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**INFORMATION OPERATIONS IN IRAQ**

**BY**

**LIEUTENANT COLONEL RONALD M. BOUCHARD  
United States Army**

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by

LTC(P) Ronald M. Bouchard  
U.S. Army

Colonel Ralph D. Ghent  
Project Advisor

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U.S. Army War College  
CARLISLE BARRACKS, PENNSYLVANIA 17013

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## ABSTRACT

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The United States effectively used information operations prior and during the Gulf War. In the wake of the U.S. led coalition victory, Iraq developed an asymmetrical approach to defeating any future coalition effort. Iraq's pattern of behavior demonstrated a growing mastery in perception management. Iraq's effective use of the media squashed U.S. efforts to establish a coalition response to Iraq's non-compliance with the UNSCOM inspections in early 1998. The successful use of information operations by Iraq in early 1998 shows how a small and unsophisticated desert country mastered the use of information operations. Taking from the lessons of trial and error an inexperienced Iraq effectively used asymmetric actions by using the media to influence international opinion and U.S. policy. This paper addresses the media, public opinion and policy prior to, during, and after the Gulf War.



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## INFORMATION OPERATIONS IN IRAQ

In 1999, when we think or talk about Information Operations, we naturally think about the information infrastructure, technology and the cyber threat. With the explosion of information technology, information assurance is truly the Achilles' Heel of Joint Vision 2010.<sup>1</sup> However, Information Operations is more than the interconnected information systems. Information Operations (IO) is any "action taken to affect adversary information and information systems when defending one's own information and information systems."<sup>2</sup> This definition communicates that there is more to IO than simply attacking and defending computer systems.

Information Operations has offensive and defensive objectives. Offensive IO involves the use of assigned or supporting capabilities and activities to affect adversary decision makers, and achieve or promote specific objectives. Examples of offensive IO include operations security, military deception, psychological operations (PSYOPS), electronic warfare, and computer attack. Defensive IO is employed to protect and defend our information and information systems. Information assurance, operations security (OPSEC), physical security, counter-deception, counter-propaganda, counter-intelligence and electronic warfare are examples of defensive IO activities.<sup>3</sup>



At the strategic level of war, the National Command Authority includes IO in the spectrum of activities it employs to achieve national objectives. At that level, IO objectives are to influence or affect an adversary's political, military, economic or informational elements of national power, while protecting our elements of national power. Deterrence, power projection, and other strategic concepts are greatly affected by our ability to influence the perceptions and decision making of others. IO can help deter adversaries from initiating action and can make important contributions to defusing crises.<sup>4</sup>

The United States effectively used information operations prior to and during the Gulf War. In the wake of the U.S. led coalition victory, Iraq developed an asymmetrical approach to defeating any future coalition effort. Iraq's pattern of behavior demonstrated a growing mastery in perception management. Iraq's effective use of the media squashed the United States' efforts to establish a coalition response to Iraq's non-compliance with the United Nations Special Commission (UNSCOM) inspections in early 1998. The successful use of IO by Iraq in early 1998 shows how a small and unsophisticated desert country mastered the use of information operations. Taking from the lessons of trial and error an inexperienced Iraq effectively used asymmetric actions by using the media to influence international opinion and U.S. policy. This paper addresses the

media, public opinion and policy prior to, during, and after the Gulf War.

### **INFORMATION OPERATIONS BEFORE THE WAR**

Immediately after the invasion of Kuwait by Iraq, President Bush began campaigning for public support. He sought support from the American people and the international community. Because the U.S. is a democratic republic, military missions cannot be undertaken without the consensus of the people and the elected officials.<sup>5</sup> In addition, the U.S. needed the support of the Arab nations and the international community as a whole. Coalition building was essential.<sup>6</sup>

The media and the United Nations (UN) were the instruments used to develop, nurture, and shape the needed internal and external support. Through the use of the media, the U.S. brought its political agenda to the American public and the rest of the world. The media dutifully reported what was being said and done by President Bush and Mr. Hussein. They extensively commentated on it in columns and editorials, bringing the message into homes and around the world. Iraq's actions were portrayed as unprovoked aggression by an irrational, ruthless dictator that the world could not let stand.

President Bush repeatedly characterized Saddam Hussein as the Western equivalent of the Great Satan, suggesting that Mr.

Hussein was even worse than Hitler. The U.S. media portrayed Mr. Hussein as a singularly bad and dangerous character. To compliment what President Bush was saying in the media, Saddam Hussein did his part at playing the monster for the American public and the world. The media heightened the hostility of the American public and focused the national will by capturing the atrocities committed by Iraqi soldiers in Kuwait, the Iraqi treatment of American hostages in January 1991, and by highlighting Saddam Hussein's defiant language.<sup>7</sup> The heightened hostility caused by Iraq's actions resulted in support for the war and a tolerance for casualties.<sup>8</sup> The media's main contribution in shaping public opinion was their extensive and full coverage of critical events.<sup>9</sup>

Public reaction for the war with Iraq was positive. Because of this, the media portrayed the build-up and the war in a positive light. Absent from the press were stories advocating peace. In addition, the media did not run critical stories about the U.S. military. A prepared story about 1600 U.S. soldiers who got pregnant while deployed to the Gulf was never published. The media's portrayal of our soldiers as being above sins-of-the-flesh was in keeping with how they influenced public opinion.<sup>10</sup>

Issues featured by the media became important to the public and policy makers, while issues receiving little media coverage

were unlikely to arouse public concern or to cause political action.<sup>11</sup> The customer's appetite for stories showing the U.S. as the great liberator of Kuwait and Saddam Hussein as a villain led to broad media coverage. Thus, the political policy makers took advantage of the media's influence, which influenced public perceptions, which in turn influenced the political agenda.<sup>12</sup> To ask which came first is a chicken or the egg question. Suffice it to say that the media reinforced and strengthened public perceptions, which in turn influenced political policy.

Saddam Hussein's initial use of IO was seen immediately after Iraq invaded Kuwait. In an apparent move to defuse international condemnation, Saddam Hussein began campaigning for international support by defaming Kuwait's ruling family and portraying Iraq as the champion for the Palestinian cause, anti-colonialism, social justice, Arab unity, and Islam. Through the use of defensive IO, the U.S. was able to defeat Iraq's political strategy aimed at influencing the Arab nations' decision-making leadership. Unfortunately for Saddam Hussein, his first attempt at using IO failed. The Gulf States requested outside help and formed a coalition.<sup>13</sup>

## INFORMATION OPERATIONS DURING THE WAR

According to the media, the public sets the news agenda.<sup>14</sup> During the war, the public had an insatiable appetite to see all they could about what was happening. Twenty-four hours a day, we could watch the war on CNN. According to General Colin Powell, once commanders have the mission, "turn your attention to television because you can win the battle or lose the war if you don't handle the story right."<sup>15</sup> General Powell felt an important key to the military's success was an understanding of public relations and politics, and how to use them. He believed that military officers of the 1990s had to understand the political and media components of their profession. He had worked on his relationships with the media, so they trusted him and accepted his explanations of what was happening.<sup>16</sup>

The media has been credited with much of what U.S. political and military leaders have done to respond to complex emergencies. According to Ted Kopple, "simple pictures can, and do, have enormous consequences for U.S. foreign policy."<sup>17</sup> The "CNN effect," shaped both U.S. and Iraq actions during the war. The U.S. curtailed its bombing along "the highway of death," in fear that it would portray the U.S. in a bad light with the American public and the international community. Political leadership feared that "the turkey shoot" would summon bad

feelings with the American people. In addition, they did not want America to appear heartless.<sup>18</sup> The Coalition did not carpet bomb Baghdad. They feared that death of civilians would play into Mr. Hussein's belief that well-publicized and suitably destructive air raids on Baghdad would cause the U.S. to lose both internal and external support for the war.<sup>19</sup>

OPSEC contributes to offensive IO. Deception and OPSEC efforts were combined to deceive Mr. Hussein of the Coalition's intent to swing west of the Iraqi defenses in Kuwait and make the main attack into Iraq itself.<sup>20</sup> However, General Schwarzkofit testified after the war that he was concerned that war analysis by experts prior to offensive action had gone to a great deal of trouble to analyze what could be done. As a result, the battle plan was inadvertently published in several well-known periodicals. If Saddam Hussein had read what was being written in the press, he could have gathered a lot of intelligence and used it to his advantage.<sup>21</sup>

During the war, Iraq continued with its government controlled media reporting, while the U.S. utilized media pools and Public Affairs (PA) programs. The U.S. used media pools to their advantage in fashioning arguments to support their policies in the Gulf.<sup>22</sup> Only a relatively few people actually fight in wars, the vast majority of people experience war through reports from others.<sup>23</sup> By effectively using media pools

and PA programs, the U.S contributed to information assurance by disseminating factual information to the group. Timely and accurate dissemination both internally and externally counters an adversary's deception and propaganda.<sup>24</sup> The U.S. also used the media to create an awareness of the military goals during the war. Through media coverage, we satisfied the desires of internal and external audiences to be kept informed. Additionally, it allowed the Coalition to inform Mr. Hussein about the friendly force's intent and capability.<sup>25</sup>

During the war, the Coalition effectively used PSYOPS, which are actions to convey selected information and indicators to foreign audiences.<sup>26</sup> The distribution of numerous leaflets and TV and radio broadcasts resulted in the surrender of over 78,000 Iraqi soldiers during the war. Ninety-eight percent (98%) of all the Iraqi prisoners of war (POWs) saw a leaflet. Seventy percent (70%) said that the leaflets convinced them to surrender. Fifty-eight (58%) percent had heard a radio broadcast. Thirty-four (34%) said that the broadcast convinced them to surrender.<sup>27</sup>

### **INFORMATION OPERATIONS AFTER THE GULF WAR**

With the benefit of hindsight, it doesn't appear that the strenuous Coalition effort in the Gulf brought peace to the

Middle East.<sup>28</sup> Although President Bush insisted that it was never an objective of the war to remove Saddam Hussein, for the American public and many external audiences, it became one. The information campaign that painted Saddam Hussein as a "singularly bad and dangerous character" left many wondering why he remained in power when the U.S. called the end to the 100-hour war. For many, as long as Saddam Hussein continued to reign, the war in Iraq was unfinished.<sup>29</sup>

After the victory parades, American public attention shifted from foreign policy to domestic problems. No longer were Americans concerned with deployed troops in the Middle East. The public agenda was now focused on current pains, the domestic economy, and not on the fading glory of victory. When public concern took a turn for domestic policy so did the media.<sup>30</sup>

### **THE MEDIA AS AN IO INSTRUMENT**

The history of mass media shows that control is regarded as a valued form of property for those seeking political power.<sup>31</sup> Control of the media has always allowed Mr. Hussein to (1) attract and direct attention to problems and solutions that favored his objective; (2) confer status and confirm legitimacy; (3) use it as a tool to persuade; and, (4) establish and



maintain a sympathetic public.<sup>32</sup> However, results indicate that Mr. Hussein learned to use it more effectively since 1991.

Much has been written about the power of the media and the tendency for the media staff to become part of the political establishment. If this is true, then it is easy to see the degree of control that Mr. Hussein's Ba'th regime had over the written and spoken word. Modern media is a critically important instrument in the hands of rulers. Eventually, government-controlled media becomes the "flawed mirror through which that society perceives reality."<sup>33</sup> In Iraq, the press has known only short spells of freedom. The electronic media has always been under government control.<sup>34</sup> Control of the media enabled Saddam Hussein to "emasculate" the political consciousness of the masses. Thus, the media became his propaganda machine allowing him to guide the Iraqi people in all things. In addition, by "levying high taxes and imposing censorship on intellectual and cultural imports, he limited and warped the political consciousness of the masses."<sup>35</sup> In an ongoing, post-war-campaign, Saddam Hussein used the press to mount an information campaign.

In the Ba'th party, the press has served as an instrument of social and political mobility. An example is Tariq 'Aziz, who started out as an editor in the early years of the regime and rose to the highest ranks within the party. Likewise,

political personalities have been assigned posts in the media, which assured the government firm control. In 1990, Uday, Saddam Hussein's son, was made owner of one of Iraq's newspapers and later became chairman of the Iraqi association of journalists. This gave Saddam control of the press, and the press direct access to Saddam. Direct access led to disproportionate coverage, which eventually turned his personal political idiom into the common speech of all that were exposed to it.<sup>36</sup>

#### **MILITARY OPERATIONS OTHER THAN WAR**

With the war "won," the U.S. began Military Operations Other Than War (MOOTW). Political endstates, as in war, drive MOOTW activities. One of the six basic principles of MOOTW is legitimacy. Legitimacy is based on the perception of the legality, morality, and the rightness of a set of actions.<sup>37</sup> IO is key to maintaining legitimacy. IO includes public affairs and PSYOPS. Public Affairs (PA) includes the media. PA programs influence public opinion and are principle factors in the success of the operation. PSYOPS provides a planned, systematic process to convey messages and influence target audiences.<sup>38</sup>

The main MOOTW activity, since the end of the war, has been to enforce economic sanctions. The sanctions were imposed with

the approval of the international community to pressure Iraq into destroying their Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD). The U.S. took action with the intent of changing the behavior of Saddam Hussein. Under UN resolution, the UNSCOM weapon inspections began. Since then, the U.S. government has had to maintain the legitimacy of the operation with the American people, the Coalition and the international community. Presidents Bush and Clinton have used the media to keep the American people informed and to legitimize the enforcement of the sanctions. As further evidence of legitimacy, every 6 months the UN Security Council votes on whether or not to continue to enforce sanctions and the UNSCOM inspections.<sup>39</sup>

Saddam Hussein claimed that the sanctions have caused unprecedented civilian suffering in Iraq. UN agencies estimate more than 500,000 Iraqi children have died from hunger and disease since the end of the Gulf War.<sup>40</sup> Because of this finding, the UN entered into a deal with Iraq that allowed Iraq to sell oil to buy food for its citizens. The Washington spin on the food-for-oil deal claimed that U.S. resolve succeeded in maintaining sanctions and forced Saddam Hussein to feed his people.<sup>41</sup>

In April 1991, Joint Task Force PROVIDE COMFORT was established to provide Humanitarian Assistance to the Kurds in northern Iraq. This expanded very quickly to also providing

them protection from Saddam Hussein's oppressive actions. UN Security Resolution 688 legitimized our actions. Until September 1996, continuation of Operation PROVIDE COMFORT was endorsed by the Turkish parliament every six months. A key factor that contributed to the overall sense of legitimacy was the role of the Joint PSYOPS Task Force through a well-planned and executed information operations campaign.

Aggressive information management on the international level was necessary to influence international political opinion in legitimizing U.S. efforts in MOOTW.<sup>42</sup> According to General J.P. McCarthy, USAF, "media representatives were in the mountains reporting the plight of displaced Kurds" from the very beginning. U.S. European Command (EUCOM) decided that the objectives for the operations could best be met by ensuring full media access. EUCOM placed members of the media on their aircraft, in their convoys, in their relocation camps and with the ground forces. Even though the media observed several mistakes, they reported on them in the proper context. By all accounts, the media provided objective coverage.<sup>43</sup>

In September 1996, when three Iraqi Republican Guard divisions were about to cross the 36th parallel to attack Irbil, President Clinton deliberately chose not to issue a forceful warning. Instead, junior administration spokesmen warned Saddam Hussein by revealing to reporters that B-52s were flying to Guam

and additional warships were heading for the Gulf.<sup>44</sup> Saddam Hussein did not heed the warning and sent Iraqi forces into the northern Kurdish safe-haven. The U.S. responded with 44 cruise missiles. Americans were informed that this decisive action had sent a message to Saddam Hussein and forced the Iraqi forces to withdraw from the safe-haven.

On the other hand, our Middle-East allies viewed our missile diplomacy as "another round of disproportionate retaliation."<sup>45</sup> Because of the media, the Arab world was aware of the half million Iraqi citizens who died as a result of the imposed sanctions. Middle East leaders did not see how missile strikes at Iraq brought Saddam Hussein under control. They perceived that strikes only brought more death and destruction to the citizens of Iraq. Turkey disassociated itself from the U.S. Kurdish policy when the U.S. proposed a second strike. Saudi Arabia refused to let the U.S. use their bases. In the judgment of the Saudi leaders, another attack would leave the Iraqi threat to Saudi Arabia unimpaired and its malice enhanced. Turkey, Saudi Arabia and the other Gulf nations did not see how the missile attacks coincided with stated goals. "When the smoke lifted," the crisis revealed that there was "a wide gap between what the American public was told and how the same events were perceived by the rest of the world."<sup>46</sup>

In contrast to the disapproval of the Arab world, President Clinton's decision to launch missiles was supported by 66% of the American public. The media coverage of America's "Favorite Bad Guy, the Butcher of Baghdad," and its reluctance to cover the 500,000 fatalities caused by the sanctions resulted in American public support for U.S. policy in Iraq.<sup>47</sup> U.S. policy makers were winning the perception battle in the U.S., but Iraq was beginning to win it in the Middle East.

#### **OCTOBER 1997 - FEBRUARY 1998**

By 1997, Iraq decided that the UNSCOM inspections had lasted too long with no end in sight. Saddam Hussein knew that the sanctions would never be lifted as long as the inspections continued. In October 1997, Mr. Hussein announced to the world that he would no longer cooperate with the UNSCOM inspection team.<sup>48</sup> The U.S. responded that Iraq would be "severely" punished if it did not cooperate. Tensions mounted as the U.S. prepared to take military action against a defiant Saddam Hussein.<sup>49</sup>

As seen with the Kurdish incident, the members of the Coalition disassociated themselves from taking military action. Arab leaders and the Iraqi-controlled media spoke out forcefully against threats of military action.<sup>50</sup> Russia, China, France,

Egypt, Turkey and all of the Arab allies except Kuwait abandoned the U.S.<sup>51</sup> Although there were signs that Jordan, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia were "running out of patience" with Saddam Hussein, none were willing to say so in public.<sup>52</sup> As the military option geared up, Mr. Hussein was able to portray Iraq as the courageous Arab nation, "standing up to Western imperialism and Zionism."<sup>53</sup> Saddam Hussein saw that the U.S. "center of gravity was the coalition, and then set about to dismantle it" by using an aggressive IO campaign.<sup>54</sup>

In November 1997, U.S. media coverage focused on which military option the U.S. should choose: "assassination of Saddam Hussein, bombing Iraq, or sending ground troops."<sup>55</sup> U.S. coverage was designed to help President Clinton "prepare the American people for war." "During the crisis, it was virtually impossible to find a voice for peace..."<sup>56</sup> The President and the Secretary of Defense (SECDEF) used the media to strengthen their case with the American people against Iraq's Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) program. The politicians and the U.S. press focused on Iraq's WMD program, failing to say anything about other Middle East countries, such as Israel, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia, which also have WMD programs.<sup>57</sup> The result was misleading U.S. media coverage. The Arab world's perception, highlighted by the Iraqi media, of the U.S. "double standard" in dealings with Israel versus Iraq, began to be a key factor

underpinning much of the Arab controversy over U.S. policy in the Middle East.<sup>58</sup> Again, the U.S. used IO effectively to gain American public support; however, Iraq used it to gain Arab support. We were losing coalition support and the international perception battle.

By the end of January 1998, Iraq's controlled media published stories with the theme that any show of force by the U.S. against Saddam Hussein was to divert attention away from the President's sexual problems.<sup>59</sup> The movie, "Wag the Dog" was just released. Media hype in the U.S. and in Iraq highlighted the similarities and raised the question in everyone's mind as to whether a military strike was really needed, or was it savvy image politics distracting all of us from the sexual allegations?<sup>60</sup> Newsweek reported that Monica Lewinsky "was the most-talked-about American woman in Baghdad."<sup>61</sup> The sexual scandal created doubt, domestically and internationally, on President Clinton's ability to focus and handle the crisis in the Middle East.<sup>62</sup> The Iraqi government seized the opportunity for effective use of IO by allowing President Clinton's sex-scandal to make headlines in the Iraqi news.

U.S influence in the Middle East sank to an all time low by the beginning of February 1998. America's "two-faced" policy in dealing with Israel in their undermining of the Middle East "peace process" led Arab allies to refuse to have anything to do



with reforming a coalition to punish Saddam Hussein. America, professing to be "the honest broker," had taken the side of Israel. In the eyes of our Arab allies, the U.S. ignored Israel's "cruel and illegal treatment of the Palestinians." American Middle East policy, which antagonizes the Arabs, was now openly disregarded by Israel.<sup>63</sup> Saddam Hussein used this to his advantage to convince the other Arab nations that the U.S. was not interested in peace in the Middle East as evidenced by their inaction to bring about peace between Israel and Palestine. According to Saddam Hussein, since the U.S. was not interested in peace, they must only be interested in inflicting pain and punishment on the Arab people of Iraq.<sup>64</sup>

By February 14, 1998, the Clinton administration and the Iraqi government escalated their bombardment of the airwaves, "each vying for international opinion," and placing blame for the crisis on the other.<sup>65</sup> Iraq contended that diplomatic means were not exhausted. Iraq further claimed that the UN inspections were "a violation of national sovereignty and a pretext for U.S. intelligence gathering."<sup>66</sup> France sympathized with Iraq's claim that the inspectors were not impartial.<sup>67</sup> China, Russia and all the Arab allies except Kuwait refused to endorse military action. They had difficulty in justifying the use of force in Arab and Muslim countries, since the U.S. was not advocating the same type of action against other nations

that were doing similar things -- a point that seldom gets noted in the U.S. media.<sup>68</sup> Additionally, they perceived U.S. action as an attempt by the U.S. to use the UN as a tool to implement U.S. foreign policy. The U.S. was reluctant to conduct unilateral military action.<sup>69</sup> Saddam Hussein had backed President Clinton into a corner. Unilateral action against an Arab country, while Israel sits on a stockpile of nuclear warheads would totally ruin U.S. credibility as a peacemaker in the Middle East.<sup>70</sup>

As the U.S. prepared for a possible military attack, network executives, both in the U.S. and the U.K., developed their media coverage plan.<sup>71</sup> At the same time, Saddam Hussein decided that it was to his advantage to have full coverage of any attack. The Iraqi government was generous with visas for TV reporters.<sup>72</sup> Iraq's skill in handling the media was "markedly improved."<sup>73</sup> In 1991, CNN was the only American network on the air throughout the bombing.<sup>74</sup> In February 1998, most major news organizations had large teams in Baghdad. Additionally, there was greater visibility of government ministers at live press conferences, a previously unimaginable event. All of this gave the appearance of greater openness. The bottom line is that Iraq used the media very effectively to get its message across.<sup>75</sup>

The U.S. announced the deployment of additional warplanes and ground forces to the theater. Britain showed their support

by sending warplanes. The U.S. also involved the Secretary of State, the Secretary of Defense and the Ambassador to the UN in a full-press diplomatic effort to explain U.S. policy.<sup>76</sup> The White House used the media to show the world America's resolve.<sup>77</sup>

However, not all efforts to use the media to influence support for military action were successful. On February 19, 1998, the national security team took their story to the American people. At Ohio State University, they "found themselves on the defensive against a vocal minority among the 6,000 students and residents" participating in the "town-hall meeting."<sup>78</sup> Although most protesters appeared to oppose military action, some argued they supported it as long as the goal was to remove Hussein. The discord was televised to 200 million homes worldwide, and was complemented by two radio networks and seven Internet sites.<sup>79</sup> It was a "remarkable demonstration of the power of the electronic media to convey the reality of American political life."<sup>80</sup> Iraqi-controlled TV repeatedly aired the CNN footage of Madeleine Albright being heckled. Secretary Albright became a casualty in the administration's media war.<sup>81</sup> The Iraqi exploitation of this U.S. media disaster reinforced how far Iraq had advanced in effectively using IO.

After the Ohio debacle, President Clinton tried to assure the world, to include Saddam Hussein, of U.S. resolve. The media campaign continued with the Washington Post reporting that

the bombing plans were expanded. They even tried to postulate when the strikes would begin.<sup>82</sup> The New York Times reported that President Clinton had signed-off on a four-day around the clock strike.<sup>83</sup> The Times also quoted Secretary of Defense Cohen stating that President Clinton approved the plan.<sup>84</sup> CBS did a practice session describing the aircraft that would be used in a bombing run.<sup>85</sup> Newt Gingrich and Trent Lott made front page of the Times when they said that the U.S. should depose Saddam Hussein. And, Secretary of State Albright wrote an essay for Newsweek in which she said "air strikes were fine, but that topping Saddam was out of the question."<sup>86</sup> The U.S. was ready for war.

On 20 February 1998, UN Secretary General Kofi Annan went to Baghdad in a last ditch effort to find a diplomatic solution. The "Iraqi-controlled media expressed concern" that Annan had a "prepared script from the U.S."<sup>87</sup> As the talks took place, "CNN reports, complete with Arabic translation, gave hourly details... asserting that the talks were going well."<sup>88</sup> It was a "clear sign" to the Iraqis that things were "swinging Iraq's way" when the "tightly controlled Iraqi media" started to show "uncensored reports" from a major "imperialist American network."<sup>89</sup>

February 1998 provided us with a stinging example of how a small country in the Middle East can confront a high-tech global

superpower and emerge with a measure of success. The confrontation dramatized that warfare had changed. "The new and important struggles were for men's minds."<sup>90</sup> Saddam Hussein learned from Desert Storm that he could influence public opinion worldwide by exploiting the media. He understood that technology had wired us together and that one atrocity can fill TV screens around the globe. "He threw his doors open to the world's press" and prepared to win the psychological battle by showing women and children killed by bombs.<sup>91</sup>

#### **MARCH 1998 - PRESENT**

As the crisis cooled, correspondents left Iraq to find new headlines. Saddam Hussein claimed victory.<sup>92</sup> Iraq's clear gain was degraded U.S. credibility in the area. Arab public opinion "had a greater bearing on official Arab policies towards Iraq than ever before."<sup>93</sup> Both Syria and Egypt, key Arab members of the 1991 Coalition, saw their relations with Iraq "normalize" as the crisis played out. Arab media became more sympathetic towards Baghdad, and condemned the U.S. for "warmongering, callousness, high-handedness, secret agendas and double standards."<sup>94</sup> By early March 1998, most of the Arab nations did not see the U.S. as having the moral high ground that it had in 1991. On the other hand, the U.S. and the U.K. believed that

the only language Saddam Hussein understood was force. President Clinton and Prime Minister Blair sent the message that "they stood ready to enforce the agreement if need be."<sup>95</sup> The U.S. began stating that it had the right to act unilaterally if Iraq did not live up to their part of the agreement.<sup>96</sup> "A number of congressmen demanded that Saddam Hussein be removed."<sup>97</sup> On 2 March 1998, the UN signed resolutions calling for "severest consequences if Iraq failed to keep its word."<sup>98</sup> Hence, the stage was set for another round of rhetoric with the U.S. threatening to use force while Iraq claimed a violation of sovereignty and U.S. "double standards" in its Middle East policy.

Amidst the rhetoric and sex scandal, Washington began to focus on the Middle East Peace process in an effort to dispel the "double standard" label and to build credibility. In April 1998, The Middle East International reported that "the U.S. is the sole effective arbiter in the Oslo process; it alone can bring pressure to bear to rescue it from its present impasse."<sup>99</sup> With U.S. prestige and foreign policy credibility riding on the Oslo peace talks, it is with little doubt that there would be an agreement that would break the 19-month impasse.<sup>100</sup>

The informational themes focused on UNSCOM reports of Iraq's WMD capability. The Washington Post ran articles on Iraq's work towards the development of an A-bomb, implosion

devices, nerve gas residue on Iraqi warheads, and the refusal to turn over documents about its arms programs to the UN.

Meanwhile, the administration stated that they were taking a measured approach "as an attempt to show countries sympathetic to Iraq that the U.S. is not rushing to drop bombs at the slightest provocation."<sup>101</sup>

Iraq focused on what they referred to as "legitimate concerns of national security, sovereignty and dignity."<sup>102</sup> They focused on the devastating effects the sanctions were having on the Iraqi people. The U.S. responded that Saddam Hussein, by his unwillingness to comply with Security Resolutions, was responsible for the sanctions imposed on the Iraqi people.<sup>103</sup> Iraq also renewed attacks on the UN inspection team and began personal attack on Mr. Butler, a former Australian representative at the UN, now head of the UN inspection team, calling him a "failed diplomat and a trivial spy."<sup>104</sup> This information theme picked up credibility as France and Syria made it known that they suspected the U.S. "was manipulating UNSCOM to not give Iraq a clean bill of health, thereby keeping sanctions in place and Iraq under control."<sup>105</sup>

In 1998, a familiar scenario was replayed. Iraqi defiance and U.S. threats of military force that resulted in Iraq compliance in November 1998 and a military strike in December 1998. In both cases, each side portrayed the outcome as a

triumph. As 1999 rolled in, the world awaited the next drama to unfold.

## CONCLUSION

During the Gulf War, Iraq took on the U.S. and the Coalition in a symmetrical manner, and lost. Learning from the war, they developed an IO plan, and attacked the U.S. asymmetrically. "The Gulf War belonged to television. The next war will be on the Internet, the ultimate media democracy."<sup>106</sup> "New communications systems have the potential to unite like-minded people" and to influence unlike-minded people.<sup>107</sup> The Internet "overruns geographic borders, making possible the creation of virtual communities of shared interest that transcends national borders."<sup>108</sup> The capability of the Internet is unrealized.

Asymmetric warfare differs from more traditional warfare by the propensity of the aggressor to focus on shattering the opponent's will as opposed to destroying military forces. "Such an adversary would see the moral, political, and cultural values of their opponents as asymmetries to be exploited."<sup>109</sup> Propaganda and misinformation require a quick response of the truth. Just as in a mass-marketing campaign, a demographic study of the operational area becomes the war map. The ability to operate in



a multi-national environment is a key factor of success, unless the U.S. plans to act unilaterally.

Media can be a major factor in the decision making process. It is readily demonstrable that media coverage of atrocities profoundly affects both public opinion and policymaking. The media's role is threefold. First, it educates the public about the developing world and about the consequences of what is happening. Second, it serves as a mechanism for mobilizing the critical resource needed, public support. Third, the media encourages and mobilizes Congress to appropriate funds.<sup>110</sup>

Operational Security must consider the effect of media coverage, and the possibility that coverage may compromise or disclose critical information.<sup>111</sup> The media can accelerate the course of events creating an environment of instantaneous communications. Everyone from top officials to the man on the street receives the latest information from CNN. What we see on TV is shaping our environment and our decisions.<sup>112</sup> "CNN is everywhere, and where CNN goes, all the other media outlets swiftly follow."<sup>113</sup>

In the Gulf, access gave the media an immediacy that drove the political process. Pentagon officials "know that advances in transmission technology could leave them with less control over what images will be transmitted."<sup>114</sup> They acknowledge that there is "no good counter-strategy if Mr. Hussein put civilians

in military installations as human shields and American television crews are there to film the carnage."<sup>115</sup> Saddam Hussein learned in the eight years since Desert Storm that he could influence worldwide public opinion by exploiting the media. He has learned that the media has strategic implications upon U.S. foreign policies.

WORD COUNT = 5,614



## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup>CDR Sam Cox et al., "Information Assurance - the Achilles' Heel of Joint Vision 2010?," Joint Staff Information Assurance Digest, 10 August 1998, rpt. in U.S. Army War College Selected Readings Course 4 Volume III, (Carlisle Barracks: U.S. Army War College, AY99) 23-8.

<sup>2</sup>U.S. Joint Staff, Joint Doctrine for Information Operations, Joint Pub 3-13 (Washington, D.C.: The Joint Staff, 9 October 1998), vii.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., viii.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid., I-2, I-3.

<sup>5</sup>Joint Warfighting Center, Joint Task Force Commander's Handbook for Peace Operations, (Fort Monroe: Joint Warfighting Center, 16 June 1997), I-14.

<sup>6</sup>Stephen C. Pelletiere, "Regional State Competitors: The case of Iraq," Challenging the United States Symmetrically and Asymmetrically: Can America be Defeated?, ed. Colonel Lloyd J. Matthews, USA Retired, (Carlisle Barracks: U.S. Army War College Strategic Studies Institute, July 1998), 293.

<sup>7</sup>John Mueller, Policy and Opinion in the Gulf War, (The University of Chicago Press, 1994), 40-54.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid., 75-79.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid., 130.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., 74.

<sup>11</sup>Doris A. Graber, Media Power in Politics, (Chicago: University of Illinois, 1994), 75.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid., p.91-92.

<sup>13</sup>"Joint Pub 3-13" I-20.

<sup>14</sup>Mueller 133.

<sup>15</sup>Bob Woodward, The Commanders, (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1991), 155.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid., 155.

<sup>17</sup>Andrew S. Natsios, U.S. Foreign Policy and the Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse: humanitarian relief in complex emergencies, (Connecticut: Greenwood Publishing Group, Inc., 1997), 124.

<sup>18</sup>Elain Sciolino, "The New Face of Battle Wears Greasepaint," New York Times, 22 February 1998, sec. 4, p. 1.

<sup>19</sup>Mueller 122.

<sup>20</sup>"Joint Pub 3-13" II-3.

<sup>21</sup>Mueller 127.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid., 117.

<sup>23</sup>Ibid., 129.

<sup>24</sup>"Joint Pub 3-13" III-7.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid., II-6.

<sup>26</sup>Ibid., II-4.

<sup>27</sup>Air Force Special Operations Command (AFSOC) CMD BRF, Headquarters, AFSOC Command, FY96.

<sup>28</sup>Mueller 53.

<sup>29</sup>Ibid., 105.

<sup>30</sup>Ibid., 103-110.

<sup>31</sup>Graber 21.

<sup>32</sup>Ibid., 21.

<sup>33</sup>Ofra Bengio, Saddam's Word, (New York: The Oxford University Press, Inc., 1998), 7.

<sup>34</sup>Ibid., 8.

<sup>35</sup>Ibid., 210.

<sup>36</sup>Ibid., 8.

<sup>37</sup>U.S. Joint Staff, Joint Doctrine for Military Operations Other Than War, Joint Pub 3-07, (Washington, D.C.: The Joint Staff, 16 June 1995), II-5.

<sup>38</sup>Ibid., ix.

<sup>39</sup>Ibid., II-5 to II-8.

<sup>40</sup>Roger Normand, "Food-for Oil Is Not Enough," Washington Post, 5 June 1996, sec.A, p. 23.

<sup>41</sup>Ibid.

<sup>42</sup>"Joint Pub 3-07" II-5 to II-8.

<sup>43</sup>Joint Warfighting Center VIII-I.

<sup>44</sup>Edward N. Luttwak, "This Line in the Sand is Shaky; Iraq: Clinton's political needs dictated a hasty attack without diplomatic cover," Los Angeles Times, 4 September 1996, sec. B, p. 9.

<sup>45</sup>Henry Kissinger, "No Objective, No Will," Washington Post, 6 October 1996, sec. C, p. 7.

<sup>46</sup>Ibid.

<sup>47</sup>Susan Douglas, "Peddlers of Amnesia," Progressive, November 1996, 17.

<sup>48</sup>Pelletiere 289.

<sup>49</sup>Ibid.

<sup>50</sup>John Lancaster, "Arab Allies Oppose Strikes at Iraq, for Now," Washington Post, 28 January 1998, sec. A, p. 12.

<sup>51</sup>Pelletier 290.

<sup>52</sup>Lancaster 12.

<sup>53</sup>Pelletier 292.

<sup>54</sup>Ibid., 293.

<sup>55</sup>"Jingo all the way," Progressive, January 1998, 8-9.

<sup>56</sup>Ibid.

<sup>57</sup>Ibid.

<sup>58</sup>"A bleak outlook," Middle East International, 16 January 1998, 2.

<sup>59</sup>Richard N. Haass, "Stay Strong on Iraq," Washington Post, 29 January 1998, sec. A, p. 19.

<sup>60</sup>Laura Ingraham, "Iraq Stockpiles and TV News Is a Dog Show; Clinton has proved a master at diverting media attention from his peccadilloes," commentary, Los Angeles Times, 20 January 1998, sec. B, p. 7.

<sup>61</sup>John Corry, "All Monica, All The Time," American Spectator, April 1998, 50-51.

<sup>62</sup>Ibid.

<sup>63</sup>"Only Europe is left to take the initiative," Middle East International, 30 January 1998, 2.

<sup>64</sup>Dr. Stephen C. Pelletier, personal interview, 30 December 1998.

<sup>65</sup>David S. Cloud, "For Now, U.S., Iraq Battling in Media Sides are Jockeying for World Opinion," Chicago Tribune, 14 February 1998, sec 1, p. 1.

<sup>66</sup>Ibid.

<sup>67</sup>Robert Swann, "France's failed mission," Middle East International, 13 February 1998, 13.

<sup>68</sup>Donald Neff, "Demanding Iraqi submission" Middle East International, 13 February 1998, 5.

<sup>69</sup>"What could military action achieve?", Middle East International, 13 February 1998, 2. "France's failed mission by Robert Swann," Middle East International, 13 February 1998, 13.

<sup>70</sup>Steve Negus, "Egypt loses its appetite" Middle East International, 13 February 1998, 6.

<sup>71</sup>Jane Hall, "Networks Brace for Gulf Action; Television: Executives beef up presence in Baghdad to cover a possible U.S. attack on Iraq," Los Angeles Times, 16 February 1998, sec F, p. 1. Robert Frank, "New Networks, Led by CNN and BBC, Gear Up to Broadcast Fighting in Iraq," Wall Street Journal, 19 February 1998, sec A, p. 19.

<sup>72</sup>Martha T. Moore, "Iraq paves way for TV, stalls spring journalist," USA TODAY, 18 February 1998, sec A, p. 4.

<sup>73</sup>"Iraq's improving PR," Middle East International, 13 February 1998, 4.

<sup>74</sup>Hall 1.

<sup>75</sup>"Iraq's Improving PR" 4.

<sup>76</sup>Neff 4-5.

<sup>77</sup>John Corry, "All Monica, All The Time," American Spectator, April 1998, 50-51.

<sup>78</sup>Tyler Marshall, "Clinton's Advisors Put on Defensive at Debate on Iraq; Mideast: protesters and supporters turn Ohio 'town meeting' into emotional clash over U.S. policy in Persian Gulf. Discord airs in 200 million homes worldwide," Los Angeles Times, 19 February 1998, sec A, p. 1.

<sup>79</sup>Marshall 1. Corry, 50-51.

<sup>80</sup>Joe Shea, "How Do You Change a President's Mind?; Democracy: The town hall meeting on Iraq lacked one vital thing: the power to vote," Los Angeles Times, 20 February 1998, sec B, p. 9.

<sup>81</sup>Corry 50-51.

<sup>82</sup>Ibid.



<sup>83</sup>Ibid.

<sup>84</sup>Ibid.

<sup>85</sup>Ibid.

<sup>86</sup>Ibid.

<sup>87</sup>Charles M. Sennott, "'Optimistic' UN Chief Arrives in Baghdad," Boston Globe, 21 February 1998, sec. A, p. 1.

<sup>88</sup>Youssef M. Ibrahim, "Despite Threat of Missiles, the Iraqi Capital's People Take a Crisis in Stride," New York Times, sec. A, p. 9.

<sup>89</sup>Ibid.

<sup>90</sup>George C. Wilson, "Losing the War of Words," Washington Post, sec. A, p. 25.

<sup>91</sup>Ibid.

<sup>92</sup>Ian Williams, "Kofi Annan's Baghdad Mission," Middle East International, 27 February 1998, 3.

<sup>93</sup>Najm Jarrah, "Arab Nerves Soothed," Middle East International, 27 February 1998, 7.

<sup>94</sup>Ibid.

<sup>95</sup>Abdullah Mutawi, "The US and Iraq: disregarding international law," Middle East International, 27 February 1998, 16.

<sup>96</sup>Ian Williams, "Warning to Iraq," Middle East International, 13 March 1998, 9.

<sup>97</sup>Donald Neff, "Price on Saddam's head," Middle East International, 13 March 1998, 10-11.

<sup>98</sup>Ibid.

<sup>99</sup>"Who will put pressure on Israel?," Middle East International, 10 April 1998, 2.

<sup>100</sup>"And they call it peace," Middle East International, 30 October 1998, 3.

<sup>101</sup>John M. Goshko, "U.N. Panel Takes No Action On Iraq's Latest Refusal," Washington Post, 25 November 1998, sec. A, p.15.

<sup>102</sup>"Sanctions on Irag: Illegal and Indefensible," Middle East International, 10 April 1998, 17-18.

<sup>103</sup>Ibid., 17-18.

<sup>104</sup>Barbara Crossette, "U.N. Chief says U.S. goes Too Far in Calling for Iraqi's Ouster," New York Times, 15 December 1998, sec. A, p. 1.

<sup>105</sup>Patrick Seale, "France and Syria: Playing for High Stakes," Middle East International, 31 July 1998, 16-19.

<sup>106</sup>Charles Jaco, "Perspective on the Media; The Net War, Where Rumor Rules; Professional reporting was co-opted by the military in Desert Storm. These days, people prefer gossip to news, anyway," commentary, Los Angeles Times, 22 February 1998, sec. M, p. 5.

<sup>107</sup>Charles J. Dunlap, JR., "21<sup>st</sup>-Century Land Warfare: Four Dangerous Myths," Parameters, Autumn 1997, 28.

<sup>108</sup>Ibid.

<sup>109</sup>Ibid.

<sup>110</sup>Natsios 125-126.

<sup>111</sup>"Joint Pub 3.07" II-5.

<sup>112</sup>Mark Jurkowitz, "Monitor pins hopes on face lift," Boston Globe, 19 November 1998, sec. D, p. 1.

<sup>113</sup>Joint Warfighting Center VIII-III.

<sup>114</sup>Sciolino 1.

<sup>115</sup>Ibid.



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**VIDEO**

Air Force Special Operations Command (AFSOC) CMD BRF,  
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