASOC, as shown here on Medal of Honor recipient Sergeant Major Thomas P. Payne





Want more Army Special Operations History?

Check out our website:

arsof-history.org/

Commander, USASOC
ATTN: AOHS (Veritas)
E-2929 Desert Storm Drive
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