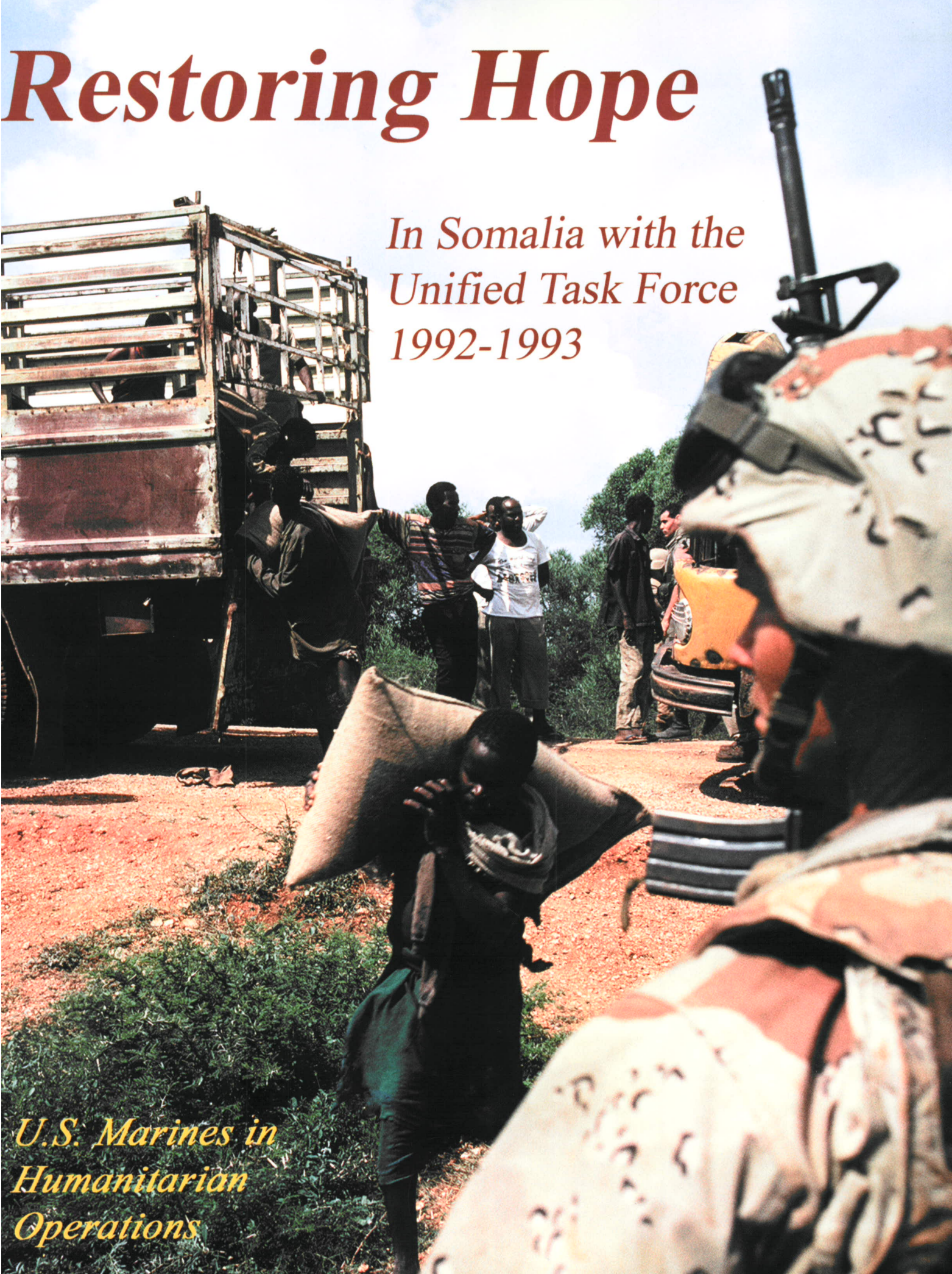


Restoring Hope

*In Somalia with the
Unified Task Force
1992-1993*

*U.S. Marines in
Humanitarian
Operations*



COVER: *Civilian relief workers unload food supplies at a village near Baidoa as a Marine escort stands by.*

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Restoring Hope:
In Somalia with the
Unified Task Force, 1992 - 1993

U.S. Marines in Humanitarian Operations



by
Colonel Dennis P. Mroczkowski
U.S. Marine Corps Reserve (Retired)

History Division
United States Marine Corps
Washington, D.C.
2005

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Foreword

This story of Operation Restore Hope relates how many issues unique to operations other than war were addressed and resolved by the commanding general of the Unified Task Force Somalia (UNITAF) and his staff. Because it is written specifically from the perspective of the command element and drawn from interviews, notes, and after action reports made at the time or shortly thereafter, this is a study of command, limited to that discrete portion of American involvement in Somalia that was the United States-led coalition under the command of Marine Lieutenant General Robert B. Johnston. It does not follow the actions of the individual components or members of the units that made up the coalition force beyond how they may have affected the work and mission of UNITAF.

Modern military operations other than war are, in many ways, similar to pacification operations conducted in Latin America and the Far East a century ago. In fact, the lessons learned sections of many modern after action reports are familiar to anyone who has read the Marine Corps' 1940 *Small Wars Manual*, a treatise of the Corps' experience in the Banana Wars, which was written before World War II. Sections of that manual emphasized that civic actions often affected mission accomplishment more than military actions, and stressed that Marines must both become attuned to local culture and remain aloof from domestic political squabbles to be successful.

The last decade of the 20th century brought great changes to the world, many of which affected the United States military. If the years 1980 to 1989 were a time of reformulating military doctrine and integrating new technologies, the years from 1990 to 1999 were a time for testing those thoughts and instruments.

The final defeat of communism in Europe, the fall of the Warsaw Pact, and the dissolution of the Soviet Union were great ends in themselves. But they were the heralds of the new world order proclaimed shortly after by President George H. W. Bush. On the one hand, these occurrences allowed the United States and its allies to act decisively in the Persian Gulf against Iraq in 1990 and 1991; but the loss of the Cold War counterbalance of the Soviet Union and its strategic aims meant the United States would find it easier to become involved in regional conflicts and localized civil strife. For the remainder of the decade, United States military personnel bore a burden of increasing operational tempo rarely known in eras of peace.

Following the Persian Gulf War and its related Kurdish relief operation, the next major military commitment was to Somalia. The crisis in that country was such that the humanitarian mission of the United States and its coalition allies could only be met by military means. The response to the crisis was named Operation Restore Hope and was significant for its size and international support. It also provided useful lessons for succeeding humanitarian operations. Brigadier General Anthony C. Zinni, one of America's foremost experts on operations other than

war, saw the need for the Marine Corps to train a new generation of Marines able to think in new directions to solve the problems of humanitarian operations conducted in support of sometimes obscure and limited national goals. Many of the issues faced in Somalia by planners and executors (the Marines and soldiers on the ground) have resurfaced in Haiti, Bosnia, Rwanda, and other hotspots.

The author, Colonel Dennis P. Mroczkowski, retired from the United States Marine Corps Reserve on 1 March 1999, with nearly 31 years of service. During that time, he served in Vietnam as an artillery forward observer with two rifle companies, as an observer and advisor with the 37th Vietnamese Ranger Battalion, and the officer in charge of an integrated observation device (laser range finder) team on an outpost in the Que Son mountains. As a reservist, he later served in a variety of positions at the battery level with Battery H, 3d Battalion, 14th Marines. While on the staff of the Fleet Marine Force Atlantic Reserve Augmentation Unit, he served as a liaison officer with the British Army on six NATO exercises. He was the G-3 plans officer with the 2d Marine Expeditionary Brigade from 1988 to 1990. During the early days of the Persian Gulf War, he was recalled to active duty as a senior watch team commander in the crisis action center of the II Marine Expeditionary Force. He later received orders to proceed to Saudi Arabia as a field historian with the 2d Marine Division. He served with that unit throughout Operation Desert Storm. He was again recalled to active duty in December 1992 to serve as a field historian with the headquarters of the UNITAF in Somalia. In October 1994, he was recalled to active duty to serve in Haiti as the joint task force historian with the multinational force during Operation Restore Democracy. On 1 January 1996, he returned to active duty as the historian assigned to United States European Command to document Operation Joint Endeavor, during which he served in Germany, Italy, Hungary, Bosnia, and Croatia. For the last years of his military career he was the officer in charge of the Field Operations Branch of the Marine Corps History and Museums Division. During this time, he served with members of the general staff of the Polish Armed Forces on three occasions in Poland and the United States in the Partners For Peace program. He was recalled from retirement during the Global War on Terror in March 2003 and served as a historian for the Special Operations Command. He served overseas with a special operations air detachment and two battalions of U.S. Army Special Forces in Kuwait and Iraq.

Colonel Mroczkowski is the author of *U. S. Marines in the Persian Gulf, 1990-1991: With the 2d Marine Division in Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm*, and co-author of *Fort Monroe: The Key To The South*. He also has written several articles on military subjects. In civil life, he is the director of the U. S. Army's museum at Fort Monroe, Virginia, a position he has held since January 1986.



C.D. Melson
Acting Director of Marine Corps History

Preface

Operation Restore Hope was a complicated and unusual operation. From the initial commitment of United States Armed Forces on 9 December 1992 until the turnover to the United Nations in May 1993, there was little need for direct military action by large units, although the Unified Task Force Somalia (UNITAF) command was not loath to use force when necessary. Rather, the need to keep a neutral and balanced approach to the situation in Somalia was more important to the success of the mission. Small unit actions, patrolling, manning key points, convoy security, and crowd control were the order of the day. For a military historian, it has been an important task to identify the critical issues, often political in nature, which were of importance to the command and its conduct of the operation, and to follow these issues as events unfolded. This is far easier in a classic military operation with well-defined missions and objectives, and in which the effects of enemy actions or capabilities are readily discernible. The history of this operation is more about the evolution of ideas and command structures than it is about the engagement of enemy forces.

I have no reservations in claiming that the operation was successful; Lieutenant General Robert B. Johnston and his coalition staff skillfully accomplished the mission of the Unified Task Force, which was to create a secure environment for the shipment of relief supplies and the establishment of the second United Nations force in Somalia, UNOSOM II. The Unified Task Force was able to turn over to the United Nations a country that, though still beset by problems, was beginning to recover and in which the famine had been broken. What occurred after 4 May 1993 is another story, of which Operation Restore Hope was the prologue.

The narrative is drawn from interviews, notes, and after action reports created at the time or shortly thereafter. As the historian assigned to UNITAF headquarters, I was in a notable position to have access to what was discussed and planned, but was also able to directly observe the resulting operations. I attended meetings and daily briefings and was able to travel throughout the theater, eventually reaching each of the humanitarian relief sectors. This gave me the opportunity to conduct interviews in the field with commanders, staff officers, and individual soldiers, Marines, airmen, and sailors. It also gave me the opportunity to see the diversity of action in each sector and to appreciate the complex nature and vast scope of operations: Somalia was not just Mogadishu, and Operation Restore Hope was more than the daily round of patrols and spot reports. The greatest difficulty I faced was in the very size of the area of responsibility (which was itself but a small part of the entire country of Somalia.) Travel was both time consuming and physically demanding; it could easily take at least three days to reach some of the farther cities, conduct a few interviews, and then return. Whether going by motorized convoy or aircraft, a day would be spent in travel each way, and a full day or two would be spent on the ground. All had to be timed to transportation schedules that could change with little or no advance notice. Failure to connect left one stranded until the next convoy or aircraft departed. Also, since I could not presume to impose on the hospitality of others, I had to be prepared to bring everything that I might require for food, water, or accommodation. "Humping" through the dust from a dirt airfield along a desert track with a full combat load, several liters of bottled water, a full Alice pack and a cot was not

something to look forward to. But the camaraderie shown in each sector certainly was, and the information gathered was worth the effort.

I also was fortunate to have met several persons with whom I got to work closely, or who helped me accomplish my mission. The first of these was Colonel Billy C. Steed, the UNITAF chief of staff, who gave me the latitude to go where I needed, provided me with access to meetings, and ensured that I reviewed important documents. Next was Captain David A. "Scotty" Dawson, who was the historian for the Marine Forces, and who had been overseeing the UNITAF headquarters portion as well until I arrived. He very quickly showed me around, and he was indefatigable and always full of enthusiasm. Much of my working time was spent in the operations center under the watchful eye of Colonel James B. "Irish" Egan, whose colorful manner made more bearable a daily grind in uncomfortable circumstances. He also demonstrated that the more important, but less noted, part of military professionalism often lies in the attention to routine duty and detail. I was fortunate to share a cramped, hot and airless working space in UNITAF headquarters with a distinguished civilian, Dr. Katherine A. W. McGrady, an employee of the Center for Naval Analyses. She provided insight in what was going on and kept me apprised on what happened while I was out traveling. More importantly, we shared the documents and information we collected, making the effort more complete than it would otherwise have been. I had the opportunity to visit on a few occasions with the 10th Mountain Division's historian, Captain Drew R. Meyerowich, USA. In addition to discussing the collection of documents and information, he spoke of his desire to get away from his desk and be more actively involved in the operation. He got his wish a few months later as the commanding officer of Company A, 2d Battalion, 14th Infantry, which, as part of the quick reaction force for the raid on General Mohamed Farah Hassan Aideed's headquarters on 3 October, fought its way through the streets of Mogadishu. Captain Meyerowich was awarded the Silver Star for his valor and leadership. Several outstanding Marine Corps combat artists also documented Operation Restore Hope. The first of these was Colonel Peter "Mike" Gish, who had an ability to see the essence of a scene and capture it in his sketchpad in just a few strokes. His good humor and endurance belied the age of a man whose service extended back to his time as an aviation cadet in the latter days of World War II, and who had seen active service during the wars in Korea, Vietnam, Persian Gulf, and in the Kurdish relief operation. He and I shared many travels and many a dinner of meals, ready to eat, atop the chancery building in Mogadishu. He was an excellent mentor who taught me how to properly use the authority of a full colonel to accomplish one's mission. The lessons came in handy in later years in Haiti, Europe, and eventually back in Iraq. Lieutenant Colonel Donna J. Neary also deployed to Somalia, and I had the opportunity to watch her talent in the field. A gifted artist, she also had a knack for photography that was used to create a portfolio of coalition uniforms and arms. Captain Burton Moore brought his experience as an infantry officer during Vietnam, and worked as an artist with the Marine Forces. He created some remarkable works of Marines in action. Two of these artists are represented in this volume. I was very fortunate in meeting Major Daniel M. Lizzul, who was working as a liaison officer with the Italian forces. He not only assisted in interpreting interviews, but also ensured I got to accompany the Italians on some of their operations. I count him as a good friend and a highly professional officer. Warrant Officer Charles G. Grow, who I had known during Desert Storm, continued his excellent performance as both a combat photographer and artist. He was an invaluable liaison with the Joint Combat Camera Team. Sergeant B. W. Beard, a writer with the Joint Information Bureau, accompanied me on a memorable journey to Gialalassi in late December. His articles,

written for the local coalition forces' newspaper and service magazines, captured the spirit of what was happening for the Marines and soldiers who were out on the streets. Finally, there were all of the officers and soldiers of the various services of the coalition forces who responded to my requests for interviews and information. These men and women were often busy with their own duties, but they managed to find time to speak with me and help me to gather a full impression of their work.

Of course, not everyone who contributed to my work in the field or to this history was with me in Somalia. As I left Somalia, my good friend and comrade, Lieutenant Colonel Charles H. Cureton, took my place. He was leading the first Joint History Team to deploy in support of an active operation, composed of five men besides himself: Commander Roger T. Zeimet, USNR; Major Robert K. Wright, Jr., USAR; Major Robert L. Furu, USAR; Major Jimmy Miller, USAFR; and Sergeant Michael Eberle, USA. Lieutenant Colonel Cureton led a highly organized and thorough field history program. These officers were able to conduct scores of interviews and collect thousands of documents. Their prodigious collection effort has been compiled into a volume entitled *Resource Guide: Unified Task Force Somalia December 1992-May 1993 Operation Restore Hope*, published by the U.S Army Center of Military History. This book has been of tremendous value in researching and writing this monograph.

Back in the United States, I owed my position to Brigadier General Edwin H. Simmons, Director of Marine Corps History and Museums. When the call came for a historian to go to Somalia with UNITAF, he selected me from a field of very qualified candidates. His deputy, Colonel Marshall B. Darling, kept me informed of what was happening back home and forwarded anything that I requested. The director of the Joint History Office, Brigadier General David A. Armstrong, USA (Retired), also provided me with briefings, information, and encouragement, and helped me to secure the opportunity to deploy to Somalia as a historian. I certainly wish to thank those who reviewed the draft of this history, most especially Lieutenant Colonel Charles H. Cureton, and Lieutenant Colonel Ronald J. Brown. Both of these officers have been friends and comrades in the service of the history of our Corps. Lieutenant Colonel Brown, a Basic School classmate, made several recommendations that helped with the clarity of some of the more technical aspects of this history. Brigadier General Gregory Gile, USA (Retired), also reviewed the chapter that details the work of the coalition forces in the relief sectors. Brigadier William J. A. Mellor DSC, AM, Royal Australian Army, did the same for those portions that involved Australia's participation.

I also wish to thank Mr. Charles D. Melson, chief historian, Mr. Charles R. Smith, senior historian, and Mr. Scott N. Summerill, senior editor, for their thorough review of the final draft. My gratitude also goes to Mr. W. Stephen Hill, who designed the maps, and to Mrs. Catherine A. Kerns, who prepared the manuscript for publication, and again to Mr. Charles R. Smith for illustrating the history and preparing the index.

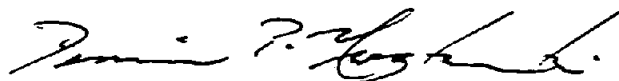
Not everything in the field worked as planned. A rare, sudden thunderstorm caught me in an open vehicle shortly after I arrived. The water caused havoc with my tape recorder. Thereafter, I was forced to use a notebook to record conversations with members of UNITAF while in the field. This is referred to as my field notebook in the pages that follow to distinguish it from my journal. In that latter volume, I recorded the information from briefings and meetings, as well as personal observations about the operation. Whenever I was working in the UNITAF headquarters compound, I could use the services of the Joint Combat Camera Team to record my interviews with commanders and staff officers. Unfortunately,

most of these were unavailable to me while I was writing this history. Fortunately, I kept notes of these interviews and have used these.

I chose to allow the materials used to guide the writing of the history and to follow the development of issues. I have endeavored to use sources collected by myself or by others at the time of the operation, or shortly thereafter. The views and comments presented most nearly coincide with those perceptions held by the participants at the time. Where I have used secondary sources, I have tried to use ones that gave insight into the more non-military aspects of the operation, such as Somali culture, politics, United Nations participation, etc. Here again, I have used studies that were prepared just a few years after the operation.

There are now several excellent studies of the operations in Somalia, but which were not used for the preparation of this work. Many of these deal with the more dramatic events of October 1993, which is outside the scope of this monograph. Interested scholars are directed to *Somalia and Operation Restore Hope* by John L. Hirsch and Robert B. Oakley, and *Policing The New World Disorder: Peace Operations and Public Security*, edited by Robert B. Oakley, Michael J. Dziedzic, and Eliot M. Goldberg. Of importance for an understanding of the United Nations' perspective and the relationships of UNITAF with UNOSOM I and II is volume VIII of the United Nations blue book series, *The United Nations and Somalia, 1992-1996*. Mark Bowden's *Black Hawk Down: A Story of Modern War* is a moving account based on interviews with participants of the raid of 3 October 1993. It is by far the best of several that have been published in recent years. In addition, there have been many excellent articles in military journals and the military forces of several of the coalition nations have written after-action reports or official histories of their contributions to the operation.

In the middle of January 1993, shortly after the death in action of Private First Class Domingo Arroyo, I was traveling by helicopter to an interview with Captain John W. Peterson, USN. While waiting at the helipad near the airport, a small group of Marines joined the party. They were members of Task Force Mogadishu. As we waited, a first lieutenant and I struck up a conversation, as Marines often will when thrown together for a short time. After explaining what we each did, he asked me, referring to Private First Class Arroyo's death, "Sir, was it worth it?" I could not answer his question then, knowing how keenly this loss had been felt. Most certainly to Arroyo's family, friends, and comrades, the price was too great. But there were also the scores of thousands of Somalis, many of them innocent children, who had been saved by the efforts of Marines, soldiers, and sailors like Private First Class Arroyo. For these and their families there could be no greater gift. If, in the end, America and her coalition partners were repaid with callous evil by some men, that does not mean the attempt ought not to have been made. Someday, perhaps, one of those children, grown-up and grateful for what had been done, will lead his country out of the fear, evil, and despair that have engulfed it.



D. P. Mroczkowski
Colonel, U.S. Marine Corps Reserve (Retired)

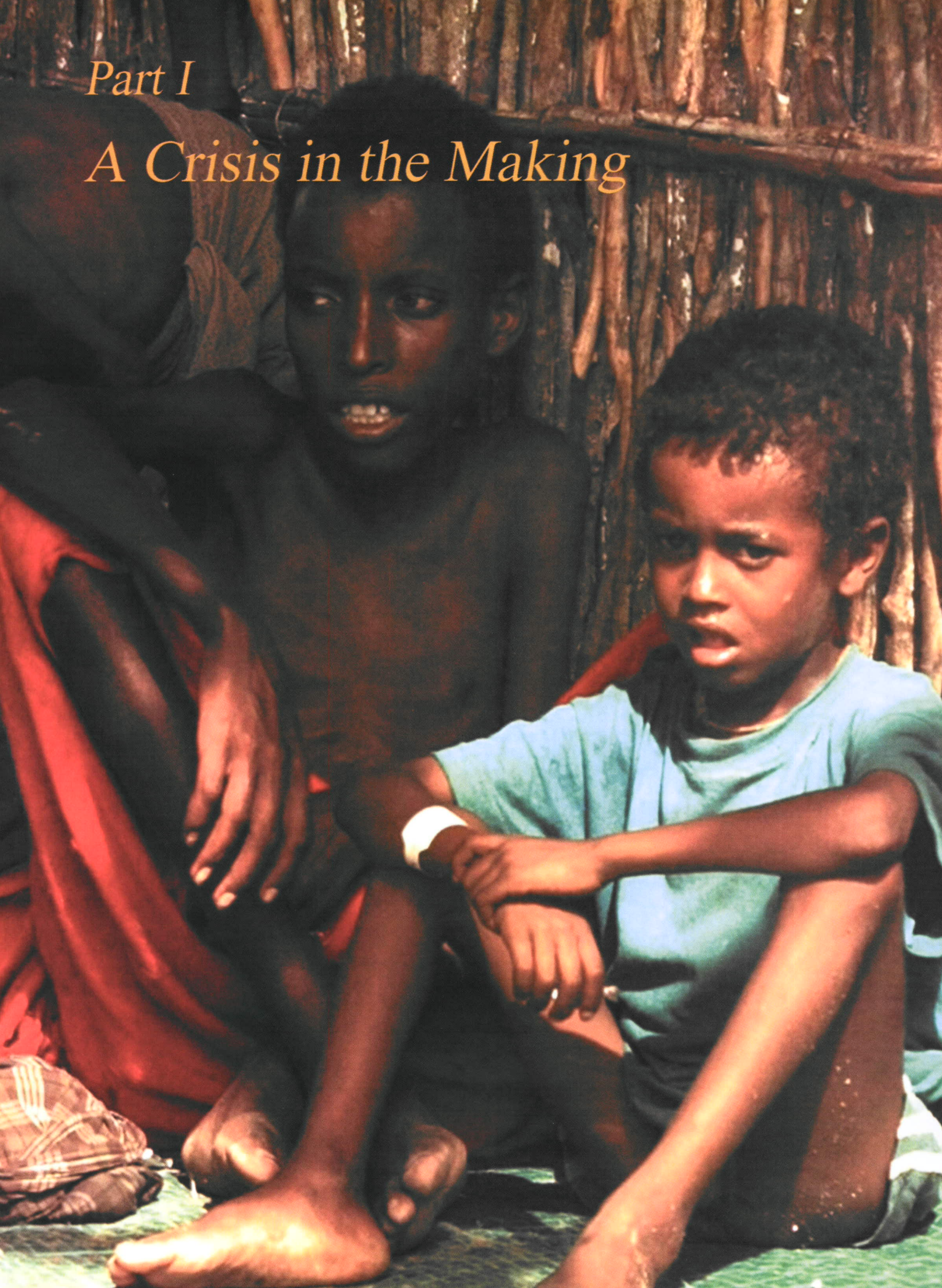
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Part I

A Crisis in the Making



Chapter 1

Descent Into Despair

The Beginning

By the summer of 1992, almost every American was familiar with the problems of Somalia. Images of sick, weak, and starving people had been forced into the consciousness of even the most casual observer of the news of the day. Television specials, photographs in magazines, newspaper articles, and even radio programs all served to focus the attention of our nation to this devastated land on the Horn of Africa. That people were suffering and dying in the thousands was obvious; that something needed to be done was unquestionable. But even the best intentions are of no consequence without identifiable goals and the means to implement a relevant plan. In August 1992, the United States, responding to a great human tragedy, was ready to act. The plan, originally quite simple, was the start of what would develop into one of the largest humanitarian relief efforts in the history of the world, Operation Restore Hope.

On 18 August 1992, President George H. W. Bush ordered the airlift of 145,000 tons of emer-

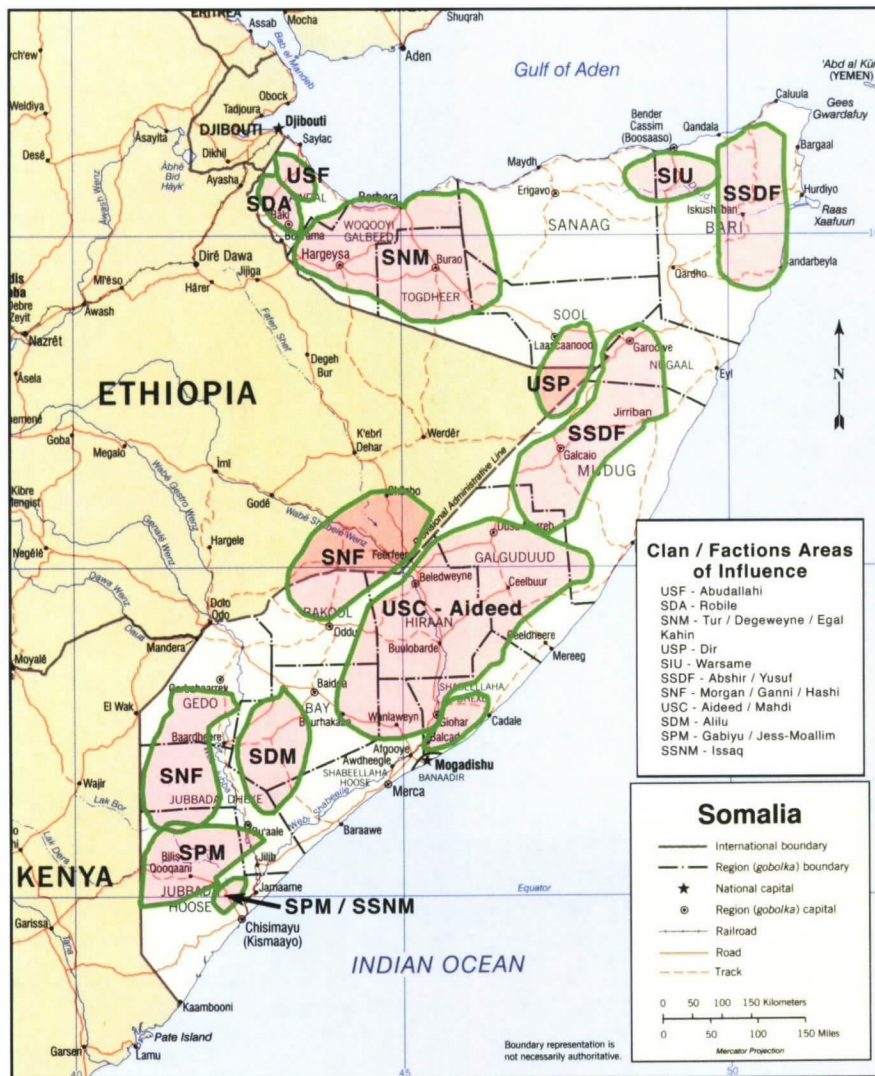
gency food supplies to Somalia. This initial effort, named Operation Provide Relief, was based in Mombasa, Kenya, and was commanded by Marine Brigadier General Frank Libutti. Military and civilian aircraft were used to fly shipments of food to towns inside Somalia.¹ From there, the food was to be distributed to needy refugees by humanitarian relief organizations and nongovernmental organizations such as the International Red Cross and the World Food Program. Unfortunately, the accomplishment of this humane task was often frustrated by the conditions on the ground in Somalia.

As is so often the case with crises that seemingly flash across the nation's television screens and magazine covers, the situation that led to a united intervention in Somalia had a long and complex history that was not immediately apparent. Of all of the world's areas, the Horn of Africa always has been one of the most overlooked and least understood. Yet, an appreciation of the history and culture of this region is necessary to understand what the United States-led coalition did, and what its accomplishments were.



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A Somali herds his flock of goats near the village of Belet Weyne. Unlike much of postcolonial Africa, Somalia's borders enclosed a single ethnic group, the Samaal, which has occupied the region since biblical times.



Clans and Colonization

One of the most important aspects of Somali society, and perhaps the most difficult for Western observers to understand or appreciate, are the concepts of lineage and clan affiliation. For many Americans, the word “clan” conjures up images of Scottish or Irish ancestry. To a Somali, however, clan relationships define individual identity and relationships to every person that he comes into contact with. It is no exaggeration that Somali children are taught their lineages for several generations back so that on meeting another person, each can recite his ancestry and thus understand his obligations and responsibilities to the other.

Traditionally, all Somalis trace their ancestry back to one man, Abu Taalib, an uncle of the Prophet Mohamed. His son, Aqiil, in turn had two sons, Sab and Samaal. It is from these two the six

clan-families descend and through which all ethnic Somalis trace their ancestry. On the Sab branch, these clan-families are the Digil and Rahanweyne; from Samaal are descended the Darod, Dir, Issaq and Hawiye. Over generations, each of these clan-families was further subdivided into clans, subclans and families.² This fracturing of the people by lines of descent produced a dichotomy not unusual in clan societies in which there is strength against an external foe, but internal national weakness. For example, while a threat to the overall structure could bring about a unified effort to combat it, the various entities could still be fiercely antagonistic to one another. In an area in which resources are scarce and competition for those resources is very great, such hereditary divisiveness can assume tremendous importance. In Somalia, the scarcity of water and arable land for both nomadic

herdsmen and for farmers has led to a tradition of competition among the various families and clans.³

A unified Somali nation did not exist until the 20th century. In earlier times, the country was under the control of various emirates, generally centered along the coast. Cities carried on a trade between the peoples of the hinterland and the Arabian Peninsula. By the late 19th century, however, several other countries were colonizing or occupying parts of the Horn of Africa that would become Somalia. The French occupied the northernmost sector, French Somaliland, today known as Djibouti. The Italians, seeking an empire in Africa, colonized the southern portion and called Italian Somaliland. The British, with an eye to the protection of the Suez Canal and their trade through the Red Sea, occupied an area on the Gulf of Aden known as British Somaliland. Even the

Egyptians and Ethiopians claimed portions of the territory inhabited by the Somalis.⁴ A legacy of bitterness, particularly against the Egyptians, the Coptic Christian Ethiopians, and the Italians, was formed at this time and was still apparent during Operation Restore Hope.

Life was not always tranquil for the occupying powers, and they often fought among themselves. In 1896, the Italians invaded Ethiopia from Eritria, their colony on the Red Sea. The army of the Ethiopian emperor, Menelik II, stunningly defeated them at the Battle of Adowa. Imam Mohamed Ibn Abdullah Hassan raised an insurrection in British Somaliland in 1899 in response to perceived threats to the Islamic religion from foreign influences. Known to history as the “Mad Mullah,” Mohamed Abdullah waged an intermittent 22-year jihad against both the British and the Ethiopians. This was a period in Somalia’s history marked by chaos, destruction, and famine and during which it is estimated that one-third of all males in British Somaliland died, often at the hands of the Mullah and his followers. It is diffi-

cult not to see a reflection of these earlier events in those that would occur 80 years later.⁵

While Great Britain, Italy, and France were allies during World War I, the rise of the Fascist dictator Benito Mussolini was to cause a division among the colonial powers. The Italian invasion and conquest of Ethiopia in 1935 placed Italy squarely in confrontation with Great Britain. British opposition to this aggression moved Mussolini to join Adolf Hitler, whose policies of expansion in Europe Mussolini had formerly opposed.⁶ Thus, when World War II began, the Horn of Africa was occupied by belligerents and was soon to become a battleground.

The Italian Fascist government recognized it had the “chance of five thousand years” to increase its African colonial holdings at the expense of Great Britain.⁷ But Italy did not declare war on the British Empire until the fall of France was imminent, in June 1940. Before the year ended, however, the British were already planning to attack the Italian forces in Somalia, as part of an overall strategy to clear the African con-

Somalia Clan Affiliations

The influence of clans and sub-clans was seen in the numerous factions and political organizations, which had been struggling for power since the overthrow of Muhammad Siad Barre. Virtually all derived their influence from their affiliation with one of the clans or clan-families. The important clans to the work of Operation Restore Hope were:

The United Somali Congress (USC). This was the largest of the factions operating in southern Somalia, and it was one of the first to fight against the Barre regime. Composed principally of the Hawiye clan-family, it was further subdivided into two factions, which were in violent competition with each other. The first of these was the faction led by General Mohamed Farah Hassan Aideed. Usually referred to as USC Aideed, it was drawn from the Habr Gedr clan. The force under Ali Mahdi Mohamed, the USC Ali Mahdi, drew its support from the Abgal clan and opposed the USC Aideed faction. Both were strong in the Mogadishu area, and each had supporters in other factions in the port city of Kismayo.

The Somali Patriotic Movement (SPM). Active mainly in the south around Kismayo, this faction was drawn from the Ogadeni clan of the Darod clan-family. It also was divided into two rival groups. One, led by Colonel Ahmed Omar Jess, was allied with General Aideed. The other was led by Colonel Aden Gabiyu and was allied with the forces of Mohamed Said Hirsi, known as “General Morgan.” Morgan’s forces were an independent faction of the Ogadeni sub-clan and were active in the Kismayo area, extending to the towns of Bardera and Baidoa. Morgan was allied with Ali Mahdi and therefore was opposed to Colonel Jess.

Several other factions were operating in Somalia at this time. Each had an armed militia. While these had less impact on the coalition’s work, they had to be considered.

In the north was the Somali National Movement (SNM), dominated by the Issaq clan-family. Under the leadership of Abdulrahman Ali Tur, this faction declared the independence of the northwestern portion of the country as the “Somaliland Republic.”

Also in the north was the Somali Salvation Democratic Front (SSDF), composed of members of the Majertain clan of the Darod clan-family. The SSDF opposed the USC.

The Somali Democratic Movement (SDM) was affiliated with the Rahanweyne clan-family and operated to the west of Mogadishu, centered on the town of Bardera and also strong in Baidoa.

The Somali National Front (SNF) was drawn from the Marehan clan of the Darod clan-family and was active along the border of Ethiopia near the town of Luuq.

The Southern Somali National Movement (SSNM) had its center in the town of Kismayo, and was representative of the Biyemal clan of the Dir clan-family.

There also were several religious-based organizations, particularly in the north. These groups included al-Itihaad al-Islamiya (Islamic Unity), which had fought against the SSDF in the north, and Akhwaan al-Muslimiin (Muslim Brotherhood), which had adherents throughout the country.

continent of the enemy. Accordingly, in February 1941, British Empire forces were on the offensive to places that would become familiar to American servicemen 52 years later. On 14 February, the port city of Kismayo was captured, followed by the town of Jilib on the Jubba River on 22 February. The city of Mogadishu was attacked next. Although it is more than 200 miles from Kismayo and Jilib, British Empire troops entered Mogadishu only three days later, on 25 February. With the Italian forces retreating into the interior, British forces advanced quickly beyond the borders of Italian Somaliland and into Ethiopia.⁸

As the war moved away from Somalia, the British assumed responsibility for the administration of the entire area. During this period, the Somali people began to develop their first modern political organizations. The Somalia Youth Club was formed in 1943, including in its membership native civil servants and police officers. In 1947, the organization changed its name to the Somali Youth League (SYL), with the announced aims of the unification of all Somali territory, a standardized written form of the language, and protection of Somali interests. With branches in all Somali-occupied territories, including areas of Ethiopia and Kenya, and with a membership from nearly all clan-families, this party represented a true national political organization. Other parties also came into being at this time, but these were invariably representative individual clan-families.⁹

A Trust Territory

British administration continued until the end of the war, when the Allies decided the Italian colonies seized during the war would not be returned. A commission composed of representatives of Britain, France, the Soviet Union, and the United States was formed to study the disposition of these former colonies, including Somalia. The SYL proposed that all Somali territories be unified and requested a trusteeship by an international commission for 10 years to be followed by complete independence. While such a proposal was agreeable to the commission, the Allied Council of Foreign Ministers could not decide on the proper method for preparing the country for independence. Finally, in 1949, the General Assembly of the United Nations assigned Italy the trusteeship with the stipulation that Somalia must be entirely independent before the end of 1960. Although there were many Somalis, particularly

in the SYL, who did not want Italy to control any of the country, they did acquiesce to the proposal. For the next 11 years, the country was prepared for independence as a Trust Territory. Although there was some antagonism toward the Italians in the early years of this period, it began to wane as the country's economy and political structures developed. The time was one of optimism as enthusiasm for the new democracy raised a national spirit without the traditional connections to the clan-families.¹⁰

During the 1950s, the SYL continued to be the most important and strongest of the political parties. By 1956, the SYL had received the majority of the seats in the national assembly. It followed a program that was nationalist in outlook and sought to weaken the influence of the clans. When drafting the constitution for the new nation as it approached independence, the SYL sought a unitary form of government. A federal form was believed to be too susceptible to the divisiveness of clan interests, and even in the SYL itself there were individuals who were more interested in the furtherance of their particular clan than in a purely national program.¹¹

Unification and Independence

In 1956, Britain agreed to the eventual independence of British Somaliland and its incorporation in the new nation. Accordingly, British Somaliland was granted independence on 26 June 1960, and on 1 July it joined with the Trust Territory to form the Somali Republic. During this early period of independence, the new national government had to address the differences between the two sections' political, economic, and social development. While clan allegiances remained important, the development of a position with an appeal to the interests of both the northern and southern sections helped to bring the nation closer together.¹²

The major issues facing the new country during the 1960s were the improvement of social conditions and the nation's physical infrastructure. At the same time, many of the nation's political leaders espoused the idea of "Pan-Somalism," a concept that called for the unification of all the Somali peoples into one nation. Whether this unity was to be achieved by peaceful or aggressive means was an issue of some debate among the leaders, but the idea had a great appeal with the people. Since many Somalis lived in the bor-

der areas of Kenya, Ethiopia, and Djibouti, this goal placed Somalia in confrontation with those nations. There were several border clashes with Ethiopia during this period, as well as guerilla raids into Kenya. While this expansionist program may have alienated Somalia at times from its neighbors, the general policy did provide a broad basis for agreement among nearly all of the political leaders.¹³

The 1960s also saw the increasing dominance of the SYL in the government. Curiously, the party's great success was becoming a weakness. As candidates in national elections began to recognize the SYL was the winning ticket, the party drew persons of all political views and beliefs into its ranks. More importantly, the party became the means through which nepotism and clan allegiances were once again served. Ironically, the SYL thus came to represent the very factionalism it had originally opposed. In addition, the party and government became corrupt as favors and personal gain took the place of public service. By the end of the decade, the nation was ripe for a *coup d'etat*.¹⁴

A Failed State

An assassin, apparently motivated by a clan grievance, killed President Abdirashid Ali Shermarke on 15 October 1969. Although the act was an isolated incident of violence, it served as the catalyst for events that quickly followed. The assassination was used as an excuse for the overthrow of the democratic government. On 21 October, when Prime Minister Ibrahim Egal tried to arrange the selection of a new president, the military moved to take over the country. Major General Mohammed Siad Barre quickly assumed leadership of the new Supreme Revolutionary Council. Members of the old government were arrested, political parties were outlawed, the National Assembly was abolished, and the constitution was suspended. Under the new name of the Somali Democratic Republic, the country embarked upon its own social experiment of scientific socialism. Specifically, the new regime wanted to end the influence of allegiance to clans and the corruption that had become endemic in the government. Society was to be transformed in accordance with a political philosophy based on both the *Quran* and Marxism.¹⁵

Among other projects begun by the new government was an attempt to raise the literacy rate of

the nation. In this they were fairly successful, employing a program of sending those who were already educated throughout the country to teach others. Not as successful was the attempt of the government to improve the economy of the country. One of the poorest of all nations, Somalia's economy was defined by the pastoral nomadic lifestyle of the majority of its people. Foreign exports were limited mainly to cattle or other foodstuffs produced in the fertile river valleys. Most farming, however, was of a subsistence level. Such a fragile economy was susceptible to the droughts that would regularly strike the region, which left the country very dependent upon foreign assistance, particularly from the Soviet Union.¹⁶

In this period of the Cold War, there was some strategic significance to the position of Somalia based upon the approaches to the Red Sea and the Suez Canal. With many of its Army officers educated in the Soviet Union, and with its commitment to a socialist form of government, Somalia



Photo courtesy of the author
 MajGen Mohammed Siad Barre took power in late 1969 in a bloodless coup following the assassination of country's prime minister, Dr. Abdirashid Ali Shermarke. Barre's goal of removing the clan as the primary Somali allegiance ultimately would lead to the destruction of the Somali state.

eagerly accepted Soviet military and economic aid. In return, the Soviets were allowed to build airfield and port facilities at Berbera, on the north coast. While the ties to the Soviet Union were never truly strong, they were to be severed permanently by the pursuit of Somali foreign policy.¹⁷

The concept of Pan-Somalism had continued into the Barre regime. In the early years of his rule, this policy was pursued through peaceful negotiations with neighboring countries. Especially in regard to the Ogaden region, controlled by Ethiopia, the Somali government distanced itself from the insurgent movements that had previously been supported there. This changed after the 1974 overthrow of Emperor Haile Selassie and the establishment of a Marxist government in Addis Ababa. When attempts failed at negotiating a settlement of the Ogaden question, the Somali government recognized the Western Somali Liberation Front, which was fighting to break the Ogaden from Ethiopia. Aid was given to the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Army, which was fighting a guerilla war against the new Ethiopian government. Finally, in July 1977, the Somali Army invaded Ethiopian territory in an attempt to gain the Ogaden. In this contest between two of its client states, the Soviet Union came to the aid of Ethiopia. With large amounts of modern Soviet equipment and a reinforcement of Cuban troops, the Ethiopians turned the tide of battle and drove the Somalis from their territory. In retaliation, Siad Barre ejected Soviet personnel from Somalia and turned to the West for support. In 1980, an agreement was reached with the United States whereby use was given of the port and airfield facilities at Berbera in exchange for military and economic aid.¹⁸ Somalia stayed close to the United States throughout the remainder of the 1980s.

This decade was not to be an easy one for the Barre regime, however. In spite of its attempts to rid the country of the influence of "tribalism," the government was increasingly identified with the Marehan, Barre's own clan.¹⁹ In addition, corruption in the government created even more dissatisfaction. By 1988, armed opposition to the Barre regime had begun with a rebellion in the north of the country.²⁰ There were three main opposition groups forming in late 1990 around geographical and clan affiliations: the Somali National Movement (SNM), which had begun in Northern Somalia; the Somali Patriotic Movement (SPM),

which was mainly recruited from the Ogaden and was active in the southern region; and the United Somali Congress (USC), composed mainly from the Hawiye clan and active in the central part of the country. By December these forces had pushed the Somali Army back the outskirts of the capital, Mogadishu. Violence and unrest began to grow within the city itself, creating a dangerous atmosphere for the foreign personnel and diplomats living there. Open fighting had begun in the city by late in the month as the predominantly Marehan-based army attempted to destroy USC elements in the Hawiye enclaves. The resulting breakdown of all order unleashed even greater lawlessness.²¹

Operation Eastern Exit

On 5 December 1990, due to escalating violence and chaos, American Ambassador James K. Bishop ordered the departure of non-essential embassy personnel and dependents. By mid-month, several foreign countries had joined the United States in advising their citizens to leave. On 30 December, Ambassador Bishop brought all remaining official Americans into the embassy compound, where he initially thought they could wait out the fighting in safety. By 1 January 1991, attacks on foreigners, including Americans, had increased and the embassy itself had been hit by small arms fire. Ambassador Bishop decided the situation was too dangerous to permit embassy personnel to remain any longer, and on New Year's Day he requested permission from the U.S. State Department to evacuate the embassy. Permission was granted on 2 January.²²

In a fine example of forward thinking, on 31 December 1990, Vice Admiral Stanley R. Arthur, USN, Commander, U.S. Naval Forces Central Command, had already alerted his staff to be prepared to conduct a non-combatant evacuation operation (NEO) in Mogadishu. Even though heavily involved in Operation Desert Shield and the final preparations for Operation Desert Storm, Central Command in Saudi Arabia began planning rapidly for the evacuation. After reviewing the Central Command plan, the Joint Chiefs of Staff issued an execute order for the evacuation operation late on 2 January. By that time, forces for the operation were already being assembled from those available in the Persian Gulf.²³

The operation was named Eastern Exit. Planners had created a variety of potential scenar-

ios, each tailored for a specific situation. In a preparatory move, U.S. Air Force AC-130 Specter gunships and ground security elements deployed to Nairobi, Kenya, in case the preferred option, a peaceful evacuation through the Mogadishu airport, could be accomplished. This plan was not pursued once Ambassador Bishop decided it was too dangerous for embassy personnel to make the nearly two-mile journey to the airport. Conditions at the airport also had deteriorated to such an extent that an air operation would be too risky. These circumstances left an amphibious option.²⁴

Admiral Arthur chose to create an amphibious force composed of only two ships, the amphibious transport dock *USS Trenton* (APD 14) and the helicopter assault ship *USS Guam* (LPD 9).^{*} The commanding general of 4th Marine Expeditionary Brigade (4th MEB), Major General Harry W. Jenkins, Jr., designated Colonel James J. Doyle, Jr., as the commander of the landing force. His counterpart, the commander of the amphibious task force, was Captain Alan B. Moser, USN. These two officers embarked their staffs and the task force got under way from Masirah Island, off the tip of Oman, by 2330 on 2 January. Colonel Doyle and Captain Moser had been informed the use of the airport was not an option, nor was an across-the-beach landing because of the distance inland of the embassy from any potential landing sites. The plan with the greatest chance of success was, therefore, to use shipborne Marine helicopters that could land directly in the embassy compound.²⁵

By 3 and 4 January, the threat to the embassy and its personnel increased. The embassy guards engaged in a firefight with looters, and small arms fire and even a rocket propelled grenade impacted inside the embassy grounds. At that point it was decided that a pair of Sikorsky CH-53 Super Stallion assault helicopters could be launched when within 500 miles of Mogadishu. The time of departure would be calculated to provide an early morning arrival at the Somali coast. This long-distance journey would require at least one aerial refueling and cause crew fatigue, but it would get the aircraft and security forces to the embassy much sooner.²⁶

^{*}Planning for the imminent start of Operation Desert Storm was paramount in the minds of planners at this time, and the choice was to have as many ships available as possible in the Persian Gulf area. It was not possible to forecast either how long Eastern Exit would take, or when ships committed to it would be able to return.

The 60-man evacuation force was composed 51 Marines and corpsmen from the 4th MEB, and nine U.S. Navy special warfare personnel from Sea, Air, Land (SEAL) Team 8F. The security elements boarded the helicopters at 0330 on 5 January. At 0345 they lifted off, with an expected arrival time of 0620. With the in-flight refueling successfully completed, the helicopters crossed the coast just at dawn. There was some initial difficulty in identifying the embassy, but it was clearly distinguished on the second attempt. As the helicopters came in for their landings, numerous armed looters were seen positioning ladders against one side of the compound wall. Upon landing, the SEALs immediately established the security of the chancery building while the Marines provided a perimeter defense for the compound. Both helicopters were quickly filled with evacuees and they returned to the *Guam* by 1040.²⁷

Back at Mogadishu, the evacuation force and the embassy security force assisted in bringing in several citizens from other foreign countries. By evening, the first of four waves of Boeing-Vertol CH-46E Sea Knight helicopters from the *Guam* arrived at the embassy landing zone. These five helicopters remained on the ground only 20 minutes, departing with an additional 75 evacuees. As the first wave of helicopters returned to the *Guam*, the second wave set down at the embassy. This wave, also of five helicopters, departed after just 18 minutes on the ground, leaving only the ambassador, his staff, and the Marine Security Guard to be evacuated. The third wave departed at 2210, and the fourth wave carried the ambassador and the perimeter defense force. This final wave took off even as looters clambered over the walls and entered the compound. The last helicopter landed back on the *Guam* at 2323, and 20 minutes later the ambassador declared the operation completed.²⁸

Civil War and Anarchy

With the completion of this highly successful operation, the American presence in Somalia ended for nearly two years. Few in the United States noticed what was happening there because the attention of Americans and most of the world was focused on the events in Southwest Asia. By the end of January 1991, Siad Barre was forced to flee Mogadishu, and the country fell deeper into anarchy and chaos as the various armed factions

continued to battle the forces of the old national government. Finally, by May 1992, Barre's forces were defeated and he was forced to flee the country altogether. This did not mean the end of fighting, however. Instead, the various factions and clans that had formerly opposed Barre now sought to achieve dominance in the new government. When Barre was driven from Mogadishu, Ali Mahdi Mohamed of the USC was selected as the new president. The USC was an instrument of the Hawiye clan, however, and Ali Mahdi never received enough support to coalesce the rest of the country behind him. The fighting, which now pitted the clans against one another, also led to the creation of new alliances and divisions. For instance, the USC itself split into two factions, one led by Ali Mahdi and the other by General Mohammed Farah Hassan Aideed.²⁹ No single group was strong enough to overcome the others in this unending fight for power. Without a central government, anarchy, violence, and lawlessness reigned.

To add to the suffering of the Somali people, a severe drought had devastated the region for about three years. As farmers were unable to raise crops, food itself became a weapon. To have it made one's own group strong; to deprive one's rivals of it weakened them as it strengthened one-

self. The threat of losing subsistence to armed bands of factional militias was now added to the threat of being robbed by the increasing gangs of bandits. With violence a reality of everyday life, everyone had to protect himself. Individuals armed themselves, formed local militias, or hired others for protection. Even private relief organizations became the targets of threats and extortion and had to resort to the hiring of armed bodyguards. It truly became a case of "every man against every man."

By the early 1990s, the history of Somalia disclosed certain disturbing patterns. First, it showed that tribalism or clan loyalty was still a dominant factor in society, despite earlier efforts to remove it. It was a force to be understood and reckoned with. The passage of time made no change in this central fact of life. What had changed was the general lifestyle of the people. The reforms of the Barre regime had removed many of the old structures by which Somali society had been able to keep clan rivalries and violence in check, or at least within acceptable limits. In fact, it could be argued that the Barre years actually made each clan more jealous of the others and desirous of achieving dominance, destroying the balance that had existed before.³⁰ In addition, the years during which Somalia was a client state of the Soviet



DVIC DN-ST-93-03436

Village women gather near refugee huts outside Baidoa. The descending spiral of rape, murder, destruction of crops and water supplies, and wholesale slaughter had led to mass starvation and forced thousands of Somalis to flee their former homes.



DVIC DD-SD-00-01008

Members of the Aerial Port Squadron from Dyess Air Force Base, Abilene, Texas, and Dover Air Force Base, Dover, Delaware, unload medical supplies from the left side of a Boeing KC-135 Stratotanker's cargo bay. Off loaded at Moi International Airport, Mombasa, Kenya, the supplies were transferred to U.S. Air Force C-130s for delivery to Somalia as part of Operation Provide Relief.

Union and the United States saw the accumulation of a large amount of weapons, ranging from rifles to tanks and artillery. Somalia thus had an abundant supply of weapons for its factional armies and bandits.

Operation Provide Relief, begun so hopefully in August 1992, soon was confronted with the reality of the chaos and strife into which Somalia had descended. The breaking of the famine could only be achieved by the safe delivery and distribution of the food.

In November, with deaths by starvation and related diseases numbering 350,000 and expected to increase rapidly, the United States decided to take action. Acting on a United Nations mandate, President Bush announced the United States would ensure the secure environment needed for the safe and effective delivery of relief supplies. However, there was no assurance the food would ultimately be given to those for whom it was intended, the thousands of refugees who were driven from their homes by the drought and fight-

ing and who now faced death by starvation. Aircraft deliveries of relief supplies could be sent into the country, but there was no guarantee the aircraft would be allowed to land safely, or that their cargoes would not be subject to extortionate payments.* In the autumn of 1992, it had become obvious that merely providing the necessities of life to these victims of anarchy would not suffice.

Operation Restore Hope was about to begin.

* An example of the amounts which the relief organizations had to pay simply to accomplish their humanitarian goals was told to the author by Lieutenant Colonel Carol J. Mathieu, commanding officer of the Canadian Airborne Regiment forces in Belet Weyne. The relief committee of the International Commission of the Red Cross was required to provide each security guard at the airport with 85 kilograms (187 pounds) of food per month. The cost for each airplane landing at the airport was 50,000 Somali shillings. Also, they were forced to rent cars and trucks at the rate of \$1,600 per month.

Part II

Operation Restore Hope



Chapter 2

The Widening Mission

Historic Decision to Intervene

The 1992 Thanksgiving holiday brought the usual round of family visiting and celebration to the American people. Yet, perhaps especially at this time, many in the United States reflected upon the poignant differences between their fortune and the plight of the Somali people. In Washington, D.C., the holidays were not to be a time of relaxation or conviviality for many in the government. President George H. W. Bush was conferring with advisers in the State Department and the Department of Defense about what could be done to alleviate the suffering in Somalia. As one official put it, “the number of deaths was going up, and the number of people we were reaching was going down.”³¹

The day before Thanksgiving, the President’s advisers provided him with three military options. The first was a simple reinforcement of 3,500 troops to the 500 Pakistanis already in Mogadishu as United Nations peacekeepers. The second was to provide both air and naval support to a United Nations force that would intervene in Somalia. The third option, and the one the President quickly chose, was for the United States to send in a division-sized unit under United Nations auspices.³²

On 25 November, President Bush announced to the United Nations that the United States was prepared to provide military forces to assist with the delivery of food and other supplies. The offer of military assistance at this point was of a “general nature,” one that required a specific request from the U.N. Security Council.³³ Without waiting for the Security Council to act, the Joint Chiefs of Staff sent an alert order to the commander in chief of U.S. Central Command, Marine General Joseph P. Hoar. Within a week, the Joint Chiefs provided a formal planning order to Central Command, directing General Hoar to prepare a detailed operations plan.³⁴

The United Nations was not long in responding to the American offer. On 29 November, the United Nations Secretary General, Boutros Boutros-Ghali, stated: “any forceful action should

preferably be under U.N. command, but if that was not feasible, a Council-authorized operation undertaken by Member States was to be considered.”³⁵ On 3 December, the U.N. Security Council unanimously passed Resolution 794, authorizing military intervention in Somalia. A multinational force led by the United States was allowed to use all necessary force to accomplish its humanitarian mission.³⁶ It was the first time in history the United Nations had elected to intervene in the internal affairs of a country without having received a request to do so from the country’s government. Of course, Somalia was unique



DoD Photo

Gen Joseph P. Hoar, the Marine Corps’ deputy for operations during the Gulf War, and before that, Gen Norman Schwartzkopf’s chief of staff at Central Command, in August 1991 assumed the post of Commander in Chief, U.S. Central Command, the unified command that has planning and operational responsibilities for 19 countries of the Middle East, South Asia, and the Horn of Africa.

in that there was no legitimate government and the situation demanded swift action.

The agreement allowing the United States to lead the force satisfied one of the few demands placed by President Bush upon the offer of troops. The American government did concede the United Nations should have a supervisory role. However, it was anticipated the United Nations would send in a peacekeeping force to replace the U.S.-led force as soon as practical.³⁷ In these early days, there was even some discussion the turnover could take place as early as 20 January 1993, Inauguration Day.³⁸

Initial Planning

While political issues were being discussed, the military planning was already in progress. As early as 22 November 1992, Lieutenant General Robert B. Johnston, commanding general of I Marine Expeditionary Force (I MEF) at Camp Pendleton, California, had received indications from Central Command he might have to form a joint task force.³⁹ On 27 November, by an oral order, General Hoar designated I MEF as the headquarters of Joint Task Force Somalia.⁴⁰



DoD Photo

LtGen Robert B. Johnston, a veteran of Vietnam, Lebanon, and the Gulf War during which he served as chief of staff of Central Command, commanded I Marine Expeditionary Force, the unit designated as the headquarters for the joint task force as it had trained for this type of operation.

Fortunately, I MEF did not have to start entirely from scratch in developing such a headquarters. During a recent exercise, CatEx 92-3, the expeditionary force had already organized and run the headquarters for a joint task force. In the exercise, the expeditionary force was tasked with acting as a "Humanitarian/Peacekeeping Joint Task Force ... simulating bare base conditions in a nonpermissive environment."⁴¹ While it was admittedly difficult to describe all the requirements of such an organization during an exercise, the work helped validate the concept and defined some of the needs of such a force.⁴²

The task force had an exceptionally capable and qualified commanding general in Lieutenant General Johnston. Distinguished and inspiring in appearance, he was also characterized by clarity of perception and speech rarely found in other individuals, regardless of rank. Trim and in excellent physical condition, he was able to meet the harsh demands of the equatorial desert and set a high standard for his command. These characteristics would serve both him and the joint task force well in the months ahead as he threaded his way through numerous political, humanitarian, and operational considerations. But for the initial planning stages, the general's greatest strength may have been his own experience as a Marine officer. He had led a battalion to Lebanon 10 years earlier and knew what it meant to be a peacekeeper in a land in the midst of civil war. More recently, he was on the staff of Central Command during the war in the Persian Gulf. He had served in Saudi Arabia as the Central Command Chief of Staff. Many of the principles for organizing a joint and combined staff, which he had seen used so successfully in the Persian Gulf conflict, would help him in creating his own joint task force.

First Steps

General Johnston had to first decide on the manner of organizing his new force. Since this was to be a joint task force, he would need to effectively integrate personnel and units from the other Armed Services. He had two choices by which he could accomplish this: organize along functional lines, as with a Marine air-ground task force, a concept familiar to all Marines; or organize the force as components, as had been done with the American forces during Desert Storm. General Johnston recognized the functional organization would require an integration of

forces at levels other than the task force headquarters. For instance, the ground forces of the Marine Corps and Army would have to be placed into a single ground combat element; the air assets of the Marines, Army, Navy, and Air Force into a single air combat element, and so on. But he saw no need for a single commander for such elements, and he knew each service component could be tasked to perform discrete missions. Besides, the experience of Desert Storm had proven it was reasonable to operate with such components, so this was the manner in which Joint Task Force Somalia would be organized.⁴³

In building the headquarters staff, General Johnston already had the I MEF staff to serve as a nucleus. Of course, these Marines had already served and worked together, and this familiarity would be an added strength for the newly forming staff. As General Hoar later wrote: "designating a component or element headquarters as the foundation of the mission ... allowed an established service staff to transition quickly to a [joint task force] with little need for start-up time."⁴⁴ However, the I MEF staff itself was not large enough for the greater responsibilities that acting as a joint task force would entail. It would require augmentation by other Marines and personnel from the other Services. For example, the need to expand the intelligence and operations sections was immediately recognized; although the mission would be essentially humanitarian, the task force would have to be prepared for an armed threat.

The Service components at Central Command, which would be providing the military units for the force, also selected individuals who would join the joint task force headquarters. General Johnston later said: "They sent their best players. ... I got key people."⁴⁵

By late November, military personnel across the nation were receiving orders to join the joint task force, or were preparing themselves for the possibility. At Fort Hood, Texas, Colonel Sam E. Hatton, USA, was serving as the deputy commander of the 13th Corps Support Command. On 1 December 1992, he received orders to proceed as quickly as possible to Camp Pendleton, California, for assignment as the task force logistics officer. He immediately handed over his responsibilities and closed out remaining tasks. He also placed some fast telephone calls to associates and acquaintances, many of which were now general officers and key personnel at the



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BGen Anthony C. Zinni, a veteran of Vietnam and several humanitarian operations, provided assistance and was selected to serve as chief of operations for the joint task force.

Department of the Army, to gauge the situation in Somalia. Proceeding to Camp Pendleton, Colonel Hatton's first task was to organize his own section. Building on I MEF's logistics section, he checked the existing table of organization and the talent available to ensure "the right people were in the right jobs."⁴⁶

Similarly, Colonel William M. Handley, Jr., USA, was serving at Headquarters, United States Army Forces Command, at Fort Stewart, Georgia, when he received a call notifying him that he had been selected to head the joint task force intelligence section. He quickly discussed the situation with the intelligence staff and received a briefing from the Third Army. After arriving at Camp Pendleton, he met with Colonel Michael V. Brock, the I MEF intelligence officer. Checking the organization of the section, he saw little to

change. After being apprised of the task force's mission, he realized one of his first requirements would be the production of area studies, which he had but a short time to prepare. In the meantime, I MEF intelligence section's organization was expanded with members from the other Services and augmented with personnel from national intelligence assets.⁴⁷

One other important member of the growing staff was Marine Brigadier General Anthony C. Zinni. His background and experience suited him for a responsible position within the joint task force staff; in recent years, General Zinni had served as operations officer for the United States European Command. In 1991, he was the Chief of Staff and Deputy Commander for Operation Provide Comfort, the Kurdish relief operation at the end of the Persian Gulf War. Shortly afterward, he served as the military coordinator for Operation Provide Hope in the Soviet Union. Now, in late 1992, he was the deputy commanding general of the Marine Corps Combat Development Command at Quantico, Virginia. He quickly volunteered to provide assistance to the joint task force. After reporting to both the Commandant of the Marine Corps, General Carl E. Mundy, Jr., and Lieutenant General Johnston, he was selected to head the operations section. General Zinni joined the I MEF staff at Central Command headquarters in Tampa, Florida, where he received briefs on the situation in Somalia. From there he left for Camp Pendleton.⁴⁸

The Surgeon General of the Navy personally chose the force surgeon, Captain Michael L. Cowan, USN. Captain Cowan was the surgeon with Naval Surface Forces, Pacific, when he was told of his selection on 6 December. By the 9th, he reached Camp Pendleton, where he began to work on planning with a staff that "had just met." His first priority was setting the medical evacuation plan, which included establishing alternate routes to move the wounded out of the country.⁴⁹

The process continued until the entire staff of the MEF headquarters was transformed into the headquarters of a joint task force. Individuals of all ranks, be they officer or enlisted, who had any of the required knowledge or expertise, were selected from the various Services by the component commanders at Central Command. They were quickly integrated into the appropriate staff sections. Within a short time the task force headquarters staff had developed a decidedly purple



DVIC DN-SC-93-04559

A port bow view of the amphibious assault ship Tripoli (LPH 10) underway. The second ship to be named after the battle of Tripoli in 1804, she was a veteran of the Gulf War during which she was damaged by an Iraqi contact mine.

complexion.* Marines accounted only for 57 percent of the total.

Organizing Tasks

Even as the staff was coming together, the task organization of the force itself had to be configured. Since I MEF was providing the cornerstone of the task force headquarters, it would only be natural that the MEF subordinate elements (1st Marine Division; 3d Marine Aircraft Wing; 1st Surveillance, Reconnaissance, and Intelligence Group; and 1st Force Service Support Group) should be heavily involved in the operation. However, there also were sound operational reasons for selecting the Marines for a large role in the mission. The Marine Corps provided its own special capabilities, not the least of which was its amphibious expertise. As in Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm, initial supplies and heavy equipment for Restore Hope would have to

arrive by ship. The joint task force could take advantage of the support provided by one of the Maritime Prepositioning Force squadrons. Also, one of the MEF's organic units, the 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit (MEU), already was embarked and in the Western Pacific and could quickly arrive in the area of operations.⁵⁰

Commanded by Colonel Gregory S. Newbold, the 15th MEU had completed its special operations training, and was therefore officially a Marine Expeditionary Unit (Special Operations Capable), or MEU (SOC). An expeditionary unit is one of the smallest of the Marine air-ground task forces. Nonetheless, the 15th MEU carried enough personnel and equipment to make it a formidable force in most situations. The ground combat element was formed around 2d Battalion, 9th Marines, reinforced by a light armored infantry platoon, a combat engineer platoon, a platoon of amphibious assault vehicles, and a battery of artillery in direct support. The air combat element was Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron (Composite) 164, nicknamed the "Knightriders." The squadron contained a formidable array of helicopters: Boeing CH-46E Sea Knights, Sikorsky CH-53E Sea Stallions, Bell AH-1W Super Cobras, and Bell UH-1N Iroquois "Hueys." The combat service support element was MEU Service Support Group 15.⁵¹

* After the passage of the Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986, with its requirements for the Services to work more closely together and its emphasis on joint operations, the term "purple" was unofficially adopted to signify the increasing cooperation of the Service components. The color denoted a separation from the roles of the individual Services by implying a blending of their traditional colors.



USS *Tripoli* WestPac Cruise, 1993-1994

Capt John W. Peterson, USN, commander of Amphibious Squadron 3, was a graduate of Dartmouth College and a naval aviator who had accumulated more than 4,000 hours in three generations of carrier-based attack aircraft.

The MEU was embarked on the three ships that comprised Amphibious Squadron 3, commanded by Captain John W. Peterson, USN. These ships were the USS *Tripoli* (LPH 10), USS *Juneau* (LPD 10), and the USS *Rushmore* (LSD 47). To provide more equipment and sustainability to the MEU, one of the ships of Maritime Prepositioning Squadron 3, the MV *1st Lt Jack Lummus* (T-AK 3011), was assigned to the amphibious squadron. The MEU and the amphibious squadron made up the *Tripoli* Amphibious Task Unit, which already was anticipating service in Somalia. In September, the Marines of the 11th MEU (SOC) had assisted the United Nations by providing security to the 500 soldiers of the Pakistani Army's 7th Battalion, Frontier Service Regiment. This regiment established the United Nations Organization Somalia (UNOSOM) in Mogadishu. The 11th MEU also provided security for United States Air Force personnel who flew the Pakistanis into Mogadishu International Airport. In November, it had appeared 11th MEU's successor, 15th MEU, might have to provide security for the arrival of UNOSOM reinforcements.⁵²

With the decision for a United States-led force, it made sense the *Tripoli* Amphibious Task Unit with the 15th MEU (SOC), already in the Pacific, would be a part of the plan. They would also be the first of the joint task force's components in place.

The structure of the Marine forces assigned to the operation had to be clearly defined. With Lieutenant General Johnston, the commanding general of I MEF, now designated as the commanding general of the joint task force, similar command changes would occur in I MEF's subordinate units. At first, it appeared General Johnston would act as both the commanding general of the joint task force and the commanding general of the Marine component, Marine Forces Somalia. But it was soon decided this component should be formed around the 1st Marine Division, commanded by Major General Charles E. Wilhelm. This in turn redefined General Wilhelm's relationships to the other subordinate units. The elements of the 3d Marine Aircraft Wing and the 1st Force Service Support Group assigned to Marine Forces Somalia would now be subordinate to General Wilhelm in his role as the component commander. In effect, Marine Forces Somalia would work on the higher operational level of a Marine air-ground task force, with its own ground, air, and combat service support elements.⁵³ * This arrangement was unusual for a Marine division staff, but it did have the advantage of placing Marine Forces Somalia on a similar basis with Army Forces Somalia.

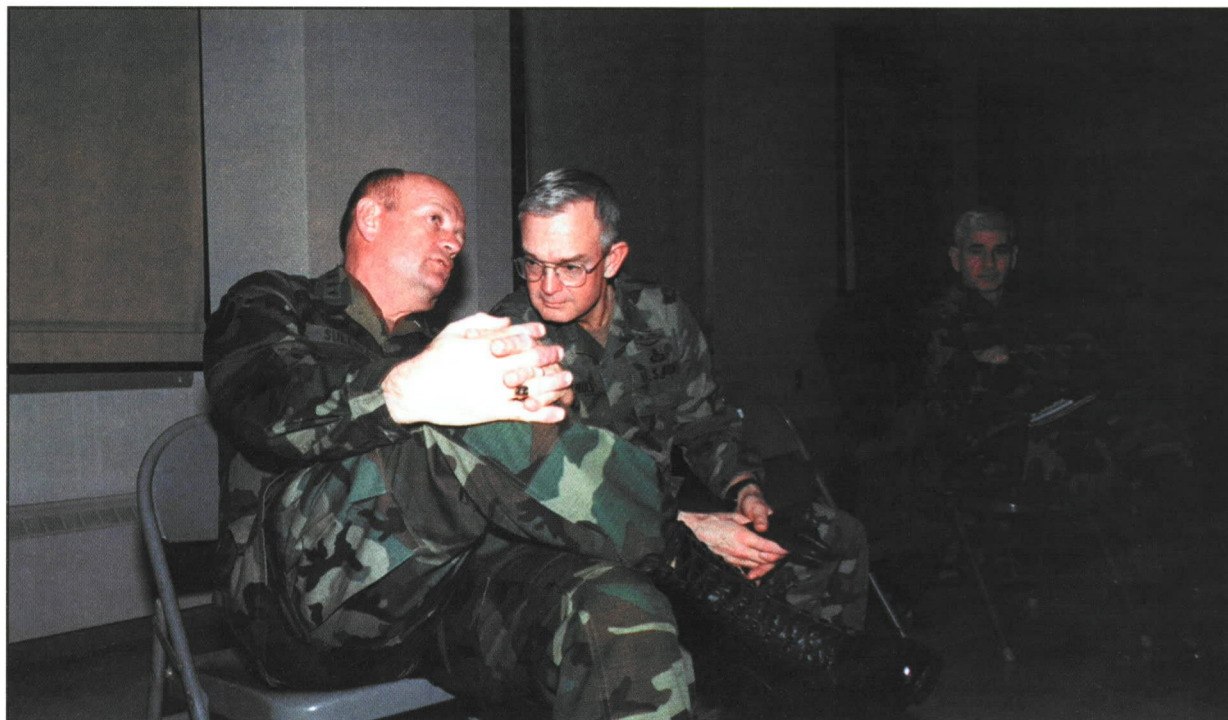
The unit chosen by Third Army's XVIII Airborne Corps to be the Army's component was

* At its height, Marine Forces Somalia consisted of 7th Marines (-) Reinforced, composed of 1st Battalion, 7th Marines, and the 3d Battalion, 9th Marines, 3d Battalion 11th Marines, 1st Light Armored Infantry Battalion, and 3d Amphibious Assault Battalion; Marine Aircraft Group 16, composed of Marine Light Attack Helicopter Squadron 369 (HMLA-369), Marine Aerial Refueling Squadron 352 (VMGR-352), Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron 363 (HMH-363), a detachment from HMH-466, Marine Wing Support Squadron 372 (MWSS-372), and a detachment from Marine Aircraft Group 38 (MAG-38); the 1st Force Service Support Group (Forward), composed of Combat Service Support Group 1 and Brigade Service Support Group 7; the 30th Naval Construction Regiment, composed of Naval Mobile Construction Battalion 1 and Naval Mobile Construction Battalion 40; and the 1st Combat Engineer Battalion (-). At times, Marine Forces Somalia also had operational control of 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit and some of the coalition forces.

the 10th Mountain Division (Light Infantry), based at Fort Drum, New York. The division's commanding general, Major General Steven L. Arnold, USA, knew Lieutenant General Johnston from when he had served as the United States Army Central Command's operations officer during Desert Storm. On the operational side, the division had recent experience in humanitarian relief undertakings. Just a few months prior, in August 1992, the division had been sent to Florida to assist with the disaster caused by Hurricane Andrew. Also, the division was light infantry, and therefore more strategically deployable than heavier, armored units in the Army. This meant the division was able to rapidly "go from deployment to employment."⁵⁴ Their light equipment also made this division a good match to the Marine forces. As Brigadier General Zinni later said, they would complement the Marines, forming "an agile, flexible force."⁵⁵ Although designated light, such a division carries considerable firepower and capability. The division's normal table of distribution and allowances included attack and transport helicopters, artillery, and hardened high mobility multipurpose wheeled vehicles (humvees) mounting antitank missiles, machine guns, or automatic grenade launchers.

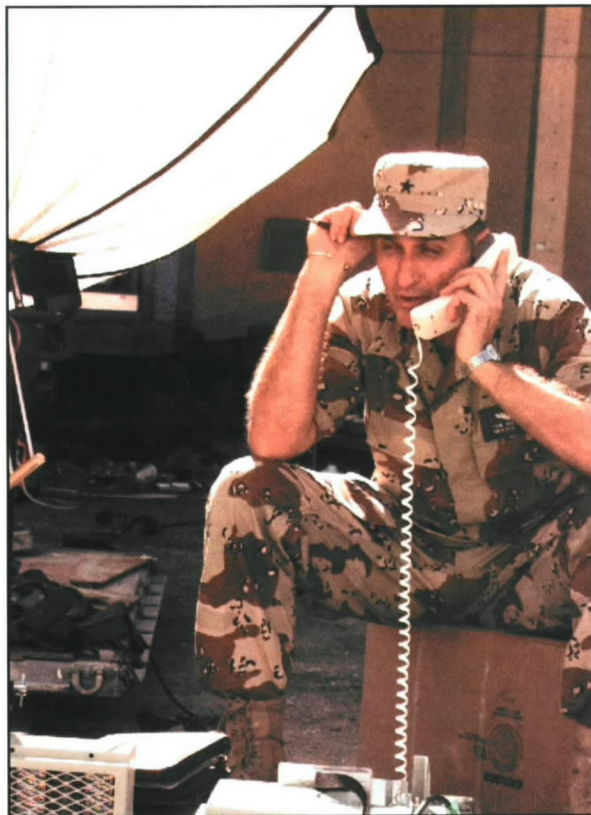
Naval Forces Somalia was quickly mustered from task forces in the Central Command area of operations, or which could be ordered to the area. The Ranger carrier battle group consisted of the aircraft carrier USS *Ranger* (CV 61), the aircraft carrier USS *Valley Forge* (CG 50), and the destroyer USS *Kincaid* (DD 965). There also was the *Tripoli* Amphibious Task Unit, which carried the 15th MEU (SOC). The ships of Maritime Prepositioning Squadron 2, consisting of the MV *1st Lt Alex Bonnyman* (T-AK 3003), the MV *Pvt Franklin J. Phillips* (T-AK 3004), and the MV *PFC James Anderson Jr.* (T-AK 3002) would join these forces. Throughout the operation, other squadrons, groups and ships of the navies of the United States and coalition partners would move into the area of operations and become a part of Naval Forces Somalia. The position of Commander, Naval Forces Somalia was initially held by Rear Admiral William J. Hancock, USN, but would change hands five times during the operation.

The Air Force's contribution to the joint task force was highly important, but required fewer personnel than the other Services. Air transport would be of tremendous significance to the operation. While ships would carry the greatest por-



DVIC DA-SC-93-00306

MajGen Steven L. Arnold, USA, right, commander of the 10th Mountain Division, discusses the Somalia deployment of the division with U.S. Army Chief of Staff, Gen Gordon R. Sullivan, at Fort Drum, New York.



JCCC DD-SD-00-00662

BGen Thomas R. Mikolajcik, USAF, a squadron and wing commander with more than 4,000 flying hours, was chosen to command the Air Force component of the joint task force.

tion of the heavy equipment, most of the personnel and much of the lighter cargo would be flown directly into the theater. Control of all these movements was critical, and so Brigadier General Thomas R. Mikolajcik, USAF, was chosen as the commanding general of Air Force Forces Somalia. General Mikolajcik's background and experience suited him for the mission. His assignment at the time was as the commanding general of the 437th Airlift Wing, based at Charleston Air Force Base, South Carolina. This unit's mission was the loading and airdrop delivery of supplies, equipment, and troops. It was tasked to support special and humanitarian relief operations worldwide. Receiving a call on 26 November to prepare for deployment, General Mikolajcik quickly put together an initial team of 70 airmen to cover inter- and intra-theater air movements. On the 29th he was told to proceed to Camp Pendleton, to which he traveled after a quick stop at Scott Air Force Base in Illinois for briefings. After discussing mobility operations

with the operations and logistics sections of the U.S. Transportation Command, he arrived at the joint task force headquarters on 1 December and was designated as the commander of Air Force Forces Somalia and the mobility commander. Although there would be only 500 Air Force personnel eventually working within the theater itself, there would be literally thousands aiding the operation at numerous stations along the air bridge.⁵⁶

The smallest of all the components would be the Special Operations Forces. This component was initially under the command of Colonel Thomas D. Smith, USA. In late November, he was the director of operations for Central Command's Special Operations Command, where he had already received briefings on Somalia. He joined the joint task force by 4 December, when General Johnston briefed his concept of operations to all component commanders. As planning progressed, coalition warfare teams were formed to resolve any operational problems between the various Services and coalition countries. Teams of six men were established to coordinate close air support and medical evacuations, coordinate operational boundaries, and to train some of the allies in American operational techniques. Such teams were requested by the joint task force for various coalition forces, and eventually General Johnston approved eight teams; one each for the forces from Pakistan, Morocco, Saudi Arabia, Belgium, France, Botswana, Canada, and Italy. The teams were sent to link up with these allied forces as they deployed.⁵⁷

Support Command

There was only one exception to the component structure of the joint task force, but it was a very important exception. This special organization was Support Command for the joint task force, which was formed as a functional element rather than as a separate Service organization. General Johnston recognized that logistics for this operation would pose a critical challenge. Since literally everything would come in from outside the theater, the general had to create a robust logistics element to provide for this important function. In the initial planning, it was recognized that Marine Forces Somalia, which would arrive before the Army Forces Somalia, would have to sustain the force with the assets of 1st Force Service Support Group and the supplies and

equipment from the maritime prepositioning force ships.* The Army Forces Somalia, as they arrived, would carry their own logistics and support elements with them, and originally it was expected that Army Forces Somalia would assume the theater logistics role, with a specially task-organized unit. However, Central Command also was working on the logistics issue, and their planners had begun to build what would become Support Command of the task force.⁵⁸ At Fort Hood, Texas, the 13th Corps Support Command (CosCom) had already seen its deputy commander selected to head up the logistics section for the joint task force. When the 10th Mountain Division was selected as Army Forces Somalia shortly afterward, the 13th CosCom was notified that it, too, would have a role to play in the operation. It would provide command and control for logistics support in the theater. With the army planners at Central Command identifying requirements and resources available, the structure of Support Command was built around the 13th CosCom staff, commanded by Brigadier General Billy K. Solomon, USA. Appropriate units were selected from the continental United States and Europe. The major subordinate commands were the 593d Area Support Group, the 62d Medical Group, and the 7th Transportation Group.** These were augmented in a building block concept in which smaller units with specialties were selected and assigned to Support Command. As the groups prepared to deploy, General Solomon recognized that his presence on the ground in theater would be necessary early on, even before the majority of his command would be prepared to arrive. On 14 hours notice, he prepared to leave with a small advance party.⁵⁹ Support Command would provide tremendous capabilities to the force.

* It also was recognized this would greatly strain the capabilities of Marine Forces Somalia and the Maritime Prepositioning Force. A maritime prepositioning force squadron carries enough rations, supplies, and equipment to sustain a force of approximately 16,000 men for 30 days. However, these assets had to stretch to cover a force that would reach more than 23,000 by late December. For a detailed discussion of the logistical structures for the operation, see Katherine McGrady's *The Joint Task Force In Operation Restore Hope*, published by the Center For Naval Analyses.

** Although composed entirely of United States Army units, Support Command was not a part of Army Forces Somalia. It was a separate command on an equal basis with the Service components.

However, it was not expected to be capable of assuming the theater role until 50 days into the operation. Until then, Marine Forces Somalia would continue to carry the burden for this support, especially in the coordination of items common to all users. The commanding general of the Army Forces Somalia, Major General Arnold, recognized his force also needed to deploy some of its own logistics assets quickly into the theater.⁶⁰

Coalition Partners

The American elements of the force were coming together rapidly. But there remained one major portion that still had to be assembled. The United Nations had sanctioned a multinational force for Somalia, and so the countries that chose to be coalition partners with the United States now had to come forward and make their contributions. Central Command was the first line in determining which countries would be accepted into this coalition, relieving the commander of this administrative burden. Offers were screened



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BGen Billy K. Solomon, USA, commissioned in Quartermaster Corps in 1966, served in battalion and division support command positions before being assigned to lead III U.S. Army Corps' 13th Corps Support Command at Fort Hood, Texas.

to ensure potential partners had self-sufficiency, mobility, and a “willingness to adhere to American operational control and rules of engagement.”⁶¹

The creation of a cohesive coalition was to present General Johnston with what he called “a real challenge.” But he was aided in this task by the large contingents eventually sent by some of the United States’ traditional allies; countries such as France, Italy, Belgium, Canada, Australia, and Turkey were all to be key contributors around which the coalition could be built. These larger forces could also be counted on to be operationally capable and to bring some of their own support. Many other countries would soon join in, eventually raising the total number of nations in the coalition to 23. While the general did not have much latitude in the acceptance of any nation’s offer, he did recognize that even the smallest contingent could be put to effective use. In these early stages, it was thought that General Johnston would be the commander of the United Nations forces in Somalia, but the U.N. decided that its own UNOSOM commander would retain operational control over all U.N. forces. General Johnston would have operational control over all coalition forces assigned to him, and he had coor-

inating authority with the UNOSOM commander, Brigadier General Imtiaz Shaheen of the Pakistani Army.⁶²

As units across the United States were preparing for their share in Operation Restore Hope, the ministries of defense of many nations prepared to give support to the United States-led effort. Some nations, such as Canada, Australia, Belgium, Egypt, Nigeria, and Norway, already had made a commitment to join UNOSOM and were preparing to deploy forces as reinforcements.⁶³ Those who would be joining with the United States began to assemble forces and formulate plans, often with their own names. Eventually, there would be French Operation Oryx, Italian Operation Ibis, Australian Operation Solace, and Canadian Operation Deliverance.

How all of these allied forces could be worked effectively into the operation; how much logistic support they would need; their operational effectiveness; and when they would actually arrive were all questions on which General Johnston and his staff would have to give very serious consideration in the few days remaining before the start of Operation Restore Hope; and in that short time there was much other work to be done.

Chapter 3

Plans and Preparations

Working with Central Command

Training in amphibious warfare has taught Marines that planning for an operation is continuous and concurrent. In late November 1992, as the nascent joint task force staff met with the U.S. Central Command staff at MacDill Air Force Base, Florida, there was a great amount of work to be done in a short period of time to prepare the plans that would guide the operation. Throughout the next several days, the two staffs would work in close cooperation to ensure the joint task force plan would complement the one issued by Central Command. Long hours and plenty of coffee were the order of the day.

Central Command issued its order on 5 December. While the two staffs had worked closely together in the development of the order, the Central Command document gave Lieutenant General Robert B. Johnston formal authority to complete and issue the final joint task force order. One of the most important points to be taken from the Central Command order was the mission, to “conduct joint/combined military operations in Somalia to secure the major air and sea ports, key installations and food distribution points, to provide open and free passage of relief supplies, provide security for convoys and relief organization operations and to assist in providing humanitarian relief under U.N. auspices.” The “anticipated D-Day” was set for 9 December, just four days away.*

General Johnston described the Central Command order as “very broad,” and he was quite comfortable with it.⁶⁴ Even as it was being written, his staff had begged the United Nations to identify implied tasks that would assist in accomplishing the mission. The most obvious of these tasks was to establish some precise way to measure success. In other words, just how was the joint

task force to know when it had established a secure environment and accomplished its mission? During these early planning stages, the end state was defined as “creation of an environment where U.N. and relief organizations can assume responsibility for security and relief operations.”⁶⁵ Unfortunately, this was rather vague. The need to more precisely define the operation’s end state was to be an important but difficult question for much of the joint task force’s existence.

The Central Command order described four phases of the operation and set rules of engagement. It also formally ordered General Johnston, as commanding general of I Marine Expeditionary Force (I MEF), to assume duties as



Photo courtesy of the author

Gen Mohamed Farah Aideed rose to become the leader of the formerly political, but now militant, United Somali Congress. He favored a military solution to the problems the Barre government had brought about.

* The time for preparation was even shorter when the time zone differences are taken into account. There are eight hours difference between Somalia and the east coast of the United States. Thus, 0500 9 December in Mogadishu is 2100 8 December in Washington, D.C., or MacDill Air Force Base, Florida.

commander of Joint Task Force Somalia (JTF Somalia) and to establish the joint task force. Johnston already had been doing precisely that for some days.

But that was not all General Johnston had been concerned with during this time of intense activity. His newly assembled headquarters and staff sections were busy identifying needed information, solving problems, and coordinating the preparation of the joint task force order. The final order was to contain myriad small, but important details, and there were some concerns that were of greater consequence than others that demanded a rapid understanding and resolution.

Somali Opposition

Sound military planning begins with a consideration of mission, enemy, terrain, troops, and time available. With the mission specified in the Central Command order, General Johnston and his staff could now concentrate on the other elements. The question of the enemy was a challenging one, filled with political and diplomatic implications. The various armed Somali factions were regarded as a great threat to the task force and its mission, but their reactions could not be gauged in advance since internal Somali politics would undoubtedly be involved. It was possible that one faction could welcome the joint task force, while its rival would oppose the coalition. There was a possibility that the force might have to fight its way ashore.⁶⁶

The size of these factional, clan-based forces, in addition to the types, numbers, and condition of their weaponry were critical elements of information that had to be gathered. In a related matter, there was the existence of simple, but widespread, lawlessness. How was the joint task force to deal with that? In a commander's estimate of the situation dated 22 November 1992, General Joseph Hoar saw the threat as follows:

Over all, the security environment throughout Somalia is volatile. The situation may deteriorate further because there is no centralized governmental control of Somali factions.

Mogadishu. The security situation in Mogadishu remains uncertain. Large numbers of armed forces (estimated 5,000-10,000 aligned under General [Mohamed Farah Hassan] Aideed and estimated 5,000-6,000 aligned under interim President [Ali

Mahdi Mohamed]) roam the city with the two opposing leaders ... exercising little control over their activities. While Ali Mahdi appears to welcome U.N. presence and assistance in Somalia, General Aideed opposes such presence and has threatened the 500-man Pakistani force and impeded that unit from securing the port and airfield in Mogadishu. Further, General Aideed has publicly stated that he will oppose any further introduction of U.N. forces into Mogadishu.

Kismayo. The security situation in Kismayo is uncertain but less volatile than Mogadishu. Factional fighting occurs frequently and the general population is known to be armed. Random shootings and violent incidents are frequent. The two factions claiming this area have formed a loose alliance with about 3,000 troops, many of whom were former Somali National Army soldiers, reasonably well-trained and experienced with weapons. The apparent leader, Col [Ahmed Omar] Jess, appears to be minimizing his ties with General Aideed and has indicated a willingness to have a U.N. contingent deploy to Kismayo.

Key Assumptions. The primary threat to security will be armed lawlessness and armed looters.⁶⁷

Some of these difficulties were further expressed in a message regarding operations in Somalia sent from Central Command in early November:

There does not appear to be any particular center of gravity, no single leader or faction or army whose defeat will bring stability. Nor is there any geographical center of gravity, contrary to the politicians' views about Mogadishu. ... The most assailable center of gravity appears to be the warlords' control over the food distribution, both in terms of amount and location. Therefore, any effort on our part has to defeat their control over food distribution, and force the warlords, should they choose to fight, to fight us on our terms.⁶⁸

Both of these issues would be addressed in the final joint task force order.

The intelligence annex of the task force order further described the factions and their possible capabilities. The United Somali Congress (USC) Aideed faction was estimated to have approximately 20,000 fighters, and USC Ali Mahdi to



Photo courtesy of the Italian Armed Forces

Somali factional militiamen gather around a "technical," a pick-up truck with a modified anti-aircraft artillery or heavy machine gun mounted in the bed. Businesses, local officials, and foreign residents were forced to hire them for protection against extortion and kidnappings by freelance gunmen.

have between 15,000 and 30,000.* Both factions were known to possess artillery, tanks, and armored personnel carriers. Mohamed Said Hirsi, known as General Morgan, headed the Somali National Front (SNF) and was thought to have a large number of the soldiers from the old national army of the Muhammad Siad Barre regime, totaling about 9,000 troops. It was also known to have seven T-54/55 tanks and eighteen 122mm artillery pieces. The rival Somali Patriotic Movement (SPM) faction under Colonel Jess was estimated to possess 15,000 fighters, of whom 2,000 were trained. While well armed, they were thought to be poorly disciplined.

There were strengths these factions were assessed to have. The first among these was their extreme unpredictability and their ability to

choose the time and place of any confrontation. Also of importance was the knowledge these fighters had of the terrain in their areas, and the fact that any aggressive militias or clans would be indistinguishable from the local inhabitants. A psychological factor that could provide another strength to the factions would lie in their ability to misrepresent the joint task force's mission and actions as an invasion, thereby increasing the aggressiveness and tenacity of their followers.

Such strengths, however, were countered by several weaknesses. The average Somali fighter was very young, often still in his teens, and described as "undisciplined, illiterate, and often under the influence of the narcotic, *khat*." In spite of the seemingly large array of small arms and heavy weapons and vehicles, there were indications of shortages of ammunition and spare parts. Their ability to operate and maintain sophisticated weaponry also was questionably, and the weapons systems of the Somalis were considered antiquated and outclassed by those of the joint task force.

* The estimates of faction strength used in this history vary greatly over time and place. This probably reflects both the difficulty of acquiring timely and accurate information and the actual changes that undoubtedly occurred within these loose organizations.

The factional leadership was known to be weak in many areas, especially in command and control.⁶⁹

Somali Terrain

The issue of terrain was equally important to define. Some pieces of information were readily available, but others were, as yet, unknown. The land features and climate were known quantities. The land was described as “undulating plains that are interrupted occasionally by areas of dissected terrain and isolated hills. The Webi Jubba and Webi Shebelle are the only streams that flow year-round along most of their lengths.” The climate can be characterized as tropical, semiarid to arid, with two short monsoon seasons. The southern plains are hot all year, with average temperatures ranging from 72 to 95 degrees Fahrenheit. The rainy season varies by region and by year with frequent droughts. The annual mean precipitation is almost 1,000 millimeters in Mogadishu, while it is much drier further inland. All of which is a way of stating that Somalia would present a hot, dry, bleak desert environment that would test the strength and endurance of both men and equipment.

But for a military planner, terrain encompasses far more than just the ground. Of equal importance are the man-made features that help to support a force in a hostile and unfamiliar environ-

ment. The term “infrastructure” is frequently used to refer to all of those buildings, structures, and systems that can be put to use. It was in this area especially that knowledge of terrain was critical. The joint task force would be very dependent upon a transportation network that would have to bring all personnel, equipment, food, water, and consumable supplies into the theater, and then be able to move them rapidly and effectively to where they were needed.

Intelligence gathering on this subject already had begun, but it did not present an optimistic picture of what the task force would face. An early study performed by the Defense Intelligence Agency described Somalia’s transportation infrastructure in the following terms:

Highways. Somalia’s road system, which has only a few high-capacity modern routes, has lapsed into disrepair. Of Somalia’s roughly 18,000 kilometers of roadway, about 3,000 are bituminous and another 3,000 crushed rock. The remaining 12,000 kilometers are dirt roads or tracks. ... Surface quality has deteriorated because of the lack of maintenance during two years of unrest. Conditions ... are so poor that parallel trails available along some stretches are frequently used instead of the road itself. ...

Air transportation. Somalia has 40 airfields with usable runways of more than

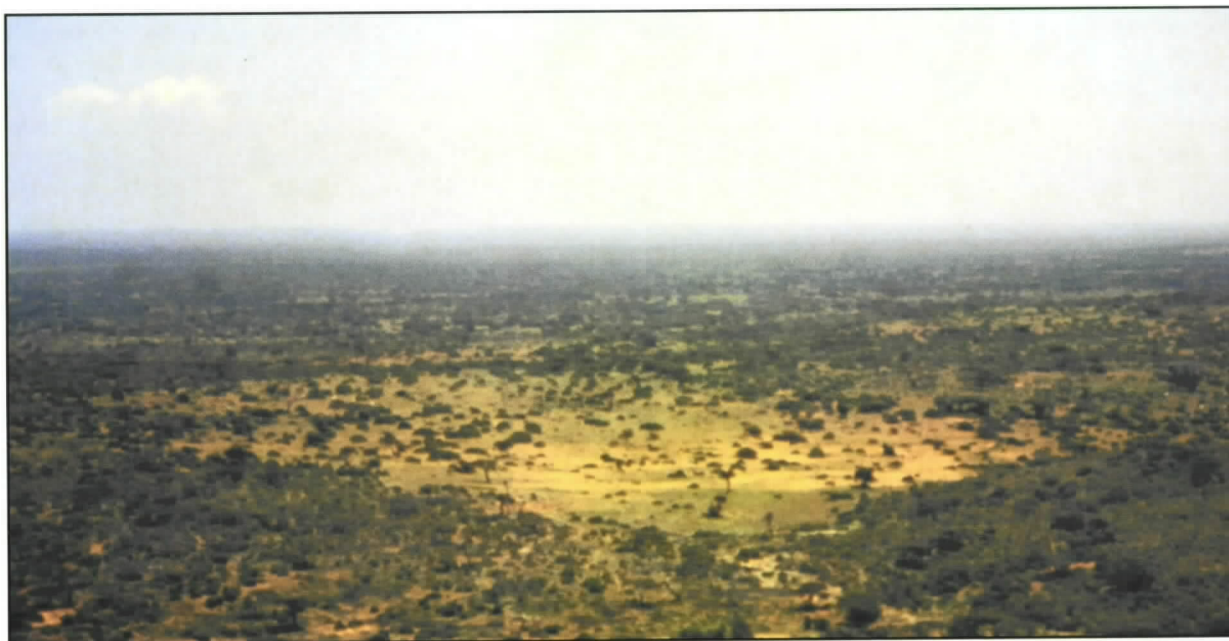


Photo courtesy of the author

The flat, featureless desert terrain to the west of Oddur, filled with scrub brush and thorn trees, is typical of the country's interior.

1,969 feet. C-130s can land at only 10 of them. Three other airfields have been opened to C-130s but with restrictions. Six of the 10 C-130-capable airfields can also accommodate C-141s. C-5 aircraft can land only at Berbera and Mogadishu. ... Airport infrastructure at Somali airfields is rudimentary at best. Few airfields have material-handling equipment or covered storage. Air traffic control is close to nonexistent. Although Mogadishu, [Bale Dogle], Hargeisa, and Kismayo have maintenance and service facilities, no airfields have the maintenance capability to fully support modern aircraft.

Seaports. The major ports of Mogadishu, Berbera, and Kismayo ... can handle general bulk and small container vessels. The operational status of petroleum offloading and storage equipment, mobile cranes, roll-on/roll-off facilities, and transit sheds at each is uncertain. Relief ship crews must be ready to use their ship's gear to unload supplies. ...

Railroads. Somalia has no railroads.⁷⁰

A final, but very important, effect the environment might have on the operation was in the area of health. The Horn of Africa presented medical planners with a wide variety of potential problems for which they would need to prepare the personnel of the joint task force. These included a high potential for infectious disease, heat-related injuries, and bites from several types of venomous snakes and insects. Diseases were vector-borne, such as malaria, or could be contracted from the unsanitary conditions prevalent in the country. As was noted in the *Soldier Handbook*: "the major infectious disease risks are from food and water-borne diseases ... related to ... poor sanitation, indiscriminate disposal of waste and decomposing corpses."⁷¹ The Central Command order was even more explicit:

Many of the deaths and much of the human suffering in Somalia is directly attributable to endemic disease, which is merely magnified and made more virulent by famine. Numerous diseases, some of which are carried by parasites (such as malaria), are present in Somalia. Among them are AIDS [acquired immunodeficiency syndrome], tuberculosis, hepatitis, pneumonia, and measles. Dysentery and gangrene are common and frequently lethal complications. Virtually all water is unsafe for drinking even when boiled due to the possible pres-

ence of spores, which the boiling may not kill. The potential for cholera and related problems from decaying cadavers is also present.⁷²

An effective preventive medicine program would be necessary to safeguard the health of the force.

Specified Tasks

Disarmament was another important issue relating to the mission of providing a secure environment.* This topic was addressed in great detail in the Marine Corps' old *Small Wars Manual*. Many members of the joint task force staff were familiar with this interesting volume. It conveys much of the extensive experience of the "Old Corps" in "operations undertaken under executive authority, wherein military force is combined with diplomatic pressure in the internal or external affairs of another state whose government is unstable, inadequate, or unsatisfactory for the preservation of life and such interests as are determined by the foreign policy of our Nation."⁷³ This experience had been gained in such places as Nicaragua, Haiti, and the Dominican Republic. But, because the world had changed radically since the book was written, and much of it was no longer valid, except as a general guide.** Also, Somalia was a unique situation, and nothing could be accepted as a matter of form. It was determined by General Johnston and his staff that there could be no attempt to disarm Somalia.⁷⁴ Virtually every Somali male, to include teenagers, carried a weapon. The personnel working for the humanitarian relief organizations hired Somalis as guards, and many people kept arms for their own protection. Weapons would have to be controlled in some manner, but this was not the same as dis-

* Disarmament was initially assigned in general terms in the original 5 December Joint Chiefs of Staff execute order to Commander in Chief, U.S. Central Command as: "provide a secure environment: disarm, as necessary, forces which interfere with humanitarian relief operations." This was deleted in a modification to the order, sent by a message from the Joint Staff to Commander in Chief, U.S. Central Command on 6 December 1992.

** The *Small Wars Manual*, the last edition of which was published in 1940, addressed such matters as civil-military relations, the role of the State Department, creation of native police forces, disarmament of civilian populations, tactics, and logistics.



DVIC DD-SD-00-00751

The flood of military assistance during the Barre years meant an abundance of military hardware, weapons, and ammunition for the warring clans to use. Weapons ranged from World War II era .30-caliber machine guns and rocket launchers to Soviet-made AK-47 rifles and U.S.-made M16s.

armament. The task forces' operation order would have to address the problem clearly and effectively.

The joint task force's office of the Staff Judge Advocate was deeply involved in a related issue. In this operation, international law and operational law would feature prominently in how the force accomplished its mission:

As each I MEF section developed implied taskings in preparation for the development of the operation plan, it became clear that U.S. forces would be operating in an austere environment where the rule of law had been replaced by the law of the gun. Advice and innovative planning in a variety of nontraditional functions and activities would be needed as the ... commander entered uncharted waters. Clearly, specialized rules of engagement would have to be drafted to

cover the abundance of small arms in the hands of unstable persons and proliferation of technical vehicles. The ability to deal successfully with these and similar challenges would require a solid foundation under international law."⁷⁵

General Johnston and his Staff Judge Advocate, Marine Colonel Frederick M. Lorenz, worked with Central Command in developing rules of engagement so those promulgated in the Central Command order were ones that could be easily incorporated in the task force order.⁷⁶

The rules of engagement, as published, were broad and focused on the protection of the force and its mission. General Johnston later said these rules were ones that "every commander would want to have on such a mission."⁷⁷ Essentially, every member of the force had the right to protect himself not only against a hostile act, but also against the threat of such an act. Under such rules it was not necessary for task force personnel to be fired upon before taking action. A weapon aimed in a threatening manner was sufficient cause to fire on the individual holding it. Also, of particular interest in this operation, "technicals" and crew-served weapons were considered to be threats at any time, regardless of the actual intent of their crews at the time encountered.⁷⁸ * To ensure that everyone understood his rights and responsibilities, cards were printed with the rules and distributed, and classes were held in which they were explained. The cards carried the reminder that the United States was not at war, that all persons were to be treated with dignity, and that minimum force was to be used to carry out the mission.

Another important implied task for this operation came from Brigadier General Anthony C. Zinni's recent experience. He knew that an operation of this sort would require the military to work closely with numerous humanitarian relief organ-

* Technical vehicles, or "technicals," as they were more commonly known, were a bizarre form of homemade weapons platform unique to Somalia. They were generally formed from the body of a pick-up truck or similar vehicle, with the addition of a heavy machine gun, antiaircraft weapon, or some other crew-served weapon mounted in the bed. They were often encountered at roadblocks and were employed by all factions and many gangs. The term itself apparently derived from the euphemism used for hiring armed guards for protection, or "technical assistance."

izations.* The relief organizations were a significant part of the overall humanitarian effort. Such organizations were already working in Somalia, providing food, medical assistance, and relief services to the civilian population. But they would have requirements of their own which would have to be provided by the military. In addition, the work of both the military and these organizations required close coordination to ensure a unity of effort. In Operation Provide Comfort in Iraq, General Zinni had achieved this coordination through a civil-military operations center. A center definitely would be needed for Operation Restore Hope.⁷⁹

The Central Command order set a specific mission for the joint task force to conduct joint military operations in Somalia to secure the major air and sea ports, key installations, and food distribution points, and to assist in providing humanitarian operations and relief under U.N. auspices. The order described the conduct of the operation in four phases. It also formally ordered the commanding general of I MEF to assume the duties as commander of JTF Somalia and to establish the joint task force.⁸⁰

General Johnston had already begun this work. In addition, his staff was working on completing the task force's own order, which was issued the day after the Central Command order, 6 December. The mission of the joint task force remained basically the same as in the Central Command order, with some minor changes in the wording. The commander's intent made an important distinction: "JTF Somalia will focus on securing the lines of communication used for the ground movement of relief supplies by U.N. and [non-governmental organization] agencies to distribution sites. JTF Somalia will not be primarily involved in transporting supplies, but will assist relief organizations by securing their operating bases as well as the ground transportation routes to relief distribution sites." This statement clearly kept the task force out of the business of actually feeding the hungry and concentrated on the more appropriate military mission of providing the nec-

essary secure environment for the relief operations.⁸¹

Psychological Operations

Johnston was clear on the importance of psychological operations and civil affairs to the success of the operation. He intended to use them to assist in disarming technicals and bandits, and to create a "benevolent image" of coalition forces as they were engaged in their humanitarian, peace-making mission.⁸² In the task force order, psychological operations were intended to focus upon presenting the image of a "strong U.S./U.N./Coalition presence, capable and willing to use force to protect the international relief effort and to allay fears about U.S./U.N./Coalition intentions." The psychological operation's themes and objectives were to assure all factions and groups of the impartiality of the conduct of the relief operations, and to dissuade any groups or individuals from interfering with the relief. Major themes were credibility of the joint task force in its ability to carry out its goals and to meet force with force if necessary, and neutrality in its dealings with all groups in its humanitarian mission. The methods to be used to get the word out to the local populace were to be "face-to-face communications, radio and loudspeaker broadcasts, leaflets, posters, coloring books, and other printed products."⁸³ To perform this valuable work, a separate Joint Psychological Operations Task Force was formed within the joint task force.

Phases of the Operation

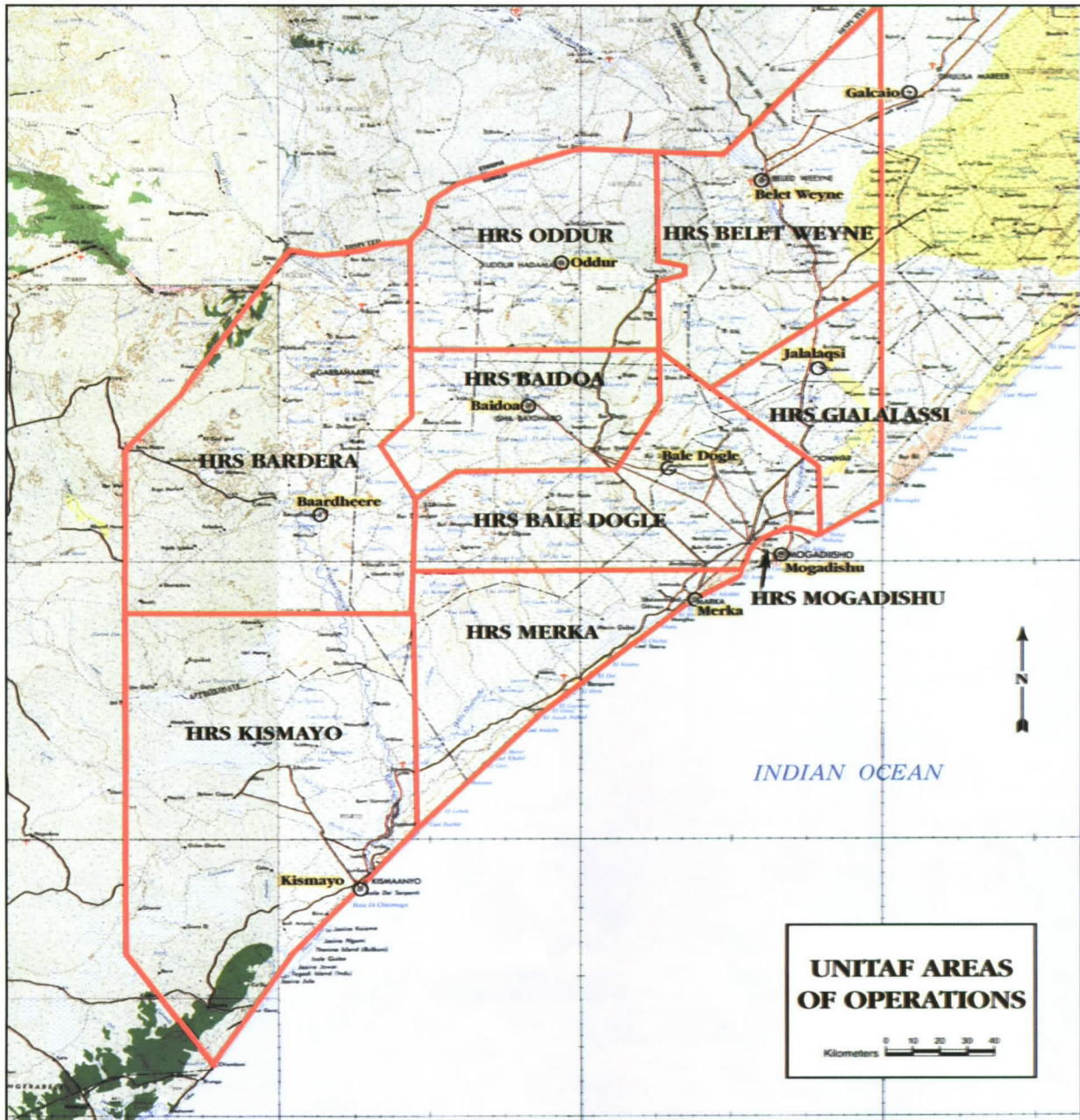
As in the Central Command order, the task force's concept of operations was set in four phases. As in any properly prepared campaign, each of these phases would lead to and set the conditions for the next. In Phase I, the forces were to "establish a base of operations and logistics in Mogadishu," to "gain control over the flow of humanitarian relief supplies through the city," and to introduce other U.N. forces throughout the country. Amphibious forces would secure the port and airfield at Mogadishu and establish a lodgment for follow-on troops. A maritime prepositioning force operation would follow. Once adequate security was established, additional forces would deploy into Mogadishu. A second airhead would be secured as soon as possible for the

* Humanitarian relief organizations is a comprehensive term that includes non-governmental organizations, private voluntary organizations, and agencies of the United Nations and the International Commission of the Red Cross. During the operation the term non-governmental organization usually was used when referring to any relief organization, but the more appropriate organization will be used when discussing the work of the Civil-Military Operations Center.

deployment of additional forces, and the town of Baidoa would also be secured. Phase II provided for the expansion of operations at the major interior relief distribution sites to include Gialalassi, Bardera, Belet Weyne, Oddur, and others as required. Additional forces would expand operations to these interior sites and establish sufficient security to allow unimpeded relief operations. In Phase III, operations would expand through the conduct of relief convoy security operations and to additional ports and airfields, to include the port of Kismayo. The crucial Phase IV would be a “transition from a U.S.-led to a U.N.-controlled

effort,” with a “gradual relief in place of JTF forces.”⁸⁴

The area of operations was divided into eight humanitarian relief sectors, so named in keeping with the nature of the mission.⁸⁵ Each sector was centered on a major city that could serve as a distribution center; in fact, many of them had been such centers during Operation Provide Relief. The other qualification for choosing these cities was that each was located on a main road and had an airfield capable of handling military cargo aircraft. The original humanitarian relief sectors were Mogadishu, Bale Dogle, Baidoa, Bardera,



Kismayo, Oddur, Gialalassi, and Belet Weyne.⁸⁶ The boundaries for the sectors were not set with regard to clan or tribal affiliation, but by simple grid coordinates.

Because of the close cooperation of Central Command and joint task force staffs during planning, General Johnston was able to sign and issue the task force's order on 6 December 1992; only one day after Central Command issued its order to the joint task force. The completed document was thorough and detailed and recognized that some key elements, such as the forces to be offered by the coalition partners, still had to be identified.* D-Day was now only three days away.

Another critical aspect, which joint task force planners had been hurriedly working on, was the development of the deployment timeline. With a known date for D-Day, planners were able to work backward in time to determine when other critical events would have to occur for the operation to begin as planned and continue in an orderly fashion. A timeline published on 1 December set the initial actions for 4 December, with the establishment of the joint task force headquarters, and worked forward 30 days, when the maritime prepositioning force offload was to be completed. The timeline called for the quick activation and deployment of many units and detachments that would have to be in place to support the impending operation. These included the naval support element and the offload preparation party of Maritime Prepositioning Squadron 2, which had to link up with those ships at Diego Garcia. The Marine air-ground task force had to take its position in the area of operations, and many other Marine Corps, Army, and Navy elements, and advance parties had to be alerted for movement within a few days.⁸⁷

The Flow of the Force

This work called for close cooperation with one of the specified commands, U.S. Transport

tation Command (TransCom), headquartered at Scott Air Force Base, Illinois. A separate plan would have to be worked out to ensure the initial landings could be made on time, that the follow-on forces could be brought into theater as required, and that enough logistical support for the force would be started on its way from the United States to reach Somalia in an orderly sequence. The detailed planning for this deployment called for the movement of thousands of troops from their home bases to ports of embarkation for further transport halfway around the world. There would have to be a sequenced timetable, employing all the assets available for the movement by ship and airplane, of the cargo needed by the force. As a supporting command, TransCom had to tailor its plans to the requirements the joint task force provided through Central Command. These were made known in a formal document called a time-phased force deployment and development plan. Such a system works best when there is an ample amount of planning time available, so force structures and logistical requirements can be estimated in advance and contingency plans created. There was no such luxury with the preparations for this operation; TransCom would have to react quickly as the needs of the joint task force were determined and made known.⁸⁸

Since the majority of logistical support would be coming by ship, a subordinate organization of TransCom, the Military Sealift Command, would have the greatest capability to support the operation. Military Sealift Command divided its responsibilities into three phases, which it called a "Trident of Sea Power." First, it would employ the maritime prepositioning force ships that supported the Marine Corps and Army to bring in the unit equipment and supplies that would be immediately needed by the first troops coming ashore. Next, it would employ fast sealift ships and chartered vessels to fill the surge in shipping that would bring in the heavy equipment and critical supplies. Finally, a sustainment phase would provide a steady flow of logistical support. Because of the long transit times (even the fast sealift ships would take 14 days to reach Mogadishu from the east coast of the United States), these assets had to be identified and prepared as soon as possible.⁸⁹

Another TransCom subordinate was equally busy with its preparations to support the operation. The Air Mobility Command had to establish the air bridge by which it would fly in most of the

* Some countries had already offered forces as part of the reinforcements to the U.N. Organization Somalia. Early planning had prepared to use these units, but with the change to a United States-led force, some of these offers were withdrawn, while other countries came forward to assist. When the order came for the joint task force, it had not yet been determined when the various coalition forces would actually join the force. Some arrived concurrent with U.S. Forces, some within a few days, and some took several weeks.

U.S. forces, as well as those of many of the coalition countries. The command already had some experience in this area, having established the plan under which the aircraft carrying the relief supplies were being brought into Kenya for Operation Provide Relief. Now, however, it faced a larger and more time-critical task. With the long sailing times for the shipping, air transport would have to carry the considerable initial burden of the earliest portions of the deployment. The com-

mand's staff quickly provided for basing rights in nearby countries, notably Egypt and Saudi Arabia, and created a plan for aerial refueling. These factors would decrease the flying time for individual flights and minimize the wear on aircraft.⁹⁰

By 6 December, the forces were ready; the plan was prepared and issued; the physical requirements and equipment needed had been determined and identified. With a few days left before D-Day, it was time to set the operation in motion.

Chapter 4

Coming Ashore

Initial Landings

All of the pieces of the operation came together in Somalia in the early days of December 1992. Actually, some forces were already in place. Teams from Special Operations Forces, as part of Operation Provide Relief, were providing security at airfields, as well as protecting the Air Force combat control teams that were operating at them. These specially trained teams also were a component of Provide Relief and were sent into the airfields to prepare the fields for subsequent air operations and to control the aircraft. Also, on 7 December, members of Company C, 2d Battalion,

5th Special Forces Group (Airborne) provided security and sniper support for America's special envoy when he arrived in Mogadishu.

The U.S. Navy and Marines were the first underway. The *Tripoli* Amphibious Ready Group (ARG), composed of the USS *Tripoli* (LPH 10), USS *Juneau* (LPD 10), and USS *Rushmore* (LSD 47), left Singapore on 23 November and headed toward the Persian Gulf. Commanded by Captain John W. Peterson, USN, the ready group moved into the waters off the southern Somali coast on 3 December. Planning for the operation by the group began in earnest the week before, when a warning order was received. At about the same



DVIC DD-SD-00-00656

Marines and sailors stand at the edge of the deck of the *Tripoli* (LPH 10). In the background are four Marine CH-46 Sea Knight helicopters scouting the area before the landings at Mogadishu.



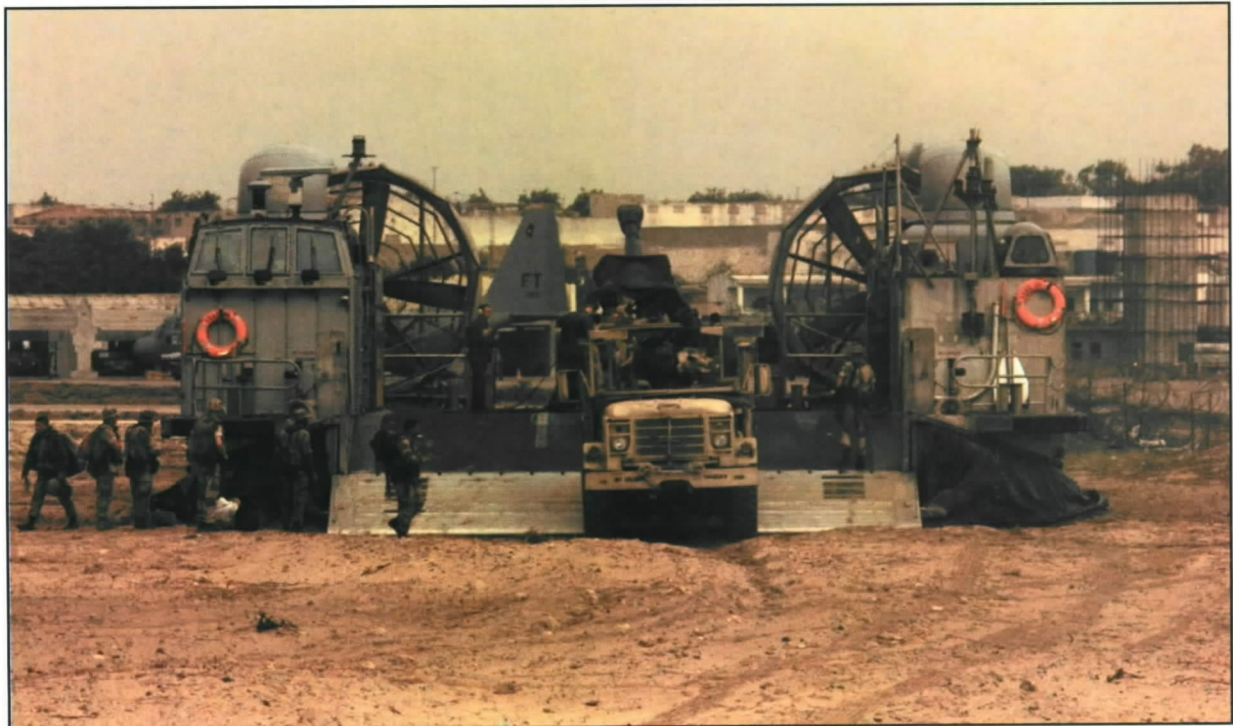
15th MEU, Westpac '92-93

A Colorado native and the son of a career U.S. Air Force officer, Col Gregory S. Newbold commanded the 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit, a force in the vanguard of the American commitment.

time, Amphibious Squadron 5, commanded by Captain Brian Boyce, USN, based on the West Coast of the United States, received a warning order that it also would support the operation. In addition, Captain Boyce would be the chief of staff for Rear Admiral James B. Perkins III, USN,

who would command the maritime prepositioning force. Amphibious Squadron 5 would have the responsibility for maritime prepositioning ship operations and the offload.⁹¹ The condition of the port was still a question for these officers, as was the infrastructure available. The ability to quickly offload, stage, and move equipment and supplies would be critical to the operation, but the capabilities of the port could not be determined until coalition forces were on the ground. In the interim, U.S. Navy Sea, Air, Land (SEAL) teams from the Tripoli ready group conducted beach and port hydrographic and reconnaissance surveys of potential landing sites.

The amphibious group carried the 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit (Special Operations Capable) (15th MEU (SOC)), commanded by Colonel Gregory S. Newbold, which would make the initial landings scheduled for the early morning of the 9th. The MEU had come under the operational control of Central Command on 30 November. In accord with the joint task force order, the MEU “splashed tracks” from the *Juneau* at 0330 to meet an H-Hour of 0500.⁹² Every available means of landing was used. The SEALs swam in from offshore and 170 Marines assaulted in 18 “Zodiac” boats to secure the port facility. Amphibious



DVIC DN-ST-93-02668

A Marine 5-ton truck towing a 155mm M198 howitzer disembarks from an Assault Craft Unit 5 air-cushion landing craft at Mogadishu.

assault vehicles carried the majority of the landing force, followed by helicopters and air-cushioned landing craft.⁹³

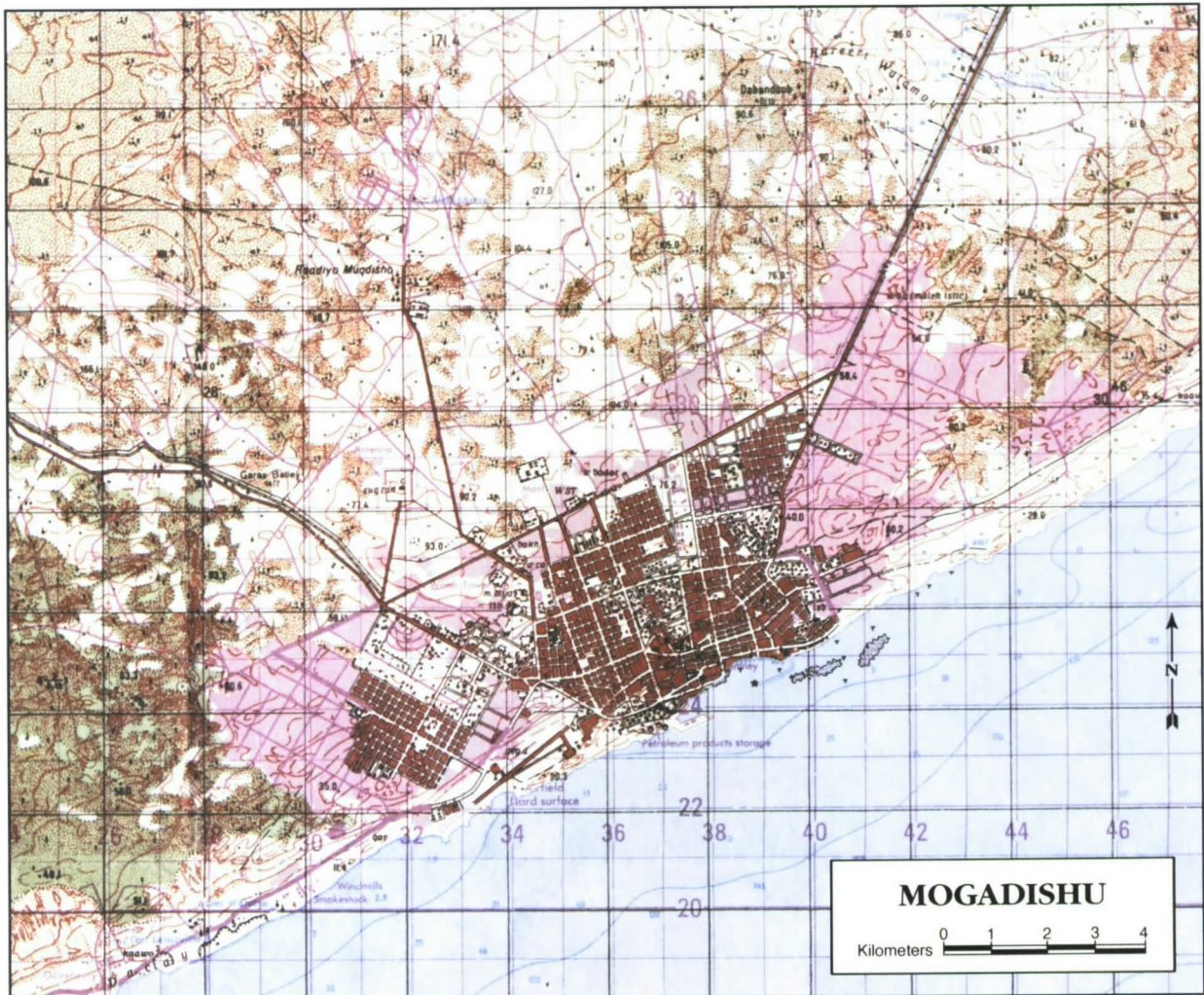
The initial landings were made at 0540. The Marines and SEALs landed across the beaches of Mogadishu and came out of the dark surf where they were greeted by the bright lights of television cameras. Ignoring the disturbing presence of the media as best they could, the reconnaissance parties pushed inland to their objectives, located at the port and the airfield. According to plan, the repositioning ship *MV 1stLt Jack Lummus* (T-AK 3011), which had arrived from Diego Garcia the previous day, was brought directly to the pier to offload, expediting the movement of equipment.⁹⁴

Other than the illuminated landing, the initial portions of the operation went quickly and smoothly. Colonel Newbold had stated he wanted to “accomplish our mission by overwhelming any opportunity for forces to oppose us. ... This is a

low intensity conflict environment requiring [a] dramatic show of force (to create the respect that will minimize opposition), mind-numbing speed (so that we maintain the initiative), and a willingness to neutralize those who attack us (to deter further violence).”⁹⁵ The strength and speed he desired were in evidence as the forces moved beyond their initial objectives and into the city. He was able to declare the airport open at 1145 and the first C-130 aircraft landed soon thereafter.⁹⁶ The Air Force Lockheed C-141 carrying members of the task force headquarters touched down just a few minutes later.

The Marines quickly passed through the city to the United States Embassy compound, where they secured the chancery. By the end of the day, they had established their forward operations command post at the airport.⁹⁷

In addition, the first of the coalition partners arrived and were incorporated into the defensive perimeter. This was a company of the 2d French





DVIC DD-SD-00-00670

At Mogadishu airport, Marines stand guard in a light armored vehicle while cargo is unloaded from a U.S. Air Force C-141B Starlifter aircraft.

Foreign Legion Parachute Regiment, which arrived by airplane from their base in Djibouti.⁹⁸ The company came under American operational control. The Legionnaires would soon be followed by thousands of soldiers, sailors, airmen, and Marines from 22 other countries.

As the coalition forces moved into Mogadishu they encountered a city that had felt the ravages of two years of civil war and anarchy. There was no electricity, no running water, and no functioning sanitation system. Law enforcement was nonexistent because there were no police or judicial system. Public buildings had been looted and destroyed and most private homes were severely damaged; virtually every structure was missing its roof and had broken walls, doors, and windows. The commerce of the city was at a standstill. Schools were closed and gangs of youths roamed the streets. Crowded refugee camps seemingly filled every parcel of open land, and new graves were encountered everywhere. The sound of gunfire could be heard throughout the city.

There had been no opposition to the landings or the subsequent movement of forces into the American Embassy compound. However, on this

first day, the operation's first shooting incident took place. A vehicle containing nine Somalis ran a checkpoint manned by French Legionnaires, who opened fire at the fleeing automobile, killing two and wounding seven.⁹⁹ This incident was unfortunate but within the rules of engagement. By running the roadblock, the Somalis had posed a threat to members of the coalition, and the Legionnaires had to react. Soon, sniper fire was added to the troops' list of concerns, especially around the port area. While not causing casualties, the desultory fire was an annoyance and an indication of what was to come.

General Johnston flew into Mogadishu on 10 December. The combined joint task force established itself inside the American Embassy compound, with the main headquarters in the chancery building. With the arrival of coalition forces, the joint task force became a combined joint task force. Later, the title would change officially to Unified Task Force Somalia (UNITAF). In a symbolic and emotional gesture for the Marines, the flag raised over the compound was one that had once flown over the Marine barracks in Beirut. The embassy compound itself was a shambles.



Photo courtesy of the Italian Armed Forces

A typical street in the Italian sector of Mogadishu crowded with pedestrians, vehicles, and market stalls.

The buildings had literally been stripped to the bare walls; even the paving tiles had been pried up and carried away. The floors of the chancery were buried in trash and debris a foot deep. Bodies were found in some areas of the grounds. The staff quickly went to work cleaning out work areas and living spaces to establish a camp.

Logistical Buildup

In the critical early days, all logistical support for the growing coalition forces came from what the 15th MEU was able to provide through its service support group, what the allies could bring themselves, and from the maritime prepositioning force shipping. The offload of these important vessels was critical. The *Lummus* had arrived the previous day and was ready to begin its offload, which was scheduled to last for four days. But first, the port area itself needed considerable attention. There was no infrastructure, not even wires left on the light poles. Everything had to be

recreated while mountains of filth and trash needed to be cleaned out. To make room for the arrival and assembly area needed for the prepositioning force shipping to offload its equipment, old warehouses had to be bulldozed. Eventually, 54 acres were cleared for this purpose. The U.S. Navy support element brought in extra materials when it arrived, and new barracks, galleys, and heads were built over time. While the offload of the *Lummus* continued, on a selective basis, the first priority was for engineer equipment and materials. Combat support vehicles and weapons like tanks and artillery were left on board.¹⁰⁰

It was long and frustrating work. A maritime prepositioning force squadron contains enough equipment and supplies for a Marine brigade of 16,000 men. To accomplish the job smoothly and efficiently there are several distinct units that must participate. The first of these is the offload preparation party; a small group of Marines who come on board the ship while it is underway to prepare the equipment for its eventual offload and



Photo courtesy of the Italian Armed Forces

The ravages of the civil war were evident in this neighborhood in the Italian sector of Mogadishu. Many of the buildings had no roofs and all were severely damaged.

use. The next is the survey, liaison and reconnaissance party, which flies into the designated port to prepare it for the imminent operation. The next is a U.S. Navy unit, the Navy support element that undertakes the operation of the offload of equipment and its movement through the arrival and assembly area. Finally, the unit that will use the gear must arrive on time to move offloaded equipment and supplies out of the port to make room for what is coming off next. A miss in the sequence can mean congestion and delays. Also, during normal operations, the entire ship will be offloaded, but Restore Hope was not an ordinary operation.

Every commander must balance many requirements, making the best use of limited resources. In this case, the conflict faced by the commander was to strike the proper balance between combat forces and logisticians, which had to compete for limited space on aircraft. So, in placing the priority for building up the force of fighters quickly, the support troops had to wait. This in turn caused

additional delays at the already burdened port. The offloading of ships took longer than projected because unneeded equipment had to be moved repeatedly or back-loaded onto the ships.

Force Buildup

Concurrent with the logistical buildup was the arrival of the forces. The airport quickly became a scene of considerable activity as more aircraft arrived, bringing in more of the UNITAF headquarters and elements of Marine Forces Somalia (MarFor). Once again, the conditions in Somalia caused problems for planners and operators. The limited capacity of the Mogadishu airport meant a strict schedule had to be maintained for arriving and departing aircraft. This in turn affected the scheduling of aerial refueling and the use of the intermediate staging bases the Air Mobility Command had set up in Egypt and Yemen. Aircraft could only be called from the staging bases once there was a clear time slot at Mogadishu. Those



DVIC DD-SD-00-00804

This view of the U.S. Embassy compound in Mogadishu shows the chancery building in the center surrounded by its own wall. Another wall, in the background, enclosed the rest of the compound. By late December 1992, the area to the top of the picture was filled with tents, mess halls, and other facilities for the UNITAF staff.



DVIC DD-ST-00-00801

This aerial view of the port of Mogadishu shows three cargo ships and a number of large, medium, and small vessels moored to the docks. The port played an important role during the relief effort.

aircraft then had to hurriedly unload passengers and cargo and depart quickly.¹⁰¹ In spite of complicated and hectic scheduling, the buildup of coalition personnel continued at a rapid pace.

On 7 December, Major General Charles E. Wilhelm, commanding general of the 1st Marine Division, assumed MarFor commander duties. On 10 December, he flew out of Camp Pendleton with a small battle staff and arrived at Mogadishu the next day.¹⁰² MarFor would provide the basic structure around which the task force would be built. As other forces, American or coalition, arrived in the theater, they would initially be placed under the operational control of MarFor.

The largest American force after the Marines was the U.S. Army's 10th Mountain Division (Light Infantry), which would form Army Forces Somalia. Because of the manner in which such an Army division deploys, its movement actually had begun on 7 December, when the first of seven trainloads of equipment departed Fort Drum, New York, for the port of Bayonne, New Jersey. Over the next 10 days, 450 railcars were used to move

more than 1,500 pieces of the division's equipment to the military ocean terminal at Bayonne.¹⁰³ There they were loaded on board ships for the long journey to the Horn of Africa. The soldiers were preparing for their deployment at the same time. Classes were held on the country's history, culture, terrain, and problems soldiers could expect. Needed equipment was brought in to fill recognized shortages, some of it from the division's "round-out" brigade, the 27th Brigade, New York Army National Guard. The division helicopters were readied for use in the deserts of Somalia with the addition of particle separators and global positioning system equipment. Desert camouflage utilities (known as battle dress uniforms or "BDUs" to the Army) were procured and issued.¹⁰⁴ Troops were sent to the ranges to fire and battle-sight their weapons, ironically often firing in the snows of a New York winter as they prepared for movement to equatorial Africa.

The division was originally expected to start its deployment on 19 December. However, on 10 December, a decision was made by UNITAF that



DVIC DD-SD-00-00747

Among the maritime prepositioning ships to dock at Mogadishu was the Algol class vehicle cargo ship, USNS Altair. Onboard cranes unload the ship's cargo of military supplies and vehicles.

Army Forces Somalia should begin its deployment much sooner. When General Wilhelm arrived in the theater, he immediately assumed operational control of the 15th MEU (SOC) and the French forces and focused efforts on securing the port, the airfield, and the embassy compound. With the arrival of 1st Marine Division's 1st Battalion, 7th Marines, MarFor was able to broaden the coalition's control to areas outside Mogadishu. This began at Bale Dogle, which UNITAF had recognized early in its planning as an important location from which to extend the force into the interior of the country. The 15th MEU (SOC)'s Battalion Landing Team, 2d Battalion, 9th Marines, supported by elements of Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 164, was given the mission, which it planned and accomplished within 48 hours. The Marines seized the airfield in a heliborne assault prior to the arrival of Army forces.¹⁰⁵

The first U.S. Army unit to deploy was Company A, 2d Battalion, 87th Infantry. The soldiers and the battalion's tactical command post loaded on board three Lockheed C-141 Starlifter

troop transport aircraft on 11 December for a direct flight into the airfield at Bale Dogle, now held by the newly arrived Marines. The soldiers arrived within 24 hours and went immediately from deployment to employment as they relieved the Marines who had secured the airfield.¹⁰⁶ * The Army assumed full control for Bale Dogle airfield on 15 December.

These early successes led to criticism of UNITAF by several members of the media. Journalists openly questioned why UNITAF was not pushing more quickly and aggressively into the interior, especially to the town of Baidoa, described as "The City of Death," where the impact of famine and suffering were at their worst. General Johnston, however, would not be pressured into hasty action. The responsibility for the accomplishment of the mission and the safety of the members of the coalition force was his

* Due to time zone differences, the soldiers actually arrived on 13 December.

alone, and he knew UNITAF was quickly building in strength and would soon expand into the other planned relief sectors. He wanted this to be done in an orderly manner, without spreading the available forces too thinly over the ground. He addressed the issue in a television interview, explaining his reasons and laying the matter to rest.¹⁰⁷

Meanwhile, the country began to show the coalition soldiers all the facets of its character. Marines, sailors, and soldiers were generally greeted with smiles and waves from the Somalis they encountered on the streets, but there were some who seemed determined to test the resolve of UNITAF. Sniping became a routine part of daily existence; seldom more than simple harassment, it still provided an edge to the life and work of the task force. Sniping was especially a problem at the port, which was overlooked by an old prison the gunmen used to cover their activities. Marines quickly secured the prison area and ended the problem in the immediate location. But throughout UNITAF's time in Somalia, sniping at convoys or into the various compounds would remain a daily occurrence.

The first direct attacks on UNITAF members also took place during these early days. In two separate incidents on 12 December three aircraft of Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 164, one Bell UH-1N Huey and two Bell AH-1W Super Cobras, were fired upon. The UH-1N Huey received damage to its rotors. In the second incident, the attack helicopters returned fire with 20mm guns and missiles (the attack helicopters carried tube-launched, optically tracked, wire-guided, or TOW, missiles), destroying two "technicals" and damaging one American-made M113 armored personnel carrier.¹⁰⁸ Such immediate, overwhelming, and deadly response was precisely what General Johnston set in his commander's guidance as the best antidote for aggression by the factions or bandits.

Just as American forces were proceeding to Somalia, so were the military contingents of several coalition partners. One of the first of these forces to begin moving were the Canadians, who had received their own warning order to participate in the U.S.-led operation on 4 December. Originally, they had prepared to deploy their force as a part of United Nations Operation Somalia and



DVIC DD-SD-00-00805

The cargo from a U.S. Air Force C-5 Galaxy aircraft is unloaded on the flight line at Mogadishu airport while a Marine UH-1N Huey helicopter flies overhead. Beyond the main runway is the Indian Ocean shoreline.



DVIC DA-SC-94-00321

An M998 high-mobility multipurpose, wheeled vehicle (humvee) is loaded onto an Air Mobility Command C-141B Starlifter at Griffis Air Force Base, New York, as equipment of the 10th Mountain Division is readied for shipment to Somalia.

had sent the auxiliary oil replenishment ship HMCS *Preserver* (510) to Somalia. Under the Canadian forces' Operation Deliverance, the ship arrived at Mogadishu on 12 December. The advance headquarters of the Canadian Joint Forces Somalia landed at Mogadishu on 13 December and embarked on board the ship. Their contribution to the forces on the ground was to be a Canadian Airborne Regiment Battle Group, the advance party of which arrived by U.S. Air Force Lockheed C-5 Galaxy aircraft at Bale Dogle on 14 December.¹⁰⁹

The Italian contingent also began to arrive at about this time. Their force was initially composed of two elements: two battalions of the Folgore Airborne Brigade, a famed parachute unit; and the San Marco Battalion, a naval infantry unit. The Italian forces were also supported from the sea by the Italian Navy's 24th Naval Group, which carried heavy equipment and supplies. The first elements of the brigade, a small special forces reconnaissance element of 23 men

led by Major Gennaro Fusco, left Italy on 11 December. They arrived in Mogadishu on 13 December and reoccupied the Italian Embassy on 16 December.¹¹⁰ The brigade would arrive in full force by 24 December. On the 23d, the San Marco Battalion arrived in Somali waters with the naval group. Brigadier General Bruno Loi arrived on 20 December and took command of the Folgore Brigade in what the Italian forces called Operation Ibis.

Thousands of miles to the south, on 15 December, the Prime Minister of Australia, The Right Honorable Paul John Keating, announced that his nation would contribute forces as well. The Australian participation would be called Operation Solace and their force would be formed around a battalion group. The battalion selected was 1st Battalion, 1st Royal Australian Regiment, stationed in Townsville. This unit was the alert battalion of the Australian Ready Deployment Force. The contingent of 930 soldiers included engineer and administrative support elements, as

well as armored personnel carriers. The battalion's artillery battery commander and forward observers would act as liaison and provide civil affairs capabilities. The Australian reconnaissance party departed on 21 December and arrived in Mogadishu the next day.¹¹¹

Another of the United States' traditional allies was preparing to send an important contribution to the coalition. The Turkish army created a special task force built around an existing mechanized infantry company, 1st Company, 1st Battalion, 28th Mechanized Brigade, stationed in Ankara. The company was strengthened with a quartermaster platoon, a transportation platoon, a signal section, a medical section, and an engineer section. In all, the reinforced company numbered 300 soldiers. The advance party left Ankara and arrived in Mogadishu on 19 December. The remainder of the Turkish force proceeded by rail to the port of Mersin beginning on 17 December. There, they boarded three Turkish Navy ships that sailed on the 17th and brought them directly to Mogadishu on 2 January 1993.¹¹²

By mid-December many other forces, large and small, were also proceeding to join UNITAF. Several of these came from the Middle East and Africa. They included a reinforced motorized rifle company from Kuwait, an all-volunteer unit that began arriving on 14 December.¹¹³ The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia sent elements of its 5th Royal Saudi Land Forces Airborne Battalion, reinforced with medical, engineer, and maintenance platoons. Numbering up to 669 soldiers, the first Saudis entered Mogadishu on 19 December, with their forces fully in Somalia by the end of the month.¹¹⁴ For the first time in its history, Botswana sent soldiers to serve outside its borders. Out of an army totaling only 5,500, Botswana sent 300 soldiers in a composite company.¹¹⁵ Several other countries, such as Pakistan, the United Arab Emirates, Egypt, Nigeria, Tunisia, Morocco, and Zimbabwe, all sent liaison officers and small advance contingents in preparation for larger contributions to be made late in December or in January. To add to the strength of the air forces, the German Air Force continued to



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Soldiers of the 10th Mountain Division, Fort Drum, New York, unload their packs after boarding a C-141B cargo aircraft, which will take them to Bale Dogle, Somalia.

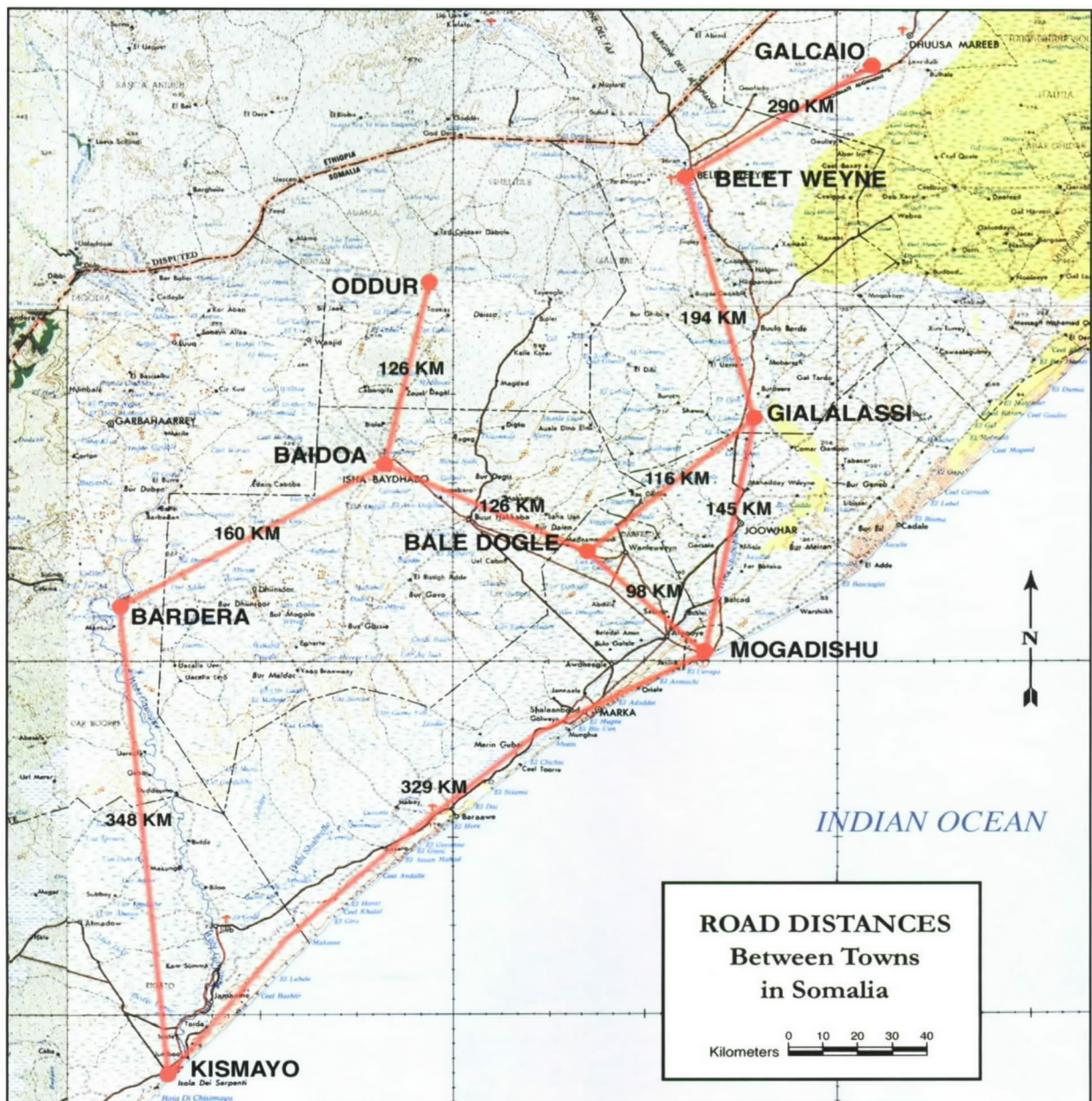
provide three C-160 Transall cargo aircraft that had been flying relief supplies out of Mombasa, Kenya, as part of Operation Provide Relief. The British Royal Air Force did the same with two C-130 Hercules transport aircraft, which it also had been using in Provide Relief. The Royal New Zealand Air Force sent three Andover transport aircraft from its Number 42 Squadron to fly transport within the theater.

Into the Interior

The arrival of all these forces, and the promise of others to come shortly, gave General Johnston

the strength and flexibility to push into the interior. Bale Dogle, strongly occupied by coalition troops, would be the springboard for the next step into Baidoa.

With the French forces already under the operational control of MarFor, UNITAF and MarFor planners decided to prepare a combined operation to secure the city. Task Force Hope was formed from the French 2d Foreign Legion Parachute Regiment, and elements of the French Special Operations Command and the 13th Foreign Legion Demi-Brigade, and 15th MEU.¹¹⁶ The task force left Mogadishu on 15 December and secured the airfield the next day through a com-





DVIC DN-ST-93-01388

The day after American Marines and French soldiers secured Baidoa, Marines of the 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit provide security for a convoy bringing food to the "City of Death."

bined ground and heliborne movement. There was no opposition. Relief convoys, escorted by coalition forces, began bringing supplies to Baidoa that afternoon.¹¹⁷

The Marines and French soldiers immediately established security posts and started patrols of the city. The presence of a large number of armed men was quickly noted and was a source of some concern. On 18 December, Somalis fired from inside one of their compounds upon members of Task Force Hope. The area was quickly surrounded and entered and all arms were confiscated.¹¹⁸ The incident highlighted a need, both inside the relief sectors and throughout the area of operations, for a policy concerning weapons control.

The rapid success of the Baidoa operation brought the first phase of Operation Restore Hope to a close. It also provided the basic framework by which all other operations to secure objectives would be organized and executed. The push to the

remaining humanitarian relief sectors would involve the U.S. Marines or Army in a series of joint and combined operations with coalition partners. Wherever possible, these operations would use the forces of the coalition nations that had volunteered to assume responsibility for the particular sectors.

The system by which these operations were ordered and controlled became fairly standard and reflected how UNITAF functioned. A series of daily fragmentary orders were issued, or more frequently if necessary. The orders listed objectives to be taken, forces to be employed, and dates for accomplishment of the missions. Coordinating instructions were provided as necessary and noted any support that was required along with specific force assignments. Each day, the next fragmentary orders would contain more information, adjust dates if necessary, and note the commanding general's additional orders or guidance. UNITAF headquarters operations section thus became a scene of continuous work as liaison officers from various U.S. units and coalition forces attended planning meetings within the future operations cell, run by Colonel Peter A. Dotto. All the while, ongoing operations were monitored in the current operations cell under Colonel James B. Egan.

Another critical part of each operation was to prepare the local population for the arrival of UNITAF forces. This task fell to Ambassador Robert B. Oakley, who had been appointed by President George H. W. Bush because of his experience in Africa as Special Envoy to Somalia. Ambassador Oakley assisted the military in understanding the Somali people and cultural nuances. He also provided insight into the tangle that was Somali politics.¹¹⁹ For each operation, Oakley would travel to the particular city in advance of military forces to meet with the local elders and leaders. He would explain in detail what was about to happen to reduce the risk of confrontation. The following day, aircraft would drop leaflets over the city that repeated the peaceful intentions of the coalition members and its humanitarian purpose. They also would warn the people not to interfere with UNITAF forces or operations. In this manner, the coalition forces would find a soft landing at each objective.¹²⁰

Securing the Relief Sectors

With Fragmentary Order 7, UNITAF began planning to take the next objective: Kismayo. The



DVIC DD-SD-00-01031

American Special Envoy to Somalia, Ambassador Robert B. Oakley, speaks to a group of Somalis. Behind him is U.S. Army BGen Lawson W. Magruder III, commander of Task Force Kismayo.

Belgian forces' 1st Parachute Battalion had arrived in Mogadishu on 13 December. Led by Lieutenant Colonel Marc Jacqmin, the paratroopers would have responsibility for securing the Kismayo relief sector, then controlling it along with elements of the Army's 10th Mountain Division. Kismayo lies approximately 200 miles south of Mogadishu, on the coast just below the equator. It is the site of Somalia's second largest port, after Mogadishu, and it had been an important base for the Somali Navy. An airfield of appropriate size for military cargo aircraft was only a few miles outside the city. Holding this area would provide another port for the receipt and onward transport of relief supplies. The Belgian forces were placed under the operational control of MarFor for this operation. Because of its location on the coast, an amphibious operation was chosen to secure the city and its facilities. Captain John Peterson, commander of the *Tripoli* amphibious group, was designated as the commander of the amphibious task force and Lieutenant Colonel Jacqmin as the commander of the landing force. The landing force was composed of Company G, 2d Battalion, 9th Marines, from the 15th MEU (SOC), and two platoons of

Belgian paratroopers. The amphibious task force itself consisted of the *Juneau* and the *Rushmore* from the United States Navy, and the French ship FS *Dupleix*, an antisubmarine warfare guided missile destroyer. Captain Peterson transferred his flag to the *Juneau*, U.S. Navy SEALs embarked on the *Dupleix* to perform pre-landing reconnaissance and surveillance of the beach and the Marines and Belgian paratroopers embarked on board the American ships.¹²¹

Because of the presence of two warring factions in the city, a preparatory political and diplomatic maneuver was very important. On 17 December, contact was made with Colonel Ahmed Omar Jess, leader of the Kismayo region's Somali Patriotic Front faction, and Mohamed Said Hirsi, who was known as General Morgan and led an independent faction in the area, setting up an agreement whereby Kismayo would be an open city. Jess and his troops would remain in the city, and Morgan and his followers would move 20 kilometers to the north.¹²²

The Belgians already had sound experience in amphibious doctrine and the operation went smoothly. On the morning of 20 December, the

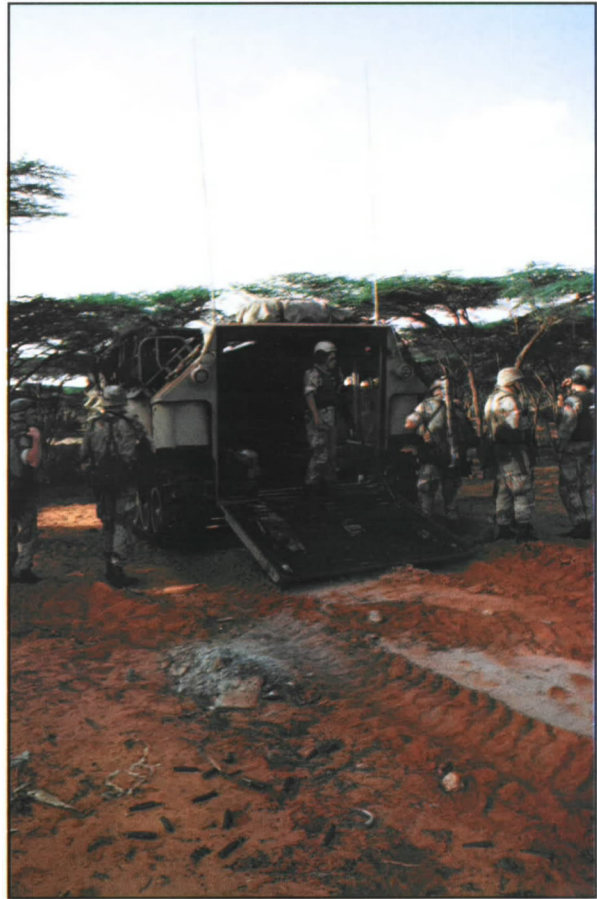
Marines landed in amphibious assault vehicles while the Belgians came ashore in air-cushioned landing craft and helicopters. There was no opposition to the landing and control was passed ashore within a few hours. Captain Peterson and Lieutenant Colonel Jacqmin went immediately to the center of the city, where they met with Colonel Jess, who protested the presence of the colonial Belgians. Lieutenant Colonel Jacqmin quickly quieted Jess's anger and made it clear the coalition forces would not be intimidated.¹²³ *

By the end of that first day the overall strength of the Belgian forces in Kismayo consisted of the 11th Company and the Close Reconnaissance Squadron, equipped with Scimitar tracked reconnaissance vehicles. With the arrival of additional Belgian reinforcements, the U.S. Marine company was released from tactical control and withdrew from Kismayo the next day. By 30 December, the Belgians had 550 men in the city.¹²⁴

The successful completion of the Baidoa operation made it possible for UNITAF to quickly plan to secure another city notorious as a scene of suffering and death; Bardera, located about 217 kilometers southwest of Baidoa, at the end of a dry and dusty track. With the arrival of more combat units from the 1st Marine Division (notably the remainder of the 1st Battalion, 7th Marines, followed shortly thereafter by the lead elements of 3d Battalion, 9th Marines, and the headquarters of the 7th Marines) there was enough power on the ground to push on to this important inland city. Colonel Emil R. Bedard, commanding officer of the 7th Marines, departed Mogadishu for Baidoa with his Marines on 22 December; only three and a half days after these units began arriving in theater.¹²⁵

Prior to leaving Mogadishu, the unit meshed with the attachment of amphibious assault and

* The issue of colonial troops was one that caused considerable anxiety and sensitivity in the UNITAF staff. Several of the coalition allies once had colonies in Africa. France and Italy once had colonies in Somalia itself. Where possible, use of troops from these nations had to be done with consideration of the feelings of the local populace. For instance, in late December, plans to secure the city of Merka originally called for the use of Italian troops. When the local population protested strongly about the return of the Italians, this operation was given to Army Forces Somalia as well as the Italians. The issue of colonialism also was a handy rallying call for the various factions when they organized protests against the presence or actions of UNITAF.



DVIC DN-ST-93-01396

Members of Company G, 2d Battalion, 9th Marines, of the 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit, exit from a P-7A1 amphibious assault vehicle after arriving to set up a checkpoint in Kismayo.

light armored vehicles. (The advance elements of both the 3d Amphibious Assault Battalion and the 3d Light Armored Infantry Battalion had arrived in Mogadishu on 19 December.) On Christmas Eve, after a long road march choked with dust, the Marines secured the airfield at Bardera. The next day they controlled all access to the city by holding a key bridge and the river crossings over the Jubba, as well as the principal road junctions. Patrols were quickly sent out to provide security for the task force as well as for the people of the city. Coordination was made with the local non-governmental agency to get the relief food shipments moving in. Another early concern was to secure the market area in the center of town so it could again open for business.¹²⁶

The next two operations were originally planned to occur nearly simultaneously using French and Italian forces to take control of the



DVIC DD-SD-00-00987

An estimated 30,000 Somalis inhabited the town of Bardera. It is one of the most populated towns in the otherwise sparsely populated region of southwest Somalia.

humanitarian relief sectors that would become their responsibilities. Planning for the operations to Oddur and Gialalassi was ongoing at UNITAF headquarters by 16 December, concurrent with the planning for the Bardera operation.

Oddur lies 260 kilometers northwest of Mogadishu, 110 kilometers north of Baidoa, and close to the Ethiopian border. Its airport contains a 4,000-foot runway capable of handling C-130 aircraft. It was noted in briefings there was a well-organized militia in the area, as well as some old Soviet military equipment.¹²⁷ The task force for the operation would consist of elements of the French 5th Combined Arms Overseas Regiment and the 13th Demi-Brigade of the Foreign Legion, with logistic support, and Company C, 1st Battalion, 7th Marines, which was placed under the tactical control of the commander of the French forces.¹²⁸

UNITAF Fragmentary Order 8, issued on 18 December, called for the French forces to secure Oddur "on or about 24 December." Many of the units to be involved, however, were still arriving. Fragmentary Order 12, issued on the 21st,

rescheduled the date of the operation for Christmas Day. On Christmas Eve, the same day the Marines were moving to Bardera, French forces began their road march to Oddur. They passed that day on the road and arrived in Oddur on 25 December.* Over the next few days, the remaining French forces in Somalia were brought from Mogadishu to Oddur. From there, they were quickly reassigned to outlying towns: the 13th Demi-Brigade had responsibility for Wajid; the 5th Combined Arms Overseas Regiment for Ceelgasass; and the Legion for El Berde, while the headquarters, cavalry detachment (an aviation unit), and support battalion, were at Oddur. On the 29th, Major General Rene de l'Home, the commander of French forces in Somalia, requested the boundary of the relief sector be moved east to include the town of Tiye gloo. Administratively,

* If the road to Bardera was dusty, the road to Oddur was even worse. The fine dust was like red talc in places, exploding underfoot with each step or billowing in clouds behind vehicles. It covered men and machines in a natural camouflage.

the town had always been a part of the Oddur district, and it was therefore proper to include it in that sector. The request was approved at UNITAF. The French forces soon dispersed themselves throughout the relief sector, eventually occupying 21 platoon-sized advance posts from which patrols could be made.¹²⁹

As early as 16 December, Fragmentary Order 7 had tasked the Italian forces to secure Gialalassi. Subsequent orders refined and amplified this initial order. Gialalassi is about 115 kilometers north of Mogadishu, and is situated on the Webi Shebelle. In intelligence briefings, this city was described as being on dry, flat ground, with a small forest to the north. There were two airfields, one of which was C-130 capable. Traveling on the roads was expected to be slow. A United Somali Congress faction under Ali Mahdi Mohamed held the area and had a security force at the airfields with some recoilless rifles. Bandits were reported to be operating along the road.¹³⁰ Fragmentary Orders 9 through 14, issued between 19 and 24 December, assigned considerable force to the operation. U.S. Air Force engineers were ordered

to provide support in inspecting and repairing the runway if necessary. Army forces would provide convoy security and establish a forward arming and refueling point at the airfield. MarFor would give helicopter, engineer, and medical evacuation support as necessary. Navy Forces Somalia would provide fixed-wing close air support. With the Italian forces still arriving, the date for the operation was changed from 26 to 27 December.

By the 26th, the Italian forces were assembling at the port. Two companies of the Folgore Brigade, with headquarters, reconnaissance group, and mortar and antiarmor gun sections bivouacked in a warehouse, while motor transport and armored personnel carriers were assembled. A convoy of relief trucks also staged at the port, loading grain that had just arrived on a cargo ship. That same day, a section of U.S. Army vehicles and a platoon of U.S. Army military police mounted in hardened humvees armed with automatic grenade launchers also entered the port and joined up with the Italian forces.

The operation began in the early morning of 27 December. The convoy left the port area and



Photo courtesy of the Italian Armed Forces

Italian forces enter the town of Gialalassi on their way to secure the nearby airfield. One of the more flexible units of the Italian military, the Folgore Brigade could operate by means of airdrops or as a light infantry brigade.



DVIC DD-SD-00-00700

Pvt Andrew Schnaubelt, USA, of the 2d Brigade, 10th Mountain Division, takes a covering position on the airfield at Belet Weyne, as a Canadian C-130 Hercules cargo plane from Canadian Forces Base, Petawawa, Ontario, lands.

headed north on one of the few hard-surfaced roads. This was the old “*Strada Imperiale*,” or Imperial Way, built by the Italians during the 1930s. As the task force left the city, the light of dawn revealed a verdant countryside where the road paralleled the Shebelle. Armed sentries guarded large tracts of sorghum and other crops. Helicopter gunships would occasionally fly low over the length of the convoy. Interesting historical monuments were located every 10 kilometers along the roadside; these were markers of stone, bearing the Fascist insignia and noting the distance from the city. The condition of the road was as bad as had been reported. Years of neglect and battle damage from the civil war had taken their toll. The road was frequently cratered from artillery rounds, and in some places the paved surface was entirely gone for long stretches. The convoy, already slowed by the presence of the relief trucks, frequently had to drive through rutted tracks on the side of the road. Speeds averaged only about 10 kilometers per hour. By 1800, the assault forces in armored personnel carriers and

trucks entered the town. Crowds of waving, singing and smiling people greeted the remainder of the convoy. The Italian forces proceeded on to the airfield, setting security around it for the night with the convoy in the center, close to the landing strip. The next day, they set up platoon-sized defensive positions around the town and oversaw the unloading of the grain supplies at the distribution center.¹³¹

The last of the originally planned relief sectors to be secured was Belet Weyne. Planning for this operation had initially called for Army Forces Somalia to have the responsibility for the mission.¹³² During this time, the Army troop build-up was continuing. Major General Steven L. Arnold, commanding general of Army Forces Somalia, arrived on 22 December. At the same time, the Canadian forces were also preparing to enter the theater in large numbers. Fragmentary Order 14, issued on 23 December, placed the Canadian forces under the tactical control of Army Forces Somalia for the operation. Upon release from tactical control, the Canadians would assume respon-

sibility for the entire sector. The date for the operation was set for 28 December.

The city of Belet Weyne is 320 kilometers north of Mogadishu, and only 32 kilometers from the Ethiopian border. It also is situated closest of all the relief sectors in the northern portion of Somalia, which were outside UNITAF's area of operations. For these reasons, a U.S. Special Operations Forces team would also be a part of the operation. They would patrol along the boundary to keep the competing factions apart.¹³³ In staff meetings, the city was described as flat and situated on the Shebelle River, which was the only obstacle in the area. There were two bridges in town and one C-130 capable airfield. There was only one road into the city, but it was assessed as good for handling traffic. The Hawadle clan controlled the city with a small security force armed with some crew-served weapons and anti-aircraft artillery.¹³⁴

General Arnold gave command of the operation to the 2d Brigade (Commando Brigade) of the 10th Mountain Division. The task force would be composed of the 2nd Battalion, 87th Infantry, and a battalion of the Canadian Airborne Regiment Battle Group. The plan was to seize the airfield with an air assault. On the 28th, the Army flew the assault units on board Sikorsky UH 60A "Blackhawk" helicopters, while MarFor provided additional support with four helicopters. Almost immediately following the securing of the air-

field, Canadian C-130 aircraft began to land, bringing additional troops and vehicles. In less than two days, about 1,000 soldiers had been brought to Belet Weyne. On 30 December, the Canadians assumed sole responsibility for the relief sector. The contingent from Army Forces Somalia departed for Bale Dogle, to prepare for another mission.¹³⁵

The successful completion of the Belet Weyne operation on 28 December marked the end of the second phase of Operation Restore Hope.¹³⁶ The purpose of this phase had been to secure the remaining five objectives as points from which to provide security throughout the area of operations to allow the unimpeded distribution of relief supplies. This was four to six weeks ahead of schedule, reflective of the amount of fast paced work accomplished by UNITAF and component level planners, and in execution by the multinational forces involved. It also was indicative of the flexibility of the command in the ability to prepare each operation even as forces were arriving in theater. Logistics challenges were daunting and required close monitoring of the time-phased force deployment data, but it worked.

There was to be no letup in tempo and no time for self-congratulation. As soon as the 2d Battalion, 87th Infantry, arrived back in Bale Dogle, they were tasked with an additional mission: to secure the port of Merka, located about 70 kilometers southwest of Mogadishu. It was a



DVIC DD-SD-00-00793

On 31 December 1992, soldiers of the 2d Brigade, 10th Mountain Division, jump from a UH-60 Blackhawk helicopter in an air assault to take control of the airfield at Merka.

place where a corrupt mayor was acting in concert with local bandits to prevent relief supplies from getting to the humanitarian relief organizations for distribution to outlying towns. The relief organizations in the city had not received any supplies for six months. For these reasons, and also to secure another port, Merka was added to UNITAF's objectives and an operation to secure it was planned.¹³⁷

The original plan called for an amphibious operation, using the San Marco Battalion of the Italian forces. The date was set for 27 December. Unfortunately, the only good landing beaches were 22 kilometers south of the city. Those near the city were unsuitable, with a berm at the high-tide mark and rocky ledges on both flanks.¹³⁸ The lack of adequate landing beaches close to the objective caused a change in the initial concept of operations. By 28 December, Fragmentary Order 19 directed the Italian forces to place the San Marco Battalion under the tactical control of Army Forces Somalia for the operation, which was scheduled for the 31st. The operation would be a combined ground and air assault with the Italian forces proceeding in trucks while U.S. Army forces seized the airfield. The road leading to the city was described as poor and very dusty with a possible travel time of four to six hours. In addition, there were at least five bandit-run checkpoints on the road, each generally watched by one man armed with an AK-47 rifle; machine gun positions were also reported on the town mosque and along the road.¹³⁹

Control of the operation was again given to the 10th Mountain Division's 2d Brigade. The multinational task force was composed of one company of the San Marco Battalion attached to the 2d Battalion, 87th Infantry. Supported by the 10th Mountain Division's organic 10th Aviation Brigade, the American soldiers conducted an air assault to secure the airfield, and then immediately secured the port. They then linked up with the Italian forces that were proceeding overland escorting a convoy of relief supplies. The American soldiers and the Italians escorted the convoy to the outlying town of Qoryooley, the site of a refugee camp where the food was needed.¹⁴⁰

Thus, by the end of the year, and barely within three weeks of the initial landings, all the humanitarian relief sectors had been secured by the coalition forces. Convoys were running smoothly, but there was already a need to improve communications between all the major cities. One answer

to this was the establishment of an intra-theater flight schedule. Another was to establish a road network throughout the theater that could provide for quicker movement of convoys bearing supplies and troops. UNITAF Fragmentary Order 9, issued on 19 December, set up a network of nine main supply routes connecting the sectors. Each was named for a different color. Subsequent orders tasked particular forces with the inspection, clearance and repair of the roads. Of special concern were landmines that were so often encountered, thousands had been laid throughout the country, and now they had to be found and removed from the roads.

The UNITAF structure was largely in place at the end of the second phase. Its rapid success was undoubtedly assisted by two factors. The first was the heavy reliance on psychological operations that General Johnston had emphasized in his initial orders. The visits by Ambassador Oakley, the use of radio broadcasts, leaflet drops, and the publication of a Somali-language newspaper all kept the populace informed of what was happening and why. The second factor was the quiet reaction of Somali clan-based factions. While all claimed to welcome the arrival of UNITAF, the coalition forces' presence inserted an unknown quantity into their political and military calculations. There was some testing of UNITAF resolve in the early days, but those incidents were quickly and decisively resolved. The rules of engagement allowed for protection of the coalition forces, and Somali faction leaders would be presented with an unacceptable loss of men, arms, and prestige if they provoked UNITAF security elements. Such lessons kept the Somali leadership relatively quiet and receptive to the requests of UNITAF.

As the third phase of the operation began, it was recognized there was still much work to be done, and many more important decisions had to be made. In this phase, the operations were to expand the security of the interior of the country through the use of convoy security and the creation of additional distribution sites. This phase would set the stage for the delicate hand-off to the United Nations force, generally known as UNOSOM. As with a relay race, the smooth passing of the baton is critical to success, and this is no less true in military operations other than war. The UNITAF staff wanted to ensure the baton was passed without difficulty.

Chapter 5

Politics, Peace Talks, and Police

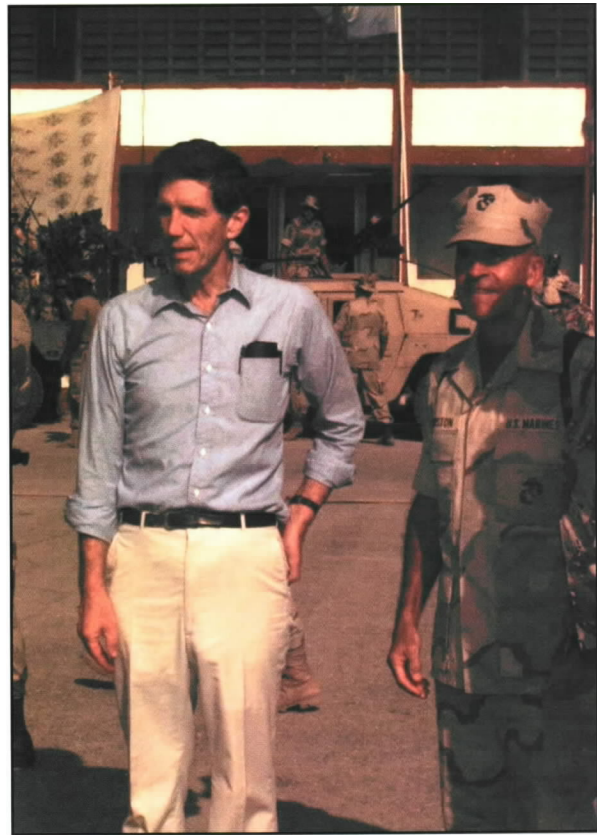
Military-Political Cooperation

The military aspects of the operation were proceeding smoothly by the end of December 1992. The long hours of planning, bringing together a staff, and forming the coalition were producing rapid success. But there were considerations that went beyond occupying and controlling territory. There were times when military commanders, as well as the Marines and soldiers in the field, had to act as diplomatists, negotiators, and statesmen. "I suppose if there is a blueprint for how the diplomatic and political side should work with the military on an operation like this, it was perfect," noted Lieutenant General Robert B. Johnston. "We recognized very early that this was a very, very complex environment."

Carl von Clausewitz, a 17th century Prussian soldier and philosopher, defined war as "merely a continuation of policy by other means." While Operation Restore Hope was not truly a war, as Clausewitz understood it, his maxim was nonetheless true. Even in this operation other than war, the commanding general and his staff officers had to keep in mind that "the political object is the goal ... and means can never be considered in isolation from their purpose."¹⁴¹ Matching military means to political objectives drove much of what the coalition did and how it continued to structure itself. Brigadier General Anthony C. Zinni, the operations officer, summed this up in an interview: "Operations such as this become less clear as far as military objectives. They become more politically driven. The humanitarian needs force the military to work differently. Terms change to suit the mission; military terms will not work. Marines quickly and clearly moved to the humanitarian side. The key to the operation is the people; we must respond to their hope."¹⁴²

American Ambassador Robert B. Oakley recognized at the start that one of his greatest responsibilities would be to assist the military commanders with the myriad political issues this operation brought. Accordingly, he and General Johnston established a coordinating committee in which they met daily or more frequently as neces-

sary. General Johnston saw the committee's role was "to tie the diplomatic-political considerations with our military power, which allows us to pressure the factions to ... decrease violence."¹⁴³ The two sides of the committee got along very well, with their mutual work seeming to progress from a quick understanding of each other's needs. "We simply ... didn't sit down and say 'here is our joint strategy.' It just seemed like I knew when I was going to do something militarily that I needed diplomatic support. He [Ambassador Oakley] seemed to have the instincts of knowing what needed to be done up front. We talked a lot and that was the important thing. It was a very cooperative effort, helped a great deal by Mr. John Hirsch, who was my political advisor, and de



DVIC DD-SD-00-00755

LtGen Robert B. Johnston, commander of the joint task force, stands on the tarmac of Mogadishu airport with Ambassador Robert B. Oakley.

facto he became Ambassador Oakley's DCM [deputy chief of mission]."¹⁴⁴ Another important task for the committee was to present a clear message to the factions by ensuring the coalition spoke with one voice.¹⁴⁵ The faction leaders would take advantage of any confusion in aims or methods.

The two sides of the committee brought dual pressures against the factions. Diplomatic initiatives were begun to get the sides talking to resolve their differences, while the military might of the Unified Task Force Somalia (UNITAF) made the Somali factions take these steps seriously. To reduce the violence and bring the nation together, a series of reconciliation talks were scheduled in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. It was hoped these talks, held on neutral ground, would instill the faction leaders with a sense of responsibility for the future of their country. Only those who were willing to put down their arms and control their followers would take part in these talks; those who did not would have neither voice in the talks nor a place in the Somalia to come. As Ambassador Oakley later said about General Morgan: "My officers and UNITAF officers have met with him on several occasions and told him that the way Somalia is going today, the way to get into the ... future is not by using the gun. As a matter of fact, those who persist in taking the political power [by force] are losing out in the political future of Somalia. Nothing bars him from participating in the peace process except his own behavior."¹⁴⁶ Getting the faction leaders to accept their responsibilities and to give up their weapons would take a deliberate plan and a lot of coercion. Ultimately, there was a long and logical process of thought and action by which all of these ends were to be accomplished. It involved the issue of disarmament; defining the secure environment required by the mission; the use of overwhelming force when necessary; the assistance to the humanitarian organizations; the furtherance of the peace process among the faction leaders; and the rebuilding of Somali civil institutions. Each of these was a thread in a tapestry of peacemaking.

Weapons Control and the use of Force

One of the first points that had to be settled was the issue of disarmament. As explained earlier, disarmament of Somalia was neither a specified part of the mission nor an implied task. However, something had to be done to reduce the number of

arms. The program decided on was one of weapons collection or weapons control rather than total disarmament.* Of course, from the point of security, there were so many weapons in Mogadishu and elsewhere that their very presence posed a threat. General Johnston turned his attention to this matter immediately on his arrival. "At that point [11 December] we were trying to reduce any threat to the U.S. forces. My primary mission was security of the force ... and clearly, it was required to disarm those elements that would directly threaten our forces; i.e., the 'technicals' that were in Mogadishu or Baidoa or Bardera or anywhere on the road map."¹⁴⁷ In a meeting with Ambassador Oakley, the start of the weapons control program was laid out. "There were so-called technicals in almost every block and this was obviously a serious threat to the Somali people. It is a significant threat to our forces and it symbolizes the power of the warlords, both military and political, in the eyes of the Somali people. We decided the number one objective was to get these dangerous things out of town and at the first meeting between [General Mohamed Farah Hassan] Aideed and Ali Mahdi [Mohamed] that took place here with General Johnston and myself present we got them to agree and to issue a public statement that they would remove their heavy weapons from Mogadishu."¹⁴⁸ By 22 December, reports at staff meetings noted the turn-in of technicals and heavy weapons was proceeding well; Aideed had already moved his, and Ali Mahdi was in the process of moving his to a site east of the city. The actual cantonment of all these weapons took many days to complete, but was undoubtedly hurried by the knowledge that coalition forces would consider the weapons fair game.¹⁴⁹

This initial agreement by the two major faction leaders was used by UNITAF as the lever to get all heavy weapons and technicals in the country out of circulation. The initial ceasefire agreement,

* The correctness and efficacy of this decision for control as opposed to disarmament is made in *Somalia Operations: Lessons Learned* by Colonel Kenneth Allard, published by the National Defense University Press in January 1995. In discussing UNITAF and its successor, UNOSOM II, Colonel Allard states: "There is a basic conceptual difference between arms control and disarmament. Removing or limiting the major weapons of an inferior or defeated military force can be thought of as a form of arms control, but to commit military forces to the mission of forcibly disarming a populace is to commit those forces to a combat situation that may thereafter involve them as an active belligerent."

signed by all faction leaders in early January, specified these weapons would be voluntarily impounded in cantonments.¹⁵⁰ The owning faction would identify these cantonments for UNITAF so movement of weapons into or out of them could be monitored. These were known as authorized weapons storage sites. There was a noticeable initial reluctance by some elements, especially Colonel Ahmed Omar Jess and Mohamed Said Hirsi, known as General Morgan, in Kismayo, to participate. Eventually, even they complied, spurred on by pressure applied by Belgian paratroopers and American soldiers in the city. These coalition forces in Task Force Kismayo confiscated several technicals, demonstrating the serious intent and strong resolve of UNITAF.¹⁵¹

The actions against the heavy weapons and technicals soon noticeably decreased their numbers.* There was still, however, a large number of small arms available in the country that had to be controlled. Again, there were no simple solutions to the issue. The sheer volume of weapons made total disarmament impossible. There also were some legitimate organizations that needed to be able to protect themselves. In many towns and villages, local militias were formed for the protection of the populace from bandits. To disarm these groups would leave them prey to the lawless elements or rival factions. Also, as General Johnston recognized, disarming them would convey the erroneous assumption that UNITAF would pick up the burden of their security.¹⁵² He emphasized this point to his commanders in a meeting on 5 January, when Canadian forces in Belet Weyne voiced concern about taking weapons from a valid militia brigade. General Johnston responded there was no intent to disarm legitimate militias. The weapons should be inventoried and local commanders should work with the militias, but UNITAF could not undertake the full security responsibility for the relief sectors.¹⁵³

Similarly, the various relief organizations had armed guards for the protection of their personnel or work sites. These were often moonlighting soldiers of one of the factions, which presented a source of extra income for the faction leaders. Simply disarming these guards posed several problems. First of all, to take away their rifles and

machine guns and dismiss them would cause relief personnel to be uneasy, as they could become targets of their former guards.* Second, the relief organizations did have legitimate security requirements in their work places and while traveling. Finally, as with the local militias, UNITAF did not have the resources to take up this large security mission, notwithstanding the political pressure to protect these organizations.¹⁵⁴ **

The question of small arms thus came down to authorized versus unauthorized weapons. General Johnston recognized that with the elimination of the technicals and other heavy weapons, relief organizations' security personnel did not have to possess heavy machine guns or similar armament. Rifles, such as the ubiquitous AK-47s, would now be adequate protection against the bandits, but would not give the guards so much firepower they would become a threat to others.

A system of identity cards was developed.¹⁵⁵ These were permits to carry firearms. Their purpose was to ensure that only those who were employed as guards could openly carry such weapons. The cards would be issued to the relief organizations, not to the Somalis who were in their employ. The card system went into effect on 8 January 1993.

The first cards were colored pink, with no provision for photographs. This led to attempts to circumvent the system by some Somalis. A second set of blue cards, with photographs, was put into place by late February. These cards provided greater access for the Somalis for whom they were issued, but there were still some problems. Soldiers or Marines who interpreted the rules too stringently sometimes still confiscated weapons from legitimate guards, much to the discomfort of the relief staff and their guards. In April, UNITAF addressed this problem by issuing a card to all coalition troops that explained the weapons confiscation policy and the identification card system.¹⁵⁶

The most effective instrument to get the faction leaders to cooperate with UNITAF's demands was

* This was especially true in Mogadishu. There continued to be reports, however, that technicals had been sent to outlying districts, where they were out of sight but ready for use as needed.

* During the course of the operation there were instances of members of humanitarian relief organizations being wounded or killed by guards over disagreements about employment or pay.

** UNITAF provided security to food convoys, coordinating such work with relief organizations. These actions were within UNITAF's explicit mission.

the willingness to use force when necessary. From the earliest days of the operation, the coalition partners demonstrated they would meet any aggression or threat with an overwhelming response. UNITAF controlled the skies and the seas along the coast, and the patrols and convoys of its Marines and soldiers demonstrated a strong and professional presence. Coalition leaders were therefore taken seriously, and if a local coalition commander said he would take a certain action, he was believed. This credibility allowed General Johnston to implement the policy of arms control in a more gradual way than might have been otherwise possible; as he later stated: "We have incrementally ratcheted up what we've been removing to get every weapon off the streets. To try to take them all right away was unrealistic. We could have imposed this militarily, but it would have impaired the important role of getting the Somali people to take charge of their own system."¹⁵⁷ Ambassador Oakley also saw the advantages of this system of credibility through strength: "We've been remarkably successful because we come from a position of force. It's an area [in] which you have to figure what, in our judgment is fair, and then tell them ... what they should do. If you negotiate, you quite frequently find yourself ending up at a disadvantage because they're very good at negotiations, twisting it around different ways."¹⁵⁸

The diplomatic negotiations and the reduction of weapons on the streets began to make Somalia relatively safer, but there was a need to be able to say just how much more secure the country actually was. Nearly every Marine serving with UNITAF had also served in Operation Desert Storm: the same was true for many of the American soldiers, sailors, and airmen, and some of the other coalition troops. A concept that had become familiar during that earlier conflict was the definition of the end state. The internal examination that had occurred in the American armed forces during the 1980s reinforced the idea that commanders had to know how an operation should come to its conclusion and what the resulting dynamic between the opponents should be like. The Marine Corps' FMFM 1-1, *Campaigning*, published in 1989, defined the end state as "the military conditions we must realize in order to reach that destination, those necessary conditions which we expect by their existence will provide us our established aim." It also stated: "in the main, the more general the conflict, the

more predominant are the military factors, and the easier it is to translate aims into military terms. But the more limited the aims of conflict, the less predominantly military is the conduct of the war, and the more difficult it is to translate those aims into military conditions." UNITAF was engaged in one of these limited operations, with all of the uncertainty that could entail.

The need to define this end state was recognized from the earliest days. If the mission was to produce a secure environment, how could that be measured? In the original Joint Task Force Somalia operation order, issued 6 December, the commander's intent stated: "The end state desired is to create an environment in which the U.N. and [nongovernmental organizations] can assume full responsibility for the security and operation of the Somali humanitarian relief efforts." As military forces spread throughout the area of operations, UNITAF planners sought a quantifiable definition of security. General Johnston saw the definition and refinement of the end state as an implied task, although a difficult one. As he said: "[We] now need a precise measure for success; how do you know when a secure environment is established? [We] need an objective measure."¹⁵⁹ By Christmas Day, the UNITAF staff was still searching for this precise measurement of security, recognizing that reducing the number of technicals and other arms was certainly a contributing factor.¹⁶⁰

Discussion of the secure environment turned to an appreciation of the relativity of the term. Some members of the staff noted there were cities in the United States that had problems with violent crime. Did that mean they were not secure? At what point was violence at an acceptable level? When was any place secure for its citizens? Taking that line of thought, could Mogadishu be considered secure if its level of violent crime met that of a major American city, such as Detroit? Interesting as these discussions were, they led to the recognition that the problem in Mogadishu and throughout Somalia was unique in being twofold. Here, violence was brought to the people by both the warring factions and by renegade criminal elements. The first could be controlled, because it was organized and its leaders had their own political goals that could be addressed. The other was a problem of the greater society, and while that problem might be reduced, it would always exist. Ultimately, then, the end state of establishing the secure environment would be



DVIC DD-SD-00-00863

Representatives of the Magadishu clan leaders dismantle a roadblock along the "Green Line," the border that separated both the city's north and south sections and members of opposing clans.

reached with the end of organized, as opposed to criminal, violence.¹⁶¹

By 7 January 1993, UNITAF planners, led by Colonel Peter A. Dotto, had developed a transition matrix, which included indicators of the stability of relief sectors. This matrix was presented to the commanders and published in a letter of instruction on the 15th. The indicators included quantifiable criteria in five categories. These were resistance, humanitarian relief, infrastructure, populace, and transition actions. The objective criteria included such concepts as the numbers of technicals and crew-served weapons in the sector; the numbers of roadblocks encountered and the visibility of weapons; breaches of agreements and actions against UNITAF; conditions of airfields, ports, and main supply routes; the establishment of local councils and civil-military coordination

teams; food shortages and numbers of unescorted convoys; and the state of security for relief warehouses. With each sector commander reporting on these indicators each week, UNITAF could take an objective view of how its actions were aiding the accomplishment of the mission.¹⁶²

Reconciliation Conferences

The weapons control policies and the actions of the commanders in the relief sectors were some of the building blocks to secure the environment. The series of peace conferences was another. The United Nations sponsored these with the support of UNITAF leaders. If the faction leaders could be kept talking to each other, with a purpose of reconstructing their nation, they would be less inclined to fight each other. Of course, such a plan

presupposed the willingness of these leaders to accept the diminution of their power to secure the common good. Such a proposition was tenuous at best, as events eventually showed. Nevertheless, the talks were necessary and proper if peaceful progress was to be made.

Only two days after the arrival of UNITAF headquarters, General Johnston and Ambassador Oakley had already begun a first round of talks and achieved some agreements among the faction leaders. At that time, General Aideed and Ali Mahdi "met face to face for the first time, and reached an agreement to respect the ceasefire to which they had agreed earlier in the year, and to remove their heavy weapons from the streets of Mogadishu."¹⁶³ Two weeks later, in a dramatic and well-publicized event, these two leaders met along the "Green Line" that divided the city into factional areas, pledging, "on this occasion the abolition of the artificial demarcation lines in the city that resulted from the civil war will be declared."¹⁶⁴

To help with these kinds of issues, and to prepare for the more formal talks that would come later at Addis Ababa, Ambassador Oakley and the UNITAF staff formed two committees. The first was strictly political. It was headed by Ambassador Oakley himself, and was intended to bring the faction leaders together so they could go over their differences point by point. In this manner, they moved incrementally along toward a peaceful political resolution. The second committee was for security. It was essentially a military-to-military organization headed by General Zinni, the UNITAF operations officer. Its members included the leaders of the factional militias. General Zinni described the committee's work: "We worked security issues and concerns. ... We tried to prevent problems and confrontations. It was our way of issuing ultimatums and that sort of thing. It was a good forum for military-to-military kinds of issues. We were working toward a cease fire, disarmament, cantonment of weapons, all that kind of thing ... and laying the ground work for a bigger discussion."¹⁶⁵

The bigger discussion was a series of national reconciliation talks. On 11 December 1992, the Secretary General of the United Nations, Boutros Boutros-Ghali, formally invited 11 political faction leaders to "participate in an informal preparatory meeting for a conference of national reconciliation and unity in Somalia. This preparatory meeting, which I will personally chair, will be

held at the headquarters of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa in Addis Ababa on 4 January 1993."¹⁶⁶ * Also invited were representatives of the Organization of African Unity, the League of Arab States, the Organization of the Islamic Conference, and the Standing Committee of the Countries of the Horn of Africa. Members of UNITAF and United Nations Organization Somalia (UNOSOM I) also attended. The setting in the capitol of Ethiopia was a good choice for two reasons. First, it was close enough that participants could travel there quickly with UNITAF and UNOSOM support. Also, Ethiopia had just come out of its own civil war, and its president, Meles Zenawi, was an advocate of the peace process. The talks would receive his strong support.

Three additional factions eventually joined these first rounds of talks.** Although intelligence assessments indicated not all faction leaders were enthusiastic about the talks, none wanted to be left out. This was especially true of Aideed, who was at first reluctant to attend because of a mistrust of the United Nations and Boutros-Ghali, but he eventually realized the only way to further his own aims and protect his political agenda was by taking part in the discussions.*** Perhaps because of mutual jealousy and mistrust, and perhaps partly from a desire by each faction to not be seen as the spoiler of national unity, surprising progress was made at these initial talks. Another factor was

* The original invitees were Mohamed Farah Abdullahi of the Somali Democratic Alliance; Mohamed Qanyare Afrah of the United Somali Congress; Abdurahman Dualeh Ali of the United Somali Front; General Mohamed Farah Aideed of the Somali National Alliance; Haji Mahmoud Barbar of the Somali Democratic Movement; Mahmud Khalif-Shire of the Somali National Front; Haji Aden Hussein Mohamed of the Somali Africans Muki Organization; General Mohamed Abshir Musse of the Somali Salvation Democratic Front; General Aden Abdillahi Noor of the Somali Patriotic Movement; Ibrahim Meigag Samatar of the Somali National Movement; and Abdi Dahir Warsame of the United Somali Party.

** These were Ali Ismael Abdi of the Somali National Democratic Union; Mohamed Ragis Mohamed of the Somali National Union; and Colonel Ahmed Omar Jess of the Somali Patriotic Movement.

*** Boutros-Ghali worked under a triple suspicion in the eyes of General Aideed; he was not only the Secretary General of the United Nations, he also was Egyptian and a Coptic Christian.



Photo courtesy of Col Frederick M. Lorenz

Col Peter Dotto, UNITAF operations future plans officer, along the Green Line in Mogadishu during a route reconnaissance for a food convoy.

American determination. "Most Somali factions appeared ready to take the disarmament process seriously, in large part because they understood the U.S. expectation that the process would move forward. At General Johnston's insistence, the U.N. organized and convened early February follow-up meetings in Mogadishu with representatives of all the factions, who were asked to identify specific cantonment and transition sites and to establish a time table for implementation."¹⁶⁷

Between 8 and 15 January 1993 all participants signed three sets of agreements. These were broad, far-reaching, and significant. The first set called for "an immediate and binding ceasefire in all parts of the country under the control of the concerned warring factions;" for "the immediate cessation of all hostile propaganda against each other;" for "cooperation with all international organizations working inside and outside Somalia

to distribute humanitarian relief;" and for "the free movement of Somali people throughout the entire country as a measure of confidence-building." Of equal importance was the call for a national reconciliation conference to be held in Addis Ababa on 15 March. The second set, signed on 15 January, provided specific agreements on disarmament. First, all heavy weapons under the control of the political factions were to be handed over to a ceasefire-monitoring group. The militias of the factions were themselves to be encamped in areas outside the cities and towns where they would not threaten the peace. There they would be disarmed, and with the help of the international community they would be retrained in civilian skills in preparation for demobilization. The ceasefire-monitoring group would be comprised of troops from UNITAF and UNOSOM and would have a committee made up of representa-

tives of all the warring factions. Finally, in a separate agreement, the factions agreed to establish an ad hoc committee to prepare for the conference in March.¹⁶⁸

There were some issues in these agreements that would have a tremendous impact on UNITAF. The ceasefire was not the first one the factions had agreed to; but it was the first in which they had voluntarily agreed to disarm and demobilize.¹⁶⁹ This was a large task to which UNITAF and the United Nations were now committed as members of the ceasefire-monitoring group. The only United Nations presence in Somalia was the 500-man Pakistani brigade, so the work of preparing the plans for cantonment and encampment and monitoring the factions' activities fell primarily to the UNITAF staff. Colonel Dotto explained UNITAF's participation in the planning: "General Johnston told Brigadier General Imtiaz Shaheen [the commander of the UNOSOM I force, the Pakistani brigade] that he would provide his planning cell, [that is] us, future plans, and we'd help him in any way to come up at least with a plan to go back to the U.N. with."¹⁷⁰ As General Zinni said: "Probably the vast majority of the work in this area is done by our staff since it was much more robust."¹⁷¹ The future plans section of Colonel Dotto's operations unit formed a cell composed of four UNITAF planners, plus five or six liaison officers from coalition countries and two planners from UNOSOM. The cell was augmented by the arrival of Colonel Mark Hamilton, USA, and Ms. Katie Sullivan, a political officer, both of whom had just come from El Salvador, where a similar peace process had occurred.¹⁷² In an effort to further the progress of the talks, General Johnston and General Shaheen issued a joint letter to all of the signees of the accords of 8 January. The letter called upon them to "begin the disarmament process. ... [W]e request that you provide the commanders of UNOSOM/UNITAF a detailed list of all weapons heavy and light, under the control of your political movements. ... Additionally, to begin the planning for transition of armed combatants to Somali society, we request the general geographic locations and numbers of all forces under your control." This letter was issued on 8 February, and the information was requested by the 15th.¹⁷³

The problem now faced by UNITAF was to determine how much of this work was within its proper sphere. "We were asked if we could participate in the disarmament process and we felt that

our participation could only be limited to conduct of tasks that were within our mission statement and our mission constraints or parameters, and also within our area of operations. If cantoning weapons, if supporting transition sites, if picking up weapons, if all these sorts of things happened in our area and happened so that they coincided with our current mission we would be glad to accommodate within the system in doing them."¹⁷⁴ UNITAF would not be monitoring the ceasefire. That task would remain a mission of the United Nations, for which it would have to come in quickly to take advantage of the cooperative attitude evident at that time.¹⁷⁵ As General Zinni said in March, there was a window of opportunity for the United Nations that they could not afford to lose, but getting the U.N. to act with resolution and dispatch was an issue that would confront the UNITAF staff until May.¹⁷⁶

The Addis Ababa talks needed more than a good sense of timing if they were to succeed. National reconciliation, like a fragile flower, required the careful nurturing of trust if it was to bloom. The United Nations would have to ensure that trust among all players and be an impartial moderator itself. In the end, this was a major stumbling block.

Somali Police Forces

While national reconciliation among the numerous factions received great attention, the rebuilding of national structures was also important. Within a month of the initial landings, UNITAF encouraged the rebuilding of the Somali police force. Before the civil war, the Somali police were a respected national force of 40,000 men and women.¹⁷⁷ Since they were not aligned with any clan, they also were trusted to be impartial. But the police had left their posts with the anarchy that came with the civil war and the rise of bandits who were often better armed than the police. A few did stay on at their precinct houses, usually to try to protect the property itself, but they performed no real police duties except in the immediate area. Faction comrades usually liberated apprehended criminals from the Mogadishu prison.¹⁷⁸

The arrival of UNITAF provided these officers a chance to regain their positions and once again to serve a meaningful purpose. There was as yet no government to back them, or even to pay them, but the interest and desire to serve were still evi-



Photo courtesy of the author

Two Somali policemen, wearing their old uniforms, voluntarily returned to their posts to provide security at the airport in Kismayo.

dent. General Johnston used one telling example to illustrate this point. "Early in the game, this old, gray-haired policeman showed up. ... He was asked, 'Who do you work for?' because we knew there was no government, no police force, nothing in uniform. 'I'm working for the government.' 'There is no government.' 'Well, then I must be working for the people.' So you could see some spontaneous interest on the part of the Somalis, of trying to get hold of their own city again."^{179*}

* In travels throughout the area of operations, the author also noticed the emergence of the police. The first time was on a trip to Kismayo in early January where two Somali policemen were on duty at the airport. The men were working without official sanction but were highly visible in their khaki uniforms with blue berets and silver badges. When Army officers at Kismayo were asked about them, no one could say much. They had simply shown up and kept away the crowds of curious and especially kept an eye on the adolescent boys to ensure they did not cause trouble.

But it was more than just individual policemen who wanted to resurrect the police force. The security committee that worked closely with General Johnston and Ambassador Oakley also saw an opportunity to establish a police force with its former reputation as an impartial agency. "The defined Security Committee ... came to see me and said the day after the first Marine had been killed [13 January 1993], 'We want to assume responsibilities for our own security. You are all doing things in the city that we should be doing and we'd like to help.' I said 'What kind?' "He said 'We want some material assistance, but we want assistance in fending off the political and clan influences that would try to turn such a force into their [instrument] rather than something that is relatively independent and national.'"¹⁸⁰

This particular interest of some Somalis coincided with the interest of the leaders of UNITAF in the creation of a structure by which the Somalis could start to reclaim responsibility for their own security. The recreation of a police force would make it easier for UNITAF to accomplish its overall security mission and prepare for the hand-off to the United Nations. Also, it would weaken the faction leaders. As General Johnston said: "We felt that [the recreation of a police force] was healthy to the extent that you can get somebody other than the warlords providing security, then you enfeeble the warlords. ... It is as effective as taking away their weapons, if there's another authoritarian figure that the Somalis recognize."¹⁸¹ Of course, this effect would also assist UNITAF by relieving the members of the coalition forces of some duties. "We'd been around long enough to know that if you have a Somali who is a figure of authority, then he'll take care of the rock-throwing kids better than a Marine with a machinegun."¹⁸²

There were, of course, problems in the recreation of the Somali police that had to be addressed and resolved before any work on the project could begin. First, such an action was far beyond UNITAF's mission. It clearly fell into the category of nation building. This broad and vague term covered several kinds of projects that could easily become long-term and expensive measures more properly performed by the United Nations. However, it was recognized this project, so useful to all parties involved with Operation Restore Hope (UNITAF, United Nations, humanitarian relief organizations, and Somali people) should be actively supported and encouraged. In a staff



Photo courtesy of the Italian Armed Forces

An Italian soldier provides weapons training to a member of the Somali auxiliary security force in the Italian camp at Balad.

meeting held on 1 February, General Johnston described this as the “most important thing right now, even more important than the reconstitution of the government.”¹⁸³

But how far could that support go? United States law was very explicit about assistance to foreign nations for the training and establishment of police forces. Section 2420, Chapter 32 of the United States Code, “Foreign Assistance; Miscellaneous Provisions,” states: “On and after July 1, 1975, none of the funds made available to carry out this chapter, and none of the local currencies generated under this chapter, shall be used to provide training or advice, or provide any financial support, for police, prisons, or other law enforcement forces for any foreign government or any program of national intelligence or surveillance on behalf of any foreign government within the United States or abroad.” Even more specifically, the 1991 Appropriations Act prohibited a foreign military financing program or international military education and training programs for Somalia, among other countries.¹⁸⁴

Even as the UNITAF staff and Ambassador Oakley worked to define the basic structure of support that could be provided under U.S. law,

contact was made with senior officers of the old national police. The coalition’s representative was Lieutenant Colonel Stephen M. Spataro, USA, UNITAF’s provost marshal. By 27 January 1993, he had met six times with the subcommittee of 10, an informal group of senior police officials, criminal investigation division officers, and lawyers.* At these meetings, the subcommittee presented their views on the rebuilding of the police force; its size, transportation and communications needs, logistics requirements, and pay and food allotments for the officers and their families. They also took Lieutenant Colonel Spataro on a tour of all Mogadishu police stations and the prison. From them he learned about Somali police operating procedures and the rules for the use of force.

Initially, the Somalis sought a national force of 6,000 to 7,000 men. Lieutenant Colonel Spataro determined the national force was too difficult at that time, but that a 3,000-man auxiliary security force for Mogadishu was an appropriate and workable start. He also noted their logistical

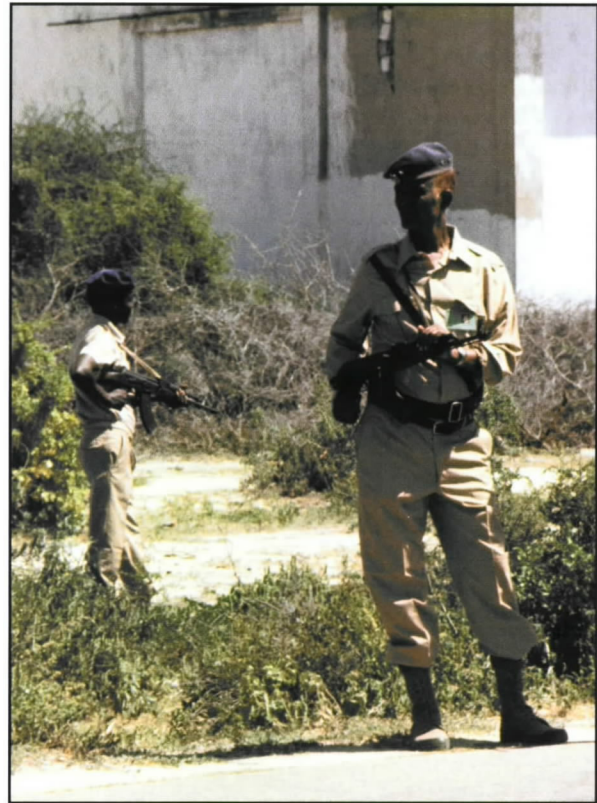
* A subcommittee of the Security Committee discussed earlier.

request was bare bones, listing only 15 trucks, 42 hand-held radios, two uniforms per man (two pair of trousers, two shirts, one pair of boots, one pair of low-quarter shoes, two pair of socks, one pistol belt, canteen, handcuffs, beret with rank insignia, and nightstick) and small arms. Lieutenant Colonel Spataro noted the old Somali police were “armed more like soldiers with rifles and in fact called their personnel soldiers, NCOs [noncommissioned officers] and officers.” He determined that “we need to change that. Rifle carrying personnel connote soldiers not police officers or auxiliary forces. Probably need to look at giving rifles to selected and trained personnel for very specific missions.”¹⁸⁵

These meetings also provided information about the judicial and prison systems. Two judges were still working in Mogadishu, along with two prosecutors. This rudimentary judicial system took care of criminals unlucky enough to be apprehended and actually brought to justice. They were sent for incarceration in the prison by the port, a facility described as “built around 1905-1910, and is really in need of repair, however, it was really kept well ... [and] operated very professionally.”¹⁸⁶

With needs and basic structures recognized, UNITAF could now get down to practical assistance. The new force would be called an auxiliary security force, and senior Somalis would vet the officers applying for positions. There were several criteria for appointment. Candidates must have been a member of the old force for two years prior to 26 January 1991, and would be reinstated at their old rank. They had to be Somali nationals and could not have been involved in any “tangible offenses against ... Somali society.” They also had to be in good physical condition. Pay was a matter of some concern, and originally the new auxiliary force would be paid with food. This was more practical than it might at first seem; in a land of famine, it not only provided sustenance for the police and their families, but they could sell or barter any surplus to fill other needs.

There was an advantage to working with an international coalition with respect to establishing this auxiliary force. Foreign nations or organizations that did not have the same proscriptions as the U.S. forces could provide what the Americans could not. Thus, the United Nations provided most of the funds for the program; the World Food Program gave the food that was the initial pay; the Italians were among the most generous of the



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Two Somali military policemen man a roadside checkpoint near Buurhakaba. The men are armed with a variation of the AK-47 and FAMAS rifles.

allies, providing uniforms, money, and training in police duties. The Australians in Baidoa also helped with training and created an excellent program with support from their lawyers. In Oddur, the French also participated by providing training. The Americans provided advice to the auxiliary security force through liaison officers. Very specifically, there was no doubt about the limits of American involvement with the force. “We’re not commanding the police. We have neither the responsibility nor the authority to command and control.”¹⁸⁷ *

The work of Lieutenant Colonel Spataro and UNITAF proceeded quickly. By 30 January 1993, 3,000 officers were ready to work at 14 stations around the city. Pending the final decision to start

* General Johnston emphasized this in a staff meeting held on 1 February 1993. “We are facilitating, assisting and advising. We cannot, by law, train a national police force; therefore, we have oversight, not control. We are fulfilling this role in UNITAF because there is no one else to take it up.” (Mroczkowski journal, entry dtd 1Feb93.)

the program, coalition engineers worked on repairs to the stations and the auxiliary security forces were uniformed, equipped, and trained. It was initially expected they would begin their duties by 14 February. These would be standard police duties, such as would be found anywhere else in the world. Their mission was to protect lives and property and maintain public order. This would be accomplished through basic law enforcement, traffic and crowd control, neighborhood patrols, and security at food distribution sites.

By the first week in February, the new officers were receiving refresher training in the use of force and how to handle their batons. Their first real test came when UNITAF and the humanitarian relief organizations implemented a mass-feeding program, whereby food would be dis-

tributed at several sites throughout the city. The auxiliary security force was needed to provide crowd control and these officers performed well. The program was successful and was soon feeding up to a million people a week, a number that could not have been reached without the police presence. Neighborhood patrols started soon after and were not without their own dangers; two police officers were killed in the line of duty within two weeks.¹⁸⁸

By the end of February, UNITAF was making great progress on several lines. The reconciliation talks were taking place, the auxiliary security force was coming back into existence in Mogadishu, and weapons were being removed from the streets. In the relief sectors, local UNITAF commanders were also successfully pursuing their own missions.

Chapter 6

Moving to the Third Phase

Settling In and Daily Work

As the members of Unified Task Force Somalia (UNITAF) moved throughout the area of operations, they found themselves in a part of the world that was at once foreign and exciting, forbidding and enticing. Except for some of the French soldiers stationed in Djibouti or the members of the contingents from the African countries, nearly every one of the coalition's Marines, sailors, airmen, and soldiers was a stranger to this part of the world.* In spite of the harshness of the country, many were attracted by this unfamiliar landscape.

When they traveled outside of Mogadishu, what they saw in equatorial Africa seemed to match the picture that existed in everyone's imagination. Roads were often no more than tracks across flat, barren terrain of dust and broken stone. The beige colors of the land contrasted with the deep blue of the sky, across which a few small, stark, white clouds might wander.

The monotony of the landscape was broken by an occasional grove of scrub bushes, thorn trees, and acacias. Some of these trees grew to a height of about 25 feet and spread their branches wide, providing shade for the passing herders or people walking along the roads. Convoys frequently passed herds of camels, cattle, or goats moving to grazing lands or to market in some remote village.

Donkeys pulled two-wheeled carts laden with firewood or drums of water. In the early morning hours, women would be interspersed with the pedestrian traffic, walking in small groups or by themselves and carrying large jugs of water or bundles of wood on their backs. Frequently they would be encountered miles from the nearest village, leaving one to wonder about where they were coming from or going to.

The villages themselves were often small collections of huts fashioned of upright poles stuck in the ground and covered with daub. The roofs were thatched, held in place with poles forming a simple dome. The huts might be round or square, depending on the traditions of the resident clan. In larger settlements, houses were bigger and more elaborate, often constructed of stone and plastered and painted in soft colors.

Where the roads drew close to one of the rivers, farmlands were encountered, and the resultant green of growing crops was a relief to the eyes. Large trees such as sycamores grew in these locations and gave welcome shade to the local inhabitants.

These areas were also the locations for larger towns and cities. Here the buildings were of stone or mud brick, plastered and whitewashed or painted in pastel colors. As in Mogadishu, two years of civil war had relieved many of these structures of their roofs and windows. The main streets of these cities were usually tree-lined and shady and crowded with people. In the center of town, the markets were coming back into life, with vendors offering such wares as were available. Often these were limited to locally produced cigarettes, bits and pieces of unrelated merchandise, fixtures salvaged from vehicles or buildings, small amounts of local farm produce, surprisingly large quantities of laundry detergent, parts of rations from all of the coalition allies (the small bottles of Tabasco sauce from the meal ready-to-eat packet were especially popular), and numerous bolts of brilliantly colored cloth. The women used these last items to make their colorful dresses. Vivid reds, blues, greens, yellows, and other bright hues splashing against the dull brown background made them look, as one Marine put it, "like exotic birds." The women usually did not wear a veil.

But occasionally some women were seen who kept their faces covered, leaving only their eyes visible, which only increased the attraction. The men dressed much more plainly, with simple buttoned shirts or tee shirts over trousers (often of military camouflage) or the traditional sarong-like skirt, called "*ma-awis*," extending from waist to

* There were a few Marines who had been to Somalia before. In the days of the Muhammad Siad Barre regime's ties to the West, the 24th Marine Expeditionary Unit participated in Exercise Eastern Wind in August 1987 in the area of Geesalay. Other Marines who served in Somalia included those attached to the embassy or who performed security inspections.



Photo courtesy of Italian Armed Forces

Somali women, in typical brilliantly colored dresses, carry firewood on a donkey cart. Traditionally, they play a passive role in both family and political spheres.

ankles. Leather shoes were sometimes seen, but footwear was usually leather sandals or rubber shower shoes. Local elders generally dressed traditionally, in the ma-awis with colorful shirts and headdress. They also wore beards, which the older men dyed with henna.

Inland, as water grew scarce, communities might center on ancient wells. There, women and herdsman would gather to draw up buckets of the life-giving liquid for their families or thirsty animals. Even farther afield, solitary houses might be encountered. *Zaribas* enclosures made of interwoven branches of thorn trees and bushes protected the houses and also were used as corrals for the herds. In these isolated places, deep pits were often dug to hold the precious rainwater from the wet seasons. After many dry weeks, these pits were muddy enclosures containing pools of green-topped liquid. Unappetizing as it appeared, these bits of water were necessary for survival.

Nomad camps were very simple. *Zaribas* were quickly set up for the protection of herds and people. The huts of these herdsman and their families consisted of structures about five feet in height, made of bent poles covered with hides or sheets of green plastic. Similar huts were seen in every refugee camp.

The climate was particularly harsh, and the native people had to be equally hard to survive in it. For the coalition's troops, the heat posed a real challenge, especially before they became acclimated. During the hot, dry months, the temperatures climbed and the arid air sucked the moisture right out of the coalition soldiers. The sun at midday felt, as one Marine later said, "like it was 10 feet over your head." For safety reasons, soldiers on patrol or other duty outside the compounds wore their full utility uniforms with protective vests, helmets and other gear. This increased the dehydrating effects of the climate. Everyone was supposed to drink at least five liters of water a day. When out on patrol, or doing heavy work, this might have to be increased. Providing this much bottled water to the thousands of Marines and soldiers and allies scattered throughout the area of operations was one of the most important logistics functions of UNITAF.

In contrast to the brilliance and heat of the days were the dark and cool of the nights. On a moonless night the desert sky assumed a deep black that was set off by the lustrous stars, giving them a brilliance rarely seen except at sea. Marines or soldiers who had sweated while on patrol or while standing guard at some sun-beaten post would

shiver when the desert sand gave up its heat after sundown. This was especially noticeable at those sites near the coast, where there was a continuous sea breeze, which added to the cooling effect. In the various tent areas, the constant blowing of the wind also produced a steady flapping of canvas. This rhythmic accompaniment to daily life became so much a part of existence that its absence was noticeable and a cause for comment. The strong breezes kept tugging at the lines of the tents, requiring the residents to pull them taut every day, lest a sudden gust lift their canvas homes off their poles. The same wind also brought an unending drift of sand, which infiltrated every nook and cranny of tents, bedding, and equipment. Weapons had to be cleaned two or three times a day to keep them in proper order.

Native animals were sometimes encountered along the tracks or in the compounds. *Dik-dik*, a tiny antelope, would occasionally be seen running through the brush. More rarely, gazelles or boars might be spotted from convoys heading to the out-

lying relief sectors. Large storks would alight in the villages near the rivers, standing with equanimity close to the people passing by. In the pre-dawn hours, flights of silver-colored ibis would be seen noiselessly flying just a few feet overhead. There were rare encounters with poisonous snakes, such as the spitting cobra and the puff adder. At night, a flashlight might freeze a tiny jerboa, a small rodent, in its beam, or a scorpion might be seen scuttling across the sand.

This was the world in which UNITAF conducted its daily work. For all its exotic attraction, it was still a dangerous place, as events would soon prove. Sniping and harassing fire continued, with compounds and convoys being the usual targets. The large cities of Mogadishu and Kismayo, in particular, were especially troublesome, since these were the scenes of frequent factional fighting and general banditry. The 1st Marine Expeditionary Force (I MEF) command chronology for this period notes: "Mogadishu remained volatile. The [Marine Forces Somalia] elements ...



Photo courtesy of the author

The village chief of El Berde, Abdil Ugas Husen, poses with elders after meeting with French officers. Husen's interpreter, Abdil Kader Abdilahi Ali, is in the center.



Photo courtesy of the author

Hastily constructed for the protection of herdsmen and their herds of cattle, camels, or goats, zaribas were often encountered far from any village.

which moved into northern Mogadishu found themselves constantly harassed by minor incidents of deliberate but inaccurate sniping and spillover fire from factional fighting. These attacks were particularly frequent at the newly occupied soccer stadium and along the 21 October Road.¹⁸⁹

However, while these incidents were annoying, they were not the most serious threats. Occasionally, a grenade would be rolled into the path of a vehicle, causing casualties and damage and increasing the need for being always on the alert. As dangerous as these incidents were, in the early days of the operation the greatest threat was more passive. During the civil war and resultant factional fighting, land mines had been sown in scores of thousands all across the splintered country. These silent killers were placed on roads and tracks or in areas the unwary might stumble into. Efforts to report and clear these weapons began immediately. But they soon had their deadly effect.

The first two weeks of the operation had passed with no fatalities, a happy circumstance for all. But this good fortune was offset by an unspoken question; how long would it last? It ran out on 23 December. On that day, a UNITAF vehicle struck an old Soviet land mine near Bardera. Three people were injured and one was killed. Lawrence N.

Freedman, a United States government civilian employee and retired U.S. Army sergeant major, was the first member of UNITAF to be killed in the performance of duty.¹⁹⁰

Mogadishu

A more serious and direct threat to UNITAF personnel and mission accomplishment came two weeks later. On 6 January 1993, a convoy moving through Mogadishu was fired on from two of the authorized weapons storage sites belonging to General Mohamed Farah Hassan Aideed's faction. Lieutenant General Robert B. Johnston knew he had to take strong and immediate action against such an egregious and violent threat.

Throughout the remainder of that day, a plan was developed by Marine Forces Somalia (MarFor) and coordinated with the UNITAF staff.

The plan was simple but effective, and by using all the types of firepower available, it was also a dramatic demonstration of UNITAF power. Company K, 3d Battalion, 9th Marines, and Company C, 1st Battalion, 7th Marines, would surround the two weapons storage sites. Light armored vehicles from the 3d Light Armored Infantry Battalion were to screen the area, and snipers would be positioned to overlook the target areas. A reserve force was formed from a compa-



ny of the 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit (Special Operations Capable) (MEU (SOC)) and positioned at the embassy compound. The two rifle companies (Team Alpha and Team Bravo) were strengthened by the attachment of M1A1 Abrams tanks and amphibious assault vehicles, as well as high mobility multipurpose wheeled vehicles (humvees) mounting tube-launched, optically tracked, wire-guided (TOW) missiles and heavy machine guns. Team Alpha, Company K, also had four light armored vehicles. Seven helicopters were assigned to the operation, three AH-1Ws with Hell Fire missiles and four UH-1Ns with 20mm guns.¹⁹¹

At 2200, Colonel Michael W. Hagee of the UNITAF staff met with Brigadier General Ali Mohamed Kedeye Elmi, one of Aideed's chief subordinates.* Colonel Hagee informed General Elmi that because of the recent violations, the authorized weapons storage sites were invalidated and were surrounded by UNITAF troops. The Marines would enter the compounds at dawn of the next day, 7 January, and confiscate all the equipment and weapons located there.¹⁹²

* At the time, General Aideed was in Addis Ababa for the preliminary reconciliation talks.

By 2300, the two storage sites were surrounded and kept under surveillance throughout the night. Psychological operations teams from the U.S. Army's Company B, 9th Psychological Operations Battalion, were attached to each of the rifle companies. At 0553, they began to broadcast warnings to the Somali fighters that they were surrounded, and that if they came out with their hands up, they would not be hurt. At about the same time, the helicopters appeared in the sky.¹⁹³

The Somalis in weapons storage site Number 8 surrendered. But those in the other site, Number 2, chose to resist. The helicopter crews and snipers reported that one of the tanks in the compound was manned and two Somalis were also preparing to fire a heavy anti-aircraft machine gun. The commanding officer of the task force, Colonel Jack W. Klump ordered a sniper to shoot the crew of the machine gun. The sniper did so, and also fired a round against the barrel of the weapon, rendering it unserviceable. This opened the engagement, which was short, sharp, and one-sided. Initially, the Marines came under a heavy volume of fire from recoilless rifles, machine guns, and small arms, but this was quickly suppressed. At 0615, the helicopters were cleared to fire their rockets against targets in the compound. They continued to fire for about 30 minutes, interrupting their fire only once for another psychological operations



DVIC DN-ST-93-02880

Early in the multinational relief effort, Operation Restore Hope, Marines in a humvee patrol the streets of Mogadishu.

broadcast. At 0647, the tanks entered the compound, followed 14 minutes later by the Marines of Company K.*

Resistance ended except some sporadic sniping at the aircraft. The riflemen cleared the buildings that had not been destroyed by the helicopters. Major General Charles E. Wilhelm declared the area secured at 0926, by which time additional trucks were enroute to help carry off the confiscated weapons. In addition to numerous small arms and ammunition, there were 4 M47 tanks, 9 howitzers of various calibers, 13 armored personnel carriers, 3 anti-aircraft guns, 11 mortars, and 1 recoilless rifle.¹⁹⁴ All was accomplished at the cost of only one casualty, a corporal wounded by an accidental discharge.

* Colonel Klimp referred to this part of the action as a "bluff." The tanks had no ammunition for their main guns, although they did have rounds for their machine guns. It was believed the armor of the M1A1 Abrams tanks would be proof against anything the Somalis had, and the machine guns would be firepower enough.

The action was a blow to General Aideed's prestige and pride. At a staff meeting later that day, General Johnston mentioned that Aideed "was embarrassed by his lack of control [over his soldiers] and regrets what happened."

The commanding general also told his staff that "[we] told Aideed we view his initiating clan fighting to be destabilizing. ... [We] want all to know how we regard what they do. ... We communicated with the faction involved. They accept responsibility and we don't expect to see it again." More importantly, UNITAF had demonstrated to all factions that "our reach is long."¹⁹⁵

This strong action did reduce the more blatant attacks against UNITAF forces by factional forces, although the sniping continued at about the same levels. The spot reports received every day at the headquarters contained the tally of such incidents. Generally, these were just random shots into compounds, most likely fired by individuals who were seeking to prove something. As Brigadier General Anthony C. Zinni said: "I think it's in the Somali nature to test you. I think it's part of the warrior ethic; maybe it's part of the



DVIC DD-SD-00-00737

As Marines take cover behind a wall, a UH-1N Huey helicopter supports the assault on one of Gen Aideed's weapons storage sites.

proof of manhood and bravery, and of course for two years around here the rule of the gun had gone about unchallenged. I think that the [reduction of the cantonment] sent a strong message and showed them that we weren't to be messed with and I think that test worked well in our favor."¹⁹⁶

The streets remained dangerous, however, precisely because the threat was random. Marines or soldiers on patrol or at checkpoints could never be certain when they would walk into a factional firefight, come upon a violent criminal act, or just be a ready target for someone's need to assert his authority or manhood. Such an incident occurred on 12 January and resulted in the death of UNITAF's first serviceman. That night, a security patrol was making a routine sweep along the southwest border of the airport. At about 2147, the patrol was ambushed and engaged in a firefight with several Somalis. In the course of the fight Private First Class Domingo Arroyo was hit by small arms fire. He died of his wounds about two hours later.¹⁹⁷

Private First Class Arroyo was a veteran of the Persian Gulf War and was a field wireman with Headquarters Battery, 3d Battalion, 11th Marines, at the time of his death. His service on a security patrol was in the Marine Corps' tradition of "every Marine a rifleman." Although a communicator by military occupational specialty, he was serving as a rifleman with Task Force Mogadishu, which had been formed specifically to provide security within the city.*

By the end of December, the MarFor commander, Major General Wilhelm, recognized the city needed to be stabilized to carry out the overall security mission. He instructed Colonel Klimp to devise an aggressive plan that would put MarFor ahead of the factions in terms of knowing what was happening in the city and in prepared

* The units participating in the seizure of the weapons storage sites on 7 January were also part of Task Force Mogadishu.

actions that may be necessary. Colonel Klimp came up with a four-phased plan in which each phase would “turn at the same time” as the others, like the gears in a clock, as opposed to being sequential. The first phase was for the collection of information; “information on the city; where are the different clans located, where are the gangs headquartered.” The next phase established MarFor presence by conducting foot patrols, manning checkpoints, and basically getting into the city and being seen by the people. The third phase was for direct action when necessary, such as when an important target like a weapons cache was identified. The fourth phase was for the evaluation of actions taken, assessment of new information, and formulating new tactics.¹⁹⁸ Task Force Mogadishu was the instrument created to undertake this stabilization mission. It was formed at the beginning of January from the 3d Battalion, 11th Marines; 3d Amphibious Assault Battalion; 3d Light Armored Infantry Battalion; Company C, 1st Battalion, 7th Marines; and Company K, 3d Battalion, 9th Marines. Colonel Klimp was assigned as the commanding officer of the task force.¹⁹⁹

Task Force Mogadishu numbered about 2,000 Marines. It moved to the sports stadium in the northern part of the city, where criminal activity and fighting among factions were common, and soon began its operations. The main activity was patrolling, which helped Marines gather information from the local populace and provided the presence envisioned in Colonel Klimp’s original plan. Like a cop on a beat in the United States, this very presence helped reduce violence and reassured the majority of citizens of UNITAF’s benign intent.²⁰⁰ Another important task was reducing the number of weapons on the streets by raiding the infamous arms markets operating in the city.

The word market cannot convey a true image of what these bazaars were like. Set into crowded sections of the city, the shops were little more than huts of wood and corrugated metal inside a maze of twisting, unpaved streets and alleys.

The ramshackle appearance of the business locations belied the richness of types and amounts of arms available. Rocket propelled grenades and launchers and AK-47 assault rifles were the most frequently encountered weapons. Machine guns,



DVIC DD-SD-00-00731

Two Marines run for cover while being fired on by clansmen snipers protecting the weapons storage site. The Marine in the foreground is carrying an M16A2 rifle with a M203 grenade launcher attached.



DVIC DD-SD-00-00736

Supporting the Marine assault, an M1A1 Abrams tank approaches the weapons storage site. Its main gun was empty, but there was ammunition for the machine guns.

mortars, missiles, and even rounds for a tank's main gun were available. Arms of every major weapons-producing nation could be found there; American, Soviet, Czechoslovakian, British, French, and Chinese weaponry were available. The two large markets in the city, the Argentine and the Barkera, were soon targeted by Task Force Mogadishu.* The truckloads of weapons confiscated in these sweeps were hauled away for destruction.

The first of these raids was against the Argentine Market on 8 January, followed by a raid on the Barkera Market on the 11th. Although

more than 1,500 weapons were confiscated, it was no secret that many others had been removed from the markets before the arrival of the Marines.²⁰¹ Both markets, and other identified arms caches, were the targets of subsequent raids.

The patrols, raids, and checkpoints did have an effect. As the I MEF command chronology for this period noted, MarFor's increased presence drove weapons off the streets, transforming Mogadishu into a much safer city.²⁰² However, there was still cause for concern and coalition soldiers could not afford to drop their guard. In late February, violent events in the Kismayo relief sector were reflected in Mogadishu.

When the Somali Patriotic Movement forces of Mohamed Said Hirsi, known as General Morgan and allied to Ali Mahdi Mohamed, attacked the followers of Colonel Ahmed Omar Jess in a fierce fight for the control of Kismayo, General Aided

* Fortunately, these two markets were on opposite sides of the green line, which divided Mogadishu into sections loyal to Aideed or Ali Mahdi. A raid against one could be balanced with a raid against the other, thus showing UNITAF's impartiality.



DVIC DD-SD-00-00729

Patrolling the mean streets of Mogadishu near a possible weapons storage area, well-armed Marines keep a sharp watch from the bed of a 5-ton cargo truck.

was quick to respond in Mogadishu. On 23 February, the day after the attacks in Kismayo, Aideed used his own propaganda services, such as his radio station, leaflets, and loudspeaker broadcasts to spread the story that Morgan had only been able to succeed because of the complicity of UNITAF. He also called upon his followers to attack UNITAF forces in the city.

That evening, thousands of people took to the streets, erecting barricades, starting fires, pelting convoys with stones, impeding the progress of UNITAF vehicles, and noisily demonstrating. As annoying as these activities were, the crowds were made up mostly of women and children and represented no real threat to the coalition forces. Nonetheless, as MarFor units attempted to clear the roadblocks and keep traffic lanes open, they were subjected to rock throwing that seriously injured several Marines, sailors, and coalition soldiers. But the main roads were reopened and the city quieted down by about 2300.²⁰³

The crowds were back the next morning. Again, roadblocks were put up and fires started. Again, Major General Wilhelm ordered MarFor to

keep the main roads open. On this day, the main disturbances were centered near the United States Embassy compound and the important traffic circle known as K-4. This circle, at the intersection of two major roads, controlled traffic leading to UNITAF headquarters, the airport, and the port. It was considered a key point and was the site of a heavily manned checkpoint. Rocks and Molotov cocktails were thrown at Marines in these areas.* Two Somali auxiliary security policemen were killed during the disturbances and three Marines and one Somali policeman were wounded. To provide his men all possible support, Major General Wilhelm ordered every available MarFor attack helicopter to provide reconnaissance and support to the forces on the ground. He also requested, and received from Lieutenant General Johnston,

* These are gasoline-filled glass bottles, stopped with a soaked rag as a wick. When thrown against a vehicle or in the area of troops, the bottles break, spreading flames. They are an inexpensive and easy to make incendiary device, named for Vyacheslav M. Molotov, the Soviet Foreign Commissar during World War II.



DVIC DN-ST-93-02402

Marines man a checkpoint in Mogadishu on New Year's Day 1993. The presence of coalition troops often drew crowds of curious Somalis, usually composed of young men and boys.

permission to distribute CS riot control agents, a non-lethal tear gas. As an additional measure, he called out a P-19 aviation crash fire truck from the air base at Bale Dogle. The truck's high-pressure hose would be useful in dispersing rioting crowds, if necessary. In the end, these extraordinary measures were not needed. The crowds dispersed by about noon.²⁰⁴ But more trouble was brewing.

On 25 February, the K-4 traffic circle was again the center of tension. There, at about 0900, some Somalis began to fire at the most available UNITAF targets: Marines and Nigerian soldiers of the 245th Reconnaissance Battalion who were responsible for the security of the traffic circle and surrounding area.* The Marines returned fire, and the Nigerians also began to fire rocket propelled grenades at the buildings where the Somali gunmen were hiding. The heavy firing continued throughout the day. Major General Wilhelm

ordered the area sealed off and swept within two hours. A strong force of Marines and coalition soldiers was called out for the mission. With the Marines of the 3d Battalion, 11th Marines, and the Nigerians as a blocking force, two companies of the 1st Battalion, 7th Marines, and soldiers of the Botswana Defense Force Contingent acted as the maneuver element. Shortly after 1400, the Marines and Botswana soldiers began their sweep down three main approaches toward their comrades at the traffic circle, converging with them shortly before sunset. The action had a salutary effect: the firing ceased and quiet returned to the area. Three Marines and two Nigerian soldiers were wounded during the action.²⁰⁵

Valuable lessons were learned from these events, and changes were made to better protect coalition forces should anything similar occur again. Some active measures, short of the use of deadly force, were put into place. While MarFor had received permission to distribute tear gas to its units, this riot control agent is non-specific, blanketing an area and affecting the innocent as well as those engaged in hostile acts. It can also

* At the time, and later, Aideed claimed these gunmen were bandits attempting to use the unrest of the past two days for their own purposes, and that he had no control over them.

linger. Cayenne pepper spray was determined to be a better agent because it comes in an aerosol can and can be directed against a specific target. Beginning on 1 March, pepper spray was issued to MarFor units, although control of its use remained with Lieutenant General Johnston and only persons trained in its use were to employ it. At about the same time, two P-19 crash fire trucks were moved to Mogadishu to support MarFor. One of these was placed at the port and the other at the stadium. A third truck was ordered for use in Mogadishu and was available by 10 March.

More passive measures also were taken to protect troops from rocks and other thrown items. Protective visors that attached to the Kevlar helmets were issued and combat service support personnel created wire mesh shields to be attached to humvees to protect the windows and occupants. These resourceful Marines also created another special piece of gear to attach to amphibious assault vehicles. During the February disturbances, crowds of Somalis had effectively stopped these vehicles by simply lying down in front of them. The drivers were naturally loath to

run over these people and risk injuring or killing them. Service support Marines made cowcatchers that attached to the front of the amphibious assault vehicles and allowed them to move through crowds or barricades with minimal harm to demonstrators.²⁰⁶

With these measures in place, MarFor increased its activities in the city and the number of patrols was boosted to create a greater presence. MarFor officers continued to meet regularly with neighborhood representatives and a greater degree of order and safety was achieved in the city. Operations to clear the streets of traffic obstructions and debris and distribute food were restarted as soon as possible after the February riots. When the forces of General Morgan and Colonel Jess again clashed in Kismayo in the middle of March, coalition units braced for trouble, but nothing of significance occurred. Throughout the remainder of March and April, the efforts of MarFor and coalition allies continued to stabilize the city. The demonstrations that took place during this time were described as peaceful and some were even held in support of UNITAF.



DVIC DD-SD-00-00770

As Somali civilians watch, U.S. Marines walk single file down a small alley in the capital's Bekara Market. The Marines swept the market looking for arms and munitions as part of Operation Nutcracker.



DVIC DN-ST-93-03819

A Marine prepares to load a box of weapons parts onto a truck filled with munitions confiscated during a patrol.

A good indication of progress occurred on 24 March, the end of the holy month of Ramadan. For the first time since the civil war the city was able to spend two days in celebration of this special holiday. Five days later, Somalis in the city peacefully held a rally in support of the recent Addis Ababa meetings.²⁰⁷

MarFor performed other important work in Mogadishu, not all of it related to patrolling or manning checkpoints. When UNITAF forces first arrived in the city the roads were choked with all types of rubbish and the debris of war. Often only a single narrow lane existed for the passage of traffic, and that would be thronged with pedestrians. This was unacceptable to the military forces, which needed to be able to move quickly throughout the city and between the important facilities at the port, airport, embassy, and elsewhere. Operation Clean Street started on 28 December with the aim of clearing the main roads and opening them for the fast-moving traffic of the coalition. Marine combat engineers and members of the U.S. Naval Construction Battalion, the Seabees, performed the work. The operation continued until 6 January 1993 and was the first of

several Clean Street operations that benefited UNITAF as well as the citizens of the city. As soon as the roadways were opened to traffic, the roadside markets began to come back to life, and soon merchants, barbers, and tailors were operating from small stalls.²⁰⁸

Another innovation used in Mogadishu was the idea of mass distribution sites. The large numbers of refugees, often scattered in settlements throughout the city, made it difficult for humanitarian relief organizations to effectively distribute food to those in need. By consolidating the distribution specified areas throughout the city, more people could be reached more efficiently. Also, by flooding the city with grain, the price of food would be lowered and the black market for stolen food would be undermined. MarFor had the responsibility of establishing the program with the relief organizations.²⁰⁹ The program was launched in February in conjunction with the establishment of the Somali auxiliary security force. On 6 February, the first mass food distribution was held. Eventually, there were 25 distribution sites located throughout the city with Somali auxiliary security forces providing control. Security for



Marine Corps Combat Art Collection 306-4-21

Combat artist Maj Burton E. Moore, a former member of a Marine Corps scout/sniper team, joined Jump Team 1, Recon Company, 5th Marines, atop the old U.S. Embassy in Mogadishu as the team returned hostile fire in 1993. Portrayed in his painting of the experience is (left) Sgt Charles A. Johnson, LtCol Edward J. Lesnowicz, Cpl Patrick B. Ward and Cpl Tim Richards.

each site was the responsibility of MarFor units and coalition forces guarded 18 of the 25 sites.²¹⁰

The work of the coalition in Mogadishu was reflected, on a lesser scale, in most of the other relief sectors. But each sector was unique, and people traveling outside Mogadishu saw a far different side of Somalia than was apparent in the capital city. This was largely because each humanitarian sector generally had one dominant clan, which meant factional rivalry and fighting were not as prevalent as it was in the capital. Also, the cities and towns were not nearly so large or crowded as Mogadishu. Still, each sector had its own challenges. Some quickly became very quiet, and others continued to have troubles with factional fighting and bandits. The establishment of the first three humanitarian relief sectors outside Mogadishu provided experiences and lessons that were used elsewhere. Bale Dogle, the important airbase; Baidoa, the "City of Death;" and

Bardera all benefited from the early attention they received as centers of UNITAF activities.

Bale Dogle

The control of the first sector, Bale Dogle, passed quickly from the Marines to the soldiers of the 10th Mountain Division. As these soldiers flew directly into the airbase, they soon had responsibility for its security and the Marines were able to move on to other cities. The responsibility for this sector did not remain long with the American soldiers, however. By early January 1993, the soldiers of the Royal Moroccan Army began to arrive, and by the 12th of that month they were placed under the operational control of Army Forces Somalia.²¹¹ The Moroccan forces were composed of two infantry companies, a cavalry company, a medical section, and other support detachments of the 3d Motorized Infantry Regiment, under the overall command of Colonel Major Omar Ess-Akalli.* This force formed a mobile intervention group of more than 1,000 men with 200 light vehicles equipped with crew-served weapons, as well as light tanks, artillery, and antitank missiles.²¹²

Their initial task was to ensure the security of the airbase. Then, as more troops arrived throughout Mogadishu, control was extended. By 28 January, the Moroccans were responsible for most of the sector. On 1 March, they were placed directly under UNITAF control and given responsibility for the security of all of sector Bale Dogle.²¹³

Their light vehicles provided the Moroccans with flexibility and tactical mobility, which they used to patrol the sector and escort convoys. The heart of their tactical mission, however, remained the security of the important airbase.²¹⁴ In addition to being a major aerial port for the operation, Army Forces Somalia established a firing range for its AH-1 helicopters within the sector. The range was a key factor in maintaining the accuracy of the weapons systems of the aircraft.²¹⁵

The Moroccans had yet another mission, one given to them by the King of Morocco himself. The king wished to help the sick and distressed people of Somalia, and he extended the Moroccan

* This was a highly experienced regiment, which at that time had just come from spending several years fighting insurgents in the Western Sahara.

humanitarian mission to include a large hospital operating in support of the Somali people. The hospital staff had many specialties, to include nutritionists, obstetricians-gynecologists, podiatrists, ophthalmologists, oral surgeons, and specialists in digestive disorders and bone diseases. There was also an engineering specialist for water purification. Somali medical specialists and social workers were hired to assist the Moroccan staff. The hospital quickly gained an excellent reputation among the Somali people and was seeing 400 to 500 people of all ages and tribes every day. There were five to six major surgical procedures performed daily.²¹⁶

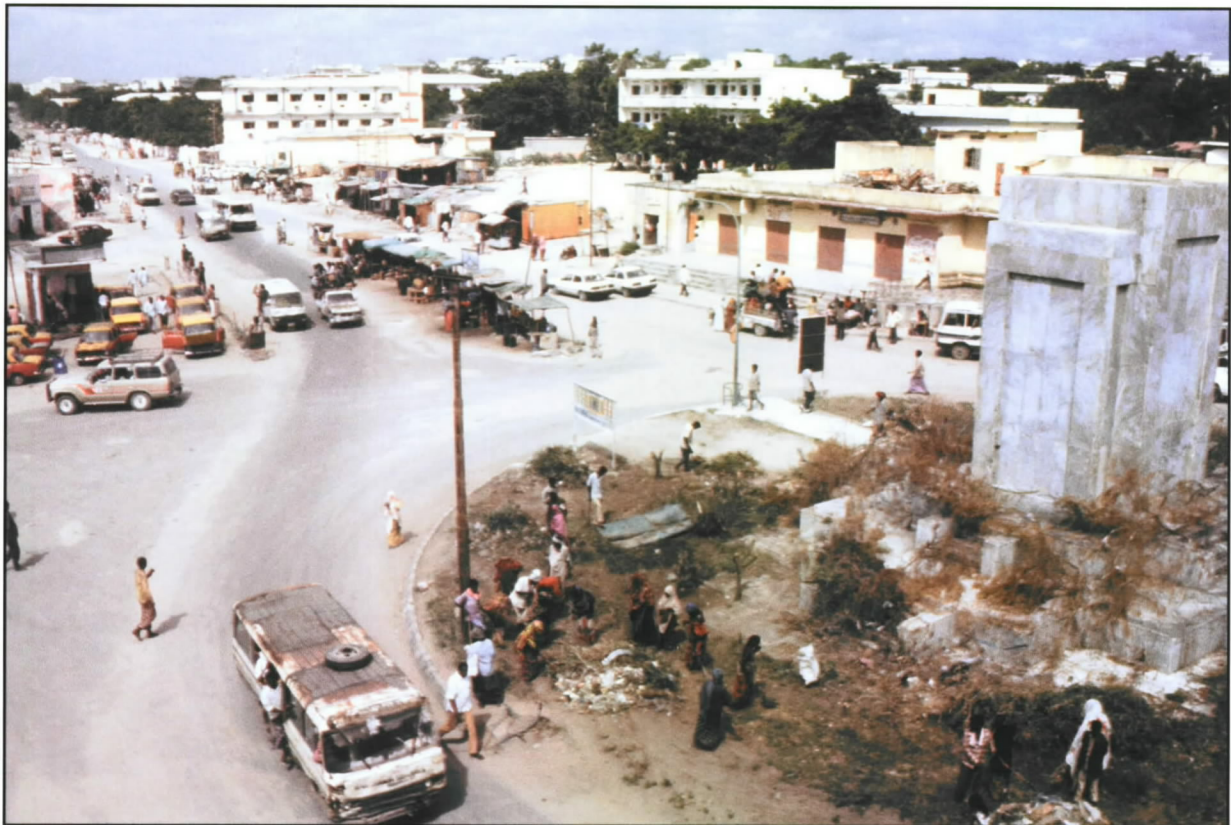
The Moroccan contingent was intended to be self-sufficient, which they were with food, water, and fuel. In fact, the king ensured his men in Somalia received fresh food every day; they carried no prepackaged rations and cooked their meals daily. But the light vehicles, which provided the force with its flexibility, also caused its largest logistics problem. All maintenance and repair on these vehicles had to be performed in Morocco.²¹⁷

The Moroccan unit was one of the largest non-U.S. contingents in the coalition. With this strong and mobile force patrolling the sector, Bale Dogle soon became one of the quietest in the area of operations, with few incidents reported.

Baidoa

The next sector occupied, Baidoa, presented a very different aspect to the soldiers of the coalition, and elicited different responses. There were more lawless elements present in this sector and, accordingly, more violent incidents. Also, the political situation was more complicated. The Marines who first occupied the sector were very aggressive patrolling, conducting raids, and making searches where threats were assessed. At night, helicopters were used to extend the presence of the coalition forces into outlying areas and to frighten off bandits.²¹⁸

Even at this early period, Colonel Gregory S. Newbold, as the commander of the 15th MEU, the Marines who initially occupied the town, recognized the difficulty, if not impossibility, of creat-



DVIC DA-ST-96-01283

The centrally located K-4 traffic circle in Mogadishu was the site of several confrontations between local Somali factions and coalition forces.

ing a secure environment in the relief sector if the bandits were allowed to carry their arms openly. He, therefore, told the local leaders his forces would seize any weapons seen on the streets of Baidoa. While the aggressive actions of the Marines quickly decreased hostile acts against the coalition, the policy of no weapons openly carried had equally good results. As the power of the bandits declined, the local elders could reassert their authority. They did so within the first few days of the Marines' arrival. Several Somalis approached the Marines and requested assistance in establishing a security council.²¹⁹

Under the direction of Colonel Werner Hellmer, the local civil-military operations team provided the secure and neutral venue needed to establish such a council. Relying heavily on humanitarian relief organizations, the team sought out the legitimate local leaders and elders. At the same time, Colonel Hellmer and his small staff recognized the importance of including representatives of all major groups and clans. It was vital to the Marine mission and its image of neutrality that no one who should be a member would inadvertently be left out. Representatives from the State Department and United Nations Operation Somalia (UNOSOM) were also in attendance at the beginning of this new security council. As throughout the area of operations, the idea was that the Somalis would take care of their own internal governance. Under the protection of the Marine policies of "no openly carried weapons, no crew-served weapons, and no technicals with gun mounts," the weakening of the bandits, and the strengthening of the elders, conditions in Baidoa soon began to improve.²²⁰

On 27 December, 3d Battalion, 9th Marines, relieved the 15th MEU of responsibility for Baidoa. They continued their predecessors' routine activities; protection of food convoys, patrolling in the sector, and mine clearing. The civil-military operations team remained in place working with the relief organizations and the local security council. By early January, Colonel Hellmer believed they had made good progress. People were out on the streets again, the markets in town were open, and the local buses were running. Fear no longer existed and people could sleep safely, some getting a full night's rest for the first time in years. The lingering problem that Colonel Hellmer saw was what to do with those who previously had made their living by banditry and stealing relief supplies.²²¹

Another organization making life better in Baidoa was *Action Internationale Contre de Faim* (International Action Against Hunger). This relief agency set up two camps, one for the most critical refugee cases and the other for those who were less serious. In the first, there were four servings per day of what was described as a very rich mixture of food. This was intended to get these people back up to strength and out of danger. Those who were in better health were placed in the other camp, where they were fed one meal of a regular mixture per day. In addition, there was a hospital ward treating various illnesses, such as malaria, cholera, tuberculosis, and other respiratory diseases.²²² * Such work was typical of what the relief organizations were doing in all the sectors. The civil-military teams provided coordination with the military to ensure they received their relief supplies safely and answered other legitimate needs.

By the middle of January 1993, the Marines were ready to hand over responsibility for the sector. At 2359 on the 16th, Baidoa was transferred to Army Forces Somalia, with the remaining Marines placed under its control.²²³ However, this situation was only intended to be temporary.

During this same period, the Australian contingent arrived by ship and airplane. By 8 January, a portion of the advance party had already come to Baidoa to assess the quality of the water and determine if it could be purified. Company A, which had left on the Royal Australian Navy's HMAS *Jervis Bay* (GT 203) on 24 December, made port at Mogadishu on 12 January. By the 17th, the main body, composed of Company B, half of Company C, and most of the battalion headquarters, flew straight to Baidoa on board a Qantas Airlines 747 passenger aircraft. The remainder of the Australian forces arrived the next day. Company A, mounted in trucks off the ship, motor marched to the town.²²⁴

The Australian force would soon be one of the largest national contingents. It included Companies A, B, C, and D of the 1st Battalion, 1st Royal Australian Regiment, with their normal battalion headquarters, plus support and administration companies. Attached to this battalion group were Squadron B, 3d Battalion, 4th Cavalry

* Such diseases were rampant in the refugee camps throughout the area of operations and were the result of poor sanitation, crowded conditions, and unclean water.



Photo courtesy of the Australian Department of Defense

Australian soldiers move by convoy from the port of Mogadishu to Baidoa where they would relieve elements of the 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit.

Regiment, mounted in armored personnel carriers; the battery commander's party, Headquarters, 6th Field Battery, 4th Field Regiment; and 17th Troop, 18th Field Squadron, 3d Combat Engineer Regiment. All were supported by a detachment of the 103d Signals Squadron and the 1st Battalion Support Group.²²⁵

The Australian force was intended to be as self-sufficient as possible. Therefore, when they deployed, they tasked their support group for 30 days of supply and ammunition. The greatest concern was for water. The advance party found that the local water could be purified. Also, HMAS *Tobruk*, which was also supporting the operation, could pump water into tankers that could then make the overland journey to the relief sector. The support group was a very capable organization, which contained fuel tankers and 8-ton cargo trucks. It also had a medical section capable of forming a regimental aid post. The maintenance detachment included a field workshop for electrical and general engineering maintenance, as well as for vehicle and communications repair.²²⁶

For requirements above the capabilities of the support group, the Australian forces could use UNITAF's logistics assets for water, fuel, rations,

and other common consumables. These arrangements were set under cross servicing agreements signed between the United States and Australian governments. Anything required that was not available from UNITAF was either purchased in Kenya, or flown in from Australia by the Royal Australian Air Force on regularly scheduled C-130 Hercules flights.²²⁷

The handoff of responsibility for the sector was completed on 19 January. At a simple ceremony, the flags of both nations were lowered and raised in reversed positions on the flagpole. At the same time, appropriate music was played on a harmonica. "Waltzing Matilda," the Australian battalion's quick march and the national song, is also the division march of the 1st Marine Division, so it was chosen and matched with "The Star Spangled Banner."* For the previous two days, Company A of the Royal Australian Regiment had been under

* In the author's interview with Major John Caligari, Royal Australian Army, "Waltzing Matilda" was identified as the regimental march of the 9th Marines, and it is so identified in the notes of the interview. Calls to the division actually identified it as the division's own march, adopted during World War II.

the tactical control of 3d Battalion, 9th Marines. Now the situation reversed itself as Company L, 3d Battalion, 9th Marines, was placed under the tactical control of the Australian forces. The Marines would retain this command relationship until they departed Baidoa.²²⁸

By 23 January, all of the Australian force was present in Baidoa; 888 soldiers armed with 36 M113 armored personnel carriers and eight 81mm mortars. The Australians quickly settled into their mission, which, as elsewhere in the area of operations, was to control the sector and provide security for the relief operations and the supply convoys. The work was divided into three parts and rotated among the companies. One company guarded the airfield, while another patrolled in town. The third company patrolled in depth, throughout the sector, to establish presence, collect intelligence, and respond to any incidents.²²⁹

About 80 kilometers from Baidoa on the main road to Mogadishu was the town of Buurhakaba, the second largest in the sector. A huge rock mas-

sif that rose from the plain to a height of a few hundred feet dominated the town. This area had been the site of much bandit activity and was noted for the presence of several technicals. To end these depredations, the Australians established a permanent outpost at the town. This was occupied in company strength, with patrols extending out to other towns in the sector. The other companies could be called for support if there were a need.²³⁰

There were two intelligence gathering organizations operating in the Baidoa sector. One was a three-man combat intelligence detachment of the Australian force. These soldiers were responsible for collecting human intelligence, checking the populace, finding out who was in the area, and the identification of the local clans and subgroups.²³¹ There also was a team of American Special Forces in the sector. This team was "used to conduct area assessments throughout the [humanitarian relief sector], especially in those areas where conventional forces or relief agencies had not yet



Photo courtesy of the Australian Department of Defense

LtGen Robert B. Johnston talks with an Australian soldier while visiting the Australian headquarters in Baidoa. Behind LtGen Johnston is Col William J. Mellor, commander of the Australian army contingent.



Marine Corps Combat Art Collection 119-9-51

During a 1993 deployment to Somalia, combat artist Col Donna J. Neary depicted this familiar scene of the international relief effort. In this piece, an Australian soldier is shown escorting a refugee convoy. After relieving the 3d Battalion, 9th Marines, in Baidoa, "Diggers," the nickname adopted by Australian soldiers, took over relief escort duties in that area.

arrived." The local commander used these assessments to plan operations in support of the humanitarian relief organizations that were providing relief to these outlying areas. In addition, the Special Forces team also provided intelligence about criminal activities and sources of banditry.²³² With one of the companies always operating in the sector in a random pattern of patrolling, the Australians were able to respond whenever and wherever intelligence indicated that something was afoot. The company could quickly move into the target area and remain for a few days.²³³

Baidoa was not terribly plagued by the presence of warring factions during this period." There

were some instances of armed troops passing through the sector, but these were generally small groups that were monitored closely as they moved along. Lawlessness was another matter. By the end of January, the Australians had established the pattern by which they would operate for the next few months. Finding the towns that were the centers of criminal activity, they used a series of cordon and search or airmobile operations to find and confiscate weapons and make their presence felt. The Australian forces soon were stamping out the banditry that had been so rife in the sector. When they discovered that the bandits had adopted the tactic of attacking civilian traffic along the roads at night, the Australians became equally resourceful. After dark, Australian vehicles with their lights off would follow the civilian trucks and buses. The drivers would use night vision goggles to operate, and the troops would also use night vision devices to scan the roadsides ahead to spot any ambushes. These ambush-busting operations were a very successful deterrent to the bandit activity.²³⁴

* There was some factional activity in the sector, but it was relatively minor. For instance, during the visit of the author to the Baidoa humanitarian relief sector in late January, a representative of the Somali Liberation Army had just appeared in town to recruit. The Australian's quick reaction force planned to "pay him a visit" at his quarters to search for arms and explain the weapons policy. He was not very successful in his recruiting efforts.

The Australians were constantly busy during their four months as a part of UNITAF. The pace of operations was described as grueling. While the work was hard, harsh, and unrelenting, it did help to keep the sector more quiet and secure than some others. The success of the Australians' operations can be measured by the fact that bandits only engaged them on four occasions. They sustained no casualties while confiscating and destroying almost 1,000 weapons and a vast quantity of ammunition and explosives.²³⁵

Bardera

The Bardera relief sector differed from Baidoa in several critical ways. First, it was a smaller sector. While the town of Bardera had been ravaged during the civil war, one clan, whose faction, the United Somali Party, was led by General Abdi Dahir Warsame, inhabited it. Therefore, there was little of the factional fighting that had been so troublesome elsewhere, and it was far simpler to stabilize the sector once UNITAF troops arrived. Ironically, the presence of a single faction in the town actually increased the effects of the famine. Most of the starving people in the sector had come from its outlying areas, and the inhabitants of the town felt no obligation to assist those to whom they were not related. Those living in the town were relatively well-off in comparison to the

refugees, who were crowded into an area called the "Italian Village" to the south of the town. Here they were subject to starvation from the lack of relief supplies, from disease due to crowded and unsanitary conditions, and from the depredations of armed bandits. When the Marines arrived, as many as 300 refugees were dying each day. With the safe delivery of food and medicines to the relief organizations and the presence of the Marines, the death toll soon dropped to less than 10 percent of what it had been.²³⁶

After the success in Baidoa, Colonel Hellmer moved quickly to Bardera, arriving in late December. With Colonel Emil R. Bedard, the commanding officer of the 7th Marines, he set up another civil-military operations center. Colonel Hellmer's team soon was assisting the legitimate elders of Bardera to establish a security council and reassert their own authority. Again, the Marines were there to provide security, not to govern. The elders took advantage of the opportunity to reestablish an effective local government, enforcing laws, trying criminals, and meting out justice to those convicted of crimes. By 7 February, an auxiliary police force was brought back into existence, and the police were soon joining the Marines at checkpoints. As a result of these efforts, the influence of local bandits waned. Bardera was noted for being a quiet sector for the next four months.²³⁷

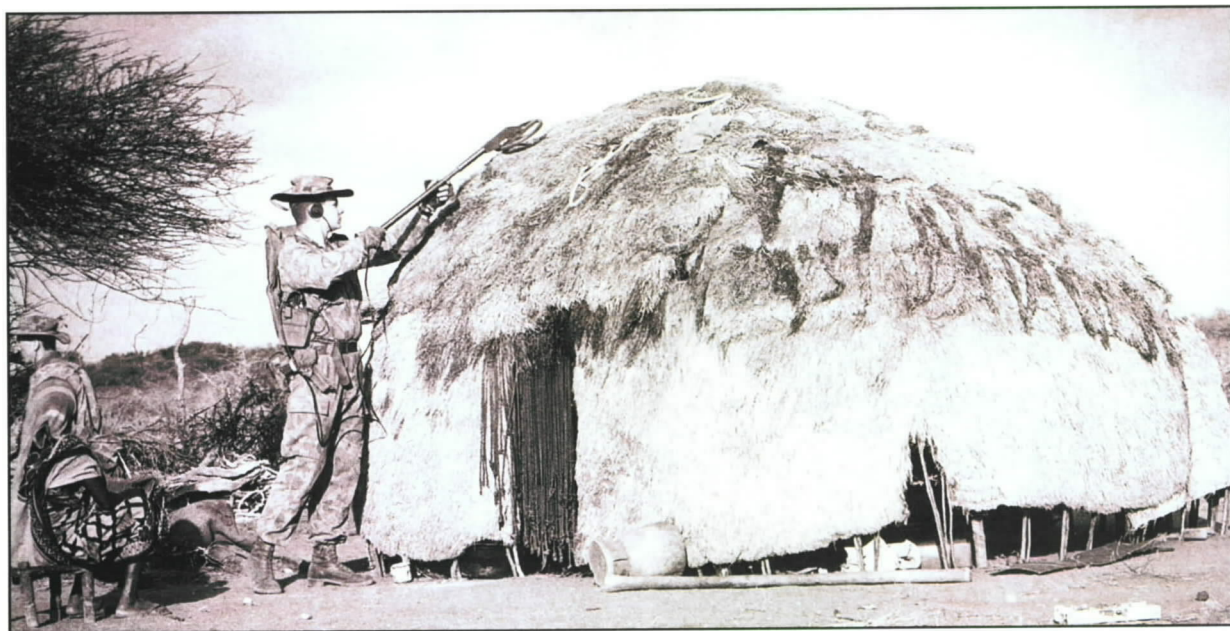


Photo courtesy of the Australian Department of Defense

An Australian soldier uses a mine detector to search for hidden arms in the effort to stamp out banditry in the Baidoa humanitarian relief sector.

Still, there were some problems that beset the relief efforts. The most notable of these was the presence of mines along the main roads. Nearly every road in the sector was mined, making it difficult to open the main supply routes into the interior.* Even though few mines were encountered, the clearance operations had to progress slowly and thoroughly along every mile before they were safe for the passage of convoys. Even then, the roads needed repair. As engineers worked on the roads, the helicopters of Marine Aircraft Group 16 lifted food and relief supplies to the humanitarian relief organizations in outlying villages that otherwise could not have been reached.²³⁸

Toward the end of January, the restructuring of forces in the theater allowed Major General Wilhelm to rearrange the Marine forces in a manner he considered more in keeping with local conditions. The 1st Battalion, 7th Marines, which had originally occupied the Bardera sector, was recalled to Mogadishu, where its riflemen were advantageously used in the urban environment. Its place was taken by a new organization, Task Force Bardera, formed around the 3d Amphibious Assault Battalion. This unit, with its greater mobility, was better suited to the open terrain in the sector. On 24 January, the task force officially began its duties in Bardera.²³⁹

While the sector was fairly quiet, there was still the need for vigilance. This was especially true in late February when serious fighting erupted among the factions in Kismayo, the humanitarian sector bordering Bardera to the south. To ensure that Bardera was not affected by the fighting, and especially to ensure that Colonel Jess' Somali Patriotic Movement forces did not enter the Bardera sector, Task Force Bardera maintained reconnaissance elements north and south of the town. At the beginning of March, squad-sized patrols were sent along the Jubba River valley as far south as the town of Saacow. These patrols and screens had the desired effect, and no disturbances or significant presence of Jess' forces were noted in the sector.²⁴⁰

By the end of April, the Marines were able to turn over responsibility for a sector that was returning to peace and normalcy. As UNITAF prepared to hand off operations to the United Nations, Task Force Bardera was brought back to

Mogadishu to prepare for redeployment. On 18 April, the Botswana Defense Force contingent relieved the Marines of responsibility for Bardera.²⁴¹

Oddur

As the French soldiers moved into the towns from which they would operate in Oddur, they brought with them great experience in operating in this part of the world. Many of these French soldiers and Marines had served in the neighboring state of Djibouti, formerly known as French Somaliland. They came, therefore, with knowledge of the importance of clan and tribal allegiance in Somalia, and they tried to work within that context in this sector.²⁴² In addition, the French forces in Djibouti had witnessed the civil war that began there in 1991 between the Somali Issas and the Ethiopian Afars.

By 28 December, the last elements of the French forces arrived from France and Djibouti, and moved to Oddur through Mogadishu. By this time, the French forces consisted of a command element, which included a special operations company, a logistics support battalion, a military intelligence detachment, and detachments of security forces, military police, and communications. The ground forces were composed of one battalion from the 5th Combined Arms Overseas Regiment, one battalion from the 13th Foreign Legion Demi-Brigade, and the 3d Company of the 2d Foreign Legion Parachute Regiment. The 3d and 4th companies of the 2d Marine Infantry Regiment strengthened the other battalions with organic armored personnel carriers. These forces were supported by an aviation detachment from the 5th Attack Helicopter Regiment, and the 3d Company of the 6th Foreign Legion Engineer Regiment. All told, there were about 2,200 French soldiers, Marines, and Legionnaires in the Oddur sector.²⁴³

As in Bardera, the natives of Oddur were mainly from one dominant clan, the Rahanweyne. However, that does not mean there was unity throughout the sector. The Rahanweyne clan was described as "divided into a multitude of sub-clans opposed to each other and characterized by opportunism and fragile alliances." Also, the people living in the north and near the critical Ethiopian border were members of the rival Ogaden clan. As in Bardera, the townspeople felt little sympathy toward the refugees from the out-

* Lawrence N. Freedman was killed when his vehicle struck a mine in this sector.



Photo courtesy of the author

French Foreign Legionnaires made their headquarters in an old Italian fort at El Berde, from which platoons and squads were sent to villages and hamlets throughout the Oddur sector.

lying districts who were not related to them. The local leaders looked out for their own clan, but not the others. The French would thus have to draw on all their experience and skills in dealing with the native Somalis throughout this sector.²⁴⁴

The French forces were deployed in their traditional “oil spot” manner. The sector was first broken down into three sub-sectors centered on major cities or towns, which in this case were Oddur and the Ethiopian border, Wajid, and Tiyegloo. One battalion occupied each of these sub-sectors. From these, 10 towns or hamlets were occupied by company-sized forces, which then sent platoons to other locations, for a total of 20 occupied sites. The French then were able to operate from these strongpoints, spread throughout the sector, show their presence, maintain a strong posture, and conduct reconnaissance. In Oddur itself, a mobile reaction force supported by helicopters was kept ready to intervene in any situation.²⁴⁵

In the city of Oddur, the work of these coalition forces was very similar to what was going on in the other sectors. The Somalis soon established

local committees for security, food distribution, school operations, and so forth. As was the case elsewhere, the French recognized they had to get the Somalis to take responsibility for their own welfare and governance. The French also established their own team to work with the relief organizations in town, notably *Medecines Sans Frontieres* (Doctors Without Borders) and Concern. These organizations ran a hospital and feeding stations. The effectiveness of the organizations’ work was significantly increased by the arrival of the French Army, which controlled the safe shipment and distribution of food and supplies while leaving the humanitarian agencies to carry on with their own duties.²⁴⁶

By 30 December, just days after their arrival in the sector, the French special operations forces pushed out along the axis Oddur-Ted-El Berde. The purpose of this initial operation was three fold: first, it provided a surveillance line toward the Ethiopian border; next, it opened the sector to these areas for the local humanitarian organizations; and finally, the French presence there would

help to stop the heavy flow of refugees coming into Oddur and other cities from the northern towns which were hit hard by war and drought.²⁴⁷

This area was very important to the entire operation because its northern limit stretched along the Somali-Ethiopian border. The flow of refugees across the ill-defined frontier brought with it the possibility of armed forces from either nation crossing into the other's territory. This, in turn, might cause an incident that could be difficult to contain. As early as 31 December, during a helicopter reconnaissance in the vicinity of the town of Yet, French troops came across four armed men in civilian clothing who were acting suspiciously. The men were picked up, interrogated, and found to be members of the Ethiopian Army. They were quickly turned over to their own authorities.²⁴⁸

The presence of the Ogaden clan also served to increase the volatility of this section of the border. The town of El Berde, located just a few kilometers south of the border, was a case in point. Prior to the civil war, a *modus vivendi* was in place here, as elsewhere in Somalia where a smaller clan or sub-clan had to coexist in an area dominated by a larger, stronger one. An effective police force was active in the area and there were regional and district committees, on which the local chiefs served. In this way, good relations were maintained with the various national ministries and the governor at Oddur. With the coming of the war, however, clan was pitted against clan. The populace of the region around El Berde, about 8,000 people, crossed into Ethiopia.* By early 1993, they were returning to find their homes and villages destroyed or damaged. They needed food, medicine, and humanitarian assistance. To compound the situation here, the returning chief of El Berde did not recognize the legitimacy of the new governor of Oddur. Despite the internal strife, the French were respected and were working with both sides to effect reconciliation and an agreement to bring back normal relations.²⁴⁹

The French tactic of spreading across the sector into hamlets and villages in platoon and squad formations allowed them to cover maximum territory. With so many soldiers in the sector, they also relied upon the mobility of their armored personnel carriers and helicopters to move rapidly and

establish control of the zone. By late January, their presence had created a reassuring effect on the relief organizations, which were able to move about with greater security. The people also began to respond by gaining confidence, providing intelligence, and returning to their villages.²⁵⁰

The first contacts between the French and the native Somalis were described as excellent, and the local elders and chiefs were satisfied with the French presence. By the beginning of February, mine clearing operations had effectively been completed throughout the sector. A police force, armed only with batons, was established, and a weapons registration program was in place. This program allowed the French to confiscate unregistered firearms and to arrest any armed individuals.²⁵¹ The French soldiers, Marines, and Legionnaires settled into a daily routine of patrols, reconnaissance, ambushes, checkpoints, searching for arms caches, and seizing unauthorized weapons.

During February, the French already realized they could decrease and realign their forces without losing control of the sector, and the first French units began to rotate out of theater. The battalion of the 5th Combined Arms Overseas Regiment left, along with the engineers and one company of Marine armored personnel carriers. Helicopter support also was decreased. To accommodate fewer troops, the number of towns and hamlets occupied was reduced to 12, but the amount of patrols was increased. By March, the French government decided that 1,100 men would take part in UNOSOM II. During the remainder of March and April, the French forces continued to realign themselves, rotating out some of the original units while bringing in new ones to support the United Nations mission.²⁵²

Gialalassi

As the Italian forces settled in around Gialalassi, their responsibilities were soon extended beyond that sector. Having reclaimed their embassy in Mogadishu early in the operation, the Italians kept a strong force in the neighborhood for its protection. It also made sense to the Italian commanders that they should be given responsibility for some part of the city that included the area where they were located. Of course, political and practical considerations were involved in determining how the Italian forces would be employed in the city.

* The French estimated about 113 villages and hamlets in the sector had been abandoned and roughly 40 percent of the local population (118,000 people) had become refugees.



Photo courtesy of the Italian Armed Forces

Italian soldiers on patrol in the Gialalassi humanitarian relief sector, which as later expanded to include the northern half of Mogadishu.

First, there was the question of how the Somalis would accept the Italians, with their history as a colonial power. The issue was a delicate one, for the Italians were a strong presence who brought distinct benefits to the coalition. Yet, General Johnston did not want them to be placed in a situation or position in which they would be counterproductive if Somali anti-Italian reaction was strong. He saw the older Somalis, who had lived in the period of Italian presence, would be amenable to their return as a part of UNITAF. He was more worried about the younger Somalis, who might make an issue of colonialism. General Johnston therefore followed a policy of gradualism by which the Italian forces were slowly placed in the city and countryside and the reac-

tions of the Somalis were assessed. After the successes of the Merka and Gialalassi operations, he decided the problem might have been overstated. Johnston soon decided to give the Italians responsibility for a portion of the city.²⁵³

Other political considerations had to be taken into account. MarFor and other coalition forces had occupied areas that were mostly in the southwestern portion of the city, which was territory of General Aideed. The Italian Embassy was in the northeast part of the city, in an area claimed by the forces of Ali Mahdi. While this could be a counterbalance, it was recognized that it was imperative no favoritism be shown to either faction leader by the coalition forces in the area. Since the Italian Embassy was nearly adjacent to the head-

quarters of Ali Mahdi, General Johnston determined the Italian forces headquarters should not be established in that area. Instead, the Italians were given responsibility for the northeast portion of Mogadishu, with their sector extending into Gialalassi. Their headquarters was then established in the town of Balcad, several kilometers out of Mogadishu along the main route heading north. The gradual manner in which this was accomplished, along with the professionalism of the Italian soldiers, allayed any suspicions by the Somalis of either neocolonialism or favoritism.²⁵⁴

The Italian soldiers were soon conducting patrols, arms sweeps, and other civil actions within the city of Mogadishu. The situation there required close cooperation between all parties. "As activity in Mogadishu picked up, MarFor and Italian units began running into each other on patrols and during operations, creating confusion and potentially dangerous situations."²⁵⁵ Although the creation of distinct areas of responsibility was a major step toward solving the problem, direct liaison between the coalition members was a necessity. For example, early in January, Italian soldiers had been fired at by a sniper along a route in a section of the city called the Villagio Scibis. To show their resolve, the Italian command planned a major sweep through this area using about 540 men. The operation was to start at 0430 on 12 January. But when the liaison officer brought this to the attention of the UNITAF staff, it was noted the MarFor also was planning to conduct an operation in a neighboring area at the same time. UNITAF postponed the Italian operation for 24 hours, when it was successfully completed without incident.²⁵⁶ Major General Wilhelm, the commanding general of MarFor, and Major General Gianpietro Rossi, the Italian commander, also agreed on the conduct of joint operations in the city, beginning on 19 January. The cooperation between the two coalition partners resulted in the creation of Task Force Columbus, composed of forces from the San Marco Battalion, and the 571st Military Police Company, a United States Army unit under the operational control of MarFor. The task force conducted patrols and provided security for humanitarian relief warehouses in the area of the Karaan Market.²⁵⁷

With such a wide and diffuse area of responsibility, the Italians had to align their units somewhat differently than those in other sectors. They maintained a large force in their sector of

Mogadishu, around the Italian Embassy. They also placed garrisons in the towns of Balcad, Jawhar, and Gialalassi. These four strongpoints controlled the main population centers in the sector and provided security along the main supply route that ran from Mogadishu to Bullo Burti. Three task forces (Alpha, Bravo, and Charlie) were assigned to cover these bases. Alpha, the smallest force with 413 soldiers, was responsible for Mogadishu. Charlie, the next largest task force, split its deployment between Jawhar, with 180 soldiers, and Gialalassi, with 550 soldiers. Task Force Bravo, the largest with 1,116 soldiers, was at the so-called transitory base in Balcad, from which it could deploy north or south as the situation required.

The threat to coalition forces differed in each of these places. As might be expected, Mogadishu, with the presence of armed members of the two main Somali factions, had the highest number of incidents. Members of Ali Mahdi's Abgal clan frequently clashed with those of the rival Habr Gedr clan of General Aideed on the streets of the capital. These fighters also fired occasionally at the Italian soldiers, or boldly threatened the local populace, just as they did with American servicemen and Somali civilians elsewhere in the city. Bandits presented the main problem in outlying towns.

The Italians quickly demonstrated their presence and strength throughout the sector with routine patrolling and checkpoints. From their strongpoints, reconnaissance patrols protected the main supply route, weapons caches and markets were raided, arms were confiscated, and mines were cleared. More importantly, the Italians devised a series of operations that would take place throughout the sector. The size of the force used for each of these operations depended on the objective. Those at the highest levels were named "canguro" (kangaroo). They were planned and directed by the Folgore Brigade headquarters and executed by its subordinate units. The next level, named "mangusto" (mongoose) comprised operations undertaken by the 186th and 187th Parachute Regiments of the brigade.* The lowest

* As with regiments in many other modern armies, these units were not formed in the manner familiar to Americans. Each was composed basically of one battalion, with a separate company-sized headquarters element through which the regimental commander provided command and control, administration, and logistics support.



DVIC DD-SD-00-00861

U.S. Marines in a light armored vehicle from the 3d Light Armored Infantry Battalion join Italian soldiers in a Fiat OTO Melara 6614 armored vehicle at an intersection along the Green Line in Mogadishu.

level operations, meant for rapid reaction to events or intelligence, were named “hilaac” (Somali for lightning). These were executed by the brigade’s special forces and were generally conducted in Mogadishu.²⁵⁸

A fourth type of operation was named “tamburo” (drum) and took advantage of the Italian force’s large component of armored personnel carriers and helicopters. The mobility and rapid movement provided by these vehicles made them especially valuable in emergency situations, the primary goal of tamburo operations. These operations also enabled the Italians to react to situations far from the city strongpoints, effectively controlling the entire relief sector.²⁵⁹

The Italian soldiers were busy with civil activities as well. In the Gialalassi sector, as elsewhere in the coalition’s area of operations, the overall success of the mission depended on the perception by the population that the coalition was there to assist the Somali recovery and to provide general security. The brigade engineer company cleared mines from roads and villages, and detachments of soldiers provided security for relief convoys moving throughout the sector. Relief organization warehouses and distribution points were kept under surveillance to prevent attack or theft. The

Italians also provided direct medical aid to the Somali people. An ambulance service carried wounded or seriously ill civilians to the Italian medical facilities.* There they were treated in cooperation with Somali health and medical personnel. By the end of January alone, these medical visits numbered more than 4,000.²⁶⁰

The Italian command worked with Somali elders and leaders to establish local committees so order could be maintained and local governance begun. They also were very actively involved in the establishment of the auxiliary security force in Mogadishu and throughout the Gialalassi sector. These forces worked in the main population centers of Mogadishu, Gialalassi, Balcad, and Jawhar. The auxiliaries were soon accompanying the Italian soldiers on patrols and at checkpoints. Weapons control within the sector was accomplished through a series of actions. First, the carrying of arms in the sector was prohibited; citizens were requested to voluntarily turn in weapons. Next, arms were confiscated during

* The Italian forces established one military hospital and one surgical ward. Six infirmaries in the four strongpoint cities backed these up. They were staffed by 39 medical officers, 12 hospital corpsmen, and 170 troops.



DVIC DD-SD-00-00864

An Italian soldier holding a 9mm Beretta 12S sub-machine gun patrols a heavily pockmarked section of the Green Line, which separated the warring factions in Mogadishu.

sweep operations in areas known or suspected to contain weapons caches or havens for armed persons. These actions had results similar to those taken throughout UNITAF's area of operations. Thousands of weapons and several tons of ammunition were confiscated and destroyed.²⁶¹

In addition to the work of the medical staff, the Italians assisted the local population in several direct ways. Wells damaged during the civil war were cleared and repaired. Main roads were put back into good order. Schools were reopened, and local businesses were encouraged and given support to help restart the local economy. A postal service between Somalia and Italy was established.²⁶²

The supply of this large force (about 3,200 soldiers) was an important issue for the Italian command. This was the Italian armed forces' first major deployment since World War II. The Folgore Brigade had a related unit, the 46th Aviation Brigade, which supported the operation

with three Aeritalia G222 utility transport aircraft.²⁶³ These airplanes, along with 12 helicopters assigned to a composite helicopter regiment, provided ample intra-theater transportation for personnel and supplies. The Italian forces were also fortunate in Somalia's location within easy air resupply distance of Italy itself. The Italian officers' mess at Balcad was soon renowned for the quality of its fare; fresh pastas, meats and fish, fruits and vegetables, and wine were all prepared and served daily.* Potable water for drinking and washing was a problem, as it was everywhere else. This burden was relieved in large part by digging two wells, one in Mogadishu and the other in Gialalassi. The combined capacity of the wells

* General Order Number 1 prohibited the consumption of alcohol. However, this applied only to American forces. Americans traveling in the theater were offered wine in Oddur and Gialalassi and beer in Belet Weyne, which they had to respectfully, and usually reluctantly, decline.



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A sampling of the small arms and crew-served weapons confiscated by the 2d Battalion, 87th Infantry, at checkpoint Condor south of Merka.

was 14,000 liters of water per day, which could be used for washing.²⁶⁴ This represented a tremendous boon because more of the water that was hauled into the relief sector every day could be used just for drinking and cooking.

Through March and April, the Italians continued to suppress bandits and assist the local populace. By the end of the latter month, as some of the UNITAF coalition partners prepared to depart, the Italians were tasked to remain as a part of UNOSOM II. Their new area of responsibility would continue to include Gialalassi, with an expansion to the north to incorporate the neighboring relief sector of Belet Weyne.

Merka

The Italian forces also had been instrumental in establishing the Merka relief sector, but once the port and airfield had been secured and roads opened into the interior, Army Forces Somalia was given responsibility for that sector. The unit that was left for this mission, 2d Battalion, 87th Infantry, was a part of the 2d (Commando)

Brigade, 10th Mountain Division.²⁶⁵ Although a smaller sector than most of the others, Merka had its share of challenges for the American soldiers.

Patrols uncovered some large arms caches during January. The first of these discoveries came on 14 January when elements of Task Force 2-87 seized 500,000 rounds of small arms ammunition hidden at an airfield near the town of Afgooye. Ten days later, Task Force 3-17, the 10th Mountain Division cavalry squadron, uncovered a large arms cache kept in eight half-buried conex boxes. In both instances, the arms and ammunition were quickly destroyed. Task Force 2-87 continued cordon and search operations throughout the sector, especially near large towns such as Kurtunwaarey, Baraawe, and Qoryooley.²⁶⁶ On 29 January, these operations uncovered two more caches.²⁶⁷

Although it was originally outside the Merka relief sector, the town of Afgooye was a concern for the soldiers in this sector. Afgooye was located within the Bale Dogle sector, which also was under the control of the Army Forces Somalia during January and February, and American sol-



Photo courtesy of the Italian Armed Forces
Italian soldiers exhibit some of the arms confiscated during sweep operations in areas known to harbor armed insurgents and contain weapons caches.

diers could therefore be transferred between sectors as needed. The problems in Afgooye centered on banditry. The town was at a key location on a main road to Mogadishu, and was therefore a magnet for bandits and lawless elements wanting to extort payments from travelers going to or from the capital city.

On 31 January, Commando Brigade conducted a large cordon and search operation at Afgooye. Task Force 2-87 conducted an air assault, while Task Force 3-17 and the 984th Military Police Company held sectors in and around the town. The operation continued for several days. At its conclusion, the 984th Military Police Company was left in the town to provide a presence and conduct stabilization operations. The operation successfully curtailed violence and banditry in this area, which allowed the people to reclaim their town.²⁶⁸ These operations continued in the Merka sector, which had become relatively quiet through February. A 60-man police force was reestablished in the town and worked closely with Army Forces Somalia by the end of January.²⁶⁹ On 1 March, as the Moroccans assumed control of the Bale Dogle relief sector, Afgooye was removed from that sector and incorporated into the Merka

sector. The 984th Military Police Company remained in place. On 9 April, the 1st (Warrior) Brigade, 10th Mountain Division, relieved the 2d Brigade at Merka. On 28 April, the Merka relief sector was turned over to the Pakistani 6th Punjab Regiment, which had arrived as part of UNOSOM II forces.²⁷⁰

Belet Weyne

The Canadian presence grew quickly in the Belet Weyne sector after it was secured on 28 December. The entire Canadian Airborne Regiment Battle Group had flown in by the first days of January 1993. Commanded by Colonel Serge Labbe, the battle group strength was 1,359 soldiers at its height. The group was composed of three commandos, with a service commando and a reconnaissance platoon in support. The Royal Canadian Dragoons' A Squadron also was assigned for the mission, as were an engineer troop and a signal troop.²⁷¹ *

The Canadian forces were supported by Grizzly, Cougar, and Bison armored vehicles, which arrived by ship and were then driven overland. ** Such vehicles were not normally part of the regimental equipment. Due to the long distances and the need for convoy protection, however, they were borrowed from other units specifically for this operation.²⁷² The Canadians conducted dismounted patrols until these vehicles began arriving in the sector on 15 January. By early March, the Canadian 93 Rotary Wing Aircraft Flight had provided six CH-135 helicopters, which increased the force's mobility and operational reach.²⁷³ ***

* In the Canadian forces, the term battle group is analogous to task force. In this instance, it represents the formation of a battalion-sized unit specifically reinforced and formed for this particular mission. The commandos that make up the battle group are company-sized airborne infantry formations. The term does not imply special operations capabilities.

** These are Canadian-made all-wheeled armored personnel carriers. The Grizzly has eight wheels and mounted a 12.7mm machine gun and a 7.62mm machine gun. The Cougar is a six-wheeled fire support vehicle armed with a 76mm gun and a 7.62mm machine gun mounted coaxially with the main gun. The Bison is an eight-wheeled armored personnel carrier mounting a 7.62mm machine gun.

*** Until this time, traffic moving between Belet Weyne and the port of Mogadishu took five days for a round trip; two days each way and one day with overnight at the port.

The Canadians divided their sector into four security zones, each of which was assigned to a sub-unit of the battle group. They quickly began aggressive patrolling throughout the sector, both dismounted and in the armored vehicles. Toward the end of January, the Canadian command had already assessed most of the humanitarian sectors as generally quiet, making the patrolling of the large security zones safer for the soldiers. It was only to the north and east that friction was causing concern.²⁷⁴

There, close to the Ethiopian border and the town of Matabaan, the political situation was complicated. Most of the population within the sector was of the Hawadle clan, and the United Somali Congress faction had a strong presence there. Some of these faction members were supporters of General Aideed. Colonel "John" Hussein was one of Aideed's division commanders. Aideed's first cousin, Colonel Omar Jaua, was the chief of staff of Aideed's 1st Division, which operated in the vicinity of Galcaio (outside of UNITAF's area of operations). A local governor named Harlane, in the town of Dharsamenbo, reported directly to General Aideed. However, there also was a United Somali Congress faction that declared itself independent of both Aideed and Ali Mahdi. The Somali National Front and the Somali Salvation Democratic Front also had strong factions in the area, and a faction of the Somali National Movement was situated along the Ethiopian border.²⁷⁵

From the start Canadian forces and U.S. Special Operations Forces in the area began to make contact with these groups. From these initial talks, the coalition soldiers received information about camps and the locations of cantonment areas, of which there were a large number in the sector, each guarded by 60 to 70 men. The coalition troops inspected and inventoried these camps and cantonments. Just as important, this aggressive activity showed a strong coalition presence throughout the sector and acted as a buffer between the factions.

Of equal importance was the need to keep the factions from causing trouble across the international boundary with Ethiopia or beyond the limits of UNITAF's area of operations in Somalia. The Belet Weyne sector adjoined both of these critical areas. Coalition patrols along these areas was enhanced by the personal contacts of Canadian and American soldiers with Ethiopian and Somali leaders. In late December and early

January, the most volatile area was at the town of Fer Fer, which lay directly astride the Ethiopian-Somali border. The Somali National Movement had a strong presence there, and the Ethiopian Army had moved more than 500 men to the area. The Ethiopians disarmed any Somali who crossed the border, but were refraining from attacking the Somalis.²⁷⁶ UNITAF Special Operations Forces had made contact with the Ethiopian commander at Fer Fer by 5 January, and kept regular contact with him.

The Special Operations Forces performed other important functions in the sector as well. They traveled to all the major villages to assess the attitudes of the local populations. They also noted which clans people belonged to, the extent of bandit activities, sources of water, main crops grown, and other information about daily life and politics. This information was passed to the coalition commander in Belet Weyne, Colonel Labbe. It was then passed to UNITAF, where, combined with similar information from the other sectors, it was processed as intelligence about the entire area of operations.²⁷⁷

The Canadian forces soon established good relations with the local populace and conducted aggressive patrolling throughout the sector. They also provided security for the convoys of relief supplies coming into the sector, notably those of the Red Cross and Save the Children. These relief organizations took care of up to 45,000 people a day just in the main city of Belet Weyne. From that center, additional supplies were distributed to outlying areas. Dependable stocks of food and regular feeding at the refugee centers brought the famine under control. Toward the end of January, starving refugees were so far removed from danger they only required one feeding per day. Yet, even with food stocks available elsewhere, large numbers of refugees stayed in the city because of the lack of water. Many wells had been destroyed or contaminated during the civil war. With the security provided by the Canadian soldiers, two humanitarian relief organizations, Save the Children and Oxfam Quebec, worked on restoring wells and provided veterinary assistance.²⁷⁸ Such measures allowed the people to return to their villages.

The Canadian command encouraged Somali self-reliance through a series of councils. There were separate ones established for local security, relief, reconstruction, and political concerns. Colonel Labbe, as the commander, met only with



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A soldier from the 10th Mountain Division points an M16 rifle into an enclosure while checking for weapons during a sweep of the small village of Afgooye. The village was a haven for weapons and bandits.

the councils, not with individuals. This discouraged any charges of Canadian favoritism. All factions and clans needed representation on these councils and at major meetings to ensure their respective interests were heard and protected.²⁷⁹

The Canadians also reached out to the Somali people in more direct ways. As was happening in other sectors, they helped reestablish a police force. These local policemen did not carry weapons, but they were soon accompanying the Canadian soldiers on patrols. The Canadians trained these officers in first aid and riot control procedures and even procured uniforms for them. The education of Somali children also received attention. In the population centers of Belet Weyne and Matabaan, several schools were repaired and reopened with the help of the Canadian soldiers. School supplies were procured through the United Nations Children's Fund and distributed to these institutions. Teachers were recruited, tested, and given vocational training and returned to their duties. The Canadians also established a fund totaling \$75,000 to pay for local laborers working on repair projects, such as roads. These workers were employed and man-

aged through the local rehabilitation committee, but the funds were controlled and disbursed by the Canadians.²⁸⁰ As elsewhere in Somalia, military engineers undertook the hazardous duty of clearing mines from roads and other areas.

Aside from the threat posed by potentially volatile confrontations of the numerous armed factions, the major problem in the sector was simple banditry. This usually took the forms of looting, sniping, and setting up roadblocks for the purpose of robbery and extortion. The Canadians sought to control these activities through the presence of their patrols. They also issued a strict weapons control policy. All weapons in the sector had to be registered, and none could be carried openly.* Non-registered weapons were seized. In this manner, small arms in the sector became less of a problem. Then, by working closely with the various factions, the Canadians got the Somalis to agree to place their heavy weapons in cantonments. By 27 March 1993, the entire sector was rated secure.²⁸¹

* This allowed humanitarian relief organizations that had legitimate security needs to maintain their protection.

In April, the Canadians prepared for the arrival of UNOSOM II forces. Under the transition plan, the Belet Weyne sector was to be handed over to the control of soldiers from India. But the Indians would not arrive on time, and the Italians had to temporarily extend their control into this sector.

Lieutenant Colonel Carol J. Mathieu, commanding officer of the battle group, recognized the sensitive position of his sector, which bordered on both Ethiopia and the portion of Somalia that was not within the UNITAF area of responsibility. He foresaw that difficulties could arise from the presence of factional forces around Galcaio and he recommended the extension of his sector, something that was eventually done under UNOSOM II.²⁸² Fortunately, the Canadians brought Belet Weyne quickly and skillfully under control, and the possibility for violence never became reality. The humanitarian sector on the other flank of the coalition's area of operations, however, would pose serious problems for UNITAF.

Kismayo

After Mogadishu, Kismayo was the relief sector that had the greatest number of incidents. That city also caused the greatest concern because of the potential for inter-faction fighting. As in the capital, these armed factions were ultimately tied by alliance to either Aideed or Ali Mahdi. Both groups wanted to control this important city, which had been the scene of heavy fighting until the arrival of UNITAF. To further exacerbate the problem, the leader of the group loyal to Aideed, Colonel Ahmed Omar Jess, was suspected of having perpetrated a massacre among the followers of General Said Hirsi "Morgan" just before coalition forces landed. Tensions were high in the city and its environs, and the need to keep the two factions apart was critical. Morgan's Somali National Alliance faction of the Somali Patriotic Movement numbered only about 1,000 men, but many of them were well-disciplined veterans of the old national army.* Jess' Somali Patriotic Movement faction was about four or five times larger, but was not nearly as well organized. Prior to the arrival of UNITAF troops, Morgan had moved his followers far up the Jubba River valley,

near the Kenyan border. He began to move south again in January.

Just as MarFor had responsibility for stabilizing the capital, so Kismayo was the responsibility of the Army Forces Somalia. Major General Steven L. Arnold decided on 17 December to deploy his 10th Mountain Division artillery tactical operations center staff to the city, under the command of Colonel Evan R. Gaddis, USA. The advance party of six officers and enlisted soldiers arrived at Mogadishu on 12 December and were quickly informed about the situation, given their mission, and told what was expected of them. They traveled to Kismayo by humvee and linked up with the Belgian and U.S. Marine units that had just secured the port and airfield.²⁸³ Task Force Kismayo was created from the U.S. Army's 3d Battalion, 14th Infantry, and the Belgian 1st Parachute Battalion. The task force headquarters was formed from the 10th Mountain Division artillery staff, reinforced by other division assets including an aviation detachment, a boat company, a communications platoon, a psychological operations team, a civil affairs team, and a support element.²⁸⁴ Brigadier General W. Lawson Magruder III, USA, the assistant division commander for operations, was selected to be the task force commanding general.

General Magruder moved quickly to impress upon the faction leaders in the sector the power and determination of UNITAF. He also wanted to ensure they understood the coalition was neutral and was there only to assist the Somali people. The task force began its security operations on 28 December. The very next day, General Magruder hosted a meeting with Colonel Jess, local elders, clan members, and former police officers to form an interim security council for the sector. Shortly after this first meeting took place, two other important steps were taken. First, the local Somali police began to form as an auxiliary security force. Soon they manned roadblocks with coalition forces. The second step was to issue a "no weapons policy" on 1 January.²⁸⁵ This was a comprehensive policy that stated: "no one may carry a pistol, rifle, automatic weapon or transport a crew-served weapon within the city limits of Kismayo." It also banned pedestal mounts for weapons on vehicles. The only exceptions were for legitimate bodyguards, and even they had to be in possession of an authorized permit, and in the presence of their employer. Their weapons had to be carried openly (in a holster or slung over the

* This is a conservative estimate of Morgan's strength. Various sources put his numbers at two or three times this.



Photo courtesy of the author

Canadian soldiers mounted in a Bison light armored vehicle patrol the Belet Weyne sector to create and maintain a secure environment in which to carry out their humanitarian work.

shoulder with the muzzle pointed down.) This policy took effect on 9 January, and was enforced through a system of routine patrols, searches of vehicles and individuals, roadblocks, and mobile checkpoints. Coalition forces and auxiliary security forces worked together to enforce the ban.²⁸⁶

The coalition forces in Kismayo would soon be at the forefront of one of UNITAF's major challenges. The ceasefire agreement on 15 January required all factional forces to remain where they were on that date. Barely a week after the signing of the initial Addis Ababa accords, General Morgan began moving his forces south from the Kenyan border toward Kismayo. There was no doubt that General Morgan wanted a confrontation with his rival Colonel Jess for control of the city. General Magruder moved quickly and directly to end the possibility of fighting between the factions and to warn General Morgan of the consequences of his actions. On 23 January, General Magruder met personally with General Morgan at the town of QoQaani. General Magruder explained UNITAF's position on the cantonment

of large weapons and technicals and told Morgan that any such weapons found outside the cantonment areas could be destroyed. General Morgan disclosed the locations of his forces at four towns in the sector. General Magruder replied that four sites were too many. Morgan stated he had already told his forces not to engage coalition forces, and that he would avoid having his men on roads used for relief convoys if he was forewarned about them. He also agreed, "not to initiate attacks against other factions." Finally, he stated he could be contacted on 26 January to arrange another meeting.²⁸⁷ In the end, however, this proposed meeting was overtaken by other events.

General Morgan was one of the more interesting characters in the Somali political landscape. A former Minister of Defense, he was a son-in-law of Siad Barre. He also had attended the United States Army Command and Staff College at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. As U.S. Ambassador Robert B. Oakley said, this meant Morgan understood how we think, "but we don't have the foggiest idea of how he thinks." Ambassador Oakley

did describe him as “very cunning and totally untrustworthy.”²⁸⁸ As if to prove the ambassador’s assessment, General Morgan’s agreement not to attack his rivals did not last 24 hours.

Some of Colonel Jess’ soldiers were in a cantonment at the town of Bir Xaani, located about 35 kilometers from Kismayo. Security was lax, perhaps in part because these men thought UNITAF would protect them from attack.²⁸⁹ On 24 January, General Morgan’s fighters attacked the outpost as part of an attempt to move against the port city. In response, Colonel Maulin, one of Jess’ subordinates, made an unauthorized move against Morgan’s forces.* UNITAF responded quickly with two radioed warnings to General Morgan to desist in his aggression and to pull back. When he paid no attention and continued with his intentions of reducing the Jess cantonment, Task Force Kismayo was ordered to stop him by force.

The task force planned a combined operation, with the 3d Squadron, 17th Cavalry, providing air assault elements and attack helicopters and the Belgian 1st Parachute Battalion forming the ground assault element. An aerial reconnaissance of Bir Xaani located General Morgan’s forces and warning shots were fired. After these were ignored, Cobra attack helicopters fired cannons and antitank rockets at the Somali technicals and military equipment. The fire was described as “accurate and deadly.” Belgian soldiers, soon on the scene, captured several technicals, artillery, and armored vehicles.²⁹⁰ This preventive operation was successful; although Morgan’s soldiers did return fire, they also pulled back quickly. The small, sharp engagement was important for two reasons. It was the first time preemptive force had been used against one of the Somali factions to enforce the Addis Ababa accords, signed only 10 days before. Second, as Ambassador Oakley said in an interview, the attack was necessary to “teach Morgan a lesson. ... Cobra gunships went in and took care of Morgan for not respecting the cease-fire, continuing to move south after we told him to stop, and for general misbehavior.”²⁹¹ General Morgan had to withdraw his remaining vehicles 35 kilometers from Bir Xaani, and his troops seven kilometers from the town.

* Colonel Jess had gone to attend the talks in Addis Ababa and had not returned. In fact, with the notoriety of the December massacre in Kismayo, there was speculation he might never return.

The forceful reaction of UNITAF forces produced an immediate effect. Fighting ceased, and the opposing factions pulled away from each other. The Kismayo relief sector entered a period of uneasy peace. Over the next few days, the Belgian paratroopers aggressively sought out and confiscated weapons, and American attack helicopters destroyed technicals found outside the compounds.²⁹² General Morgan and his men, some of whom claimed a right to return to homes in Kismayo, remained a threat in the area. Colonel Jess’ followers also caused troubles in the town and lower Jubba valley. There were several incidents of sniping and of grenade attacks against coalition soldiers, particularly the Belgians. These increased in intensity through the middle of February. By that time, General Morgan and Colonel Maulin were probing each other. In the midst of this turmoil, Colonel Jess returned to Kismayo. UNITAF had placed a lid on the situation on the southern flank, but it continued to simmer.

In late February, General Morgan was prepared to move against Colonel Jess’ forces in Kismayo once again. Taking advantage of the better discipline of his men, he infiltrated small groups into the city on 22 February. Again, Jess’ men were caught napping. In a short but intense action, several of Jess’ fighters, as well as some civilians, were killed and Jess and his followers fled the city. This clash was to have serious consequences for UNITAF.

Such a daring challenge could not go unanswered. Both General Johnston and Ambassador Oakley immediately issued a strongly worded ultimatum to General Morgan. “There can be no excuse or pardon for the deliberate, well-planned actions of your forces and senior commanders in attacking Kismayo on 22 February 1993. UNITAF condemns and holds you responsible for killing innocent civilians and terrorizing the entire population, threatening to destroy all the progress toward [prosperity] and peace which has been made in the region.” UNITAF commanders then told General Morgan, “as a result of these inexcusable, criminal actions and the breaking of the ceasefire, all your forces and weapons must be moved out [of] the lower Jubba valley to locations north of [Dhoble] no later than midnight 25 February. You must designate these locations to UNITAF by 25 February. If any of your forces are found outside of these locations on 26 February or

thereafter, they will be engaged. Any weapons located will be destroyed.”²⁹³

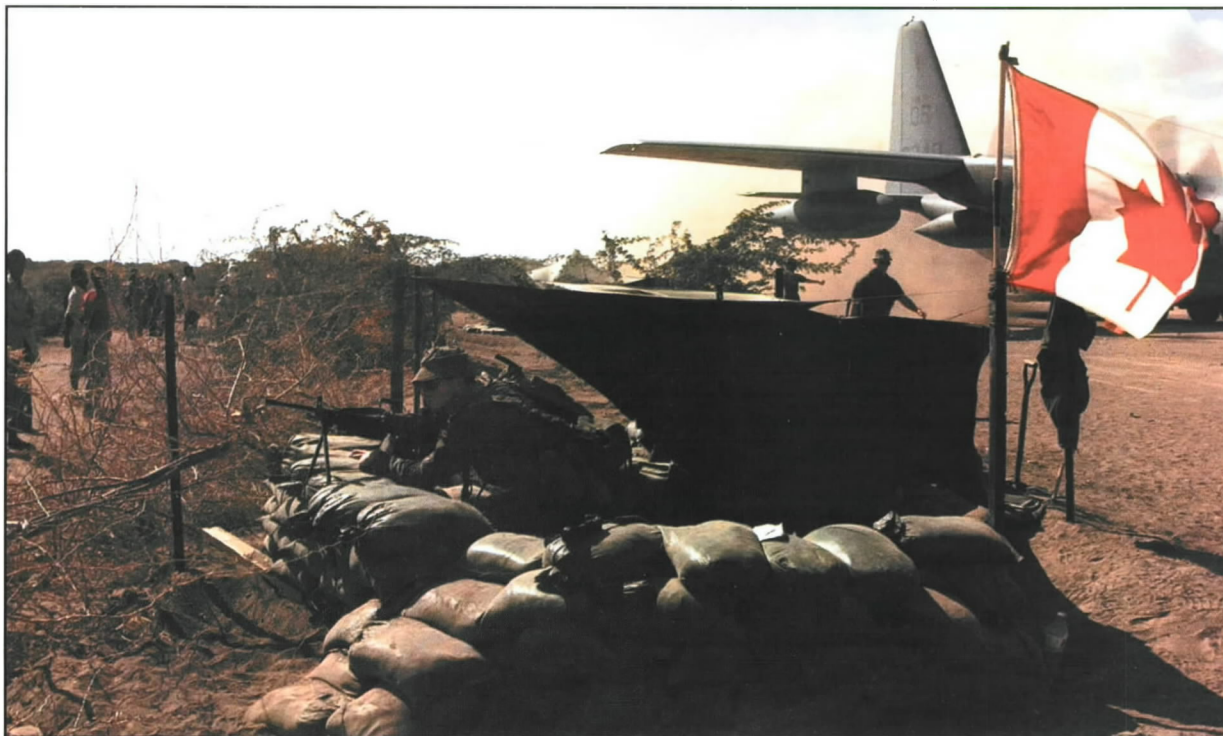
To give teeth to the ultimatum, Army Forces Somalia’s quick reaction force was ordered to Kismayo. Other Army units were shuffled in the theater to keep all humanitarian sectors secured. Even as Morgan withdrew to the Dhoble area, Colonel Jess’ forces were ordered to move out of the city, to the area of Jilib. These measures were timely, effective, and balanced, but the damage had been done.

In Mogadishu, General Aideed claimed that Morgan could not have succeeded at entering Kismayo unless he had the cooperation of UNITAF. He also told his followers that all of UNITAF’s actions were directed against his ally, Colonel Jess, conveniently ignoring what the coalition was doing to chastise General Morgan.²⁹⁴ Aideed’s efforts at disseminating propaganda succeeded in bringing his followers out onto the streets of Mogadishu for three days of disturbances.

In Kismayo, as the situation quieted down again, the Army handed over responsibility for the sector to the Belgians on 5 March. About 150 Americans remained out of the original 1,000-

man contingent. Their main mission was to work with the humanitarian agencies.

But General Morgan was not done making trouble. With the start of the next round of peace talks scheduled to begin shortly in Addis Ababa, there was concern violence might again erupt. On 9 March, Colonel Frederick C. Peck, the public affairs officer, expressed UNITAF’s views in a press statement: “We’re going on intuition and track record. We are concerned that someone might try to derail things or make a point or get a little bit better situation.”²⁹⁵ After only two weeks of relative quiet, Morgan’s forces again attacked Jess’ followers on 16 March and tried to take over the city. Jess’ supporters fled to the north, and UNITAF recalled its quick reaction force to the city. This 500-man unit, under Brigadier General Greg L. Gile, USA, was backed with 13 attack helicopters. The belligerents were quickly pushed out of the city. To further emphasize UNITAF resolve to keep the factions from confronting each other, the amphibious assault ship USS *Wasp* (LHD 1) and three other ships carrying the 24th Marine Expeditionary Unit were stationed off the city’s coast on 25 March. The MEU landed the next day and conducted patrols to the west of the



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A Canadian soldier manning a machine gun in a bunker guards the entrance of Belet Weyne airfield as a U.S. Marine KC-130 lands on the dirt airstrip.

port city. At the same time, 200 American soldiers and the Belgians pushed to the north, placing a strong cordon between the forces of Morgan and Jess.

The Addis Ababa talks, which had begun on 15 March, continued through this period. With news of General Morgan's latest actions, Aideed threatened to leave the talks, again charging UNITAF with complicity. Colonel Peter A. Dotto, UNITAF's future plans officer, was also the coalition representative to the conference. He warned Aideed that leaving the conference would only "play into the hands of his enemies."²⁹⁶ Aideed refused to listen and left. But this time he had overextended himself. His people in Mogadishu did not come into the streets as they had before. Also, several of his lieutenants disagreed with his stubbornness and formed their own contingent to continue representation at the conference. Faced with this unacceptable loss of support and prestige from his own faction, Aideed decided his interests were best served by returning to the negotiating table. While Aideed's resentment undoubtedly continued, Kismayo settled into a period of quiet for the remainder of UNITAF's time in Somalia.*

Even as the city and the area of operations began to calm down near the end of March the events in Kismayo and their spillover in Mogadishu had two serious consequences. For General Aideed, loss of credibility would cause him to seek some method to regain his stature with his followers. For UNITAF, the Kismayo troubles caused a reevaluation of the transition to UNOSOM II and a rearrangement of the redeployment schedule.²⁹⁷

Morale and Restraint

During the third phase of the operation, the work in Somalia could be rewarding for the soldiers and Marines of the coalition. They could see the results of their efforts, whether they were engineers building a bridge, infantrymen on patrol, officers assigned to the civil-military operations teams, or air traffic controllers bringing in aircraft filled with supplies or troops. Each person

* Kismayo continued to be a source of tension and conflict. On 6 and 7 May 1993, just two days after the departure of UNITAF and the turn over of the operation to the United Nations, Colonel Jess attacked General Morgan's forces in a bid to retake the city. Belgian forces, then under the command of UNOSOM II, repelled the attack.

contributed to a situation that was noticeably improving for the vast majority of Somalis. There was a tedious sameness to the daily round of work, however, and shifts were long and often monotonous with no days off. There also was an edge to life in the area of operations from the occasional attacks or sniping incidents. Within a month of the start of the operation, tension was mounting for those who patrolled the streets of the cities or the roads of the countryside, or who were riding in convoys. An official document stated the case clearly: "the strain of operating in an environment where a Marine on patrol might be met by a waving, smiling crowd on one corner and gunfire on the next began to tell on the individuals in MarFor. Many Marines began to grow increasingly impatient with the naturally curious Somalis, particularly when Somalis crowded them."²⁹⁸

This attitude was not peculiar to Americans or Marines. In Baidoa, the Australians also noted:

The soldiers observed acts of corruption and exploitation among Somalis and Somali Non-Government Organization staff. They became disillusioned. In many cases their morale plummeted as they asked themselves why they were risking their lives in a remote, hot and dangerous country, hell bent on its own destruction. It was an immense challenge for the commanders within the 1 RAR Group to maintain morale, and prevent soldiers from allowing their disillusionment and anger to lead to overly-aggressive practices. All of those who served in Baidoa had to dig deep to remain in touch with values and attitudes developed at home in Australia, while working under pressure in a brutalized society, stricken with corruption and violence.²⁹⁹

Such frustration was familiar to those senior commanders and noncommissioned officers who had served in Vietnam. There the enemy often hid within, and was supported by, the civilian population. In Somalia, there was no enemy in the traditional sense, but it was just as difficult to discern the intentions of a mob of people, or to spot within a crowd the person who might pose a real threat. Strong leadership at all levels was required to keep soldiers and Marines focused on their mission.

Major General Wilhelm recognized the creeping tiredness and frustration of his Marines by mid-January, and he issued MarFor a "Thirty-Day



Photo courtesy of the author

Belgian paratroopers stand guard at the port of Kismayo.

Attitude Adjustment Message.” In addition to calling for a brief stand down of operations to allow his Marines to gain some respite, he reminded them that they needed to maintain good relations “with the 90 [percent] of the population who welcomed the American presence.” As he noted, no matter how frustrating the situation might become, the Marines “had to avoid alienating the citizens of Mogadishu.”³⁰⁰ In Baidoa, Lieutenant Colonel David W. Hurley adopted the motto of “firm, fair, and friendly” as the guide for the Australian soldiers. He also made it clear that unnecessary violence would not be tolerated, and that all actions must be within the rules of engagement.³⁰¹

The professionalism and discipline of coalition soldiers were essential in keeping down the number of unfortunate incidents. Occasionally, some soldier or Marine would be confronted with a situation that called for a quick decision to use deadly force, although these were rare. At such times, the rules of engagement provided both a basis for action and protection for the soldiers involved if

there was an obvious threat. An investigation was held for any incident in which a member of the coalition shot a Somali. The individuals involved would either be upheld in their decision or recommended for a court-martial. On 4 February, a young Somali was shot and killed by a Marine sergeant as he rushed toward the back of an open vehicle while carrying a closed box. The box turned out to hold nothing dangerous. This was a very sorrowful event, causing grief to the boy’s family and deep remorse to the Marine involved. But since the contents of the box were not known, and since the boy’s actions were deemed to pose a possible threat, the sergeant was determined to have acted in accordance with the rules of engagement and did not face a court-martial.

But there were also some who did let their frustration and anger get out of hand, with drastic results. On 2 February, Gunnery Sergeant Harry Conde, shot and wounded a Somali youth who had approached his vehicle and stolen his sunglasses.* Gunnery Sergeant Conde shot the boy as he was fleeing from the vehicle. The gunfire also wounded another Somali. Since the boy did not present any threat to the gunnery sergeant, he was deemed to have used excessive force and was tried by court-martial. He was found guilty of two counts of assault with a firearm with intent to inflict grievous bodily harm, was fined, and was reduced in grade to staff sergeant.

* Riding in a convoy in the city of Mogadishu or in Kismayo was always a tense time. Roads between major points were kept clear by the Clean Street operations to allow for fast movement, and routes were occasionally varied, but there was always the chance of random sniping or a grenade attack. Also, Somali pedestrians frequently stepped in front of vehicles to purposely separate them from their convoy and slow them down or stop them. Then the vehicle could be mobbed as crowds of young men and boys rushed in to grab whatever they could get. Passengers in the vehicles were literally sitting targets if anyone wished to take advantage of the situation. There was a need for constant vigilance in such situations, and coalition soldiers had to be able to protect themselves and their property. On leaving a compound, a magazine was inserted into one’s personal weapon and a round chambered with the safety on. Many also carried sticks or the end poles from cots to rap the knuckles of those who might attempt to steal. At one point it was noted that some soldiers, such as the Tunisians, were traveling with bayonets fixed to deter thieves, but this practice was stopped. It was determined the very act of fixing bayonets provided a clear message of the intent of the soldiers involved and could act as a deterrent that would not be possible if the bayonets were already on the rifles.



DVIC DD-SD-00-00788

BGen Lawson W. Magruder III, USA, the 10th Mountain Division's assistance division commander and Task Force Kismayo's commander, meets with Col Ahmed Omar Jess, the Somali faction leader in Kismayo.

The most serious set of incidents occurred in Belet Weyne. The Canadians had problems with Somali men and youths sneaking into their lines at night and stealing whatever they could. The thefts were bad enough, but no one could determine the intentions of these intruders, and for that reason they posed a threat to the soldiers and a danger to themselves. Frustration and resentment mounted against these thieves. Unfortunately, some junior leaders took matters into their own hands in a manner that was unjustifiable and deadly. On 4 March, soldiers of the Reconnaissance Platoon were ordered to augment security at the engineers' camp at Belet Weyne. That evening the platoon's commander, Captain Michael Rainville, set in motion a plan to capture infiltrators by placing rations and equipment in a position that could be seen by Somalis coming close to the compound. Eventually, two unarmed Somali men were observed entering the compound. They were challenged by members of the platoon and attempted to flee. Warning shots were fired, but they continued to run. One of the Somalis was shot and captured. The other continued to run inside the com-

pound until he, too, was struck by rifle fire, knocking him to the ground. As he tried to get up, he was shot twice again at close range and killed.

Just a few days later, Major Anthony Seward, the commanding officer of 2 Commando, passed on to his platoon commanders that any intruders captured in Canadian lines were to be abused. The intention of this poorly worded direction was that any Somali thieves should be taught a lesson that would deter them, or others who might be contemplating such actions, from stealing from the Canadians. Some officers passed this word on to their men. Unfortunately, some soldiers took it as a license to do what they could to anyone unfortunate enough to fall into their hands. On the night of 16 March, a Somali teenager, Shidane Arone, was caught in the Canadian base at Belet Weyne. He was bound and taken to a bunker that had been used to hold such prisoners until they could be turned over to proper authorities. There he was tortured and beaten to death by at least two soldiers, Master Corporal Clayton Matchee and Private Kyle Brown. Several noncommissioned officers had knowledge of the beating, although



DVIC DD-SD-00-00946

Two Belgian military police officers go through the possessions of a Somali taxi driver at a checkpoint at the entrance into the compound at the port of Kismayo.

they may not have known of its severity until too late.³⁰²

Canadian authorities investigated both incidents. The result tarnished the reputation of a fine military establishment, which had received praise from General Johnston for “the humanitarian focus of the Canadian troops. It has earned them enormous good will and they have properly portrayed themselves as having come to Somalia for [a] noble purpose.”³⁰³ The careers of many soldiers in the Airborne Regiment and in the Canadian Ministry of National Defense were ruined.

The initial investigations began with a commanding officer’s investigation immediately after the 4 March shooting, but this was not received at National Defense headquarters until 23 March. However, an investigation by Canadian military police began in late April, just days before the redeployment of the UNITAF headquarters. The Canadian forces began redeploying in May and continued to arrive back in Canada through June.

As word of the incidents began to emerge, along with allegations of withheld or altered information, they developed into a national scandal, reaching into the highest levels of the Canadian Ministry of National Defense. A special Commission of Inquiry was established in Canada, which worked on questioning all officers and soldiers connected in any way with either incident. As a result of the investigation and the scandal, the Canadian Airborne Regiment was disbanded. Lieutenant Colonel Mathieu was court martialed; although acquitted he retired from the service. Several other officers and noncommissioned officers were also court martialed. Among the most significant was Major Seward, who was found guilty of negligent performance of duty and received a severe reprimand, three months in prison, and dismissal. Captain Rainville was court martialed and found not guilty. Master Corporal Matchee attempted to commit suicide while in custody in Somalia, resulting in permanent brain damage that rendered him incompetent to stand trial. Private Brown was court martialed, found

guilty of manslaughter and torture, and sentenced to five years imprisonment and dismissal with disgrace.

Among the 30,000 members of UNITAF, such incidents of unwarranted violence and abuse were rare. Generally, the soldiers and Marines of all the coalition partners were concerned with maintaining their personal honor in a difficult situation, and with assisting the great majority of Somalis who needed and welcomed their efforts. The work

was not always easy, and it often required patience and forbearance. But as MarFor's command chronology for this period stated: "The discipline of the Marines ensured that potentially explosive situations, instead of deteriorating, were defused. Many a young Somali who could have been legitimately shot under the rules of engagement owes his life to the restraint of MarFor personnel."³⁰⁴ The great majority of the coalition's soldiers displayed the same discipline.

Chapter 7

Drawing Down the Forces

Naval Operations

While their comrades on the ground were working throughout the theater, the coalition sailors were busy in various activities off the Somali coast. The work at sea was characterized during the third phase by patrolling, training with coalition partners, and shipboard routine.

Situation reports for this period are filled with the names of ships of coalition partners that entered the waters off the Somali coast and, for a time, became part of Navy Forces Somalia. Some, like the Indian offshore patrol vessel *Sukanya* (OPV P51), were that nation's entire contribution to the coalition and remained as part of the force. Others spent time in the area working with the United States and other nations' vessels and then departed when their limited missions were done. Examples of such ships were the Pakistani Navy's

replenishment oiler *Mowain* (AOR A20), destroyer *Tughril* (DD 167), and fleet oiler and stores ship *Dacca* (AOR A41); and the Indian Navy's guided missile corvettes *Kuthar* (FSG P46) and *Khukri* (FSG P49). Some of the transiting ships were supply ships supporting their countries' troops ashore, such as the Belgian command and support ship *Zinnia* (AGF A961), and the Australian helicopter and logistic support ship *Jervis Bay* (GT 203). Other ships represented the naval contingent of coalition allies that also provided ground troops to the operation. In this category were the Australian landing ship logistic *Tobruk* (LSL L50); the Italian amphibious transport dock *San Giorgio* (LPD L9892), mine countermeasures support ship *Vesuvio* (MCS A5384), and guided missile frigate *Grecale* (FFG F571); the Turkish landing ship tank *Ertugrul* (LST L401), depot ship *Derya* (AD A576), and guided missile frigate *Fatih* (FFG F242); and the



DVIC DN-SN-93-06061

An Alouette III SA-316B Chetak helicopter prepares to land on board the Indian Navy's *Sukanya*-class offshore patrol craft *Sharda* (P 55), anchored off the Somali coast.



DVIC DN-SD-00-00795

A U.S. Marine KC-130 Refueler aircraft on the ground at Belet Weyne airfield, as a Marine AH-1 "Cobra" attack helicopter flies overhead. The mission of the KC-130s was to refuel the Cobras, keeping them in the air to escort food convoys.

Canadian replenishment oiler *Preserver* (AOR 510).

The daily work of all the vessels in the coalition was varied. There were the normal training and drills, and underway replenishments were common, but the more important tasks were in direct support of the operation. Naval air was a key factor, and Navy Forces Somalia assumed the air traffic control mission for the operation during its early days. Aircraft performed road reconnaissance for convoys and stood ready for close air support if needed. Logistics and tanker flights helped troops on the ground stay supplied, while forward infrared radar surveillance flights kept the commanders informed of movements within the theater. The ships also conducted coastal surveillance and intercepted and searched merchant vessels entering the waters of the area of operations.

This latter mission was very important in ensuring more weapons were not smuggled into the theater. In one notable example, an intelligence report indicated a cargo vessel named the *Maria*, a ship of Greek origin laden with arms and ammunition, was sailing from Serbia and supposedly heading for Somalia. The coalition naval forces kept a tight watch for this ship, which was

nondescript and bore a name common to merchant vessels in the Mediterranean. The *Maria* was eventually reported as seized by the Seychelles Coast Guard in their national waters on 5 March. The ship was carrying 90 tons of munitions and falsified registry papers at the time.³⁰⁵

Air Operations

Air support was vital to every aspect of the operation. It provided a capability that offset the tremendous distances of the area of operations and served as an important and flexible supporting arm to troops on the ground.

Although a service component, the U.S. Air Force was in some aspects similar to a functional organization. Its primary duty as the overseer of Air Force Forces Somalia was to provide mobility, both into the area of operations and within the theater. It was one of the smallest components of the Unified Task Force Somalia (UNITAF), but there was no shortage of airframes in the country. Most of these came from the American forces, and all four Services (Army, Air Force, Navy, and Marine Corps) contributed to the air armada that was sent to Somalia. Some of the coalition part-

ners also used their own aircraft for resupply or as a contribution to the overall operation.

The aircraft were used for almost every traditional mission of air power.* In the initial phases of the operation, fixed-wing attack aircraft from the carriers flew air patrols for detachments working at distant sites and were prepared for close air support if necessary. Medical evacuation flights and search and rescue flights were also significant parts of the planning.** Later, Army and Marine Corps attack helicopters provided close-in fire support to operations against factions in Mogadishu and Kismayo. Transport aircraft flying on the air bridge brought personnel and supplies into the country, and C-130 and C-141 intra-theater flights carried fuel and supplies to the sectors.

The absence of traditional ground supporting arms (e.g., tanks and heavy artillery) during Operation Restore Hope was offset by the use of attack helicopters. These aircraft filled an important void in the organizational structure. With the decision to leave howitzers on board the maritime prepositioning force shipping, gunships assumed a vital supporting arms role. Marine Forces Somalia (MarFor) used them successfully in the attack on weapons storage sites in Mogadishu, and the Army employed them frequently during troubles in Kismayo in February and March. The Army's after action report claimed: "Attack aviation provided the discriminatory firepower required for this type of environment."³⁰⁶ Also, the Somalis displayed an evident respect for the capabilities of these weapons. "[Their] presence also provided a psychological effect that helped in intimidating potential threats. ... On several occasions, the mere presence of the attack helicopters served as a deterrent and caused crowds and vehicles to disperse."³⁰⁷ These versatile aircraft protected convoys throughout the theater, performed day and night reconnaissance missions, and accompanied coalition forces on the ground. They added appreciably to the coalition mission to create a secure environment.

* The Marine Corps lists six functions of support provided by its air arm. These are offensive air support, antiair warfare, assault support, aerial reconnaissance, electronic warfare, and control of aircraft and missiles.

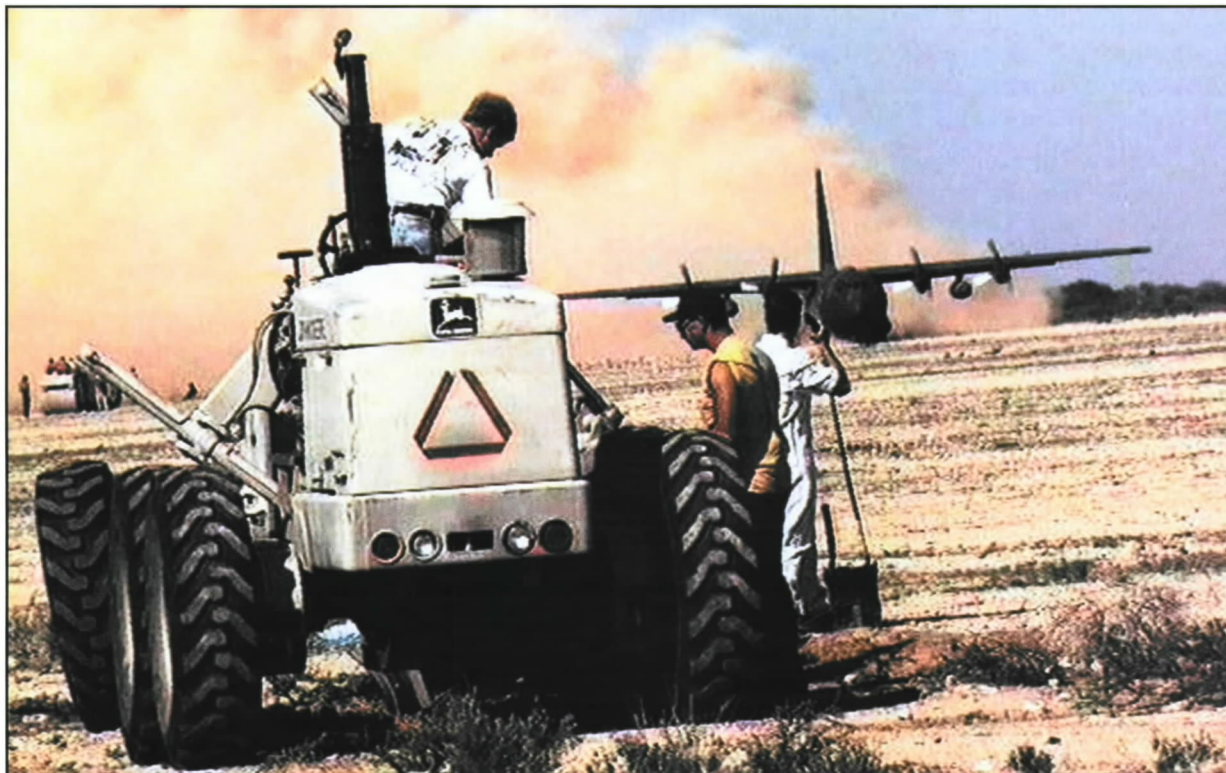
** See Chapter 8 for a more detailed description of medical evacuations.

The calibration of weapons was important to the effectiveness of the aircraft. Marine Aircraft Group 16 (MAG-16) built a firing range five miles northwest of Bale Dogle airfield where all aviation weapons could be properly checked. From 6 January to 12 January, the group conducted a battle-sight zero range to sight all of its M16A2 rifles.³⁰⁸

Aircraft were also critical to the supply of forces in the field, especially in the operation's early days. Working with the Air Force or air mobility element, MAG-16 set up "spoke channel" flights to the sectors of Bardera, Bale Dogle, and Baidoa. Service began a few days before Christmas. An average of four transport flights a day soon delivered vital cargo of rations, miscellaneous supplies, and engineering equipment to these areas. Lockheed KC-130 Hercules transports from Marine Aerial Refueler Transport Squadron 352 delivered fuel, as did CH-53D/E heavy lift helicopters from MAG-16. These helicopters also transported personnel and carried oversize cargo by external lift. The spoke channel flights served Kismayo and other sectors with fuel deliveries. Even the French forces at Oddur benefited from these flights by driving the shorter distance to Baidoa to pick up fuel and water delivered by air.³⁰⁹ As the New Zealand forces came into theater they set up scheduled "Kiwi flights" into the various relief sectors. Their light fixed-wing Andover aircraft were used to deliver passengers and light cargo on a regular basis.

The peculiarities of the desert environment affected aircraft as well as soldiers. The omnipresent dust was extremely damaging to equipment, especially to the machines' sensitive air intakes. Even the finest filters could not keep out all the powder-like dust. The aircraft at dirt airfields in the interior were particularly vulnerable to this problem, since every time an airplane or helicopter took off or landed at one of these fields it raised a storm of red or ochre dust, the color depending on the location. One solution was to use dust palliatives that could be put down on the runways and adjacent surfaces to hold the particles in place. Another solution was to place AM2 interconnecting panels, a medium-duty, aluminum, landing mat capable of supporting both fighter and cargo aircraft operations, on ramps and taxiways.

Despite all the work to repair the runways and keep them serviceable, problems developed rapidly. The traffic of the heavy Lockheed C-141 air-



DVIC DD-SD-00-00923

Using a John Deere road grader, U.S. Air Force SSgt Robert Chandler, along with other members of the Air Force's Red Horse civil engineering team, smoothes out the ground at Oddur airstrip.

craft rutted or broke up the surfaces. In some cases, such as at Bale Dogle, a main air base for the operation, this meant the suspension of C-141 flights or the transfer of cargo to the smaller C-130 aircraft for delivery.

The need for continuous maintenance of the runways was distressing. So was another common problem, foreign object damage. This was caused by small items, such as pebbles, screws, or trash that could get onto an aircraft operating area and cause damage to airframes or engines when blown around or kicked up. Damage from foreign objects was plentiful at Somali airfields. It often came in the form of stones or small rocks that were blown onto runways by propeller aircraft. Airmen, soldiers, or locally hired Somalis engaged in a never-ending struggle to keep the operating areas clear and safe.

Rocks, dust and debris weren't the only problems at the airfields. Within a short time, the airport at Mogadishu became the busiest on the Horn of Africa, resulting in serious overcrowding. Colonel Dayre C. Lias, USAF, Air Force Forces Somalia deputy director of mobility forces, noted on 18 December that there were a "World Airways

DC-10, Kuwait DC-8 and C-5 on civilian ramp. Military ramp saturated with civil and other nations military aircraft." The next day, he noted that "[Mogadishu Airport] operating close to the limit." By early January, "the north ramp (old military ramp where several non-flyable MiGs are located) was saturated with a variety of traffic. ... Civilian, relief agency, coalition force and Marine KC-130s are all using the ramp on a free flow basis. We even saw two African Airlines 707s." Colonel Lias was also very specific about the cause of the crowding: a lack of what he called visibility. By this he meant the air mobility element had no knowledge of, or control over, the arrival of many of these aircraft.³¹⁰

Control and management of aircraft were long-running problems during the operation. There were several causes. First, there were actually two operations (and thus two headquarters) responsible for sending aircraft into Somalia. One of these was UNITAF. The other was the joint task force for Operation Provide Relief, which was still based at Mombasa. Establishing a chain-of-command and tracking authority between these two entities were some of the first priorities Air Force

Forces Somalia had to establish. Provide Relief headquarters was willing to work with UNITAF man-to-man between the respective operations sections (through U.S. Central Command, their common superior) using information passed in situation reports. This was a solution, but one that was still fraught with difficulties.³¹¹

Other internal problems existed. The operation took place early in the joint era, when common command and communications systems were still being formed. As the components came into the area of operations, each brought their own systems with them, and these were not always compatible. There were "lots of software problems," Colonel Lias noted. The Navy used the contingency theater automated planning system, while the Marines relied on fragmentary orders, and the Air Force employed the theater air mobility system, all of which sought to manage complex air-ground operations.³¹²

The UNITAF method to manage and control the airspace was through an airspace control authority, established within the Air Forces directorate of mobility forces.* Under normal circumstances, a control authority is the responsibility of a sovereign nation, which, working with the International Civil Aviation Organization, can publish and distribute Notices to Airmen to help control the air traffic within its airspace. But, as with so much in Somalia, there were no normal circumstances. No sovereign government existed to work with the international aviation organization. Thus, the job fell by default to UNITAF.

Coalition commander Lieutenant General Robert B. Johnston, working through his airspace

* In most joint operations, a joint force air component commander (JFACC) would be established. The commander is normally charged with developing the air campaign plan for the theater, basing it upon the assets available to him. In a war or combat situation, this plan would address four important air functions: airspace management, airspace control, air defense, and targeting. It was soon obvious the last two functions were not of significance to Operation Restore Hope. UNITAF did require the first two, however, and so the airspace control authority was established. In the first few weeks to the operation, Major General Harold W. Blot, commanding general of the 3d Marine Aircraft Wing, held this position. In her study of UNITAF, Dr. Katherine A. W. McGrady of the Center For Naval Analyses explained the development of the authority and its functions. She also notes the term "JFACC" was sometimes erroneously used. Part of this confusion may have unintentionally come from UNITAF itself, which listed Major General Blot as joint air component commander on its early personnel rosters.

control authority staff, published a memorandum to all "potential users of Somali airspace." It cited a United Nations Resolution 794 provision to "take all necessary means" to establish the secure environment for relief operations. This was the basis to assume the airspace control authority for Somalia by UNITAF, "effective the 9th day of December 1992," and continuing until further notice. Having assumed this authority, General Johnston enjoined "all countries ... to direct their registered aircraft to strictly comply with all airspace control orders and applicable regulations and conventions in place in Somalia. All aircraft must strictly comply with established airspace control procedures to ensure effective procedural control. Violations of air traffic control directions will be reported to the International Civil Aviation Organization, the U.S. Federal Aviation Agency, and other appropriate national agencies."³¹³

Unfortunately, problems of airspace management and control continued. Not everyone saw the clear logic in the commanding general's memorandum. At a meeting held in Nairobi on 7 January 1993 between representatives of UNITAF and civilian agencies, the timely dissemination of Notices to Airman was identified as the main problem. But there were greater, related issues brought up at the meeting. The International Civil Aviation Organization did not accept the joint task force's authority to issue Notices to Airman, nor did it acknowledge the task force's interpretation of U.N. Resolution 794 that it controls Somali airspace except for military traffic, nor did it recognize task force air control orders where they conflicted with existing Notices. The civil aviation organization and other participants at the meeting further asked to discuss precise technical issues such as air traffic control procedures over Somalia, communications frequencies, changes in Notices to Airman language, and the status of navigational aids.³¹⁴ *

* Other participants included the International Air Transport Association, a trade organization that serves the commercial airline industry, and the National Geodetic Survey, a part of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. Among other missions, the National Geodetic Survey conducts aerial photographic surveys of airports in the United States to locate the positions of obstructions and aids to air travel. Since the survey agency does not function outside the United States, it is likely that some of its personnel may have attended this meeting to provide information and expertise in these matters.



DVIC DD-SD-00-00917

A variable omni-range, meteorological navigational aids system using an AN/FRN-44 site survey van with an omni-range radio was set up at Mogadishu airport by the 485th Engineering Installation Group to assist civilian aircraft into what became the busiest airport in the Horn of Africa.

The tension created by the inflexibility of the civilian authorities was made clear by the joint task force's airspace control authority when it threatened to impound civilian aircraft if they "did not start complying with the air control orders." On the other side, international organizations claimed they could not issue Notices to Airman based on the air control order language because civilian operators could not understand them.³¹⁵

In spite of the seeming impasse, both sides agreed "that safety is now the paramount issue in the critically congested airspace over Somalia."³¹⁶ This one point of agreement and the willingness of people to work to a common end were the beginning of the solution.

Just one week later, on 14 January, representatives of UNITAF, the International Civil Aviation Organization, and other agencies met in Mogadishu for a technical meeting. The commanding general of UNITAF was again designated as the airspace control authority "for all of the territorial airspace of Somalia." Colonel Frederick

M. Lorenz, UNITAF's staff judge advocate, explained the legal basis for this position under United Nations Resolution 794 and passed out copies of the memorandum by which General Johnston assumed this authority. Difficulties with the dissemination and publication of Notices to Airman were identified, and the air control order process was explained. The meeting reconvened the next day and again on the 16th.³¹⁷

One of the most important agreements reached on the 15th was that the International Civil Aviation Organization recognized that the UNITAF commanding general served as the airspace control authority "on behalf" of the sovereign state of Somalia." The distinction was noted as being academic, but it was sufficient to verify the UNITAF commanding general as the "sole authority for airspace procedures in the Mogadishu [flight instruction region]." Progress that day and the next created a single airspace control plan. UNITAF air control orders were reviewed, along with existing Notices and the

international organization's plans. From this work, two Notices, controlling upper and lower airspace, were circulated through the Kenyan Civil Aviation Authority. All future Notices to Airman would be distributed "on behalf of Somalia at the request of the Commander, Unified Task Force." A meeting was set between UNITAF's airspace control authority representative, Major John D. Reardon, and those of commercial carriers flying out of Nairobi. The International Civil Aviation Organization promised to provide plans for reconstructing airspace control within the Mogadishu region and to hire a permanent organizational representative in Mogadishu. Finally, requirements for the transition of airspace control authority to the commanding general of United Nations Operation Somalia II (UNOSOM II) would be forwarded by the international aviation organization to UNITAF.³¹⁸

These matters essentially cleared up the question of control of the civil aircraft coming into Somali airspace. The UNITAF staff continued to work out other coordination problems. The most significant of these were addressed by a series of

agreements made at the beginning of March with the adjacent flight instruction regions (Nairobi, Addis Ababa, Aden, the Seychelles, and Bombay.) The agreements covered such coordination issues as radio frequencies, transfer of responsibility from one region to another, and established routes, flight levels and separation between aircraft, and the acceptance of messages and revisions. These agreements went into effect on 31 March.³¹⁹

Management of military aircraft coming into the area of operations did not pose such drawn-out problems, but it still had to be addressed. General Johnston established his airspace control authority through the air mobility element's director of mobility forces, Colonel Walter S. Evans, USAF. By the end of December, as the tempo of air operations reached the maximum capacity for Mogadishu airport, Colonel Evans worked through the United States Transportation Command and Central Command to establish time slot allocations for all aircraft coming into Mogadishu, including those of coalition partners. At the same time, he worked with the various ground forces quartered in or near the airfield to



DVIC DD-SD-00-00889

A group of Maleel townspeople gather to await the deliver of wheat donated by Australia. The wheat was flown in slung underneath a Marine CH-53 helicopter.



DVIC DD-SD-00-00794

MajGen Steven L. Arnold, USA, commanding general of the 10th Mountain Division, meets with town elders, Red Cross representatives, and other humanitarian relief workers in Merka.

stop the growing number of near accidents caused by unauthorized personnel and equipment on the runways and taxiways.³²⁰

With the establishment of these procedures and organizational structures, UNITAF was able to look forward and plan for the ultimate transfer of air traffic services back to civil authorities. As early as 18 January, an initial plan for the transition of airspace control authority functions was published. Under it, the authority could stand down on 22 January except for airspace management functions and “aviation services ... still required by JTF Somalia Components.” On that date, Air Force Forces Somalia would be responsible for publication of a “combined flight schedule for U.S. and coalition forces” and the air mobility element was to incorporate into it all fixed-wing airlift schedules of the components and coalition partners. Provision also was made for UNITAF’s operations air section to eventually coordinate all air issues within the area of operations.³²¹ Brigadier General Anthony C. Zinni, in his position as the director of operations, assumed

the remaining airspace control authority for Somali airspace on 1 February, delegating it to Lieutenant Colonel William J. O’Meara, USAF.³²²

Establishing air control and airspace management had been long, and at times it was very complex work within a thicket of military and international organizations and operational procedures. But, as with many issues confronted by UNITAF, the problems were eventually resolved in a spirit of cooperation and mutual interest in the safety of all aircrews and the success of the overall mission. The best indicator of the success of these efforts was that, in spite of the small and poorly equipped state of the Mogadishu airport, it was accident-free even while operating as the busiest airport on the Horn of Africa.

End Game

The work performed during the third phase, from the beginning of January to the end of March, provided the basis for the transition that would occur in early May. Throughout this phase,

Lieutenant General Johnston allowed his subordinate commanders great discretion. As he said in a component commanders' meeting on 6 January: "Every HRS [humanitarian relief sector] is different; commanders must be given broad missions. [They] will have to weave [their] way through a broad fabric of village elders and others. I'm pleased with what I see; commanders on the ground taking initiative and doing a splendid job."³²³

All the coalition partners set up similar structures in the humanitarian relief sectors, ensuring a standard method of working throughout the area of operations: weapons control policies were in place in every sector; civil-military operations teams coordinated the needs of each sector's relief organizations and reported through the main civil-military operations center in Mogadishu; former police were vetted into auxiliary security forces; councils of local elders and clan leaders were established to place responsibility for Somali governance and security back into their own hands; and patrols established the reach of UNITAF far into the countryside. Where possible, coalition

soldiers provided medical care and worked with the local populace to improve their lives by such projects as digging wells or improving roads. More importantly, a secure environment, which was UNITAF's primary mission, was in place. This security allowed the delivery of food, medicines, and other relief supplies. The United Nations acknowledged the important effects of UNITAF's work during this period in its report on Somalia:

The improved security conditions made it possible for United Nations agencies and NGOs [nongovernmental organizations] to strengthen their staff in Somalia, and numerous new [nongovernmental organizations] arrived. In addition to the WFPs [World Food Program's] stepped-up food deliveries, UNICEF expanded its operations, providing medicines and staff to 16 hospitals, 62 mother-and-child health [centers] and 156 health posts throughout Somalia by January 1993, and together with its [nongovernmental organization] partners, helped feed over 200,000 children a day. The World Health Organization opened a central pharmacy in



DVIC DD-SD-00-00785

Marines of 2d Platoon, Company C, 3d Light Armored Infantry Battalion provide security for a convoy of United Nations trucks carrying food from Mogadishu to Baidoa.



DVIC DD-SD-00-00845

Marines of 3d Battalion, 9th Marines, 15th Expeditionary Unit, board an American Trans Air L-1011 for the flight back to the United States.

Mogadishu. Indeed, by January 1993, food and medical supplies were getting through to almost all the towns of southern and central Somalia, with immediate and dramatic results. Although many hungry, weak people were still staggering into feeding [centers], most could now be saved. Deaths from starvation and disease fell sharply and, reflecting the greatly increased food supply, by March 1993, cereal prices had fallen to a third of their September 1992 level.³²⁴

While coalition forces were acting so successfully in the field, UNITAF command in Mogadishu was heavily engaged in two important activities: shaping the force to meet the changing realities of the mission and preparing for the transition to United Nations control. By the end of December, with the end of Phases I and II and the start of Phase III, there was an opportunity to oversee the development of the theater. The forces spreading out through the area of operations needed attention and logistics support. There were many things, small and great, which could be

done to make the deployment run more smoothly or alleviate the harshness of daily life for the soldiers in the field.

Restructuring and Redeployment

Before the end of December, General Johnston was ready to take an objective look at the force to see how well it matched the mission in light of the progress of the past few weeks. General Johnston faced an interesting dilemma. With the success of the first two phases, the continuing arrival of capable coalition partners, and a less intense threat than had been originally anticipated, General Johnston had to decide if it still made sense to bring in the major portions of two American divisions. If not, he had to determine what sort of force structure there should be in the theater to ensure the accomplishment of the mission. As General Johnston later stated, it was a good thing to have “the ability to refine your decisions that were made ... before you started; you’ve got to have the flexibility of not feeling like you can’t change.”³²⁵

Even before the end of 1992, the composition of the American forces within the coalition changed greatly from what had originally been anticipated. It was already clear there was no need for a force incorporating armor and artillery. Also, it was clear a smaller force could perform the mission. Accordingly, MarFor cancelled its scheduled deployment of two of its subordinates; the 1st Battalion, 1st Marines, and the 1st Tank Battalion. Thus, the last Marine unit to arrive was the 3d Battalion, 11th Marines, on 31 December 1992. But this artillery battalion did not even draw its howitzers from the maritime prepositioning force ships. It operated instead as a provisional rifle battalion with assigned security duties in Mogadishu.³²⁶ *

On 6 January 1993, General Johnston held a meeting with his commanders and staff to discuss restructuring and redeployment of forces. He stated the intent had always been to build up quickly to provide overwhelming force, and then to draw back. The question of how forces could be reduced while maintaining a balanced structure was freely discussed among the officers present. General Zinni, the operations officer, remarked that the force did not need any more combat units. In the ensuing discussion, it was recognized that with the scheduled redeployment of the 3d Battalion, 9th Marines, in about two weeks, MarFor would be at about brigade size. Looking at the Army Forces Somalia units that were coming in behind the Marines at that time, it was also recognized there could be a force composed of one Army brigade and one brigade of Marines. From an initial heavy brigade structure, MarFor could reduce its size to a light brigade, which was about the size of the present Army Forces Somalia. Major General Steven L. Arnold, USA, commanding general of Army Forces Somalia, voiced his concern that UNITAF should remain joint, both within its headquarters and in its organization. He saw the mix of a Marine Corps brigade-sized force with light armored vehicles would work well with an Army brigade containing aviation assets. General Johnston foresaw that UNITAF headquarters would have to be drawn back as well, but would have to remain fairly robust to take advantage of national intelligence

assets. His guidance was that the force would draw back to the Army and Marine brigades, which would mean reducing the current size of MarFor and the UNITAF headquarters as well. He also directed that MarFor should plan to attain its light brigade size by 30 March.³²⁷

There were immediate changes at UNITAF headquarters. General Johnston later said he knew the headquarters was heavy to start, but that was needed during in the early phases when planning was critical. "But very quickly you don't need [a large headquarters staff.] Once you get into the HRS [humanitarian relief sectors], I don't need all that command and control. ... The guys on the ground doing the sweeps, the convoys, didn't need the headquarters anymore to plan all of these operations, so I was anxious to download headquarters."³²⁸ A joint personnel processing center had already been established within the operations section by the end of December to take care of non-unit line number movements out of theater.³²⁹ By the end of the year, personnel who could be spared from the headquarters staff sections were returning home or to their former units. Out of an initial headquarters of 1,008 personnel, 225 were identified by the staff sections as excess and were redeployed.³³⁰

General Johnston had to convince some officers in his chain-of-command that it was appropriate to scale back the size of UNITAF at this time. As he said: "there has been some uneasiness on the part of Joint Chiefs of Staff and even CentCom [Central Command] with this drawing down." But, as he also made clear: "It obviously takes more forces to impose the security environment that we have created than it does to maintain it." He saw the improving intelligence situation, and the ability to maintain mobility and firepower in the reconfigured force, allowed him to continue the security mission and prepare for the eventual turnover to the United Nations. He also knew, however, that "I had to keep selling and convincing people [to] trust me. I'm the guy on the ground and I know, talking to my commanders, what we can draw down to and still be able to handle any kind of eventuality."³³¹

UNITAF Redeployment

By 8 January, the UNITAF staff had developed a three-phase plan for the reduction of the American forces. The first phase was to go from 15 January to 5 February 1993, with MarFor and

* This was not unprecedented. In October 1983, during the invasion of Grenada, H Battery, 10th Marines, as part of the 22d Marine Amphibious Unit, did not land their howitzers and served as an infantry company.



DVIC DD-SD-00-00874

A Marine 5-ton cargo truck is driven up the stern ramp of the MV Pvt Franklin J. Phillips (T-AK 3004) at the port of Mogadishu. By late January 1993, the operation had accomplished its mission well enough to allow the command to reduce the size of UNITAF.

Army Forces Somalia each drawing back to their heavy brigade configurations. This would leave the Marine brigade with the 7th Marines, Marine Aircraft Group 16, and a force service support group. The Army brigade would be composed of the 2d Battalion, 87th Infantry, Task Force Kismayo, an aviation battalion, a military police battalion, and a forward support battalion. Forces from the Navy and Air Force would be reduced as appropriate. Personnel from Operation Provide Relief, in Mombasa, would also begin to redeploy at this time. Special Operations Forces would remain at current strength. Also during this period, the Joint Task Force Support Command would assume responsibility for the support of residual forces. The second phase was to begin on 6 February and last two weeks, until 20 February. In this phase, the UNITAF headquarters, Air Force, and Navy Forces would continue reductions. Special Operations Forces would begin reductions as appropriate. The Support Command would also begin to draw back its strength, except for engineer units since there was still a recognized need

for their continuing services. These important assets would be consolidated in an engineer group or the naval construction regiment, both reporting directly to UNITAF headquarters. In the final phase, lasting from 21 February to 5 March, the ground forces would be reduced to MarFor or Army Forces Somalia light brigades. The proposed Marine brigade would consist of the 1st Battalion, 7th Marines (three rifle companies, a weapons company, a tank platoon, a light armored vehicle platoon, an armored assault vehicle platoon, an engineer platoon, and a truck detachment), Marine Aircraft Group 16 (consisting of eight CH-53D helicopters, four UH-1Ns, and four AH-1Ws) and a combat service support group. The Army brigade would comprise an infantry battalion, an aviation battalion (consisting of 15 UH-60s, 6 OH-58s, and 4 AH-1s), a military police battalion of two companies, and the forward support battalion. UNITAF headquarters, Air Force Forces Somalia, Navy Forces Somalia, Support Command, and the remaining personnel of Operation Provide Relief would continue to

reduce where possible. Some engineer units would redeploy, but others would remain to continue necessary support.³³²

This plan was forwarded to Central Command for approval on 11 January. Five days later, General Joseph P. Hoar gave his approval to the concept, but denied approval for the timeline. General Hoar stipulated that units would redeploy only at his direction and that redeployment would be driven by events, not a time schedule. Specifically, such events would be in one of two categories; an American unit would be replaced by an arriving member of the coalition, or the unit would be no longer necessary to the operation, as decided by the commanding general of UNITAF.³³³

The MarFor staff immediately began work on the redeployment plan. The concerns were two-fold. They had to reduce the size of the force while continuing to conduct operations, and they had to maintain a balanced force throughout each stage of the reduction. Major General Charles E. Wilhelm had told General Johnston he could continue to conduct his mission with about a third of the current number of troops.³³⁴ The MarFor plan called for a reduction to a heavy brigade of about 4,000 Marines and sailors by 31 January and to a light brigade of 2,000 troops by 1 March. In actuality, the dates were slipped in accord with circumstances, but the plan provided the basis for the reductions as they occurred throughout the next three months.³³⁵

The first unit to depart from Somalia was the 3d Battalion, 9th Marines, which began boarding flights from Mogadishu airport on 19 January. MarFor then had to reconfigure its forces, particularly the 7th Marines, to take the place of their departing comrades.³³⁶

An important part of the retrograde was the return of equipment to the maritime prepositioning force shipping. Two of the ships, the *PFC James Anderson, Jr.* (T-AK 3002) and the *Pvt Franklin J. Phillips* (T-AK 3004), were scheduled to return to the Blount Island rework facility. Since these ships were to depart soon, equipment that needed repair was loaded onto them. (Work progressed so quickly that the reloaded *Anderson* was able to sail on 7 February, easily making its scheduled arrival date.) Also complicating the operation was the possibility the maritime prepositioning force ships might be needed to support another contingency. Equipment in good shape

was, therefore, loaded onto the *1stLt Jack Lummus* (T-AK 3011) and the *1stLt Alex Bonnyman* (T-AK 3003). Throughout these evolutions, any mission essential equipment was kept ashore in support of the Marines still in the area of operations.³³⁷

By the end of January, 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit also was putting its equipment through a rigorous maintenance effort, preparing to embark on board the amphibious shipping. This unit had earned well-deserved laurels in its work throughout the area of operations. At the beginning of February, these Marines, with pristine equipment, back loaded onto their ships. They departed the Somali coast on 3 February to continue their deployment in the Persian Gulf.³³⁸

On 19 February, UNITAF ordered MarFor to commence a reduction to the heavy brigade level. With the planning the Marines had already done, and with the redeployments that had already occurred, this was easily accomplished. With most nonessential personnel already gone from the theater, MarFor needed only to redeploy a detachment of CH-53 helicopters from Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron 466 to reach the goal by the beginning of March.³³⁹

The first days of that month saw a continuation of departures as residual detachments and personnel not part of the heavy brigade left Somalia. At the same time, preparations went forward for reduction to light brigade strength. On 9 March, MarFor began validating these movements, and on the 13th the realignment of its forces between Bardera and Mogadishu began. By 17 March, the 7th Marines, with its attached coalition forces, had returned to the capital city while Task Force Bardera remained in the city for which it was named. The same day, Colonel John P. Kline, Jr., and his staff from Marine Aircraft Group 16, departed the theater, making Marine Light Attack Helicopter Squadron 369 the MarFor aviation combat element.³⁴⁰

On 21 March, the staff of the light brigade took over the watch schedules at the MarFor command post. From that point on, in addition to their routine of normal duties within Mogadishu and Bardera, the Marines began to plan for the gradual assumption of their security mission by coalition forces and for the transition of the operation to the United Nations. The remaining staff of 7th Marines performed operational planning, while the residual MarFor staff worked on transition



Photo courtesy of the Turkish Armed Forces

Turkish soldiers with an armored infantry fighting vehicle, outfitted with a 25mm gun and machine gun, patrol their sector of Mogadishu.

planning.³⁴¹ Major General Wilhelm departed from Somalia on the 23d and Colonel Jack W. Klimp assumed command of Marine Forces Somalia.

The size and structure of Army Forces Somalia were also changed. A field artillery battalion, an aviation company of CH-47 helicopters, and some subunits of the 710th Main Support Battalion left their major equipment on board ship, or had it back loaded.³⁴² Not all of these decisions went unquestioned. The return of the CH-47s was a source of complaint by the United States Army Europe, which had sent them. As General Johnston explained: "it seemed like a requirement, initially. But very quickly after we got here, we began to say 'Do we need 47s?' Because ... we've got C-130 capable airstrips where we need them to be, why do we need CH-47s? We're not going to go and make massive vertical assaults."³⁴³

The Army Forces Somalia staff also had to plan for the redeployment of their units, but their work

was complicated because some Army units would remain in Somalia to support UNOSOM II. Army plans therefore had to account for residual organizations and establish a rotation schedule to allow Army units to return home after four months in theater.* Army planners were thus responsible for both the arrival and departure of units during this phase. Reducing numbers while keeping up capabilities was accomplished through "constant mission analysis" to "continuously reassess each unit and piece of equipment deployed."³⁴⁴

The first Army units to rotate home were a mix of organizations from both Army Forces Somalia and the Support Command, units that had either completed their assigned missions or had been replaced by coalition forces. These included two

* The Army's four-month rotation was a self-imposed requirement to facilitate transition planning and to provide an orderly flow of units in and out of theater. Under UNOSOM II, Army units and personnel served tours of six months to one year.



Photo courtesy of Col Frederick M. Lorenz

Three armed Moroccan soldiers prepare to set up a defensive position on the grounds of the abandoned Somali National University in Mogadishu.

signal battalion mobile subscriber equipment companies; the 5th Battalion, 158th Aviation; the 710th Main Support Battalion; and selected Army Forces Somalia staff. Later redeployments included Task Force Kismayo; the 3d Battalion, 14th Infantry; the 41st Engineer Battalion; and the 511th Military Police Company.

Under the four-month time limit in theater, the first rotation of units would begin in April. On 20 February, Army Forces Somalia requested that U.S. Army Central Command identify the organization that would pick up responsibility for the Army's mission in Somalia. On 28 February, a reconnaissance party for the 1st (Warrior) Brigade, 10th Mountain Division, arrived in Mogadishu. The brigade advance party arrived on 30 March.³⁴⁵ Major General Arnold, the commanding general of Army Forces Somalia, had returned to the United States on 13 March. A transition cell, under the assistant division commander for support, Brigadier General Greg L. Gile,

USA, was formed to ease the rotation. This cell continued to work in Somalia until the middle of April. During that time several other Army units arrived, including the 1st Battalion, 22d Infantry; the 3d Assault Helicopter Battalion; the 10th Forward Support Battalion; and the 4th Platoon, 300th Military Police Company. As these units came into the area of operations, they transferred property from their departing counterparts. On 9 April, the "Warrior Brigade" took full responsibility for all Army Forces operations in Somalia, for the theater's quick reaction force, and for the Merka relief sector.³⁴⁶

Coalition Shifts

The largest coalition forces assumed responsibility for all humanitarian relief sectors, but smaller forces sent by many nations also were put to effective use. These units were often only compa-

ny sized, but in the aggregate they formed a considerable addition to UNITAF capabilities.

Many of these coalition units were placed under the operational control of MarFor. These units were from Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Botswana, Zimbabwe, Turkey, Nigeria, Pakistan, and the United Arab Emirates.³⁴⁷ After working with their Marine counterparts at first, they were later given their own areas of responsibility. These areas were generally within the city of Mogadishu, and often were at some key point or in the vicinity of the airport, which was where most of them had their bivouacs. The Tunisian forces worked directly with the Support Command at the university compound that adjoined the grounds of the American Embassy.

Toward the end of the operation, with the departure of MarFor and portions of Army Forces Somalia, these small units were given greater security duties. Situation reports for the last weeks of April and the first days of May show these units at work throughout the city. To illustrate the scope of their activities, the report for 1 May notes that Turkish forces, which had previously been conducting security patrols in the vicinity of the parliament building and presidential palace, were then providing security for the embassy compound. Tunisian forces were providing security at the American University complex. Saudi forces conducted night patrols and manned security positions at the airfield. Zimbabwe forces manned two strongpoints, conducted patrols in the northwest part of the city, and established random checkpoints. Pakistani forces (by that time composed of four battalions) conducted motorized security patrols in the northwest part of the city and manned numerous checkpoints. They were responsible for security at the pump site located

nine kilometers north of Mogadishu, and also conducted patrols in Afgooye and Merka. Egyptian forces conducted patrols and provided security at the airport. Kuwaiti forces conducted mounted and dismounted patrols and provided security for the ammunition supply point. The Botswana forces conducted security operations in the Bardera relief sector. Nigerian forces manned the strongpoint at the K-4 traffic circle in central Mogadishu and conducted patrols. They also manned strongpoints in the northern part of the city and worked with the Somali auxiliary security force in the vicinity of the presidential palace. By this time, United Arab Emirate forces were under the operational control of the Italian forces and conducted security patrols at the New Port and in the Villagio Bur Carole and Hamar Jab Jab areas of the city. The Greek force, a company of 110 soldiers, arrived in early March and were placed under the operational control of the French forces at the Oddur relief sector to provide medical support from their base in Wajid.³⁴⁸

In this manner, all of the elements of the coalition helped maintain the secure environment, which was the mission of UNITAF. Those members of the coalition who were staying in Somalia also were aligned within the humanitarian relief sectors for their roles in UNOSOM II.*

* It should be noted that many of these coalition members were from African or Muslim countries. Many of these contributions were made from a feeling of support for their religious or ethnic brethren in Somalia. For some it was viewed as a distinct obligation and the United Arab Emirates contingent used that very name for their unit. As Colonel Major Omar Ess-Akalli, the commander of the Royal Moroccan forces told the author, Somalia was an African problem and it was only right that Africans should be taking part in assisting in the solution.

Chapter 8

Normality Begins to Return

Logistics

For the first few weeks of the operation, the 1st Force Service Support Group from I Marine Expeditionary Force (I MEF) provided outstanding support to the Unified Task Force Somalia (UNITAF) as a part of Marine Forces Somalia (MarFor).³⁴⁹ However, by early January, the group's ability to continue its prodigious effort was under a severe strain due to two developments.

The first was the growing size of UNITAF itself. By the middle of January, American forces and coalition partners were approaching a total of 30,000 soldiers. Since most of the supplies they needed were coming from maritime prepositioning force ships, of which four had been unloaded, that figure was about 10,000 men more than what would normally be supported from these sources.³⁵⁰ A related complicating factor was the distance that separated some parts of the coalition. Transportation assets, such as trucks, fuel tankers, and water trailers (commonly referred to as "water buffaloes") were critical for the continued success of the operation. Those available were being run hard on lengthy and rugged roundtrips to outlying sectors.

The other factor in the group's ability to continue to support UNITAF was inherent in its very nature as an integral component of a Marine expeditionary force. When MarFor returned to the United States, the support group would have to go back as well. As Lieutenant General Robert B. Johnston explained: "When you retrograde the [Marine Expeditionary] Force, you retrograde the FSSG [Force Service Support Group], because we were part of I MEF, a package."³⁵¹

These difficulties had been foreseen. The planned answer was in the creation of UNITAF's one functional subordinate command, the Support Command.* Relying on the significant combat

service support assets available to the Army, this command was organized around four specialized groups: the 36th Engineer Group; the 62d Medical Group; the 593d Support Group (Area); and the 7th Transportation Group.* In addition to the organic units belonging to these groups, the Support Command also had the 2d Chemical Battalion, the 720th Military Police Battalion, the 240th Quartermaster Battalion, and a special signal task force. This command also included personnel and postal companies, ordnance detachments, public affairs teams, and an air traffic control team.

When fully assembled in the theater, the Support Command could provide exceptional support and strength to UNITAF. The difficulty was in the amount of time it would take to bring all of these soldiers and their equipment to Somalia; plans called for the Support Command to become fully operational on 28 January 1993.

Until that time, UNITAF was dependent on the capabilities of MarFor's service support group and the maritime prepositioning force. Although stretched by great demands, these units were "performing their support well and exceeding expectations."³⁵² However, before the command was fully operational, it was necessary to task some service support assets from Army Forces Somalia to assist UNITAF. Selected 10th Mountain Division units were consolidated to perform such critical logistics functions as water production and petroleum distribution.³⁵³ This support lasted

* These units and the support systems they used were reflective of the Army's structure and its need to provide support to corps and army levels ("echelons above division"). Normally, a deploying Army division would be provided with a slice of the corps' support elements and the division would have its own structures to coordinate and work with these higher levels. In Operation Restore Hope, however, the entire 10th Mountain Division did not deploy, and the 1st Marine Division did not have the same structures in place to work with the Support Command, as did their Army comrades. The Support Command also was responsible for providing some support to the coalition partners. The command had to adjust their traditional methods of doing business to meet the demands of the theater and of the UNITAF structure.

* The full name of this organization was the Joint Task Force Support Command, but it was sometimes referred to as the Joint Logistics Command.



DVIC DD-SD-00-00879

A Russian Antonov AN-124 Condor long-range heavy transport from the Aviation Industrial Complex, Ulyanovsk, waits to unload at Mogadishu airport. The aircraft was chartered to carry a load of supplies for Brown and Root Services Corporation, a U.S. Government contractor.

from about the middle of January until the end of the month.

The Support Command's units began to arrive in theater in late December, along with the commanding general, Brigadier General Billy K. Solomon, USA. Although his command was not expected to assume the entire theater logistics support mission until late that month, individual units assumed responsibility for their portion prior to that date. For instance, on 15 January, the 7th Transportation Group took responsibility for port operations from Navy Forces Somalia and MarFor.³⁵⁴ By 28 January, when the Support Command assumed its total support mission, responsibility for medical support, some food supply (class I), water, and petroleum, oil, and lubricant (class III) supply operations were already performed by command units. Support Command and MarFor ran in-theater movement control jointly.³⁵⁵

Even as the elements of the Support Command were deploying into theater and just starting to

take up their duties, its staff looked to the future. The command was to have another, longer lasting mission than its support of UNITAF. It would become the main United States contribution for United Nations Organization Somalia II (UNOSOM II). As General Johnston explained in March: "When you talk about the Joint Logistics Command, we always saw ... our U.S. role in this thing as long term. Yes, we had a mission, but I don't think anybody ever believed that we would draw every American out of here: that we would have something for UNOSOM II and really thought it would be in the form of logistics, strategic lift, which is why we formed the Joint Logistics Command that would come in to replace the [Force Service Support Group]."³⁵⁶

On 28 January, the Support Command completed its transition of responsibilities and fully assumed the burden of combat service support in the entire area of operations.³⁵⁷ By that time, the command had established its headquarters in the American University compound, which adjoined the American Embassy grounds. Tunisian soldiers

provided the security for the compound and the command's headquarters.*

The most important function the command would provide was transportation, the nerve center for which was in Mogadishu. "Because most of the force equipment and nearly all of the supplies had to flow through the Port of Mogadishu, the port operations became the logistics center of gravity. The design of the [echelons above division] port support structure was critical to sustainment operations."³⁵⁸ Although the port's size and limited berthing space caused competition between arriving humanitarian cargo ships and military prepositioned afloat stocks, the 7th Transportation Group was able to establish an effective command and control system for the terminal operations. The group not only operated the port, it also controlled the inland distribution of the supplies.³⁵⁹

The 593d Area Support Group was prominent in establishing the logistics distribution structure. Once again, the long distances covered by UNITAF were a determining factor. The area support group was specifically strengthened with additional trucks, and those of the 7th Transportation Group were also available for missions. To ensure supplies reached their intended users quickly and efficiently, the support group established a series of intermediate theater support bases. These bases complemented each of the American Army and Marine divisions' own support facilities. This made the distribution of supplies easier since security operations in the sectors were also conducted out of these fixed locations. In addition, the system kept down the requirement for additional combat troops because the logisticians could rely upon security from the combat units in these outlying sectors. In this manner, the Support Command was able to provide direct supply maintenance support to the Army's non-divisional units and backup support to both the Army and Marine divisional units, as well as provide common item supply support and services to the units of the coalition partners.³⁶⁰

In the austere Somali environment, the ability to contract for goods and services was important for provisioning complete logistics support. The

center of such activity for UNITAF was the task force director of acquisitions. Under the original joint task force plan, MarFor contracting elements were located in Kenya, from where they provided goods services to their brethren in Somalia. Army Forces Somalia contractors were established in Somalia itself. As necessary, requirements could also be forwarded to contracting elements in the Middle East or in Europe.³⁶¹

Army contracting officers operated under a double handicap. The Somali economy could only be described as sparse since there was little to be gotten from local sources. There were also structural difficulties for them to work around. Army Forces Somalia had deployed its own field-ordering officers early in the operation, and these soldiers were able to make small purchases of services and supplies for their units. The U.S. Army component of Central Command imposed stringent restrictions on its subordinates in Somalia, most notably for the contract of labor services. A waiver to these restrictions had been requested, but was denied until the Army Central Command contracting officer could confirm the needs. Unfortunately, this officer had not yet arrived in the theater. Army Forces Somalia's judge advocate reviewed the situation and determined the ordering officers could make the necessary procurements. Eventually, in coordination with Army Central Command, an acquisition officer was warranted as a contracting officer and deployed to the theater. This officer had the authority to make purchases up to \$100,000.³⁶²

Another contracting system, tried for the first time during an active campaign in Somalia, was the logistics civil augmentation program. The program contract with the civilian firm of Brown and Root was started in 1992 through the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. These civilians, working under contract, arrived in Somalia to perform logistics tasks that otherwise would have fallen to the soldiers and Marines themselves. For instance, they provided laundry services by hiring local Somali women to do the job. They dug wells and operated cranes and worked at the port. They generated power for the camps and they provided and cleaned portable toilets. Overall, the program was regarded as a major help to the operation, although that help was expensive.³⁶³ Of a total of \$33 million originally appropriated for the contract, \$7.5 million remained by 5 March, with \$5 million of that fenced against the contractor's demobilization and draw down costs. More

* The Support Command Site Security Force was originally a Moroccan company (-), assigned to this duty on 4 January 1993. The Tunisians assumed the mission a few days later.



DVIC DD-SD-00-00778

A tank truck is filled with fresh water from a desalinization plant for distribution inland. The U.S. Air Force's 823d Civil Engineering Squadron, also known as Red Horse, set up the plant at Mogadishu airport.

money had to be requisitioned to keep these important services functioning.³⁶⁴ *

If transportation was a key logistics function, the most critical commodity supplied to the troops was water. Drinking water alone was rated at four to five liters per man per day. Water also was necessary for basic hygiene and cleaning clothing. There were no sources of safe, potable water in Somalia when UNITAF arrived, so the coalition had to take extraordinary measures to provide the precious liquid.

At first, ships in the port manufactured potable water. This was pumped ashore for transportation to the soldiers and Marines in the field. The importance of this source can be gauged from the statistics in the situation reports of the maritime prepositioning force. On 15 January, for instance, the prepositioning ship *MV 1stLt Jack Lummus* (T-AK 3011) pumped 13.5 thousand gallons of water ashore. By that date, the prepositioning

force had delivered a total of 845.5 thousand gallons of water to the collection points.³⁶⁵

In those early days, when 1st Force Service Support Group was providing the logistics support, every means available was used to carry the water. For the 7th Marines' movement to Baidoa, water trailers were used and supplemented by five-gallon "jerry" cans filled with water and placed "in every nook and cranny of every vehicle." This allowed the Marines to carry 8,100 gallons on that initial trip. By the end of December, regular convoys were set for every other day, bringing 14,000 gallons of water to Baidoa and Bardera on each run.³⁶⁶ But this effort, coupled with the need to resupply Bale Dogle, "stretched to the limit MarFor's ability to make and distribute water." Fortunately, Army Forces Somalia was arriving with its bulk liquid assets by that time. As these units became operational, they provided relief to the burdens of the Marines.³⁶⁷

Another important source of water was in the ground of Somalia. The native population had long centered some of their towns on deep wells. Army engineers and Navy construction battalions

* Brown and Root operated these logistics civil augmentation support programs successfully in Haiti, Rwanda, and Bosnia.



DVIC DD-SD-00-00777

A water truck fills a large bladder, part of a tactical water distribution system. The 823d Red Horse Squadron set up the system and accompanying shower facility at Mogadishu airport.

had the equipment to dig new wells or improve those that already existed. The well water still had to be treated before it was deemed potable, or even usable for washing. To achieve this, reverse osmosis water purification units were put into operation. These specialized units used a series of membranes, filters, and chemicals to purify the water. They could produce potable water from fresh sources, brackish groundwater, or seawater. The purified water was then stored in large inflatable bladders from which it could be pumped as needed. By setting these units up in outlying areas with wells, additional water was provided to the local troops.*

* There was similar work to improve the lot of the Somali people as well. For instance, members of the 593d Area Support Group repaired 18 of 20 wells serving Afgooye, and then improved the reservoir system of the city of Mogadishu. The level of the reservoir was raised from eight inches to more than two meters, increasing the total volume of available water from 100,000 gallons to more than 3 million gallons. For the first time in two years, the people of Mogadishu had running water. (593d Area Support Group, FY 93 Annual Historical Review, Fort Lewis: Washington, Dec93, p. 2.)

Commercial bottled water provided another source of drinking water. Veterans of Desert Storm were familiar with the clear plastic liter bottles containing pure water that could be easily distributed to the troops with their rations. Palletized loads were unloaded from ships directly onto trucks for transport throughout the theater.* Troops still carried canteens, but they were commonly seen with bottles of water sticking out of cargo pockets or next to them in vehicles.

The increase in water production and distribution had one other benefit for the soldiers and Marines on the ground. By early January 1993, bath units arrived in the theater and set up mobile shower units. Even in the midst of the hottest day coalition troops could look forward to a few minutes of refreshing cool showering in the evening. To match the clean bodies, the contracts for laundry services provided clean clothing and saved the

* There was one notable incident in which a cargo ship could not be unloaded properly and a human chain of Marines was used to pass bottles of water one at a time.



DVIC DD-SD-00-00779

A KC-130 Hercules aircraft from Marine Aerial Transport Refueler Squadron 352 homebased at El Toro, California, delivers needed fuel through expeditionary distribution system at Kismayo airfield.

troops the burden of washing their uniforms by hand.*

As water was necessary to the health of the coalition soldiers, so fuel was necessary to run their machines and vehicles. Like water, petroleum had been identified very early in the planning process as a critical class of supply. An offshore petroleum distribution system allowed this commodity to be brought to the theater by ships, which did not have to use precious berthing space at the port. The ships could stand offshore and pump the fuel to a storage and distribution point.³⁶⁸ By the middle of January, maritime prepositioning force ships had pumped ashore a total of 470,300 gallons of JP-5 (jet fuel) and 517,000 gallons of MoGas (a motor gasoline fuel that can be used in some aircraft).³⁶⁹

* This chore, when performed by the troops, was not only drudgery, it was often futile. In the early days of the operation there was not enough water to get clothing really clean or to rinse it out properly. Leaving the damp utilities hanging from the lines of a tent or the branches of a tree then exposed them to the fine blowing sand, which made them stiff, gritty, and uncomfortable.

Fuel was often delivered to outlying sectors by air. Early in the operation, Marine Corps and Air Force C-130 aircraft were used to make daily flights to deliver fuel and other cargo. But as the Support Command became fully operational, the need for air delivery declined dramatically.³⁷⁰

The Support Command's 593d Area Support Group brought ample fuel transport vehicles for the task of bulk petroleum distribution. The real problem encountered was a shortage of trained drivers in some of the units. Army Forces Somalia remedied this by providing assistant drivers for these line-haul operations.³⁷¹

Medical Care and Health Issues

Living in Somalia presented several serious threats to the health of the coalition soldiers, and UNITAF had to be prepared to deal with them all. As with nearly every other logistics function, there were two levels of support organizations at work: the first provided the initial medical infrastructure and the second, within the Support Command, was meant to be the long-term solution. At first, each of the American components

had its own medical units providing first-line support. These worked under the overall guidance of the UNITAF surgeon, Captain Michael L. Cowan, USN. In addition, many of the larger coalition forces had their own internal medical organizations.

After the possibility of wounds, the greatest threat to the well being of coalition soldiers came from the very country itself. The hot and arid climate of Somalia posed a serious threat to UNITAF personnel. The intensity of the sun during the daytime and any physical exertion drained troops of fluids and electrolytes. The greatest safeguard against dehydration and heat casualties was a program of awareness. Leadership at all levels was necessary to ensure preventive measures were carried out. The first of these was the replenishment of water. But having water available could do no good if it was not consumed in the proper amounts. Leaders, especially on the

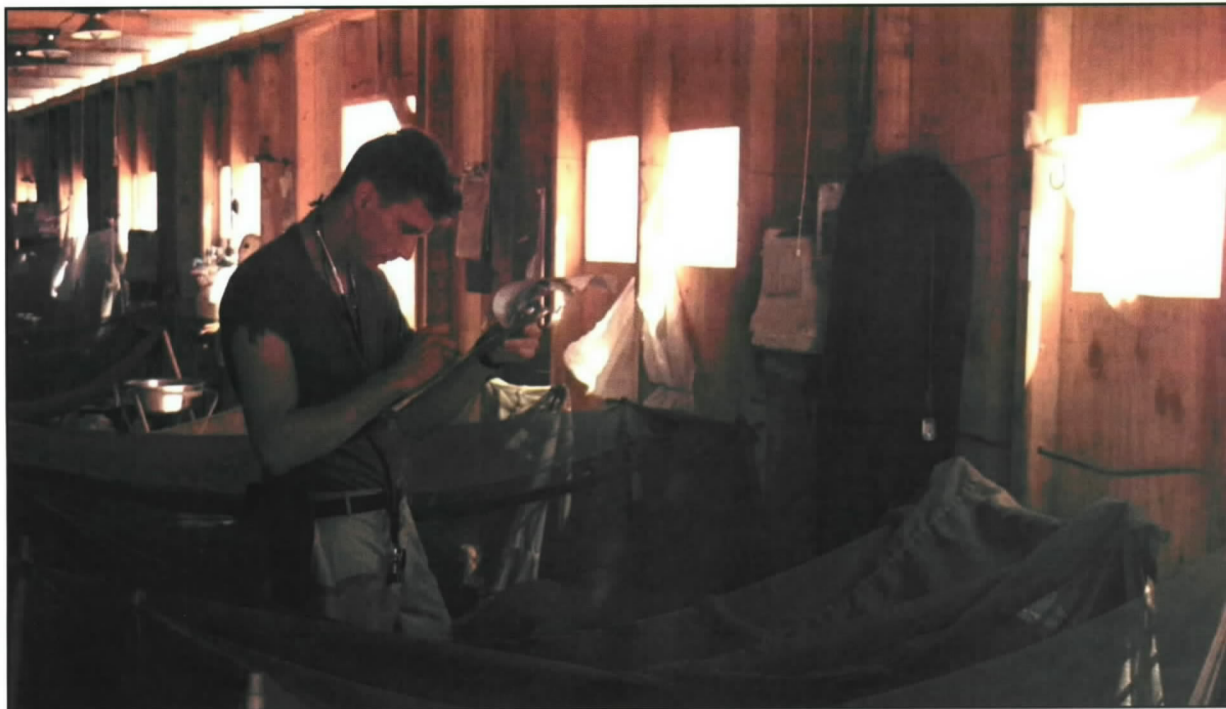
small unit level, had to be aware of the condition of their troops, constantly watching for signs of heat stress. An advisory issued to UNITAF soldiers stressed that they should work on the "weak link" principle; that when one soldier succumbed to heat injuries or showed symptoms, the others would not be far behind. Regulating work periods, resting, staying in the shade when possible, and forcing liquids were all recommended measures to prevent heat casualties.

Another environmental threat came from the creatures and organisms that lived there. Some of these were obvious; venomous snakes, spiders, and scorpions could inflict painful and dangerous bites. Other threats were not so easily noticed. Mosquitoes carried malaria, dengue fever, yellow fever, and other diseases. The bites of sand fleas could cause fevers and sores. Ticks carried hemorrhagic fever, typhus, and relapsing fever. Fleas were vectors for typhus, plague, and relapsing



DVIC DD-SD-00-00821

Lt Patrick Cosmajkl of the U.S. Navy's Environmental and Preventative Medicine Unit, Naples, Italy, examines a slide under the microscope for confirmation of a suspected Malaria case in the 1st Medical Battalion Field Hospital in Mogadishu.



DVIC DD-SD-00-00823

HM3 Anthony Pacino, USN, records a patient's vital signs in a ward of the 1st Medical Battalion Field Hospital. The use of mosquito nets was required because of the prevalence of malaria.

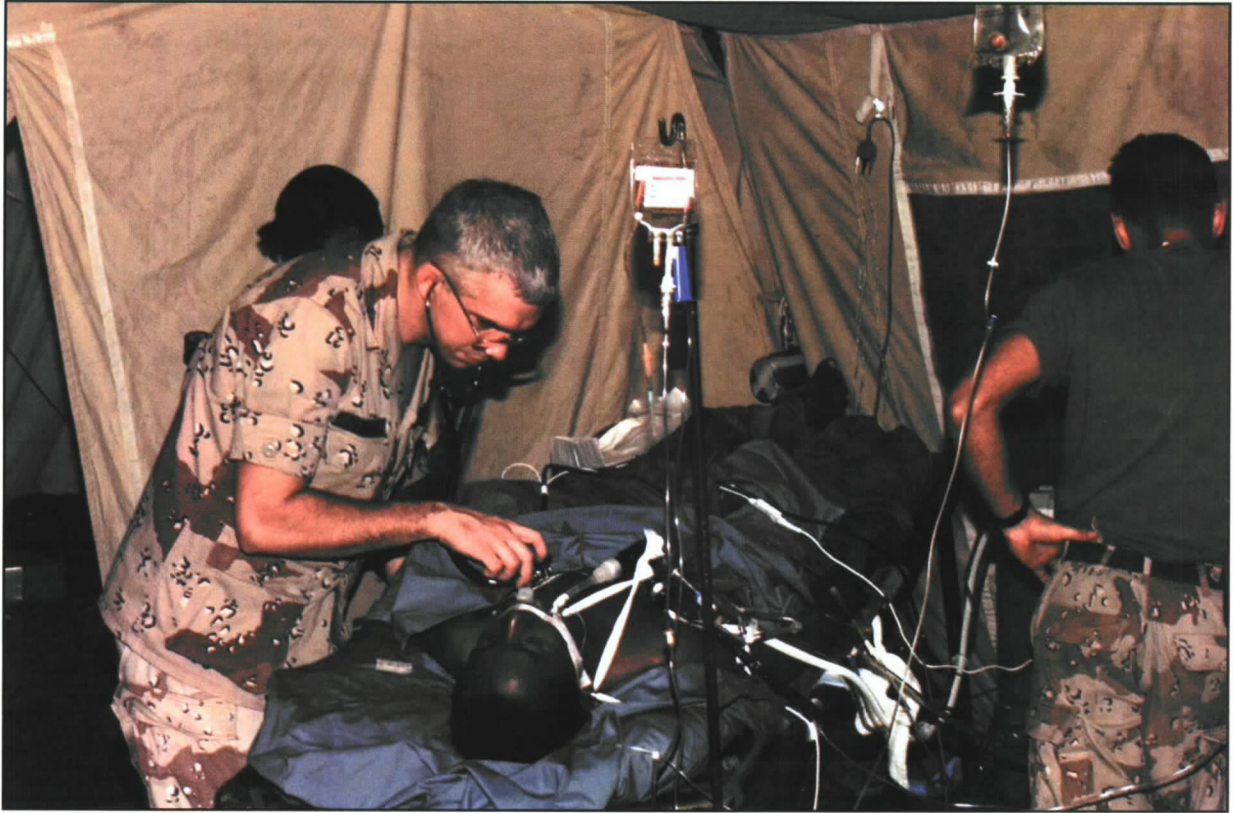
fever. Mere contact with the ground or water could make a soldier prey to parasites and diseases. Hookworms lived in the soil, as did mudworms and whipworms that could be ingested if a soldier did not wash his hands before eating. Tetanus from puncture wounds was the real menace. The worms carrying snail fever could enter a body from exposure to the water of streams, rivers, or ponds. Mud fever came from contact with water or mud contaminated with infected animal urine. Prevention for all of these included such simple practices as avoiding areas where snakes, spiders, or scorpions might be lying. Clothing and boots were shaken out before putting them on and all personnel were warned to avoid sleeping on the ground (all American personnel were issued cots) or walking barefoot. Keeping trousers bloused and sleeves rolled down helped avoid contact with insects, and repellants containing DEET (N,N-diethyl-meta-toluamide) were issued. All personnel had mosquito nets for their cots. If soldiers or Marines had to enter bodies of water, they were warned to keep their trousers bloused and to cover as much of their bodies as possible.³⁷²

Vaccines were available for the prevention of many diseases, and troops were inoculated before

deploying. Required immunizations were immune serum globulin, tetanus-diphtheria, oral polio, influenza, typhoid, yellow fever, meningococcal, and measles. For malaria, the prophylactic mefloquine was given to the troops on a weekly basis.³⁷³

Captain Cowan recognized the challenge he faced in guarding the task force's health as its senior surgeon. The time-phased force deployment caused shortages of mosquito nets and insect spray, which had to be made up quickly. Apprising General Johnston of the situation, Captain Cowan received the support he needed to get these items to the troops.³⁷⁴ He also began a campaign to educate the soldiers and Marines about the benefits of so simple an act as washing one's hands frequently. Lister bags and bars of soap were placed where they were most needed, outside of latrines and near the entrances to mess facilities.

To combat the spread of disease, Captain Cowan had three epidemiological units assigned to him. These units had a sophisticated serology, parasitology, and bacteriology laboratory. They were responsible for monitoring the health of the personnel of units in the field and going out to any battalion aid station on the first sign of an epidemic to stop it before it could take hold. These



DVIC DD-SD-00-00835

Maj Eric Edwards, USA, head nurse of Intensive Care Unit 1, 86th Combat Support Hospital, tends a wounded Somali who had been caught in a crossfire during a gunfight on a Mogadishu street. His left leg was severely wounded and eventually required amputation.

medical specialists identified areas from which diseases were spreading, enlisted local command emphasis for the preventive medicine programs, and stopped the incidents. An outbreak of dysentery was stopped in Mogadishu. In Bardera, occurrences of malaria and dengue were swiftly brought under control.* Infected soldiers were brought from the outlying areas back to Mogadishu for proper treatment, and in most cases returned to duty in four days.³⁷⁵

Medical evacuation was another health concern. Again, the distances in the theater were a factor. Specific helicopters were assigned to aerial medical evacuation and were required to be

able to transport any casualty to Mogadishu within two hours. To answer this need, MarFor helicopters from the amphibious assault ship USS *Tripoli* (LPH 10) were placed forward in such areas as Bardera, and they never missed the time limit for a critical medical evacuation. A casualty clearing company in Mogadishu was ready to stabilize patients and then forward them on. In the early days of the operation, this meant going to the *Tripoli*, which was the only medical backup available in the theater. The combination of the pervasive dust and the old style tents caused problems for the sterility of the clearing company's modern and sophisticated equipment. As Captain Cowan said: "This great new state-of-the-art [equipment] is in 19th century tents, full of dust. [The corpsmen] did a good job, but ... this [kind of structure] is definitely wrong, not for this climate, not for the desert."³⁷⁶

The answer to many of the captain's concerns was within the Support Command. The initial planning for medical support was based on the expectation of large numbers of casualties. This in

* A Center for Disease Control study indicated the effectiveness of the preventive medicine programs. Of the thousands of American personnel in Somalia during the time of UNITAF, there were only 131 incidents of malaria, of which 83 appeared after the troops had returned home. (Center for Disease Control, "Malaria Among U.S. Military Personnel Returning From Somalia, 1993," *CDC MMWR Weekly*, 16Jul93, pp. 524-526.)

turn dictated the structure of the medical unit, the 62d Medical Group. In addition to an evacuation hospital, there were the three medical companies (one each for ambulance, air ambulance, and clearing), two sanitation detachments, an epidemiology detachment, an entomology detachment, two veterinary detachments, a dental detachment, and one for combat stress control. The group even contained its own medical logistics battalion. The mission of this large unit was to provide "comprehensive care to all U.S. forces involved in the security and humanitarian mission and to provide limited support to other coalition forces in the theater (i.e., on an emergency-only basis)."³⁷⁷

One of the 62d Group's first challenges was receiving its planned hospital equipment. The Army barge-carrier vessel *Green Valley* (TAK 2049), which carried the 86th Evacuation Hospital's gear, had too deep a draft for the port of Mogadishu. Not could the ship offload at

Mombasa because its length was too great for the docks there. So the 86th Hospital had to wait for its equipment to be brought in by air. This required adjustments to the time-phased deployment that interrupted the scheduled airflow, but the operations section's movements unit worked wonders in getting the equipment into the theater. The hospital was up and running by 6 January 1993. The hospital consisted of four operating rooms and more than 100 beds for patients, including an intensive care unit with 12 beds. With the establishment of the Army hospital, the Navy casualty clearing company was able to depart. The 62d Medical Group picked up all UNITAF medical responsibilities by 28 January.³⁷⁸

The number of American troops supported by the 62d Medical Group reached a peak by mid-January, then declined through the transition to the United Nations at the beginning of May. The number of combat casualties was not nearly as great as initially planned for. So the group, like



DVIC DD-SD-00-00858

Hospital Corpsman James Brown, USN, applies topical ointment to the arms of a Somali infant as part of the medical civic action program conducted in the streets of Mogadishu by medical personnel from MEU Service Support Group 15.



DVIC DD-SD-00-00697

U.S. Air Force 1st Mobile Aeromedical Staging Flight personnel carry a patient from a Marine CH-46 Sea Knight helicopter at Mogadishu airport.

other units, was able to scale back its personnel and organization for the follow-on medical units that arrived in early May. The surplus capability meant the medical staff was able to provide some services for Somalis, although this was not part of their mission. It was always expected, however, that the American medics would treat any Somalis injured by American forces. Doing so had the additional benefit of maintaining skills. There also was a humanitarian aspect, the desire to treat an injured fellow human being. But there was a two-fold problem in providing treatment to these Somali civilians. First, they were taking up beds, facilities, and medical stocks that might be needed should there be a sudden surge of American casualties.³⁷⁹ Second, there was the ethical dilemma of how to provide care that exceeded that which would normally be found within the country at large. As Captain Cowan noted, “we can’t be the medical facility of Somalia.” An answer lay in assisting local doctors and care providers, and in the use of the facilities of the hospitals provided by some of the coalition partners, such as the Swedes and the Moroccans.

Even with American casualties lighter than expected, the 62d Medical Group had to maintain certain capabilities as it reduced the size of its force. An air ambulance was retained to continue

accommodating the long distances, and since adequate fixed medical facilities would not be available in the country, the evacuation hospital also remained. The continuing threat of disease dictated keeping a large preventive medicine capability.³⁸⁰ By early May, the 86th Evacuation Hospital was replaced by the 42d Field Hospital, a smaller facility with only 32 beds. In its time of support to UNITAF, the 86th provided service to a large number of the force’s soldiers and Marines: there were 4,914 outpatient cases with 971 Americans admitted for treatment.³⁸¹

Air evacuation was one of the most important parts of medical planning. Original estimates were for 200 patients per week showing up at the battalion aid stations per 1,000 soldiers. The vast majority of this estimate was expected to be for disease and non-battle injuries, with a smaller portion for combat injuries; but preparations still had to be made for the movement of these persons within and out of the area of operations. The U.S. Air Force’s 1st Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron was tasked to develop the evacuation system for patients to third and fourth echelon medical facilities. Two aerial evacuation crews supplemented the squadron, one each from the 183d and 156th Aeromedical Evacuation Squadrons. The 1st Aeromedical Squadron was located with the Air

Force's air mobility element and was composed of an aeromedical evacuation coordination center, a mobile aeromedical staging facility, and the aeromedical evacuation liaison team. By 19 December, all aeromedical evacuation personnel had arrived in Mogadishu. A separate aeromedical evacuation operations team and six evacuation crews deployed to Cairo West Airport, Egypt, to support transiting evacuation missions.³⁸²

Since the battalion aid stations in the humanitarian relief sectors had only limited medical capabilities, the evacuation plan was set for patients to be moved to the larger and better-equipped facilities in Mogadishu and Mombasa, Kenya. At first casualties were taken to the *Tripoli*. Later, as the Army's 86th Evacuation Hospital became operational, patients stayed at that facility in Mogadishu or the one in Mombasa. Evacuation aerial ports of embarkation were established in the theater at Kismayo, Bardera, Gialalassi, Oddur, Belet Weyne, and Baidoa. The aerial ports of debarkation for these flights were in Mogadishu and Mombasa. Serious cases needing even higher levels of treatment were sent out of theater. Embarkation ports for these evacuation missions were established at Mogadishu, Mombasa, Djibouti, and Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

The debarkation ports for these movements were at Cairo West, Egypt, and Ramstein and Rhine Main air bases in Germany. In some rare instances, casualties were flown directly from Somalia to Germany on board strategic airlift using aerial refueling support.³⁸³

For the first 90 days of the operation, the squadron moved a total of 304 casualties. Of these, 38 were sent out of theater. By 10 March, the size of the aeromedical evacuation system was reevaluated in consideration of the actual needs of the operation. On 19 March, all remaining 1st Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron personnel redeployed and the evacuation mission was turned over to U.S. Air Force Reserve component personnel. The reserve airmen were stationed in Cairo West, and rotated into Somalia as required.³⁸⁴

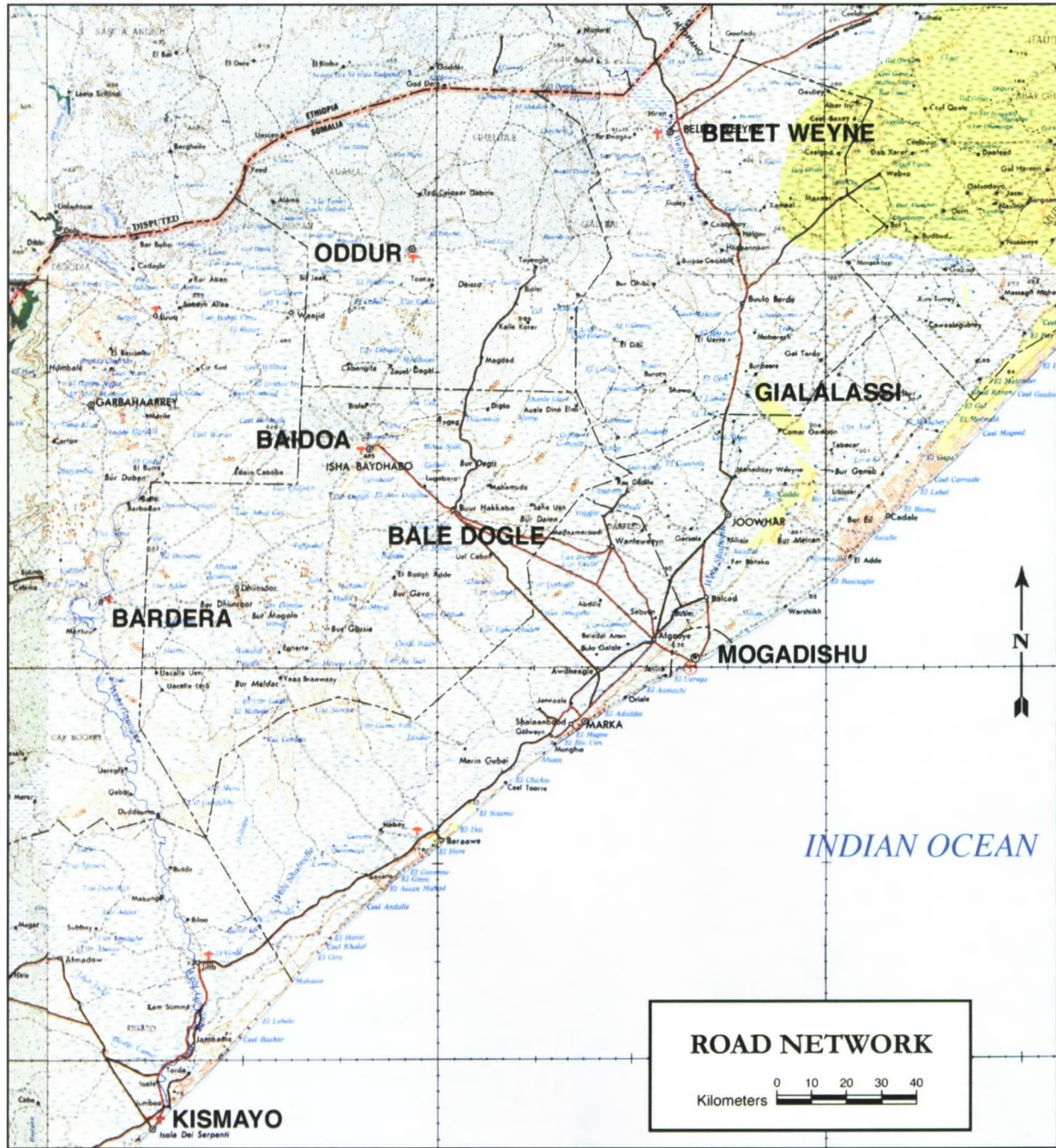
Engineering

UNITAF was provided numerous engineering assets and capabilities. Some coalition members brought their own engineer units, often specifically sent to clear mines and undertake local work projects. In addition, each of the U.S. Armed Services had internal engineer units.



Photo courtesy of the author

A merchant ship carrying vital relief cargo arrives at the port of Kismayo shortly after coalition forces reopened that port.



The task force's engineer staff consisted of 34 individuals from all Services. Under the leadership of Colonel Robert B. Flowers, USA, the task force engineer, they were divided into two sections. The facilities section was responsible for real estate management and all related functions, such as the location of the tent cities and bases, hazardous waste storage, and coordination of vehicle parks and wash down sites. This section also managed critical engineer supplies such as dust palliatives, plywood sheets, lumber, electrical, and concertina wire. The operations section

oversaw the work of the various engineer units of the components, ensuring it all fit within the task force's requirements. The UNITAF engineers' mission was to "protect U.S. and allied troops; repair and maintain needed sea and air ports, other logistics facilities, roads and bridges, and command and control facilities; and construct bases to support coalition forces."³⁸⁵

The first engineering task was to improve and repair the theater infrastructure. Ports and airfields were given top priority. In Mogadishu, the

engineers cleared the port's docks and warehouses. They also acquired additional adjacent space and more warehouses to increase the port's capacity. In Kismayo, engineer divers removed sunken hulks and prepared the port to receive shallow-draft vessels. As the area of operations expanded, repairs and maintenance were performed at each of the airfields.

As soon as the initial objectives were secured, Marine engineer assets were quickly put to work at Mogadishu port and the airfield. As the operation moved inland, and as the coalition grew in numbers, these Marines brought their skills to new sectors. Soon they were helping build a better quality of life for their comrades in the field. They repaired roads and constructed base camps, tent areas, heads, and mess facilities. Marine Corps explosive ordnance disposal personnel also destroyed confiscated ordnance and rounds and mines discovered in the field.³⁸⁶

The Navy supplied two mobile construction battalions to the engineer effort. These "Seabee" units were a part of the 30th Naval Construction Regiment. The first of the Seabees, a nine-man advance party, arrived in Mogadishu on 10 December and were immediately put to use repairing the runway lights at the Mogadishu airfield.³⁸⁷

The construction battalions' main mission was to provide "vertical construction support" to the United States forces and coalition partners. This translated to working on base camps in the relief sectors, to include building tent areas with wooden decks and siding, latrines, showers, and mess facilities. Like the Marines, the Seabees worked on the main supply routes, grading shoulders to widen the roads and making repairs to bridges. They also drilled wells and installed a new water pump for a refugee camp on the banks of the Jubba River near Bardera. They joined their Marine counterparts in the Clean Street operations in Mogadishu and prepared the site for the Army evacuation hospital.³⁸⁸

Both mobile construction battalions were heavily involved in the repair and maintenance of the airfields in the theater. Relief flights by C-130 aircraft into Baidoa caused that airstrip to deteriorate early in the operation. Repairs involved removing 300,000 square feet of the runway's asphalt surface and pulverizing it. This material was then mixed with Portland cement and poured, graded, and compacted to make a new surface. The Seabees then put down 600,000 square feet of AM2 interconnecting aluminum landing mat pan-

els for aircraft turnarounds, parking aprons, and helipads. Similar work, but on a lesser scale, was done at the airfields at Bale Dogle and Bardera. At the former site, the Seabees worked alongside Marines of Marine Wing Support Squadron 372 to build landing and staging areas for CH-53 helicopters and taxiways and turnaround areas for C-130 aircraft.³⁸⁹

The Air Force also had specialized engineers for airfield repair. These airmen belonged to an organization called "Red Horse," an acronym for rapid engineer deployable heavy operational repair squadron engineer. Like the Navy Seabees, these engineer specialists provided assistance in base camp construction. But their larger, and more important, mission was to "perform heavy damage repair" to facilities and utilities in an expeditionary environment. The austere setting and degraded infrastructure in Somalia made these airmen key players in the operation.³⁹⁰ *

They went to work early. On 10 December, a team was testing the airfield at Bale Dogle for serviceability for C-141 aircraft. With an Air Force combat control team on hand and Special Forces soldiers for protection at the remote location, the Red Horse team used a specialized piece of equipment to check the runway surface. This was a large, weighted rod that could be dropped from a set height. The weight was dropped on the runway surface and the depth of its penetration was measured.³⁹¹ Of the 10,500-foot runway, the first 4,500 feet were determined unserviceable and repairs were quickly begun.

The Army's 36th Engineer Group was responsible for one of the operation's most important construction projects. This was the repair of the main supply network and the construction of what became known as the "Somali Road."

The task force staff recognized that improvement of the road system would provide multiple benefits for the entire operation. First, it would enhance security by connecting all the humanitarian relief sectors and reducing the travel time

* Red Horse teams moved into each of the relief sectors as they were opened, often accompanying the troops. The author watched one such team operating the morning after the Italians secured Gialalassi airfield. When it was determined the dirt runway was not sturdy enough to take the wear of heavy aircraft, the Red Horse engineers discovered an abandoned roller on a part of the field. They soon had it in repair and running across the field in an early attempt to compact and upgrade it.



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Soldiers of Company A, 41st Engineer Battalion, 10th Mountain Division, celebrate the completion of a Bailey Bridge they erected between Kismayo and Jilib. The bridge was named for Sean Devereaux, a UNICEF worker killed while endeavoring to feed thousands of starving people in southern Somalia.

between them. This in turn would mean that fewer forces would be required in theater to cover the same amount of ground. Rapid-moving convoys could more efficiently deliver relief supplies. Safe and quick movement on the roads would also benefit the people of the interior by providing them with a means of getting their products from farms and herds to markets in the cities. Contracted labor would provide jobs for local Somalis and boost the overall economy. Finally, the roads would give the factions an easy means to move their forces and heavy weapons to transition sites and cantonment areas. The 36th Engineer Group was given the mission of working on the main supply routes and creating the Somali Road to connect all the sectors.³⁹² General Johnston, through his engineering staff, specified standards for the road system: "All supply and resupply routes were made to carry two-way traffic at military load class 30 and used soil stabilization where possible."³⁹³

Work began on 20 January 1993 and proceeded rapidly. Many difficulties were encountered but overcome. Mine removal operations were necessary on some stretches to open the way to the interior. Mines were a persistent problem throughout the entire area of operations and were not limited to roadways, although they caused considerable trouble there. Commander William F. Boudra, USN, of the UNITAF staff described what the engineers faced:

Massive quantities of land mines and unexploded ordnance dotted roads and the Somalian landscape. Our forces encountered a variety of mines and other munitions manufactured by many different countries. Because operational procedures called for marking and bypassing mines and unexploded ordnance, we used minesweeping teams frequently. Marking, however, had to be austere because any valuable materials would certainly be stolen. We settled on painting

mine warnings on rocks. Breaching mine and [unexploded ordnance] areas to open routes was required on numerous occasions. Several methods were employed. Teams equipped with metallic mine detectors were used but their value was limited because most mines and ordnance were non-metallic.* Therefore, we used field expedient mine rollers made from locally procured and modified construction compactors pushed by armored combat vehicles. This method proved very effective. Both explosive ordnance detachments and Sappers were put to work on countermine and [unexploded ordnance] neutralization operations.³⁹⁴

Other difficulties came from the condition of the road surface in various stretches, requiring decisions about whether these areas should be repaired or bypassed. Where available, locally procured surface aggregate was used to fill holes. In other cases, the roadways were patched with mixtures of soil and cement, and dust palliatives were put down throughout the routes. Bridges were repaired or strengthened as necessary. In some areas, the road had to be entirely rebuilt.³⁹⁵ The portion between Jilib and Bardera had to be laid down on a different route through new terrain. In the Kismayo sector, two Bailey bridges were constructed and a third was set up in Bardera.

Five weeks of heavy, hurried labor completed the job. On 24 February, the Somali Road was finished. The engineer group had constructed or repaired more than 1,100 kilometers of roadways, connecting all of the humanitarian relief sectors. The interior of the entire area of operations was opened to the movement of relief supplies, the transportation of local produce, and the resettlement of refugees. More importantly, driving time between sectors dropped dramatically. It had originally taken 26 hours to travel by vehicle from Mogadishu to Kismayo; now it took only 12. Travel time between other sectors dropped by 50 to 75 percent. This major engineering feat was a

* In Oddur, the author saw a stockpile of several hundred cases of such antipersonnel mines. These were simply made of wood with a hinged top for inserting the charge and a small opening in one side for placing the detonator. These devices could be placed in the ground with pressure-sensitive detonators or rigged as booby traps with trip wires. With little metallic content, they would have been difficult to find with traditional metal detectors.

great success, one that contributed to the security of the force and the completion of its mission.³⁹⁶

Communications

Another important method to link the area of operations was effective communications. For UNITAF, this responsibility fell to the communications section, whose members had to work closely with the components and with the forces of the coalition partners.

Colonel Robert G. Hill faced a daunting task as the UNITAF communications officer. In early December, as he was building his joint team through the Central Command administration officer, he was planning his own concept of support for the overall mission and the courses of action. The communications section would be responsible for identifying and sourcing needed equipment, and then installing and operating it. The system had to link the commander to his staff, the components, and the coalition partners, and had to provide support for operations, intelligence, and personnel and logistics functions.³⁹⁷ The communications network would have to work over long distances in theater and be able to reach literally around the world when needed, and be set up within the bare infrastructure environment that affected every other aspect of the operation.

Prior to deployment, the communications section worked with MarFor to set the basic communications plan. Communications nodes would be established at each of the relief sectors as they were secured. These nodes would be "constructed around an AN/TSC-93 spoke terminal and would consist of a switching capability, communications center, two high-frequency radios, two tactical satellite terminals, and a local area network server."³⁹⁸

Equipment came from a variety of sources. Colonel Hill knew I MEF's normal equipment load could not meet the dual requirements placed on it, to support both the new task force headquarters and the 1st Marine Division acting as MarFor. He therefore asked for augmentation of satellite communications and single-channel radio systems through the joint communications support element, an organization under the control of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. The communications element controlled a pool of equipment to support two joint task force headquarters; some of this was duly allotted for UNITAF's use. This equip-



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On a rise overlooking Mogadishu airport, TSgt Jack Richards, Sgt Derrick Hawkins, and A1C Charles Layne, of the U.S. Air Force's 5th Combat Communications Squadron, conduct daily maintenance on the microwave dish of a tropo satellite support radio system.

ment provided the connectivity from the task force headquarters to the components, which then supplied the necessary equipment on their end. Internal support came from the 9th Communications Battalion and the communications company of the 1st Marine Division.³⁹⁹

Communications with the outside world were established early in the deployment. The task force headquarters was connected to Central Command in Tampa, Florida, by a single-channel tactical communications satellite. Satellite communications also were established between Fort Meade, Maryland, and Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.⁴⁰⁰

A communications support element van arrived with limited telephone connectivity. This helped to expand internal communications, albeit on a small scale. As the coalition's forces moved into the relief sectors, connectivity was provided to keep the soldiers and Marines on the ground linked to the headquarters at Mogadishu. An early problem was encountered when some component forces arrived before their command and control assets. This led to borrowing of equipment among U.S. forces to ensure that all missions were properly covered. As more equipment arrived, so too did the opportunity to normalize things along Service lines. But, even by late January, there

were still anomalies. Because of the mix of units and missions there, the American components at the port and airfield at Mogadishu displayed a corresponding mix of equipment. Marine units were using Air Force transmission systems, and Army units were using Marine gear. Overall, however, the ability to use whatever equipment was at hand was judged to have worked well.⁴⁰¹

The need to be prepared to operate in a bare environment caused one noticeable problem. As some units arrived they brought commercial satellite equipment with them that would ensure reliable communications anywhere in the world. By attaching a STU-III, secure communications could also be achieved.* Ironically, the convenience of this equipment was also its greatest weakness. This was a commercial system, and

* TacSat, InMarSat, and STU-III (secure telephone unit, third generation) are all communications systems and pieces of equipment. TacSat is a military satellite system that uses communication repeaters that work with the terminal equipment of land, sea, and air forces. InMarSat is a commercial satellite communications operator that provides telephone, fax, and data transmission services to client ground, sea, and air users. The STU-III is a voice encryption device that allows speakers to discuss classified matters over a telephone by scrambling the sound.

there was an expensive cost to its use. Some units had borrowed the equipment from their non-deployed comrades, creating an interesting dilemma: who would pay the user fees, the owner or the using unit? Colonel Hill soon recognized he had to get control of the number and use of these sets in theater.⁴⁰²

Communications with the coalition partners presented some challenges. Where NATO members were operating there was no great difficulty because of the interoperability of equipment and procedures. For the other nations, all manner of communication issues had to be resolved. Frequency assignment was a concern, but direct contact with the UNITAF frequency manager kept all partners on separate networks. Communications security was another matter that had to be addressed, both among the United States components and the partners. It would be inappropriate for every organization in theater to be receiving its own secure communications deliveries. So a joint communications security management office was formed as a central point for the delivery and distribution of all such messages and materials. This

office also was responsible for working with the Defense Courier System to ensure the proper receipt of all such materials. But the non-NATO coalition partners were not cleared to receive such classified information. For them, liaison officers were assigned. These officers accompanied the partners in the field, and they carried the appropriate U.S. communications equipment.⁴⁰³ In this manner, all units of the task force, no matter what their size or mission, were linked through UNITAF headquarters.

A greater difficulty was communicating with UNOSOM headquarters, even though it was located less than a half mile from the UNITAF compound. Telephone landlines, which would normally be an easy method of connecting with U.N. forces, could not be used because the wire would have been stolen as soon as it was strung. In addition, both headquarters used different radio communications equipment. A solution was to issue hand-held radios, called "bricks," for both headquarters. Even then difficulties were encountered due to the different voltages of the battery chargers each headquarters used. Such small mat-



DVIC DD-SD-00-00907

U.S. Air Force SSgt Rick Robinson of the 52d Combat Communications Squadron adjusts an SB3865 tactical telephone switch at the U.S. Embassy in Mogadishu. The squadron provided communications support for the Air Force's Air Mobility element.



DVIC DD-SD-00-00791

A soldier from the 9th Psychological Operations Battalion (Airborne) hands leaflets to several Somalis on the streets of Kismayo.

ters were difficult to foresee, but each was resolved as it was encountered through the application of a cooperative attitude and a desire to get the job done.⁴⁰⁴

Psychological Operations

Lieutenant General Johnston knew the successful completion of his mission would be greatly helped by a well-run psychological operation effort. "Having understood the potential impact of PSYOP [psychological operations], I was extremely interested in having PSYOP up front for this operation because I knew ... that it would prevent armed conflict. ... You come in with tanks and people think you're there to hurt them. PSYOP worked well to convince [Somalis] that we were there with the military capability to take care of the factions and their little armies—that we were going to provide support and safety."⁴⁰⁵

To ensure this valuable support was planned and integrated into the UNITAF operation, a joint psychological operation task force was organized

under the supervision of the director of operations, Brigadier General Anthony C. Zinni. This specialized task force, under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Charles Borchini, USA, was formed from elements of the Army's 4th Psychological Operations Group (Airborne). The nucleus of the task force came from the 8th Psychological Operations Battalion and the Product Dissemination Battalion. The 9th Psychological Operations Battalion (Tactical) provided two brigade psychological operations support elements and eight loudspeaker teams. These last units were attached to the 7th Marines, and the Army's 10th Mountain Division.⁴⁰⁶

The joint psychological operations task force had the mission of providing information and coordinating communications to two target audiences. The first group included those persons and organizations General Johnston had to work closely with to accomplish the mission: the special envoy, UNOSOM, United Nations agencies, and the humanitarian relief sectors. The second group was the Somalis, comprised of the general



DVIC DD-SD-00-00792

On the streets of Kismayo, a soldier from the 9th Psychological Operations Battalion distributes copies of Rajo, the Somali-language newspaper. The paper proved to be an effective tool in providing UNITAF information to the Somali people.

Somali population, the leaders of the factions, elders from the clans and villages, religious leaders, and professionals and intellectuals.⁴⁰⁷

The task force accomplished its information dissemination mission through a variety of products. Leaflets were easily produced and widely distributed. These small sheets usually had a colorful picture on one side and a related message in Somali on the other. Themes ranged from an explanation of the purposes of the coalition forces to information about the dangers of mines and unexploded ordnance. These were distributed to target areas by aircraft. Throughout the operation several types of aircraft were used: Marine Corps CH-53 helicopters; USAF and Canadian C-130 Hercules airplanes; Army UH-60 and UH-1 helicopters; Navy S-3 Viking airplanes; and New Zealand C-748 Andover airplanes.⁴⁰⁸

Another printed product was a Somali-language newspaper named *Rajo*, the Somali word for hope. The staff of the paper included soldiers

from the 4th Psychological Operations Group, civilian area experts, and Somali linguists. They produced articles about military operations in Mogadishu and the other relief sectors, relief operations, redevelopment, and analyses of the peace and reconciliation talks. Other features dealt with public health information, articles about rebuilding the educational system and police forces, and interviews with relief staff members. One other popular feature was a cartoon featuring a Somali named Celmi and his camel Mandeeq. The conversations between these two characters emphasized the themes of the coalition's mission and what current operations were accomplishing. The first copy of this paper was published on 20 December 1992, and it soon had a daily run of 15,000 to 28,000 copies, depending on the availability of paper. It was distributed to every town and village in which UNITAF soldiers were deployed. The paper was apparently effective in getting out UNITAF information to the

Somalis. As U.S. Ambassador to Somalia Robert B. Oakley later told the *Rajo* staff: "We are using *Rajo* to get the correct information into the hands of the Somali population and to correct distortions. ... It has made a big difference. The faction leaders, I know, read it very, very carefully. Every once in a while [General Mohamed Farah Hassan] Aideed or Ali Mahdi [Mohamed] or one of the other faction leaders draws to my attention something that appeared in the newspaper. So they're very, very sensitive to it and they know its power."⁴⁰⁹

In cooperation with the newspaper, UNITAF established a Somali-language radio station, also named *Rajo*. Radio *Rajo* offered the Somali people a choice from the faction-controlled radio stations as a source of information. Twice a day, the station broadcast a 45-minute program consisting of news stories from the *Rajo* newspaper, world events, readings from the *Quran*, readings of Somali stories and poetry, and Somali music. The broadcasts were designed to encourage the Somali factions to settle their differences and rebuild their country. There were several specific themes the station staff wove into the broadcasts. These were to emphasize the neutrality of the coalition and ensure listeners that the rules of engagement would be applied fairly against all factions as necessary; to highlight the capabilities of the coalition and the work its members were doing, especially those from African or Islamic countries; to encourage disarmament and highlight the agreements made by the faction leaders; to reinforce the idea that only the Somali people could resolve their problems and encourage the rebuilding of the country's social infrastructure; to encourage displaced people to return home and harvest or plant crops; and to emphasize that there would be no change in the rules of engagement or capabilities during the transition from UNITAF to UNOSOM II.⁴¹⁰

The radio station was located at UNITAF headquarters in the U.S. Embassy compound. It broadcast on a combination of midwave and shortwave frequencies. With extensive adjustments to the transmitting antenna, the *Rajo* shortwave programs could be received in every city and town in each of the relief sectors.⁴¹¹

One other method of getting out the UNITAF message was through loudspeaker teams. Accompanying troops during operations, these teams broadcast surrender appeals and gave instructions to crowds or to Somalis in arms mar-



DVIC DD-SD-00-00812

A young Somali boy holds one of several leaflets prepared and distributed as part of UNITAF's psychological operations effort. The leaflet portrays a Somali man shaking the hand of a U.S. soldier, thereby emphasizing that the United States was in Somali as a friend trying to help end the suffering.

kets or at roadblocks. The team members helped to distribute copies of the *Rajo* newspaper. They also worked closely among the people, gathering important information and assessing the security environment. They gave an added, personal emphasis to the coalition messages in the *Rajo* paper and radio broadcasts by meeting with village elders and local religious leaders.⁴¹²

Psychological operations teams supported every UNITAF action from the very start of the operation. On 9 December, loudspeaker teams accompanied the 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit during the initial landings. A Marine CH-53 carried a team for the first leaflet drop over the city of Mogadishu. After that, loudspeakers and leaflet drops were a part of each movement of coalition forces into the relief sectors. Two to three days before the arrival of UNITAF soldiers into a town, the teams dropped special handshake leaflets that depicted a Somali and a coalition soldier shaking hands and explained the mission of the coalition to assist the relief operations. While emphasizing the peaceful intent of the coalition, these leaflets also clearly stated that UNITAF was prepared to take any necessary action: "We are prepared to use force to protect the relief operation and our soldiers. We will not allow interference with food

distribution or with our activities.” After UNITAF forces moved into a sector other leaflets were dropped over the cities and villages and along the routes leading to it. These showed Somali people waving to a guarded convoy of relief trucks, and explained: “We are here to protect relief convoys.” They also warned: “Do not block roadways! Force will be used to protect the convoys.”⁴¹³

Loudspeaker teams were conspicuous during the Marine assault against the weapons storage sites in Mogadishu in early January and in the Army’s efforts against the forces of Mohamed Said Hirsi (General Morgan) in Kismayo in February. They accompanied coalition forces on sweeps of arms markets and during Clean Street operations. Special leaflets explained the intent of these operations and in February a very specific one was directed at the forces of General Morgan. The leaflet explained the ultimatum issued by the UNITAF commander and told Morgan’s men they must move by the deadline of 25 February, “or risk destruction.”⁴¹⁴

These task force activities were of great value to UNITAF, clearly demonstrating a benign and neutral stance balanced with a will to use force if necessary. Speaking of the loudspeaker teams, Major General Charles E. Wilhelm, the MarFor

commander, summed up the value of the psychological operations efforts: “They reduced the amount of unnecessary bloodshed by convincing Somali gunmen to surrender rather than fight.”⁴¹⁵

Civil-Military Operations

While most of the structures created by UNITAF were internal, that is, created to assist its own forces in accomplishing the mission, there was one that looked externally, to the humanitarian relief organizations. These organizations, working directly with the people of Somalia, were the link between the military security mission and the end of famine. They worked in a wide variety of areas, distributing food, providing medical care and assistance, helping with agricultural and veterinary problems, assisting refugees and displaced persons, digging wells for clean water and working on other small civil projects. They occupied a unique place in the mosaic of the operation; manned by civilian staffs and controlled by individual parent organizations, they were highly independent. They also were an important part of the solution to Somalia’s woes. They truly were partners in the operation, and their needs had to be considered and met.



DVIC DD-SD-00-00790

Soldiers from the 9th Psychological Operations Battalion ride in a humvee broadcasting messages to local Somalis gathered on a street in Kismayo. Elements of the 10th Mountain Division walk alongside providing security.

The relationships with the relief organizations did not have to be created entirely from whole cloth. During his time in Operation Provide Comfort in Iraq, Brigadier General Zinni had seen the value of establishing an entity to coordinate civil and military efforts. He wanted to repeat the process used in the Kurdish relief operation by establishing a similar group in Somalia.⁴¹⁶ Also, the United States Government, through the State Department, had created a number of organizations whose primary mission was to provide disaster assistance and economic aid, as well as furnish the structures by which these could operate in foreign countries.

As early as August 1992, the United States Government had been supporting the relief organizations in Somalia through these agencies. The Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance, a part of the United States Agency for International Development, had established a disaster assistance response team for Somalia. Two disaster response teams also operated in Nairobi and Mombasa, as coordinating agencies for Operation Provide Relief.⁴¹⁷ With the military intervention in December the requirement grew for closer cooperation among all parties.

During Operation Provide Relief, humanitarian relief organizations had already begun to tax the military command with requests for assistance. To reduce these direct requests and to coordinate the military response to them, a humanitarian operations center was established. This center was staffed with military officers, workers from the Agency for International Development and some relief workers. This worked well for Provide Relief, and so a center was established in Mogadishu for Restore Hope. The operations center had a simple mission: to plan, support, and monitor the delivery of relief supplies; but it had a complex organization, reflecting the mix of military, governmental, international, and civilian humanitarian aid members. The director was Philip Johnston, a United Nations official and a member of UNOSOM.* There were two deputy directors; one, a civilian, was from the response team, and the other was a military officer from UNITAF. The center contained a standing liaison

committee, composed of members from UNOSOM, UNITAF, the disaster assistance response team, United Nations and Red Cross agencies, and an executive committee to represent the non-governmental organizations. A bloc called the "Core Groups" represented those relief organizations with specialty interests such as agriculture, sanitation, health, and education. The loose connections of all these groups into one organization meant it had little real authority. The director responded to the U.N., and the deputies to either the Agency for International Development or UNITAF. The relief agencies were responsible to their parent organizations. The center was able to do one thing well; it established the forum for all these organizations to discuss and coordinate their needs and efforts. The main center was established with the U.N. headquarters in Mogadishu on 11 December. Thereafter, a center was established in each humanitarian relief sector.⁴¹⁸

Colonel Kevin M. Kennedy, a veteran of cyclone relief operations in Bangladesh, had been the chief of staff for Operation Provide Relief since August. He was, therefore, familiar with many of the key players in the humanitarian operations community, whether they were United States Government workers or relief organization personnel. He was selected to be the military deputy director of the humanitarian operations center and head the main civil-military operations cell in Mogadishu.⁴¹⁹

As part of the operations center, the cell was the clearinghouse for requests of the relief organizations for military support such as convoy escorts, security of facilities, space-availability on military flights, and technical assistance.⁴²⁰ Colonel Kennedy saw his duties as working in two directions. The cell was the link for the relief organizations to the military of UNITAF and UNOSOM. He also had to work closely with Ambassador Oakley and the UNITAF staff to coordinate their support. He assisted the humanitarian organizations to define their logistics requests so they could get what they actually needed, such as the berthing of relief ships, the staging of containers, and setting convoy routes and times. Colonel Kennedy saw the cell needed to be an institution that continued beyond the life of UNITAF. He therefore worked with the Japanese, Germans, Canadians, and others in the solicitation of funds. He also was involved in the development and implementation of relief policy, working with the United Nation's 100-Day Plan,

* Philip Johnston was then the president of CARE USA, and had been appointed by United Nations Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali to lead a 100-day action program for accelerated humanitarian assistance in Somalia.



Photo courtesy of Col Frederick M. Lorenz

Representatives of the major humanitarian relief organizations gather for a daily meeting in the civil-military operations center in Mogadishu. Based on a similar organization established during the Kurdish relief effort in Iraq, the center endeavored to coordinate the civil and military efforts.

and creating a similar plan through 1993 for presentation at the Addis Ababa conferences.⁴²¹

The main cell in Mogadishu did not have a large staff, but it was a busy organization. There were daily meetings to which all relief organizations were invited, along with representatives of the United Nations and the disaster response teams. This was in keeping with Colonel Kennedy's desire to be inclusive. These meetings were used to discuss upcoming humanitarian operations, exchange information, and pass on intelligence. The main cell also had a variety of relief-related responsibilities. It promulgated and explained UNITAF policies to the relief organizations, and it worked closely with the UNITAF operations section in conducting mission planning for requests that needed complicated support, required more than one military unit, or that involved more than one organization. It chaired the Mogadishu port shipping committee to coordinate access to the port and pier space. It maintained a

24-hour watch to respond to emergency requests from relief organizations and coordinate them with the UNITAF staff. It also helped to create a food logistics system for the organizations. This system monitored food stocks, tracked delivery dates, listed warehouse capacities, transport availability, and the repair and condition of the road system.⁴²²

Just as each relief sector had a humanitarian operations center, each also had its own civil-military cell, which maintained contact with Colonel Kennedy's central organization in Mogadishu. These small teams of Marine or Army officers worked closely with the sector commanders and helped provide the same types of support to their local relief organizations. They also were given latitude to work with the local security committees and councils.

Convoy escorts were probably the most visible support the military gave the relief organizations. When an organization was expecting to move a

convoy of trucks loaded with relief supplies, they filled out a standard request and submitted it to the operations cell at least 48 hours in advance. The cell then tasked either a U.S. or coalition partner with escort duty. The relief organization and the military unit then had authorization for direct liaison. The component or coalition partner controlling the relief sector that a convoy was going to was generally tasked with escort duty. Convoys going to those sectors closest to Mogadishu (Baidoa, Bardera, Merka, and Gialalassi) received security escorts all the way to their destinations, but farther districts would split the responsibility. For instance, if a convoy was going to Belet Weyne, the Italians would escort it beyond Gialalassi, and the Canadians would meet them and take it the rest of the way.⁴²³

This was a rather simple process that worked well. For the first 90 days of the operation, UNITAF averaged 70 escorts a month, with monthly averages of 700 trucks carry 9,000 metric tons.* Convoy security gave the relief organizations an additional benefit; they could use trucks to move food to distant areas, so they could provide more food at less cost than they had been able to bring in by airplane. This security not only allowed the World Food Program to bring in its own fleet of trucks, but also increased competition among the local transportation providers, further lowering costs.⁴²⁴

There were some difficulties. Coordination between relief organizations and military units was not always perfect. Occasionally an escort unit was not informed of delays in the formation and start times of convoys. Locally hired trucks were subject to breakdowns, often the result of deliberate sabotage by their drivers who sought to obtain a portion of the shipment when the rest of the convoy had to proceed without them. There were some days when there were simply not enough assets to provide security for all the requested convoys. Some would have to wait, but eventually all convoys received an escort.⁴²⁵

Convoys were not the only humanitarian relief organization assets that required security. The organization oversaw hundreds of offices, warehouses, distribution centers, clinics, and housing for their staff personnel. These facilities, located throughout the country, often fell prey to bandits

since they contained food, medicines, and cash. Many of the relief organizations hired armed guards before the arrival of UNITAF. These mercenaries were often unreliable and prone to resent any attempt to fire them, in which case they became a threat to their employers. While not every place needed UNITAF protection every day, there were times when threats, real or perceived, made it appropriate to call for such assistance.

At such times, staffs of the relief organizations could call a "911-type" emergency number in the civil-military operations center. The request was then passed on to the UNITAF joint operations center, where it was assigned to a component or coalition unit. Again, this was an easy process, but it had its limitations. First, there were four levels the request had to go through: the relief organization; the civil-military operations center; the joint operations center; and then on to the military unit. Response time was increased, therefore, by the request moving along this chain, no matter how quickly each entity tried to pass it on. Also, there were numerous sites that might have to be guarded. Mogadishu alone had 585, and there were more throughout the rest of the area of operations. Consolidation of facilities and spaces could have eased this problem, but the relief sites remained dispersed.⁴²⁶

In addition to simple security needs, the relief organizations also required advice and, from time to time, direct assistance. Brigadier General Zinni, in an assessment of the operation made in March, saw it proceeding on three tracks. There were the obvious military and political portions. Then there was the humanitarian aspect, which he described as going beyond the "short-term sense of getting food and emergency care to the people that are in jeopardy, but it's also the long-term reconstruction in terms of getting public services started: hospitals, public works, that sort of thing."⁴²⁷ He had praise for Philip Johnston and his work with the United Nations in the humanitarian operations center, and the establishment of the plan for the development of the country. But providing the kind of actions envisioned was difficult.

The problems with giving this kind of assistance were limitations under United States law of what the military could provide and the obscure boundary between legitimate civil affairs-type activities and nation-building, which was to be left to the United Nations. Within this gray area, however, there was room for work to be done by

* These figures are only for convoys going out of Mogadishu, and do not count the convoys traveling inside the city.



Photo courtesy of Col Frederick M. Lorenz

UNITAF's chief engineer briefs humanitarian relief workers on new and ongoing projects at the civil-military operations center in Mogadishu.

the troops in the field. As Colonel Kennedy said: "the [Civil Affairs] program has been laissez-faire; do it if you want to, do it if you can."⁴²⁸ The money that could be legally spent on such projects was limited (a small amount of operations and maintenance funds), as was the ability to define it as work that benefited UNITAF and thus assisted the overall security mission.⁴²⁹

Out in coalition units, soldiers and Marines had the desire to help the Somalis in more positive ways than simply providing security. They had another necessary asset; time in their off-duty hours to volunteer for such work if they so wished. It was not long before commanders took advantage of these attributes of their troops. On 24 December, Colonel Gregory S. Newbold, commanding officer of the 15th MEU (SOC), initiated Project Hand Clasp, a program to assist schools, orphanages, and other organizations in the town of Baidoa. Through these actions, Colonel Newbold sought to maintain a benevolent

image of his Marines in the minds of local Somalis. The work had the added benefit of keeping up the morale of the MarFor personnel involved. In January, these Marines began Operation Renaissance in Mogadishu. This civil affairs operation combined medical and dental assistance visits with security sweeps of the area between the airfield and the port. These actions helped to stabilize the neighborhood and make it safer for UNITAF troops.⁴³⁰

Later, MarFor in Mogadishu worked closely with local schools. The Marines saw two benefits to these actions. Schools represented a piece of normalcy for the population, and they would keep children off the streets and away from trouble and harm. The Marines wrote to relatives and friends at Marine Corps Bases Camp Pendleton and Twentynine Palms, California, soliciting school supplies. The United Nations Children's Fund provided special educational kits for teachers, school staff, and students. These were given to

schools close to the soccer stadium, a main MarFor site, and one was sent on to Bardera. In a particularly dangerous area of Mogadishu, which warring factions claimed, the schools needed more than just supplies. The presence and activities of a MarFor civil-military operations team at these schools kept them from being attacked or looted. The team also contacted the World Food Program on behalf of the teachers and staff and procured supplies of corn, cooking oil, and sugar.⁴³¹

In the farther relief sectors things were happening in much the same fashion. Colonel Werner Hellmer, the MarFor officer-in-charge of the civil-military operations center, had established civil-military operations teams in Bardera and Baidoa. Working on the adage that actions speak louder than words, the Marines in these sectors, noted Hellmer, "get actively involved with the people ... one on one. ... We went out there and got involved, saw what the people wanted, how we could help them, and we did that."⁴³² What they got involved in was the provision of security to wells, protection of schools by visible patrolling, and assistance to schools and orphanages. Repairing water mains, leveling of school grounds, repairing classroom spaces, and other small maintenance projects were coordinated with Marine combat engineers and Seabees. Materials were not specifically requisitioned for the projects; but in a land where any building materials were scarce, scrap lumber was kept and used for such purposes.⁴³³

These experiences of the Marines were not

unique. They were repeated in all the other sectors, whether run by Army Forces Somalia or a coalition member. Within a short while, the security operations, the work of the relief organizations, and that of the civil-military operations teams all had their effect on the daily lives of the Somali people. As Colonel Hellmer said of Bardera and Baidoa:

You could see them blossom. ... The shops were open, the kids were in the street, children were now taking the donkeys and water burros and getting [containers] filled without the adults there with them. You saw bicycles on the street, kids playing soccer, children carrying bags of rice, which they weren't able to do several weeks before because they got robbed. The storefronts, the signs were being painted. You saw electricity in Baidoa. ... They were rebuilding places. The economy was starting to thrive. The marketplace was open. There was music. People in the streets sitting in front of their houses now without barricading themselves in the compound. Those are just the changes we saw within thirty days.⁴³⁴

During the third phase of the operation, successes were observed throughout the theater. Coupled with the decrease of violence and the improved security situation, many members of UNITAF felt their part of the task of restoring Somalia to the community of nations was close to an end. They hoped they might soon return home, but for that to happen the United Nations had to be prepared to accept the mantle of responsibility.

Part III

Getting Out



Chapter 9

Transition and Return

United Nations Relationship

From the very beginning, United States military and civil leaders maintained close ties to their counterparts in the United Nations. Senior U.S. Government officials met with the U.N. staff “two or three times each week” about the Somalia operation.⁴³⁵ By January 1993, military planners from U.S. Central Command were in New York “to assist the undermanned U.N. Military Staff Committee in developing its concept of operations and list of logistics requirements. Those planners remained available to the United Nations while it stood up a functional staff in Mogadishu in April.”⁴³⁶

It was much the same in the field. Iraq’s Ismat T. Kittani, the special representative of the Secretary General of the United Nations, met regularly with his U.S. counterpart, Ambassador Robert B. Oakley. In particular, Kittani attended the very first meeting between Ambassador Oakley, Lieutenant General Robert B. Johnston, and the faction leaders on 11 December.⁴³⁷ Thereafter, the military and political sides of Unified Task Force Somalia (UNITAF) worked closely with the U.N. staff, most notably Lansana Kouyate of Guinea, the deputy U.N. special representative, in establishing and running the Addis Ababa conferences.⁴³⁸ On the military side, General Johnston’s staff maintained close cooperation and exchanged liaison officers with Brigadier General Imtiaz Shaheen’s United Nations Organization Somalia (UNOSOM) staff. The UNITAF operations staff was especially helpful to UNOSOM by drafting the plans for disarmament and ceasefire that came from the initial Addis Ababa talks. Also, Marine Colonel Kevin M. Kennedy, from the UNITAF civil-military operations cell, was the military deputy director of the humanitarian operations center, headed by Philip Johnston, a United Nations appointee.

This close cooperation would be strained as time went on. By early March, UNITAF had accomplished much in terms of creating security, ending famine, and helping to encourage reconciliation and the reconstruction of social structures.

The members of UNITAF also knew they were never intended to be the long-term solution to Somalia’s problems; that work fell more appropriately to the United Nations. Unfortunately, the U.N. was slow in coming. Brigadier General Anthony C. Zinni summed up the general feeling at this time: “I think the process [of reconciliation] is well along the way. I think the faction leaders and the Somalis are ready to begin the process. Frankly, I don’t feel the U.N. is prepared at this point ... though I feel they’ve got to deal relatively quickly because they cannot lose this window of opportunity when everyone appears very cooperative.”⁴³⁹ General Zinni also was clear about what was necessary for the U.N. to be successful in taking over responsibilities in this transition period. “The key to the fourth phase is the U.N. structures to provide security and basic humanitarian needs. Nations of the world must provide funding and forces. The presence of security forces will be needed for a while. The factions must reconcile their differences and agree on how to restructure the government. The U.N. must help with basic services and infrastructure to allow them to be self-sustaining: [these are] growth and exports, security forces, police and militia, political development, humanitarian services.”⁴⁴⁰

The difficulties facing the United Nations in fielding its UNOSOM II force reflected its differences from UNITAF in operational capabilities and goals. The operation in Somalia presented the U.N. with many challenges, and, as an international organization, it had to work its way through them in accordance with its own structures and diplomatic methods. As Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali stated, the operation in Somalia was distinct from nearly every other operation in which the United Nations had been involved.

There was no precedent for the organization [U.N.] to follow as it embarked on this course, no example but the one it was about to set, and there were many unanswered questions about the undertaking to which the international community had committed itself. Would member Governments contribute sufficient troops, including the neces-

sary logistics elements, and place them under the command of the United Nations? Would these forces be deployed in time for a smooth transition from UNITAF? Would the troop-contributing countries follow through on an enforcement mission if hostile action by one or more of the factions led to casualties among their troops? And would member states be willing to pay for what would inevitably be an expensive operation at a time when the United Nations peace-keeping budget was growing faster than at any point in its history?⁴⁴¹

The United Nations did not have a readily available body of troops, nor did it have command elements from which it could draw to construct its new UNOSOM II force. These would all have to be solicited from member states, and this would take time.

Even more important to the United Nations were the conditions it saw as necessary to be in place for the transition. The question of building organizations and military systems was the easier

of the U.N.'s two hurdles in taking over the operation. The second, and more difficult, concerned specific aims for UNITAF. In a letter to President George H. W. Bush on 8 December, the Secretary-General emphasized two conditions, which he believed to be important for a successful transition:

The first was that UNITAF, before its withdrawal, should ensure that the heavy weapons of the organized factions were brought under international control and that the irregular gangs were disarmed. The second essential condition for a successful transition, I believed, was for UNITAF to exercise its mandate throughout Somalia. ... Countrywide deployment was indispensable as the militias could simply withdraw their heavy weapons to parts of Somalia where the task force had not been deployed and bide their time. The problems of reconciliation, disarmament, and demobilization were national in character and thus required UNITAF's presence throughout the country.⁴⁴²



Photo courtesy of Col Frederick M. Lorenz

On 3 April 1993, representatives of the 16 Somali factions meet at the United Nations headquarters in Mogadishu to discuss disarmament. At the head of the table is BGen Imtiaz Shaheen, Pakistani Army, UNOSOM I military commander.

This was very different from UNITAF's perception of its mission. As General Johnston stated in February 1993: "I had specific guidance ... that our mission was focused on an area that required humanitarian relief. Quite frankly, disarmament was only required for us to conduct our humanitarian mission."⁴⁴³ At the next level of the chain-of-command, General Joseph P. Hoar, the commander in chief of Central Command, agreed with General Johnston's assessment: "Disarmament was excluded from the mission because it was neither realistically achievable nor a prerequisite for the core mission of providing a secure environment for relief operations."⁴⁴⁴

Ambassador Oakley stated the United States Government's position in even more detail a few years later:

The United States was convinced that despite its own military superiority, the Somalis would fight rather than give up all their weapons under external coercion. Complete disarmament of all the factions would have required at least a doubling of the UNITAF personnel and, almost certainly, would have resulted in substantial casualties, as well as a disruption of humanitarian operations.

The United States was prepared to support and assist the United Nations on the broader, long-term issue of beginning a systematic program of voluntary demobilization and disarmament under United Nations auspices, but not willing to accept formal responsibility for this long-term, major program. Its UNITAF partners agreed with this proposal and were prepared to participate. The United Nations, however, refused responsibility. Consequently, the program was not undertaken.⁴⁴⁵

This wide gulf continued throughout February, March, and April, and it would affect the eventual transition. The result was a dilemma for both sides. For the U.N., the difference between its earlier peacekeeping missions and this one of peace enforcement meant it had to have a military organization of comparable size and strength to UNITAF working under similar rules of engagement. The time required to assemble a staff and build a force was lengthened by U.N. reluctance to assume responsibility before its conditions were met by UNITAF. The coalition partners were frustrated because they had fulfilled their own missions, and were providing the U.N. with exact-

ly the window of opportunity of which General Zinni spoke.

UNITAF restructuring also caused concern. While General Johnston had no doubts about the ability of UNITAF to do its job as it drew back to its two light brigades, not everyone shared his optimism. In his mind, the two actions of reduction and transition were separate issues. He also knew he had to keep his superiors comfortable about what he was doing. As he put it, he wanted to "de-link" the two actions in the minds of those at Joint Chiefs of Staff and Central Command. That was difficult, because the lack of U.N. movement delayed high-level approval for shipping units out of Somalia.⁴⁴⁶

The draw down was also affected by events in the area of operations. The confrontations between factional groups under Mohamed Said Hirsi (known as General Morgan) and Colonel Ahmed Omar Jess in Kismayo in February and March were handled quickly by UNITAF, but they were indications the situation was still volatile. To U.N. Secretary General Boutros-Ghali "the events in Kismayo were a serious violation of the ceasefire and a setback to hopes that the factions would hand over their heavy weapons. Action by just one faction was enough to risk unraveling the progress made in Addis Ababa and jeopardize the delicate stability established by UNITAF."⁴⁴⁷ UNITAF did not see the situation as being so delicate as did the U.N., but these actions did delay the return of some U.S. Army units from Kismayo and slowed the overall reduction of units.⁴⁴⁸

With the slower pace of the reductions and the wait for the arrival of UNOSOM II, UNITAF continued its work from February to May. One additional aspect, on the political side, was to support the next round of talks in Addis Ababa in March.

Lansana Kouyate led this important conference, sponsored by the United Nations. The talks opened on schedule on the 15th and continued for 12 days. All factions were represented except the Somali National Movement, which controlled the northwest portion of the country it declared to be the independent nation of Somaliland.* By 27 March, the representatives had adopted a unanimous "Addis Ababa Agreement of the First

* The Somali National Movement did send observers to the conference.

Session of the Conference on National Reconciliation in Somalia.” This agreement committed all factions to ending their armed conflict and to a peaceful reconciliation of differences. The agreement also set a two-year transition period for a new central government that would come into being in March 1995. All parties recognized the need for local governments, district and regional councils, and a national police force. Of concern for UNITAF was the provision by which the factions agreed to a “complete and simultaneous disarmament” throughout the country. UNITAF and UNOSOM were asked to assist in this process by accepting the weapons of the factions. The turn-in process was to be completed within 90 days. These two organizations were also asked to react strongly against those who might violate the ceasefire.⁴⁴⁹

Despite the impressive cooperation by the factions expressed in the wording of the agreements, success depended on the willingness of all parties to make the accords work. No one was fooled into an unrealistic sense of optimism, yet the next several weeks remained a quiet time throughout the area of operations. It was during this period the U.N. forces began to arrive.

Slow Transition to U.N. Control

UNITAF and Central Command had begun to plan for the transition as early as 23 December 1992. On that date, a point paper was issued setting very broad guidance for the transfer of responsibilities, the establishment of a quick reaction force, and the residual support the United States would provide to UNOSOM II. It even included a notional U.N. peacekeeping organization. While some points of this paper eventually changed, this was a start for planning. The proposed plan required UNITAF to maintain control over the entire area of operations until it was secure; suggested that coalition partners remaining under UNOSOM II be emplaced in the humanitarian relief sectors they would eventually control; and called for the UNITAF staff to gradually work with and give responsibility to the UNOSOM II staff.⁴⁵⁰ But such a broad plan left many specifics to be worked out on the ground, actions considered to be appropriate to the UNOSOM II staff, and this planning would fall by default to UNITAF. General Johnston expressed some of the anxiety felt by UNITAF members

who had to do this work on their own in January, February, and March:

I could see all of these frustrations that affected our mission, of things that we knew had to be done by UNOSOM II in the big picture [reconstitution of the police force, working with the humanitarian relief organizations, civil-military operations, refugee resettlement, disarmament, and cantonment], not just our limited mission. You know, professionally, you take some pride in looking ahead and saying what needs to be done. ... But for the last month at least ... I have been making decisions for him [Turkish Lieutenant General Cevik Bir, the incoming UNOSOM II commander]. ... I don't want to make decisions on where the cantonment areas are, where the resettlement areas are, because I won't be here. General Bir is going to have to execute, and should have been here to do the planning. ... We are only now, in the first few days of March ... seeing the blue hats starting to form in here. ... The U.N. still does not have a staff.⁴⁵¹

General Johnston also was busy pushing his superiors, within the bounds allowed him as a military officer, to bring pressure on the United Nations to move more quickly. “Ambassador Oakley was very useful in doing that. I mean, he came on publicly. I came on in message traffic. Some of them were [in the form of] daily telephone calls to the [Commander in Chief of Central Command] saying, ‘We need some help. Who is pushing the U.N.’”⁴⁵²

While the United Nations was not moving as quickly as it might have, it had chosen the commander of its new UNOSOM II force. Lieutenant General Cevik Bir was a Turkish officer, described by General Johnston as having “a good operational background, good reputation.”⁴⁵³ He was chosen to be the commanding general of UNOSOM II because of his military background and his religion. Placing a Muslim in charge was a bow to the sensibilities of the vast majority of the Somali people. It was hoped this would establish a bond between the populace and the new United Nations presence.

General Bir had been on one brief inspection to Somalia in late February. Unfortunately, the timing of this visit was poor. He had arrived at the time of the troubles in Kismayo and Mogadishu, and the UNITAF staff's attention was not focused

on the general who would lead their replacements. As noted in a Navy Forces Somalia situation report: "The unfortunate timing of these clashes near the American Embassy compound has caused the curtailment of briefings for Gen Bir. [General] Johnston has concluded it is difficult to focus on briefings with this activity nearby."⁴⁵⁴

General Bir returned on 15 March, but his command was still in an embryonic stage. Members of the UNOSOM staff came in individually or in small groups at this time. The UNITAF staff did its best to accommodate and inform them about the operation and the duties they would fulfill. On 11 March, for instance, UNITAF held a meeting for the UNOSOM II chief of staff, Brigadier General James S. Cox, Canadian Army, who had arrived a few days before. He met with the deputy commanders of the chiefs of staff of all those forces that would participate in UNOSOM II. Three days prior, General Cox and UNOSOM II communications personnel had moved into the embassy compound with their equipment. That same day, the UNITAF operations staff officially started their transition to UNOSOM II. Less than a week later, on the 14th, General Johnston approved UNITAF's final transition plan. The next day, UNOSOM II staff members began to integrate with the UNITAF operations watch center in a process called "twinning."⁴⁵⁵ General Johnston described this twinning process as "sitting counterparts next to our counterparts, and we'll work with them ... until they're ready to take the hand-off."⁴⁵⁶

On 3 March, Secretary General Boutros-Ghali reported to the U.N. Security Council, "the effort undertaken by UNITAF to establish a secure environment is far from complete and in any case has not attempted to address the situation throughout all of Somalia." Following the advice given to him by United States officials as early as 18 December, Boutros-Ghali sought a new mandate for UNOSOM that would change it from peacekeeping to peace enforcement. UNOSOM II should, in his words, "cover all of Somalia ... and include disarmament."⁴⁵⁷ To ensure the success of

this mission, he sought a mandate for the new force that would achieve several goals: to monitor all factions with respect to the ceasefire agreements; to prevent resumption of violence, using force if necessary; to maintain control of the factions' heavy weapons; to seize the small arms of unauthorized armed groups; to maintain the security of all ports, airfields, and lines of communications; to protect the lives of United Nations and relief organization personnel; to clear mines; and to assist refugees.⁴⁵⁷

With the exception of the extension of the mission to "all of Somalia" and the emphasis on total disarmament, none of this was different from what UNITAF had been doing for months. The document did, however, show that the U.N. recognized the new UNOSOM II organization needed to be very strong to match this mandate. Boutros-Ghali proposed to the Security Council that UNOSOM II have 28,000 troops, including 8,000 in logistics roles. Logistical support was to come primarily from UNITAF troops already in Somalia. This meant the Support Command would continue to be a major contributor. Also, the United States was asked to provide a quick reaction force. On 26 March, the Security Council adopted Resolution 814, which provided a mandate for UNOSOM II and included all the conditions Boutros-Ghali had asked for.⁴⁵⁸ A tentative transition date was set for 1 May.

Following these actions, personnel began arriving in Somalia to prepare for the transition. Two important additions to the United Nations staff were both Americans. Retired U.S. Navy Admiral Jonathan T. Howe was appointed as the new Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary General, and Major General Thomas Montgomery, USA, was selected as the UNOSOM II deputy force commander.

General Montgomery's appointment revealed a strange dichotomy in the force structure. Not only was he UNOSOM II deputy commander, he also was the commanding general of the United States Forces in Somalia for UNOSOM. These forces were split along two chains-of-command. Most of the U.S. troops were part of the logistics support to the operation as well as part of the United Nations force. There was also the 1,100-man quick reaction force for UNOSOM II, the 10th Mountain Division "Warrior Brigade," which had been filling the same role for UNITAF. It also reported to General Montgomery. But others reported through their own chains-of-command.

* This was written less than one week after the Kismayo-Mogadishu disturbances of late February, which likely influenced the Secretary General's perception.

** UNOSOM II's area of responsibility eventually extended farther north than that of UNITAF, but only to the city of Galcaio.



Photo courtesy of Col Frederick M. Lorenz

Leaders from U.S. Marine Forces Somalia, from left, Col Jack W. Klimp, Marine Forces deputy commander, Col Emil R. Bedard, Task Force Mogadishu commander, and Col Werner Hellmer, staff judge advocate and head of the Marine Forces civil-military operations team, wait to meet Somali elders.

These included a U.S. Marine expeditionary unit, which would remain on call as the theater reserve. In August, another United States unit independent of U.N. control was sent to Somalia. This was Task Force Ranger and was composed of Army Rangers and Special Forces. Major General William F. Garrison, USA, commanded the force, which reported directly to Central Command's commander, General Hoar.

Several of UNITAF's coalition partners would remain to participate in UNOSOM II, which made the United Nations' search for contributing nations easier and enabled the transition to progress more rapidly. Pakistan, already present in UNOSOM I and UNITAF, sent two additional battalions, creating an infantry brigade. Several other nations made commitments. India, Ireland, Norway, Bangladesh, Nepal, Romania, Republic of Korea, and Malaysia eventually sent troops. Many of these forces were slow to join UNOSOM II. At the time of the official transition, the force was still 11,000 soldiers short of its goal.

UNITAF had been realigning forces to ensure those remaining would be in place and operating in their designated relief sectors by the time of the transition. These included the French, Italians, Belgians, Australians, Moroccans, Pakistanis, Botswanans, and Turks. At the same time, United States forces continued their redeployment schedules. Army and Marine Corps units withdrew from the field and moved back to Mogadishu prior to embarkation. Both Army Forces Somalia and Marine Forces Somalia (MarFor) were down to light brigade strengths by late March and early April.

On 4 March, Army Forces Somalia directed Task Force Kismayo to prepare to turn over full responsibility for the relief sectors to the Belgians the next day and then return to Mogadishu. On the 11th, the task force completed this movement and redeployed from Somalia. The 10th Mountain Division's main command post was on the same flight, and its commander, Major General Steven L. Arnold, departed two days later.⁴⁵⁹ On 9 April,

the Warrior Brigade, which would stay as part of UNOSOM II, assumed all responsibility for Merka sector, the quick reaction force, and all remaining Army operations in Somalia. This flexible brigade was composed of the 1st Battalion, 22d Infantry; 3d Battalion, 25th Aviation; 10th Forward Support Battalion; and other support detachments. When the Merka sector was turned over to the Pakistani forces on 28 April, the Warrior Brigade moved into new quarters at the university complex and airport in Mogadishu.⁴⁶⁰

The Marines continued their redeployments leading to the light brigade level, and by the 13th they had realigned their forces between Bardera and Mogadishu. By 17 March, the 7th Marines had consolidated in Mogadishu, and Task Force Bardera remained in that city for the time being. On 21 March, the light brigade staff "assumed all watches in the MarFor CP [Command Post]," while the staff of the 7th Marines moved from the soccer stadium to the embassy compound. Two days later, Major General Charles E. Wilhelm left for Camp Pendleton. Colonel Jack W. Klimp replaced him as MarFor commander. Over the next few weeks, the focus of the remaining Marines was to work with coalition forces to turn over responsibilities. In Mogadishu, these were

Pakistani soldiers and those of the United Arab Emirates. In Bardera, the task force worked with the Botswanans. On 9 April, Colonel Klimp returned to the United States and Colonel Emil R. Bedard, commanding officer of the 7th Marines, assumed duties as commander of MarFor. On 18 April, the Botswanans assumed responsibility for Bardera sector. In Mogadishu, the Marines passed operational control of the United Arab Emirates forces to the Italians on 15 April. On the 24th, MarFor ceased patrolling in the city and turned over their principle areas of interest to the Pakistanis. On the 26th, the MarFor Marine Aircraft Group 16 made its last flights and ceased operations. That day, MarFor formally turned over all its responsibilities to the Pakistani forces of UNOSOM II during a ceremony attended by members of the UNOSOM II and UNITAF staffs, members of the Somali auxiliary security force, and representatives of all the remaining coalition forces. Remaining MarFor elements began redeploying the next day.⁴⁶¹

By the beginning of May, the work of UNITAF was done. In five months of unrelenting effort it had formed itself from four branches of the American Armed Forces and 22 coalition nations; deployed rapidly to Somalia; worked through a



Photo courtesy of the Italian Armed Forces

LtGen Robert B. Johnston transfers responsibility for operations in Somalia to Turkish LtGen Cevik Bir at a formal ceremony held in May 1993 at the U.S. Embassy compound in Mogadishu.



Photo courtesy of the Clinton Presidential Library (P3276-04)

President William J. Clinton welcomes LtGen Robert B. Johnston to the White House, where he presented him with the Defense Distinguished Service Medal. "I'm receiving the medal," LtGen Johnston said, "but a lot of 18 and 19-year-old men and women in uniform demonstrated enormous discipline, good judgment, and a good deal of patience in performing a rather unique mission."

number of complex issues while conducting demanding military operations; succeeded in its security mission; and prepared the way for its replacement, UNOSOM II. On 4 May, in a ceremony held at the embassy compound, Lieutenant General Johnston passed responsibility for operations in Somalia to Lieutenant General Bir. Shortly after, General Johnston and the remaining members of his staff boarded an airplane for the long flight home.

They arrived in Washington the next day. There the new U.S. president, William J. Clinton, met them in a special ceremony on the south lawn of the White House and thanked them for all they had done and accomplished. In his remarks, the President summed up what had been done in a short time:

You represent the thousands who served in this crucial operation—in the First Marine Expeditionary Force, in the 10th Mountain

Division, aboard the Navy's Tripoli Amphibious Ready Group, in the Air Force and Air National Guard airlift squadrons, and in other units in each of our services. Over 30,000 American military personnel served at sometime in these last five months in Somalia. And serving alongside you were thousands of others from 20 nations.

Although your mission was humanitarian and not combat, you nonetheless faced difficult and dangerous conditions. You sometimes were subjected to abuse and forced to dodge rocks and even bullets. You saw firsthand the horror of hunger, disease, and death. But you pressed on with what you set out to do and were successful. You have served in the best tradition of the Armed Forces of the United States.

To understand the magnitude of what our forces in Somalia accomplished, the world need only look back at Somalia's condition

just six months ago. Hundreds of thousands of people were starving; armed anarchy ruled the land and the streets of every city and town. Today, food is flowing, crops are growing, schools and hospitals are reopening. Although there is still much to be done if enduring peace is to prevail, one can now envision a day when Somalia will be reconstructed as a functioning civil society.⁴⁶²

After the ceremony, the former members of UNITAF continued their journey home to resume their lives and various duties, and the Unified Task Force dissolved back into its individual units.

In Somalia, the forces of UNOSOM II did not wait long to be tested. On 6 and 7 May, the forces of factional leader General Mohamed Farah Hassan Aideed's ally, Colonel Omar Jess, clashed with the Belgians while trying to retake the city of Kismayo. This was the precursor to bloody fights in June, July, and October.

Epilogue

On 1 March 1995, Lieutenant General Anthony C. Zinni returned to Mogadishu as the commanding general of a combined coalition task force. Seven nations provided ships and amphibious forces for Operation United Shield.* The mission was to protect the last UNOSOM II forces, Pakistani and Bangladeshi soldiers, as they withdrew from Somalia. Earlier that day, 1,800 U.S. Marines of the 13th Marine Expeditionary Unit (Special Operations Capable) and 350 Italian Marines landed and set up a defensive perimeter. The operation was completed 73 hours later.

The intervening two years since the departure of UNITAF had not been kind to either the United Nations forces or to the Somalis. Shortly after the departure of the Unified Task Force, a subtle but important change in the mission came about that had profound effects on UNOSOM II and the participation of the United States in the operation.

General Aideed had not forgotten the incidents of late February 1993 in Mogadishu and Kismayo. On 5 June that year, in a bold and confrontational move, his forces attacked a contingent of Pakistani troops, killing 24 of the UNOSOM sol-

diers.* This challenge to the United Nations was answered by trying to destroy Aideed's power structure. He was declared a criminal and UNOSOM II, with the support of the Clinton administration and United States forces, began to actively seek to capture him to bring him to justice. This action may have appeared appropriate, but it overlooked the fact that Aideed was still a respected and influential figure to a large number of his countrymen. This act also tore the fabric of neutrality by singling out Aideed as a specific target, which fed his propaganda machine. Finally, it placed UNOSOM troops in direct confrontation with Aideed's strong political faction, and its militia forces in the city.

American forces, notably Task Force Ranger, tracked down and captured several of Aideed's high-ranking subordinates. In an unfortunate incident on 12 July, missiles fired from helicopter gunships burst into a house at which leaders of Aideed's United Somali Congress faction and elders of Aideed's Habr Gedr clan were holding a meeting. Many Somalis were killed, some estimates of the number dead reached as high as 70. Many previously neutral Somalis believed they had to defend their homes and their land against the United Nations and joined Aideed's camp. Although lightly armed, these soldiers were aware of American tactics and conformed their own to make the best use of what was available. On 25 September, a militiaman shot down a helicopter with a rocket-propelled grenade, a highly unusual feat. Having proven it could be done, Aideed's forces awaited their next opportunity, which came on 3 October.

That day, Aideed was to attend a meeting with some of his chief lieutenants. The site for the meeting was identified and a task force of U.S. Rangers and Special Forces was sent to capture him. The mission ran into trouble even as the helicopters carrying the assault force approached the

* The Pakistani soldiers were on an operation to inspect one of General Aideed's compounds in Mogadishu. During Operation Restore Hope, these inspections were announced shortly before they would take place, but not with enough lead time for the factions to move or hide anything. The inspections were thus not a total surprise to the factions, and they knew why they were taking place. Unlike such inspections under UNITAF, this one was unannounced. The compound also adjoined the site of Aideed's Radio Mogadishu transmitting station. Claiming the United Nations soldiers were there to shut down the station, Aideed was able to rally his followers in a deadly attack.

* Nations participating in Operation United Shield were the United States, Great Britain, France, Italy, Malaysia, Pakistan, and Bangladesh.



DVIC DD-SD-00-00884

Somali men carry bags of wheat delivered by a Marine CH-53 Sea Stallion helicopter assigned to Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 363.

target building. A rocket-propelled grenade struck one helicopter, forcing it to land close to the target. Another was shot down shortly thereafter, also by a rocket, and crashed a few blocks away. The mission then turned from one of capturing Somali leaders into one of also rescuing the survivors of the downed aircraft and bringing out the force. The Rangers were soon surrounded by hundreds of Somali militiamen firing on them with small arms and rocket-propelled grenade. The reaction force, composed of soldiers of the 10th Mountain Division, had to fight its way through the streets of the city, which were now filled with thousands of militiamen and civilians trying to kill as many UNOSOM troops as they could. After 15 hours of fighting, the convoys returned to the base at the airport, bringing the survivors and most of the dead. The price was 18 Americans killed and 78 wounded. The cost, along with the pictures of dead U.S. soldiers being dragged through the streets by gloating Somalis, was more than the administration was willing to pay.

A decision to withdraw American forces from Somalia was made shortly after. With the most powerful member state of UNOSOM II leaving, other nations followed suit. By the beginning of 1995, the United Nations announced that UNO-

SOM II was to end on 31 March. Operation United Shield was actually conducted weeks before that date. As the final U.N. troops were ready for their withdrawal from Mogadishu, Marines were ordered to provide security for the operation. The last U.N. and American forces left the country on 4 March.

After the U.N. departure from Somalia, things continued as they had before. Aideed and Ali Mahdi Mohamed still vied for power and bloodshed continued unabated, along with suffering of innocent people. All this happened as if a curtain had descended around the country's borders. What occurred in Somalia received little attention in the world press. Only unusual news came out. For instance, General Mohamed Farah Aideed was killed in a gun battle in Mogadishu on 1 August 1996. Shortly afterwards, his son, Hussein, who had served with UNITAF as a United States Marine Corps corporal and translator, returned to Somalia and took over his father's position. Somalia is still divided. The northern portion claims its independence as Somaliland, although it is not, as yet, recognized. In the south, the area of Operation Restore Hope, the fighting and dying continues. Cities and towns change hands, and a few humanitarian relief organiza-

tions still try to bring some assistance. The talks between the factions continue amid reshuffling alliances. The State Department still issues strongly worded warnings about travel in Somalia, and the country is listed as one of the world's most dangerous places.

But, in spite of such results, some good came from Operation Restore Hope. UNITAF did succeed in ending the famine and holding down the violence during its time in Somalia. Some accounts claim more than 200,000 lives were saved by the efforts of UNITAF in getting relief supplies through. As the Joint Meritorious Unit Award citation to UNITAF states:

Unified Task Force Somalia enabled the delivery of over 42,000 metric tons of relief supplies to the starving population, disarmed warring factions, fostered a ceasefire, and restored police and judiciary systems. Through the intervention and leadership of Unified Task Force Somalia, relief efforts of over 60 different aid and relief organizations and the support of 23 nations were coordinated and focused to reverse a human tragedy of famine and disease that was claiming the lives of thousands each day.

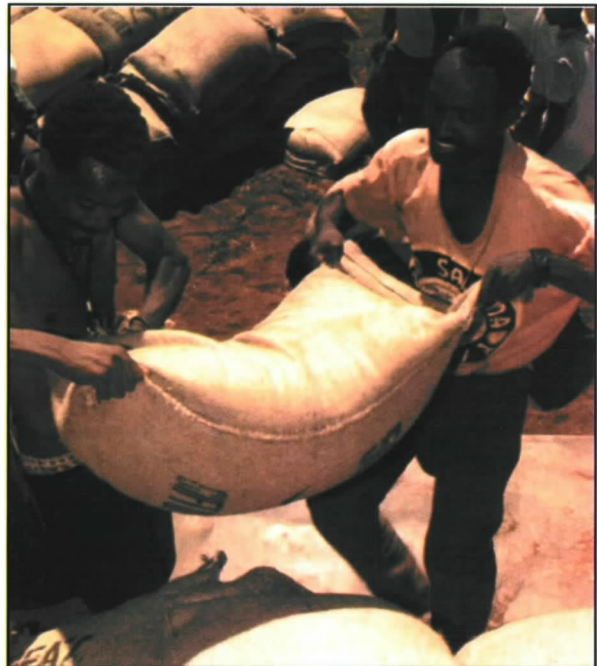
Operation Restore Hope, along with its predecessor Operation Provide Comfort, opened a decade of humanitarian relief and peacemaking operations. The experience of each has contributed to the success of the next, and many of the issues that were of importance during Restore Hope have remained through subsequent operations. They are part of the current military world.

One of the operation's greatest strengths was the close relationship that existed between the military and the political sides. The cooperation between the commanding general and the special envoy was seamless and presented a united front to the Somali factions. It also ensured the members of the coalition were working toward goals established for UNITAF. The support that Lieutenant General Johnston and Ambassador Oakley provided to each other set a standard for future joint task forces assigned to such humanitarian missions.

The idea of force protection continues to permeate military planning at the beginning of the new century. In a humanitarian or peacekeeping role, how many casualties are Americans willing to tolerate? This question was forcefully answered for the specific instance of Somalia in October

1993. However, with each new operation commanders must consider how success depends on keeping their soldiers safe and casualties within acceptable limits. The measures taken to ensure this safety can range from permissive rules of engagement which allow individual soldiers to take action against perceived threats to the wearing of protective vests and helmets at all times. These latter measures especially can impose a burden on soldiers or Marines working in tropical or desert climates. Equally important, they can become a physical reminder to any opposing force of the unacceptability of loss to Americans. This can become a weakness in itself, if only in perception. Finding the proper balance is a commander's responsibility.

Nation building is another term that has been heard referring to Somalia, Haiti, Bosnia, and Kosovo. In any situation characterized by civil war and the destruction of civil institutions and structures, the successful completion of the mission will depend in some part on the reconstitution of those agencies. What is appropriate in one case may not be in another. In Somalia, the intent of UNITAF was to encourage the Somalis to take responsibility for their own governance and inter-



DVIC DD-SD-00-01026

Two Somali men load large bags of Australian wheat on the back of a truck for transport to the village of Maleel. The distribution was a cooperative effort of U.S. Marines, who provided the helicopter support, and the Australian Army, which secured the delivery perimeter.

nal security. In Bosnia, the active assistance with civil structures and economic development was more deliberate. Again, the responsible commander will have to determine how much support to provide without entangling his unit or his government in the affairs of a recovering nation.

The reconstitution of police forces was another issue that first became important in Somalia and then came up elsewhere. The United States-led intervention in Haiti quickly worked with an international police component to recruit, train, and deploy police forces throughout the country. If this latter case was more successful, it was because of the recent experience in Somalia.*

The long wait for the United Nations to field its UNOSOM II force tried the patience of UNITAF. The fact that the United Nations might have an agenda that differed from that of the United States and its coalition partners was hardly surprising, but it foreshadowed the vast difference in mission that would come after UNITAF turned over responsibility. The nature of the relationship between the U.N. and those U.S. forces assigned to it was also fraught with difficulty, because the United States tried to keep a course, which allowed it to maintain its national objectives while concurrently serving as part of a larger peace-keeping force. The split between United States and United Nations forces may have been a contributing factor in the clash of 3 October 1993. The experience of Somalia was helpful in Haiti, where the United Nations force came in more quickly and better prepared for its mission.

While the original mission was seemingly very straightforward, it soon was necessary to determine the bounds of what was acceptable to accomplish that mission. The term mission creep was invoked as a check for every extra action UNITAF was asked to perform. The repair of roads, building of bridges, and other physical improvements were permissible if they would aid the task force mission. The internal operation of the country was to be left to the Somalis, with encouragement from UNITAF. Full disarmament was never an option for UNITAF, but with the transition to the United Nations, the definition of what was appropriate began to change. From the

initial goal of providing a secure environment, the forces under the United Nations were drawn more and more into the internal affairs of Somalia, and eventually lost the neutrality maintained with such rigor under UNITAF.

The experiences of the staff of I Marine Expeditionary Force creating a joint task force headquarters and bringing together a coalition force have been incorporated into several missions that followed. Provisions for standing joint task force headquarters, and the recognition of the needs and capabilities of coalition partners, are now a part of the joint warfare doctrine of the United States.

Relations with civilian organizations were important during Restore Hope. Working from the recent experience of the Kurdish relief operation, the staff of UNITAF quickly built an effective civil-military operations structure that extended throughout the country. While relations with some of the humanitarian relief organizations or their staff members proved difficult at times, it was recognized they had legitimate concerns, they were a source of valuable information, and they were important to the successful completion of the operation. The civil-military structures in each succeeding operation have improved based on the experience of Somalia, and the need to work cooperatively with these organizations is now incorporated into service and joint doctrine.

Each military operation is unique. The conditions that existed in Restore Hope have not been duplicated exactly in the campaigns that followed. Each of these has been a beneficiary of the ideas, structures, and solutions that were so carefully thought out and implemented for the first time in the deserts and cities of Somalia. The legacy of Operation Restore Hope lies in these: the examples of the good work of the Unified Task Force in difficult and dangerous conditions; the restraint and good order of its personnel; and the maintenance of its political balance and neutrality.

The men and women, Marines, soldiers, sailors, and airmen who served in Restore Hope were challenged to replace anarchy and fear with order and security. They faced situations that were then novel, but have since become familiar. Their efforts made them the first of General Zinni's new thinking American military.

* This operation had some of the same troops as well. The ground component for Operation Restore Democracy was formed around the U.S. Army's 10th Mountain Division.

Notes

Chapter 1

There have not been many books available on Somali history and culture until recently. Even the most current books deal mainly with the events of October 1993, and give only a cursory view of how Somalia came to its condition of 1992. However, there are a few official sources that deal with these topics in some detail. Headquarters, Department of the Army, publishes a series of area studies for the nations of the world. The one for Somalia was published in 1982 (third edition) and updated in a fourth edition in 1993. These books provide information about Somali culture, clan affiliation, political and military structures, terrain and climate, and the important history of this nation. These are important sources for anyone researching the history of Somalia prior to the 1990s. At the start of Operation Restore Hope, the United States Army Intelligence and Threat Analysis Center published a small volume entitled *Restore Hope Socaliinta Rajada: Soldier Handbook*. This handy guide was intended for troops deploying to Somalia, and provided basic information about climate and terrain, diseases and preventive medicine, weapons of the factions, and a lexicon of basic Somali words and phrases. More importantly, it described the Somali clans, identifying the armed factions and their leaders. Adam B. Siegel wrote an excellent monograph study of Operation Eastern Exit for the Center for Naval Analyses. It was used extensively for the portion of this chapter relating to the evacuation of the American Embassy in Mogadishu in January 1991.

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28. *Ibid.*, pp. 28-34.
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Chapter 2

Much of the material for this chapter was taken from notes the author made during interviews with officers of the joint task force, which also were recorded on videotape by members of the Joint Combat Camera Team. The policy at that time was for the tapes to be sent to the main combat camera office in Washington, D.C. Many of these tapes are unaccounted for. Therefore, the author's notes have been used here. The information in this chapter is from interviews with: LtGen Robert B. Johnston, hereafter Johnston-Mroczkowski intvw; Col Sam E. Hatton, hereafter Hatton-Mroczkowski intvw; Col William M. Handley, Jr., hereafter Handley-Mroczkowski intvw; BGen Anthony C. Zinni, hereafter Zinni-Mroczkowski intvw; Capt Michael L. Cowan, hereafter Cowan-Mroczkowski intvw; MajGen Steven L. Arnold, hereafter Arnold-Mroczkowski intvw; BGen Thomas R.

- Mikolajcik, hereafter Mikolajcik-Mroczkowski intvw; Col Thomas D. Smith, hereafter Smith-Mroczkowski intvw; and Col Robert W. Tanner, hereafter Tanner-Mroczkowski intvw.
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Chapter 4

This chapter is based mainly on information taken from interviews conducted by the author in the field. These were with Capt John W. Peterson, USN, hereafter Peterson-Mroczkowski intvw; Capt J. W. Perkins, USN, hereafter Perkins-Mroczkowski intvw; Capt Brian Boyce, USN, hereafter Boyce-Mroczkowski intvw; Col Les van den Bosch, Belgian Army, hereafter van den Bosch-Mroczkowski intvw; LtCol Thulagalyo Masisi, Botswana Defense Force, hereafter Masisi-Mroczkowski intvw; LtCol John M. Taylor, hereafter Taylor-Mroczkowski intvw; LtCol Ailen Pietrantonì, French Army, hereafter Pietrantonì-Mroczkowski intvw; LtCol Emanuel Spagnuolo, Italian Army, hereafter Spagnuolo-Mroczkowski intvw; LtCol Carol J. Mathieu, Canadian Army, hereafter Mathieu-Mroczkowski intvw; and Maj Lelon W. Carroll, USA, hereafter Carroll-Mroczkowski intvw. The author also used his personal journal, referred to as Mroczkowski journal with appropriate date citations.

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Chapter 5

The information for this chapter was taken primarily from interviews conducted in the field by the author and other historians. Those by the author were with LtGen Robert B. Johnston, hereafter Johnston-Mroczkowski intvw; BGen Anthony C. Zinni, hereafter Zinni-Mroczkowski intvw; Col Peter A. Dotto, hereafter Dotto-Mroczkowski intvw; and LtCol Donald C. Spiece, Jr., USA, hereafter Spiece-Mroczkowski intvw. A second interview between the author and LtGen Zinni was conducted on 14 May 1994, hereafter Zinni-Mroczkowski intvw 2. Interviews conducted by LtCol Charles H. Cureton, USMCR, and Maj Robert K. Wright, Jr., USAR, were with LtGen Robert B. Johnston, hereafter Johnston-Cureton-Wright intvw; Ambassador Robert B. Oakley, hereafter Oakley-Cureton-Wright intvw; BGen Anthony C. Zinni, hereafter Zinni-Cureton-Wright intvw; and Col Peter A. Dotto, hereafter Dotto-Cureton-Wright intvw. The author also used his personal journal, referred to as Mroczkowski journal with appropriate date citations, and his field notebook, referred to as Mroczkowski field notebook, which contained copies of many of the interviews.

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Chapter 6

This chapter was based mainly on interviews the author and other historians conducted in the field. Those by the author were with BGen Anthony C. Zinni, hereafter Zinni-Mroczkowski intvw 2; Colonel Major Omar Ess-Akalli, Royal Moroccan Army, hereafter Ess-Akalli-Mroczkowski intvw; LtCol John M. Taylor, hereafter Taylor-Mroczkowski intvw; Col. Werner Hellmer, hereafter Hellmer-Mroczkowski intvw; Maj John Caligari, Royal Australian Army, hereafter Caligari-Mroczkowski intvw; LtCol Ailen Pietrantoni, French Army, hereafter Pietrantoni-Mroczkowski intvw; Maj Daniel M. Lizzul, hereafter Lizzul-Mroczkowski intvw; Maj Leland W. Carroll, USA, hereafter Carroll-Mroczkowski intvw; SFC Kenneth W. Barriger, USA, hereafter Barriger-Mroczkowski intvw; Capt Geoff Kyle, Canadian Army, hereafter Kyle-Mroczkowski intvw; LtCol Carol J. Mathieu, Canadian Army, hereafter Mathieu-Mroczkowski intvw; and LtCol Donald C. Spiece, Jr., USA, hereafter Spiece-Mroczkowski intvw. Many of these interviews were copied in the author's field notebook, cited as Mroczkowski field notebook. Interviews made by other historians included in this chapter were by LtCol Charles H. Cureton and Maj Robert K. Wright, Jr., USAR, with Ambassador Robert B. Oakley, hereafter Oakley-Cureton-Wright intvw; LtGen Robert B. Johnston, hereafter Johnston-Cureton-Wright intvw; and BGen Anthony C. Zinni, hereafter Zinni-Cureton-Wright intvw. Also used was the oral history inter-view between Capt David A.

Dawson and Col Jack W. Klimp, hereafter Klimp-Dawson intvw. The author also used his personal journal, referred to as Mroczkowski journal with appropriate date citations. He was also provided a copy of the personal journal of Col Dayre C. Lias, USAF, hereafter Lias journal, with appropriate date citations.

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Appendix A

Unified Task Force Somalia Organization

Command and Staff

Commanding General: Lieutenant General Robert B. Johnston
Special Envoy: Ambassador Robert B. Oakley
Deputy Commanding General: Major General W. D. Moore, USA
Joint Force Air Component Commander: Major General Harold W. Blot
Chief of Staff: Colonel Billy C. Steed
Political Advisor: Mr. John Hirsch
Administration (J-1): Colonel L. Rehberger III
Intelligence (J-2): Colonel W. M. Handley, USA
Operations (J-3): Brigadier General Anthony C. Zinni
Logistics (J-4): Colonel Sam E. Hatton, USA
Plans and Policy (J-5): Colonel John W. Moffett
Command, Control, Communications (J-6): Colonel Robert G. Hill
Executive Assistant (J-8/EA): Colonel Michael W. Hagee
Joint Information Bureau: Colonel Frederick C. Peck
Joint Visitor's Bureau: Colonel R. J. Agro
Civil-Military Operations Center: Colonel Kevin M. Kennedy
Unified Task Force Surgeon: Captain Michael L. Cowan, USN
Unified Task Force Engineer: Colonel Robert B. Flowers, USA
Headquarters Commandant: Major Eric C. Holt
Joint Combat Camera Detachment: Lieutenant Commander James P. Kiser, USN

Coalition Forces

Australia

Commanding Officer
Colonel William J. Mellor, Australian Army

1st Battalion, The Royal Australian Regiment
Battalion Group
1st Battalion, The Royal Australian
Regiment

Battalion Headquarters
Alpha Company
Bravo Company
Charlie Company
Delta Company
Support Company
Administration Company
1st Battalion, Support Group
Battalion Headquarters
Transport Troop
Field Supply Platoon
Medical Platoon
Dental Section
Field Workshop
B Squadron, 3d/4th Cavalry Regiment
Battery Commander's Party, 107th Field
Battery
17th Troop, 18th Field Squadron, 3d Combat
Engineer Regiment
Detachment, 103d Signals Squadron

Naval Contingent

HMAS *Jervis Bay*
HMAS *Tobruk*

Belgium

Commanding Officer
Colonel Marc Jacqumin, Belgian Army

1st Parachute Battalion (Reinforced)
Headquarters Company
Support Company
11th Company
13th Company
21st Company
Reconnaissance Company
Engineer Platoon
Supply Platoon (Reinforced)
Surgical Team
Signal Platoon
Explosive Ordnance Disposal Team
Aviation Detachment
Judge Advocate General Team

Naval Contingent

HMS *Zinnia*

Botswana

Commanding Officer

Lieutenant Colonel Thulanganyo Masisi,
Botswana Defense Force

Composite Reinforced Company

Command Section
1st Platoon (Mechanized)
2d Platoon (Light Infantry)
3d Platoon (Light Infantry)
4th Platoon (Light Infantry)
Special Forces Troop
Mortar Platoon
Medical Section
Transportation Section
Signals Section
Stores Section
Messing Section
Central Arms Depot
Engineer Section

Canada

Commanding Officer

Colonel Serge Labbe, Canadian Army

Canadian Joint Force Somalia

Canadian Airborne Regiment Battle Group
1 Commando
2 Commando
3 Commando
Service Commando
DFS Platoon
Reconnaissance Platoon
A Squadron, Royal Canadian Dragoons
Engineer Troop
Signal Troop
Aviation Detachment

Naval Contingent

HMCS *Preserver*

Egypt

Commanding Officer

Colonel Al-Fakhrani, Egyptian Army

Composite Reinforced Company

1st Platoon (Light Armored)
2d Platoon (Light Armored)
Logistics Platoon
Medical Section
Engineer Section
Maintenance Section
Logistics Section

France

Commanding General

Major General Rene Delhome, French Army

Command Element, 9th Marine Infantry Division
Battalion, 13th Foreign Legion Demi-Brigade
Battalion, 5th Combined Arms Overseas
Regiment
3d Company, 3d Marine Infantry Regiment
4th Company, 3d Marine Infantry Regiment
3d Company, 6th Foreign Legion Engineer
Regiment
Detachment, 5th Combat Helicopter Regiment
Detachment, Special Forces
Detachment, Logistics Support Battalion

Naval Contingent

Frigate *Georges Leygues*
Light Transport *La Grandiere*
Amphibious Ship *Foudre*
Tanker *Var*

Germany

Commanding Officer

Lieutenant Colonel Meitzner, German Air
Force

The German contingent consisted of three
Luftwaffe C-160 Transall aircraft operating from
Mombasa, Kenya, as a part of Operation Provide
Relief.

Greece

Commanding Officer

Colonel Spilitios, Greek Army

Infantry Battalion (-)

India

Commanding Officer
Commodore Sam Pillai, Indian Navy

Naval Contingent

Tanker INS *Deepak*
Amphibious Landing Ship INS *Cheetah*
Frigate INS *Kuthar*

Italy

Commanding General
Major General Gianpietro Rossi, Italian Army

Headquarters Element

Folgore Parachute Brigade
Headquarters Regiment
186th Parachute Regiment
187th Parachute Regiment
9th Assault Parachute Battalion
Logistics Battalion
Armored Vehicle Company
Engineer Company
Tank Company

Field Hospital "Centaurio"

Surgical Detachment
San Marco Battalion (Marine Infantry)
Composite Helicopter Regiment
Detachment, 46th Aviation Brigade

Naval Contingent

Frigate ITS *Grecale*
Logistical Landing Ship ITS *Vesuvio*
Landing Ship Tank ITS *San Giorgio*

Kuwait

Commanding Officers

Lieutenant Colonel Mohamad al-Obaid,
Kuwaiti Army
Major Al Muzien, Kuwaiti Army

Composite Reinforced Motorized Company

Company Headquarters
Armored Car Platoon
Scout Platoon
Scout Platoon
Medical Section
Engineer Section

Logistics Section
Communications Section
Military Police Section
Post Exchange Section
Public Affairs Section

Morocco

Commanding Officer

Colonel Major (brigadier general equivalent)
Omar Ess-Akalli, Royal Moroccan Army

Base Section

3d Motorized Infantry Regiment
Infantry Company
Infantry Company
Cavalry Company
Air Defense Artillery element
Medical Section

New Zealand

Commanding Officers

Colonel Dunne, Royal New Zealand Air Force, 9 December 1992 to 18 March 1993
Wing Commander Duxfield, Royal New Zealand Air Force, 18 March 1993

Detachment, 42 Squadron (Three Andover transport aircraft)

Nigeria

Commanding Officer

Lieutenant Colonel Olagunsoye Oyinlola,
Nigerian Army

245 Reconnaissance Battalion

Battalion Headquarters
Administration Company
Company Headquarters
Quartermaster Platoon
Engineer Troop
Light Aid Detachment
Signals Section
Mobile Shop
Company A (Mechanized Infantry)
Company B (Mechanized Infantry)
Company C (Reconnaissance Company)
Company D (Reconnaissance Company)

Pakistan

(Note: Does not include Pakistani forces in Somalia as part of UNOSOM I)

Commanding Officers

Colonel Asif, Pakistani Army
Lieutenant Colonel Tariq S. Malik, Pakistani Army

6th Battalion, The Punjab Regiment

Battalion Headquarters
Company A
Company B
Company C
Company D
Support Company
Company Headquarters
Signals Platoon
Administrative Platoon
Transport Section
Administrative Section
Assault Engineer Platoon
81mm Mortar Platoon

7th Battalion, Frontier Forces

10th Battalion, Baluch Regiment

1st Battalion, Sind Regiment

Saudi Arabia

Commanding Officer

Colonel Ali al Shehri, Royal Saudi Land Forces

5th Royal Saudi Land forces Airborne Battalion (Reinforced)

Headquarters Company
1 Company
2 Company
3 Company
Combat Service Support Element
Medical Platoon
Engineer Platoon
Maintenance Platoon

Sweden

Commanding Officer

Lieutenant Colonel Lars A. Hedman, Swedish Army

1st Field Hospital

Tunisia

Commanding Officer

Lieutenant Colonel Sharif, Tunisian Army

Infantry Battalion (-)

Turkey

Commanding Officers

Colonel Huseyin Erim, Turkish Army, 9 December 1992 to 25 March 1993
Major Haldun Solmazturk, Turkish Army, 25 March 1993

1 Company, 1 Battalion Mechanized, 28 Brigade

Headquarters Section
1st Platoon (Mechanized Infantry)
2d Platoon (Mechanized Infantry)
3d Platoon (Mechanized Infantry)
Fire Support Platoon
Quartermaster Platoon
Transport and Maintenance Platoon
Signal Section
Medical Section
Engineer Section

Naval Contingent

Landing Ship *Tank Ertugrul*
Logistics Ship *Derya*
Destroyer *Fatih*

United Arab Emirates

Commanding Officers

Lieutenant Colonel Alkefbi, United Arab Emirates Army, 9 February 1993
Lieutenant Colonel Abdullah Ketbi, United Arab Emirates Army

Al Wajeb Battalion

Headquarters Company
Services Section
Combat Engineer Platoon
81Mm Mortar Platoon
Reconnaissance Company
2d Company (Mechanized Infantry)
3d Company (Mechanized Infantry)

United Kingdom

Commanding Officer
Wing Commander Humphrey, Royal Air Force

The United Kingdom contingent consisted of two Royal Air Force C-130 aircraft flying out of Mombasa, Kenya, as part of Operation Provide Relief.

United States

Air Force Contingent

Commanding Officers
Brigadier General Thomas R. Mikolajcik, USAF, 9 December 1992 to 29 March 1993
Colonel Wirthe, USAF, 9 March 1993

Air Force Forces Somalia
Air Force Forces Somalia Staff, Mogadishu
437th Tactical Airlift Wing
5th Combat Communications Group
823d Civil Engineering Squadron
Mogadishu Airfield Tactical Airlift Control Element
Mogadishu Airfield Support
Deployed Tactical Airlift Control Element

Army Contingent

Commanding Generals
Brigadier General William Magruder III, USA
Major General Steven L. Arnold, USA, 22 December 1992 to 13 March 1993
Brigadier Greg L. Gile, USA, 13 March to 4 May 1993

Army Forces Somalia
10th Mountain Division (Light Infantry)
2d Brigade (Commando Brigade)
3d Battalion, 14th Infantry
Headquarters Company
Company A
Company B
Company C
2d Battalion, 87th Infantry
Headquarters Company
Company A
Company B
Company C
A Company, 1st Battalion, 87th Infantry

E Company, 1st Battalion, 87th Infantry (Provisional)
Scout Platoon, Headquarters, 1st Battalion, 87th Infantry
Aviation Brigade (Falcon Brigade)
3d Battalion (Assault), 25th Aviation
Headquarters Company
Company B
Company C
Company D
3d Squadron, 17th Cavalry
Headquarters Troop
A Troop
B Troop
C Troop
D Troop
10th Mountain Division Support Command
210th Support Battalion (Forward)
Headquarters and Company A
Company B
Company C
710th Support Battalion (Main)
Headquarters and Company A
Company B
Company C
Company D
Company E, 25th Aviation
10th Signal Battalion
Headquarters Company
Company A
Company B
Company C
41st Engineer Battalion
Headquarters Company
Company A
Company B
110th Military Intelligence Battalion
Technical Control And Analysis Element
Military Intelligence Support Team
Counter Intelligence Team
Ground Surveillance Radar Team
Long Range Surveillance Detachment
10th Military Police Company
Battery B, 3d Battalion, 62d Air Defense Artillery
Detachment, Battery A, 3d Battalion, 62d Air Defense Artillery
Joint Task Force Support Command
Commanding General
Brigadier General Billy K. Solomon, USA

- 36th Engineer Group
 43d Engineer Battalion
 Company A
 Company B
 Company C
 Direct Support Maintenance Unit
 63d Engineer Company (Combat Support Equipment)
 642d Engineer Company (Combat Support Equipment)
 74th Engineer Detachment (Diving)
 95th Engineer Detachment (Fire Fighting)
 520th Engineer Detachment (Fire Fighting)
 597th Engineer Detachment (Fire Fighting)
 33d Finance Battalion (Provisional) (FSU)(-)
 602d Maintenance Company
 Detachment, 514th Maintenance Company
 62d Medical Group
 32d Medical Battalion (Logistics)
 86th Evacuation Hospital
 159th Medical Company (Air Ambulance)
 423d Medical Company (Clearing)
 514th Medical Company (Ambulance)
 61st Medical Detachment (Preventive Medicine Sanitation)
 73d Medical Detachment (Veterinary)
 224th Medical Detachment (Preventive Medicine Sanitation)
 227th Medical Detachment (Epidemiology)
 248th Medical Detachment (Veterinary)
 257th Medical Detachment (Dental)
 485th Medical Detachment (Preventive Medicine Entomology)
 528th Medical Detachment (Combat Stress Team)
 555th Medical Detachment (Surgical)
 Detachment 513th Military Intelligence Brigade
 593d Support Group (Area)
 4th Support Center Material Management)
 548th Supply and Services Battalion
 62d Supply Company
 266th Supply Company (Direct Support)
 364th Supply Company
 7th Transportation Group
 49th Transportation Center (Movement Control)
 6th Transportation Battalion
 24th Transportation Battalion
 24th Transportation Company
 57th Transportation Company
 100th Transportation Company
 119th Transportation Company
 155th Transportation Company
 360th Transportation Company
 710th Transportation Company (Provisional) (Boat)
 870th Transportation Company
 22d Transportation Detachment
 160th Transportation Detachment
 169th Transportation Detachment
 329th Transportation Detachment
 491st Transportation Detachment
 Military Traffic Management Command
 "Tiger" Team
 2d Chemical Battalion
 720th Military Police Battalion
 511th Military Police Company
 571st Military Police Company
 978th Military Police Company
 984th Military Police Company
 Military Police Criminal Investigation Element
 240th Quartermaster Battalion
 110th Quartermaster Company (POL)
 267th Quartermaster Company
 18th Quartermaster Platoon
 26th Quartermaster Detachment (ROWPU Barge Team)
 30th Quartermaster Detachment (ROWPU Barge Team)
 82d Quartermaster Detachment
 22d Quartermaster Laboratory
 Detachment, 54th Quartermaster Company (Graves Registration)
 Task Force Thunderbird (Signal)
 209th Signal Company
 516th Signal Company
 Company C, 327th Signal Battalion
 Detachment, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 11th Signal Brigade
 Detachment, 63d Signal Battalion
 Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment, 86th Signal Battalion
 Detachment, 19th Signal Company
 Detachment, 69th Signal Company
 Detachment, 385th Signal Company
 Detachment, 505th Signal Company
 Detachment, 521st Signal Company
 Detachment, 526th Signal Company
 Detachment, 593d Signal Company
 10th Personnel Services Company
 546th Personnel Services Company
 129th Postal Company
 711th Postal Company
 Detachment, Company B (Air Traffic Control), 1st Battalion, 58th Aviation
 Task Force 5-158 Aviation

13th Ordnance Detachment (EOD)
 60th Ordnance Detachment (EOD)
 542d Ordnance Detachment (EOD) (Control Team)
 27th Public Affairs Team
 28th Public Affairs Team

Joint Psychological Operations Task Force
 Commanding Officer
 Lieutenant Colonel Charles Borchini, USA

8th Psychological Operations Battalion
 Product Dissemination Battalion
 9th Psychological Operations Battalion (Tactical)

Marine Corps Contingent

Commanding Officers
 Major General Charles E. Wilhelm, 9 December 1992 to 23 March 1993
 Colonel Jack W. Klimp, 23 March 1993 to 9 April 1993
 Colonel Emil R. Bedard, 9-28 April 1993
 Colonel Kenneth W. Hillman, 28 April 1993 to 4 May 1993

Marine Forces Somalia

1st Marine Division (-) (Reinforced)
 Headquarters Battalion, 1st Marine Division (-) (Reinforced)
 7th Marines (-) (Reinforced)
 Headquarters Company, 7th Marines
 1st Battalion, 7th Marines
 3d Battalion, 9th Marines
 3d Battalion, 11th Marines (-) (Reinforced)
 3d Light Armored Infantry Battalion (-) (Reinforced)
 3d Amphibious Assault Battalion (-)
 1st Combat Engineer Battalion (-)
 Reconnaissance Company, 5th Marines
 Company C, 1st Tank Battalion (-) (Reinforced)
 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit (Special Operations Capable)
 Headquarters, 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit (Special Operations Capable)
 Battalion Landing Team, 2d Battalion, 9th Marines
 Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 164 (Composite)
 Marine Expeditionary Unit Service Support Group 15

24th Marine Expeditionary Unit (Special Operations Capable)
 Headquarters, 24th Marine Expeditionary Unit (Special Operations Capable)
 Battalion Landing Team, 1st Battalion, 2d Marines
 Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 263 (Composite)
 Marine Expeditionary Unit Service Support Group 24
 1st Surveillance, Reconnaissance and Intelligence Group
 Headquarters Company, 1st Surveillance, Reconnaissance and Intelligence Group (-)
 1st Intelligence Company (-)
 1st Force Service Support Group
 Headquarters, 1st Service Support Group (Forward)
 Headquarters and Service Battalion (-)
 7th Engineer Battalion (-)
 7th Motor Transport Battalion (-)
 1st Landing Support Battalion (-)
 1st Supply Battalion (-)
 1st Maintenance Battalion (-)
 1st Medical Battalion (-)
 1st Dental Battalion (-)
 Marine Aircraft Group 16
 Headquarters, Marine Aircraft Group 16
 Marine Light Attack Helicopter Squadron 369
 Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron 363
 Marine Aerial Transport Refueler Squadron 352
 Detachment, Marine Heavy Helicopter Squadron 466
 Marine Air Traffic Control Squadron 38 (-)
 Detachment, Headquarters and Headquarters Service Squadron
 Detachment, Marine Wing Communications Squadron 38
 Detachment, Marine Air Traffic Control Squadron 38
 Detachment, Marine Air Support Squadron 3
 Detachment, Marine Air Control Squadron 1
 Detachment, Marine Wing Support Squadron 1
 Detachment, Marine Aviation Logistics Squadron 16
 30th Naval Construction Regiment

Headquarters, 30th Naval Construction
Regiment
Naval Mobile Construction Battalion 1
Naval Mobile Construction Battalion 40
9th Communications Battalion
1st Radio Battalion
1st Naval Gunfire Liaison Company (-)
MAGTF Integration Instruction Team
National Intelligence Support Team

Naval Contingent

Commanding Officers

Rear Admiral William J. Hancock, USN, 19-
28 December 1992
Rear Admiral Philip J. Coady, USN, 19-28
December 1992
Rear Admiral (LH) James B. Perkins III,
USN, 28 December 1992 to 15 January 1993
Captain J. W. Peterson, USN, 15 January
1993 to 1 February 1993
Captain Terry R. Sheffield, USN, 1 February
1993 to 5 March 1993
Captain Nathan H. Beason, USN, 5-23
March 1993
Commodore Pyle, USN, 23 March

Naval Forces Somalia

Ranger Battle Group

Cruiser Destroyer Group 1
Destroyer Squadron 7
USS *Ranger*
Carrier Air Wing 2
Fighter Squadron 1
Fighter Squadron 2
Attack Squadron 145
Attack Squadron 155
Air Anti-Submarine Squadron 38
Tactical Electronic Warfare
Squadron 31
Helicopter Anti-Submarine Squadron
14
VAW 116
HSL 47 Detachment 2
HC 11 Detachment 10

USS *Wabash*

USS *Valley Forge*

Kitty Hawk Battle Group

Cruiser Destroyer Group 5
Destroyer Squadron 17
USS *Kitty Hawk*
Carrier Air Wing 15
Fighter Squadron 111
Fighter Squadron 51
VAW 114

Helicopter Anti-Submarine Squadron
4
Air Anti-Submarine Squadron 37
Fighter/Attack Squadron 27
Fighter/Attack Squadron 97
Tactical Electronic Warfare
Squadron 134
Attack Squadron 52
Marine Detachment
Detachment, Explosive Ordnance
Unit 3

USS *Leahy*

USS *W. H. Standley*

USS *Sacramento*

USS *Tripoli*

USS *Juneau*

USS *Rushmore*

CTF 156

USS *Tripoli*

USS *Juneau*

USS *Rushmore*

USS *Niagara Falls*

CTF 155

Maritime Prepositioning Ship Squadron 2
Wasp Amphibious Ready Group

CTF 156

Amphibious Squadron 2

TF 156

USS *Wasp*

USS *El Paso*

USS *Louisville*

USS *Nashville*

USS *Barnstable County*

Naval Beach Group 1

Assault Craft Unit 1

Beachmaster Unit 1

Amphibious Construction Battalion 1

Cargo Handling Group 1

Military Sealift Command Office, Mogadishu

Patrol Squadron Special Project Unit

Special Operations Contingent

Commanding Officers

Colonel Thomas Smith, USA

Lieutenant Colonel William L.

Faistenhammer, USA, after 20 January 1993

1st Battalion, 5th Special Forces Group

Company B

ODA 526

ODA 54

ODA 543

ODA 546

ODB 560

ODA 561
ODA 562
ODA 563
ODA 564
ODA 565

2d Battalion, 5th Special Forces Group
Company A (Operation Provide Relief)
Company C

Zimbabwe

Commanding Officer
Major Vitalis Chigume, Zimbabwe Army

S Company, 42 Infantry Battalion (Reinforced)

Headquarters Section
Administration
Operations
Signals
Engineering
Public Affairs
Electrical and Mechanical
Engineering/Stores
Chaplain

1st Platoon
2d Platoon
3d Platoon
81mm Mortar/Antitank Platoon
Medical Platoon

Appendix B

Glossary of Terms, Abbreviations and Somali Spelling

AAV	Amphibious Assault Vehicle
ACA	Airspace Control Authority
ACE	Air Combat Element
ACO	Air Control Order
AES	Aeromedical Evacuation Squadron
AFFor	Air Force Forces Somalia
AMC	Air Mobility Command
AME	Air Mobility Element
APOD	Aerial Port Of Debarkation
APOE	Aerial Port Of Embarkation
ArFor	Army Forces Somalia
ARG	Amphibious Ready Group
ASG	Area Support Group
ATF	Amphibious Task Force
AWSS	Authorized Weapons Storage Site
CA	Civil Affair
CentCom	U.S. Central Command
CinC	Commander in Chief. In the United States military, used as the title of a commander of a specified or unified command, as in CinCCent, the commander in chief of the United States Central Command.
CJTF	Combined/Joint Task Force Somalia. One of the names given to the organization responsible for Operation Restore Hope, when it included both United States Armed Forces and coalition partners (thus making it a combined and joint force). Note that this acronym is sometimes also used for Commander Joint Task Force Somalia, especially in message traffic. See also JTF and UNITAF.
CMOC	Civil-Military Operations Center
CMOT	Civil-Military Operations Team
CoSCom	Corps Support Command
CSSE	Combat Service Support Element
CWT	Coalition Warfare Team
FIR	Flight Information Region
FSS	Fast Sealift Ship
FSSG	Force Service Support Group
GCE	Ground Combat Element
Humvee	High Mobility Multiwheeled Vehicle
HRO	Humanitarian Relief Organization
HRS	Humanitarian Relief Sector
ICAO	International Civil Aviation Organization
I MEF	I Marine Expeditionary Force
JTF	Joint Task Force Somalia. The original name given to the organization that would conduct Operation Restore Hope. As a joint task force, it referred only to the organization when it was composed of United States forces. It was changed over time to CJTF Somalia and to UNITAF

JTFSC	Joint Task Force Support Command. Sometimes referred to as the Joint Logistics Command, or JLC
LCAC	Landing Craft Amphibious Cargo
MarFor	Marine Forces Somalia
METT-T	Mission, Enemy, Terrain, Troops, Time Available
MEU (SOC)	Marine Expeditionary Unit (Special Operations Capable)
MPF	Maritime Prepositioning Force
MPS	Maritime Prepositioning Squadron or Ships
MSSG	MEU Service Support Group
MSR	Main Supply Route
NavFor	Navy Forces Somalia
NGO	Nongovernmental Organization
NoTAM	Notice to Airmen
OpCon	Operational Control. It is defined as a level of command authority used frequently in the execution of joint operations. It is the command authority, which may be exercised by commanders at any echelon at or below the level of combatant command and can be delegated or transferred. It is the authority to perform those functions of command over subordinate forces involving organizing and employing commands and forces, assigning tasks, designating objectives, and giving authoritative direction necessary to accomplish the mission.
PhibRon	Amphibious Squadron
PsyOps	Psychological Operations
PVO	Private Voluntary Organization
RoE	Rules of Engagement
ROWPU	Reverse Osmosis Water Purification Unit
SNA	Somali National Army
SNF	Somali National Front
SPF	Somali Patriotic Front
SPM	Somali Patriotic Movement
SOCCent	Special Operations Command, Central Command
SOFor	Special Operations Forces
SPMAGTF	Special Purpose Marine Air-Ground Task Force
SYL	Somali Youth League
TaCon	Tactical Control. It is the command authority over assigned or attached forces or commands, or military capability or forces made available for tasking, that is limited to the detailed and usually local direction and control of movements or maneuvers necessary to accomplish assigned missions or tasks. TaCon may be delegated to and exercised by commanders at any echelon at or below the level of combatant command. TaCon is inherent in OpCon.
TransCom	The United States Transportation Command
TPFDD	Time phased force deployment data
ULN	Unit Line Number. A number assigned to a unit, with its personnel and equipment, which is to be shipped as an entity. The ULN is used to tell units when to be prepared to load onto transport. It also informs the receiving headquarters when they can expect the arrival of a unit in theater. It can also be used to track the unit while it is enroute.
UNITAF	Unified Task Force Somalia. The name given to the organization responsible for Operation Restore Hope, encompassing the headquarters, the United States Armed Forces components, and the coalition partners.

Notes on Somali Spelling

There was no standard written form of the Somali language until the 1960s. Fortunately for those in the West, the government decided to adopt the Latin alphabet as the basis for the written form. However, the exact spellings of place and personal names vary from one source to another, depending on the understanding of the phonetics by the individual transliterating. To further complicate matters, the major clans often speak different dialects. There are also differences between Italian and English forms of the sounds and words.

For the sake of clarity, a standard of spelling for the most common names has been used in this volume. However, where a name or word is quoted, the spelling used in the quotation may have been kept. The following is a list of these names, with alternate spellings as they may be found in other sources, atlases, or histories.

Afgooye; Afgoi
 Aideed; Aidid
 Baidoa; Baydhabo
 Balcad; Balad
 Bale Dogle; Bali Dogle; Baali Doogle
 Bardera; Baardheere
 Beer Hanni; Bir Xanni; Bir Hane
 Buulobarde; Bulu Burti; Buulo Berde
 Buurhakaba; Buurhabaka (note transposition of the k and b); Bur Acaba; Buur Hakaba
 Belet Weyne; Beled Weyne; Belet Uen; Belet Huen
 Djibouti; Djibuti
 Dhoble; Doble; Dhooble
 Fer Fer; Ferfer; Feer Feer
 Galcaio; Galkayo; Gaalkacyo
 Gialalassi; Jialalaqsi; Xialalaksi
 Habr Gedr; Habir Gedirh; Habr Gidr
 Hargeisa; Hargeysa
 Hawadle; Xawaadle
 Hussein; Huseyn
 Jawhar; Giohar; Johar
 Jilib; Gelib
 Jubba; Juba; Giuba
 Kismayo; Kismayu; Cismayo; Chisimayu; Chisimaio; Kismaayo
 Merka; Marka; Merca
 Mogadishu; Mogadisho; Muqdishu
 Mursade; Murasade; Mursida
 Oddur; Huddur; Xuddur
 Shabele; Shabeele; Shabeelle; Shebelle; Shebeli; Scebeli
 Tiyegloo; Tayeeglow; Tigieglo; Tayeegle
 Webi; Uebe
 Wajid; Waajid; Wadjid
 Yet; Yeet; Yeed

Appendix C

Chronology of Events and Operations

26 June 1960	British Somaliland receives independence.
1 July 1960	British Somaliland joins with the Trust Territory to form the Somali Republic.
15 October 1969	President Shermarke is assassinated.
21 October 1969	Siad Barre takes over the government of Somalia in a military coup.
July 1977	Somali Army invades Ethiopia.
November 1977	Barre abrogates Somali treaties with the Soviet Union.
1978	Somalia signs an agreement with the United States allowing U.S. military access to Somali military facilities.
1980	An agreement is signed between Somalia and the United States. In return for military aid, the United States receives use of the port and airfield at Berbera.
1988	Armed opposition to the Barre government begins with a rebellion in the north of the country.
1990	Three main opposition groups are fighting against the Barre regime. These are the Somali National Movement, the Somali Patriotic Movement, and the United Somali Congress.
December 1990	Fighting nears Mogadishu. Civil order breaks down in the city.
5 December 1990	U.S. Ambassador James K. Bishop orders the evacuation of all non-essential United States Embassy personnel.
30 December 1990	All remaining Americans are brought into the United States Embassy compound.
31 December 1990	The commander of U.S. Naval Central Command orders his staff to prepare for an evacuation of the American Embassy in Mogadishu.
1 January 1991	Ambassador Bishop requests permission from the State Department to evacuate the U.S. Embassy in Mogadishu.
2 January 1991	The State Department grants permission for evacuation of the embassy.
2 January 1991	Joint Chiefs of Staff issues an execute order for Operation Eastern Exit.
2 January 1991	Four ships carrying Marine forces get underway from the Persian Gulf to conduct noncombatant evacuation of the embassy.
5 January 1991	Ships arrive off the coast of Mogadishu. Operation Eastern Exit begins. First helicopters leave the ships at 0345; the last helicopters return at 2323. The operation is declared complete at 2340.
22 January 1991	Siad Barre flees Mogadishu
May 1992	Barre's forces are defeated and he flees Somalia. Fighting between the factions for control of the country begins.
17 November 1991	Fighting and civil disorder force United Nations staff to evacuate Somalia.
18 August 1992	President George H. W. Bush orders the airlift of 145,000 tons of food to Somalia in Operation Provide Relief.
23 November 1992	<i>Tripoli</i> Amphibious Ready Group (ARG), carrying the 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit (Special Operations Capable) (15th MEU (SOC)), departs Singapore enroute to the Persian Gulf.

- 25 November 1992 President Bush announces to the United Nations that the United States was prepared to provide military forces to assist in the delivery of food and relief supplies to Somalia.
- 27 November 1992 Commanding general of Central Command (CentCom) designates I Marine Expeditionary Force (I MEF) as the headquarters of Joint Task Force (JTF) Somalia.
- 29 November 1992 United Nations Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali states that the U.N. Security Council would consider authorizing an operation by member states.
- 1 December 1992 Joint Chiefs of Staff issue a warning order to the commander in chief of Central Command (CinCCent).
- 2 December 1992 Joint Chiefs of Staff order the commander in chief, Pacific, to assign I MEF to CinCCent.
- 3 December 1992 The United Nations Security Council unanimously passes Resolution 794, authorizing military intervention in Somalia. CinCCent issues deployment to I MEF. Tripoli ARG arrives off southern Somali coast.
- 4 December 1992 JTF Somalia headquarters established. Lieutenant General Robert B. Johnston briefs his concept of operations to component commanders.
- 5 December 1992 CentCom issues its operation order for Restore Hope. CinCCent assigns commanding general I MEF as commanding general, JTF Somalia.
- 6 December 1992 JTF Somalia issues its operation order for Restore Hope.
- 7 December 1992 First trainload of Army equipment departs Fort Drum for the port of Bayonne, New Jersey.
- 9 December 1992 At 0330, landing vehicles carrying Marines and Navy Sea, Air, Land personnel (SEALs) are launched from the ARG for initial landings and arrive at Mogadishu at 0540. By 1145, the Mogadishu airport is declared secure and the first military aircraft lands. One company of the 2d French Foreign Legion Parachute Regiment joins the JTF in Mogadishu.
- 10 December 1992 General Johnston arrives in Mogadishu. Headquarters for Combined JTF Somalia is established in the United States Embassy compound. Unified Task Force Somalia (UNITAF) decides to move up the deployment of Army forces, originally scheduled to begin on 19 December, by eight days.
- 11 December 1992 Major General Charles E. Wilhelm, commanding general of Marine Forces Somalia (MarFor) arrives in Mogadishu. General Johnston and Ambassador Robert B. Oakley begin talks with faction leaders. General Mohamed Farah Hassan Aideed and Ali Mahdi Mohamed agree to respect the ceasefire and to remove heavy weapons from the city. United Nations Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali invites 11 political faction leaders to a preparatory meeting for a conference of national reconciliation.
- 12 December 1992 Three helicopters of Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 164 are fired on by Somalis in two separate incidents. The helicopters destroy two "technicals" and damage one M113 armored personnel carrier. HMCS Preserver arrives at Mogadishu port, beginning the Canadian Operation Deliverance. First Army unit, Company A, 2d Battalion, 87th Infantry, arrives at Bale Dogle.
- 13 December 1992 Bale Dogle secured by Marines of the 15th MEU (SOC). First Army unit, Company A, 2d Battalion, 87th Infantry arrives in Bale Dogle. The Belgian 1st Parachute Battalion arrives in Mogadishu. First elements of the Italian Folgore Brigade, a reconnaissance unit, arrive in Mogadishu.
- 14 December 1992 Advance party of Canadian Airborne Regiment Battle Group arrives in Mogadishu. First elements of Kuwaiti force arrive in Mogadishu.
- 15 December 1992 Army forces assume control of Bale Dogle sector from Marines.

- 16 December 1992 Turkish advance party arrives in Mogadishu. Task Force Hope, composed of elements of the 15th MEU (SOC) and French forces, secures the airfield at Baidoa. Italian reconnaissance unit reoccupies the Italian Embassy. Phase I of Operation Restore Hope is completed.
- 19 December 1992 Turkish reconnaissance party arrives in Mogadishu. First elements of Saudi Arabian force arrive in Mogadishu.
- 20 December 1992 Kismayo port and airfield are secured by elements of the 15th MEU (SOC) and the Belgian 1st Parachute Battalion.
- 22 December 1992 Australian forces reconnaissance party arrives in Mogadishu. Major General Steven L. Arnold, commanding general of Army Forces Somalia, arrives in Mogadishu.
- 23 December 1992 A mine near Bardera kills Lawrence N. Freedman, a U.S. Government civilian employee. Mr. Freedman is the first member of the Unified Task Force to die in the performance of duty. The Commandant of the Marine Corps, General Carl E. Mundy, Jr., arrives at the embassy compound in Mogadishu for a formal visit. The San Marco Battalion arrives with the Italian Naval Group.
- 24 December 1992 Bardera is secured by elements of the 7th Marines. Task Force Kismayo is formed from the Army forces under the command of Brigadier General Lawson W. Magruder, III, USA. Main body of Italian Folgore Brigade arrives.
- 25 December 1992 French forces secure Oddur.
- 27 December 1992 Italian forces secure Gialalassi. General Aideed and Ali Mahdi meet on the "green line" dividing Mogadishu, declaring it abolished. 3d Battalion, 9th Marines, relieves the 15th MEU (SOC) of responsibility for Baidoa sector.
- 28 December 1992 Elements of Army Forces Somalia and the Canadian Airborne Regiment Battle Group secure Belet Weyne, last of the originally planned relief sector. Phase II of Operation Restore Hope is completed. Operation Clean Street begins in Mogadishu, continuing until 6 January 1993. General Aideed and Ali Mahdi meet in Mogadishu and agree to dismantle the "green line" separating the city.
- 31 December 1992 Merka port and airfield are secured by elements of Army Forces Somalia and the Italian San Marco Brigade. President Bush arrives in Mogadishu, visiting units in the city and aboard ship.
- 1 January 1993 President Bush visits units in Baidoa and Bale Dogle.
- 2 January 1993 Main body of Turkish forces arrives in Mogadishu.
- 4 January 1993 First reconciliation conference begins at Addis Ababa, Ethiopia; 14 factions are represented.
- 6 January 1993 Commanding general issues guidance for the draw down and restructuring of the force. Members of General Aideed's faction fire on a UNITAF convoy traveling through Mogadishu. A plan is developed for the seizure of the weapons storage areas involved.
- 7 January 1993 In a dawn assault, the two weapons storage areas are seized by Marines of Task Force Mogadishu.
- 8 January 1993 Identification card system for weapons control goes into effect. Task Force Mogadishu conducts its first raid against the Argentine arms market. Australian forces advance party arrives in Baidoa.
- 8-15 January 1993 All participants to the Addis Ababa conference sign a series of agreements, calling for a ceasefire, the cessation of all hostile propaganda, cooperation with international organizations, free movement of the Somali people, and specific agreements on disarmament.
- 11 January 1993 Task Force Mogadishu conducts its first raid against the Barkera arms market.

- 12 January 1993 Private First Class Domingo Arroyo is killed by small arms fire while on patrol in Mogadishu. Private Arroyo is the first uniformed member of UNITAF to be killed in action. Royal Moroccan forces are placed under the operational control of Army Forces Somalia.
- 13 January 1993 Somali Security Committee in Mogadishu approaches UNITAF about the reestablishment of the Somali National Police Force.
- 16 January 1993 Baidoa sector transferred to Army Forces Somalia.
- 17 January 1993 Main body of Australian forces arrives in Baidoa.
- 19 January 1993 Australian forces assume responsibility for Baidoa sector.
- 30 January 1993 3,000 Somali auxiliary security force personnel are reported as prepared to start police duties.
- 8 February 1993 General Johnston and Brigadier General Imtiaz Shaheen send a joint letter to all signatories of the 8 January Accords calling on them to begin the disarmament process.
- 23 February 1993 Supporters of Aideed begin rioting in Mogadishu as a result of incidents in Kismayo.
- 24 February 1993 Rioting continues in Mogadishu, especially in the vicinity of the K-4 traffic circle.
- 25 February 1993 U.S. Marines and Botswana soldiers conduct clearing operations in the vicinity of the K-4 traffic circle. Calm returns to Mogadishu by the evening.
- 2 March 1993 Royal Moroccan forces are placed under the direct control of UNITAF and given responsibility for Bale Dogle sector.
- 4 March 1993 Members of the Reconnaissance Platoon, Canadian Airborne Regiment, shoot two unarmed intruders in the engineer compound in Belet Weyne, killing one of them.
- 16 March 1993 Two Canadian soldiers torture and beat to death a Somali teenager caught infiltrating the Canadian compound in Belet Weyne.
- 24 March 1993 The final day of Ramadan, and the start of two days of celebration. This is the first time in two years the citizens of Mogadishu have been able to celebrate this religious feast day in peace.
- 4 May 1993 UNITAF turns over responsibility for operations in Somalia to the United Nations forces, under the command of Lieutenant General Cevik Bir, Turkish Army. The last of UNITAF headquarters staff depart Somalia.
- 5 May 1993 President William J. Clinton welcomes General Johnston and his staff back to the United States in a special ceremony on the White House lawn.

Appendix D

Citation

Joint Meritorious Unit Award Unified Task Force Somalia

Citation:

Unified Task Force Somalia, United States Central Command, distinguished itself by exceptionally meritorious service in Operation RESTORE HOPE from 5 December 1992 to 4 May 1993. During this period, the Unified Task Force organized and deployed the largest humanitarian assistance mission in history, a joint and combined task force of over 38,000 personnel. Rapidly establishing security in eight Humanitarian Relief Sectors in war-torn and famine-raged Somalia, they effectively neutralized warring factions that had paralyzed and devastated the country. Unified Task Force Somalia enabled the delivery of over 42,000 metric tons of relief supplies to the starving population, disarmed warring factions, fostered a cease fire, and restored police and judiciary systems. It accomplished a major infrastructure rebuilding effort, restoring roads, airfields, seaports and public utilities that had been destroyed by two years of civil war. Through the intervention and leadership of Unified Task Force Somalia, relief efforts of over 60 different air and relief organizations and the support of 23 nations were coordinated and focused to reverse a human tragedy of famine and disease that was claiming the lives of thousands each day. Under the stability provided by Unified Task Force Somalia, the process of reconciliation and rebuilding began. The successes of the members of Unified Task Force Somalia in the accomplishment of national security objectives, and their exemplary performance of duty have brought great credit to themselves, their Services, the United States Central Command, and to the Department of Defense.

Given under my hand this 29th day of June 1993

Colin L. Powell
Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff

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