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# Battle's End

Instead of a final, climactic battle on 28 February, offensive military operations came unraveled in the early morning hours. Based upon glowing reports of success from the field, President Bush stopped the relentless killing of Iraqi soldiers and called for cease-fire talks. The conclusion was not a clean fade to peace, either on the battlefield or in the headquarters. In spite of almost unprecedented success in the field, seeds of postwar controversy were planted in the high command and in American public opinion. The events at Safwan and later near a causeway across the Euphrates marshes are instructive about the difficulties of ending a war.

The conduct of military affairs in Southwest Asia was marked by the particularly smooth integration of political and military actions almost from the outset. Although the United States military response to Iraq's aggression suffered some initial growing pains, the more typical thread that ran throughout Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm was the habit of following each key presidential announcement of political intention with a press conference by the secretary of defense and chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in which political goals were translated into clear military objectives.

With the ubiquity of CNN, operational commanders in theater could receive this guidance immediately and react to it at once. That the Iraqis could also receive it probably added more to the desired effect of coercion (or was discounted by Saddam's paranoia as mere deception) than it exposed U.S. forces to any increased risk. The technique can also be seen as a means of reassuring allies and neutrals by letting them know publicly just what the United States was about. The practice was, therefore, instrumental in maintaining both the cohesion of the alliance and ensuring that forces in the field were aware of the national command authority's intentions.

All this broke down the night of 27 February. The result was confusion and disharmony and a major killing of Iraqi forces that had tried to flee the partial U.S. encirclement during the two days after the announcement of a "suspension of offensive combat actions." At that precise time, U.S. and Iraqi military leaders were supposed to have been discussing terms for a military cease-fire in the field. Iraqi forces in the Basrah pocket were permitted to depart to the north, through Basrah, and continued to do so with their equipment after the

implementation of the cease-fire. This provided cause for postwar speculation, particularly since the forces escaping into Basrah later took part in suppressing local unrest there against Saddam's regime.<sup>1</sup>

What was absent was a clear and common vision of how U.S. forces should be distributed on the ground to facilitate the inevitable transfer of the conflict's focus and energies back to the political arena. Also lacking was a common concept of what action to take regarding those Iraqi forces, including elements of the Republican Guard, that had been driven back into Basrah and its environs. All this was missing, in part, no doubt, because the end of offensive actions came sooner than anticipated. It also reflects a fundamental weakness in a traditional U.S. view that the military and political conduct of war are separable at all but the highest levels. In this concept of civil-military relations, the soldier is given a mission and fights the war according to what is militarily correct—albeit within boundaries established by policy. He expects to be left alone to do his technical business of fighting until he has accomplished some gross military end that will enable the diplomats to arrive speedily at a resolution of the basic issues causing the war. The soldier then turns the conflict back to his political masters. Such a view in an age of instantaneous communications is, of course, not only misguided but dangerous in an army of a democracy.

The difficulty on 28 February was that it was not enough to ask if the president's military objectives had been accomplished. It also mattered politically how U.S. forces were postured when they stopped their offensive actions and what U.S. expectations were for the behavior of the Iraqi forces south of the Euphrates and Shatt al Arab, now effectively in the power of U.S. forces. The disposition of U.S. forces on the ground and their behavior toward the Iraqis with whom they were now intermingled were political more than military questions. Yet, in this case, clear military guidance did not follow the political declaration.

So events on the ground drifted, with field headquarters inventing their own interpretations of the situation. While most units drew in their lines and began to clear the area to their rear, the 24th Infantry Division, apparently on the initiative of its commander, continued to advance its main line of resistance slowly and deliberately until a major, one-sided killing took place two days after the "suspension" was announced by the president. Before that occurred, a clash took place between Schwarzkopf and the senior army commanders over selection and occupation of a site for cease-fire talks, a blowup that was occasioned by the confusion of the moment but

which was rooted in the frustrations borne of military-philosophical differences that had become evident in the conduct of the ground war.

At 1800 on 27 February, the senior commanders in Third Army believed they had about one more day's war before them.<sup>2</sup> Although the 101st Airborne Division had a plan to land a brigade on Iraqi lines of retreat along the Shatt al Arab northwest of Basrah (Engagement Area Thomas) on the 28th, there had never been a serious plan at theater level to send ground forces north of the Euphrates River, nor was there any intent to get U.S. forces tied down in fighting in the built-up areas of Basrah. With the Iraqis broken and the armored fist of VII Corps moving forward, there would be no more terrain to cover after another day's fighting. The major Iraqi lines of retreat beyond the Euphrates appeared to be within the grasp of U.S. forces, and these were the focus of attention. Because Basrah, on the south side of the Euphrates and Shatt al Arab, provided a natural haven of sorts, the decision not to fight there was a potential problem. But as the day-and-night interdiction of various choke points by both the Air Force and 101st Airborne Division attack helicopters had already shown, the problem was not beyond solution.

How to transition from offensive operations to war termination was another problem. There was concern, at least in Third Army, that Saddam, driven north of the Euphrates, still might not yield. Meantime, there was the problem of destroying the remaining Republican Guard Forces Command heavy division still believed to be in the field, the Hammurabi Division, and those other remnants of the Iraqi armored forces still on the coalition side of Basrah.<sup>3</sup>

In VII Corps, General Franks and his G3, Colonel Stan Cherrie, had to adjust the corps' deployment to the diminishing maneuver space. The 3d Armored Division, in the left center of the corps, was being pinched out of the attack. The two men also wanted to get the 1st Cavalry Division, the one fresh division left, into the fight to relieve the now tiring 1st Armored. The 1st Cavalry Division was now following the 1st Armored Division but was unable to pass through because of the intensity of combat in which "Old Ironsides" was involved with the RGFC Medina Division. Both the 1st Armored Division and 1st Cavalry were up against the boundary with XVIII Corps in the north, so the relieving division had insufficient maneuver space to go around the corps' left. Franks considered requesting attachment of the 24th Division to VII Corps so that he could envelop the remaining Iraqi forces, particularly the Hammurabi Division. But he knew such a request would merely occasion an argument with the

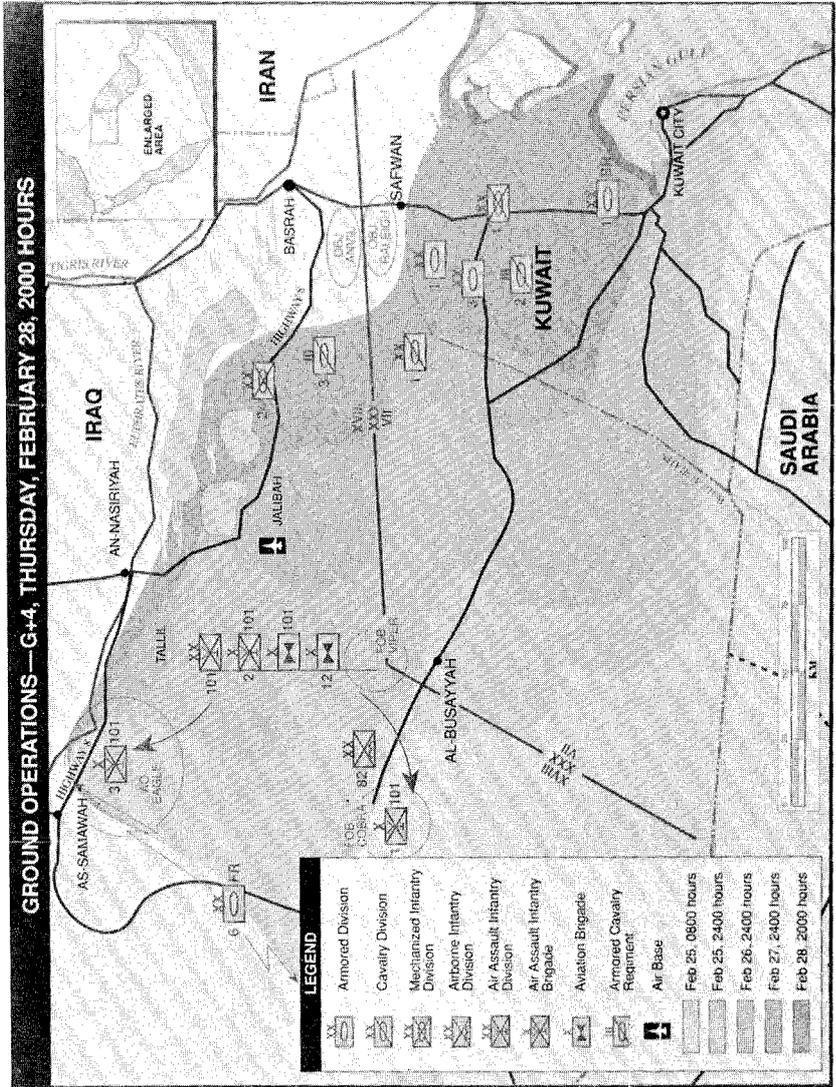
XVIII Corps, so he dismissed the idea and requested additional maneuver space to the north instead.<sup>4</sup>

The friendly fire incident that claimed the life of the 1st Armored Division's engineer had already demonstrated that intercorps boundaries were difficult enough to deal with even when they were fairly clear in advance. They were not easily changed. So VII Corps' request for more maneuver room was not likely to be promptly answered. From the standpoint of the army commander, the advance of the 24th Division down the river valley, already scheduled to begin at 0400 the following morning, was going to solve the problem of the Hammurabi Division anyway—unless it withdrew into Basrah. Before a decision was made on the VII Corps request, however, other matters intervened.

In order to arrange the battlefield for a final attack on the morning of the 28th, Franks called his major subordinate commanders at 1800 on the 27th to fix their positions long enough to reorder the corps.<sup>5</sup> The 1st Infantry Division, which by now had broken through the Republican Guard mass of maneuver, was moving almost due east. The division was in a classic exploitation and pursuit aimed at Objective Denver, whose seizure would block the Kuwait City-Basrah highway. The 1st Division's cavalry squadron, the 1st Squadron, 4th Cavalry, was already astride that road south of Safwan, at the intersection with Highway 8 and the Basrah-Kuwait City highway, already blocked farther to the south by the "Tiger Brigade."<sup>6</sup> (See map 13.)

Pursuit at night was not so easy as clever critics would imagine. The division's 1st Brigade had entered a patch of broken ground—called by veterans "the Valley of the Boogers"—infested with Iraqi infantry. There, units became intermingled and the risk of fratricide rose in the dark. The division's 2d Brigade, on the left, missed the valley and sped on by. In the 1st Brigade, the soft-skin support vehicles of the 2d Battalion of the 34th Armor actually passed the unit's combat vehicles in the dark and found themselves on the battalion's objective when the sun rose—surrounded by Iraqi tanks and alone.<sup>7</sup> The men who passed through the "Valley of the Boogers," including the combative Tom Rhame, will not be convinced that pursuit through occupied broken ground in the dark is an easy task, even in the face of a broken enemy.

The corps commander's intent was that the 1st Division would resume the attack at 0500 the morning of the 28th and, on order, turn to the north to attack toward Basrah, either alone or in conjunction



Map 13.

with the 1st U.K. Armored Division.<sup>8</sup> Though the VII Corps' staff journals record a call to that effect at about 2300 from the corps' G3, Colonel Cherrie, to the 1st Division's main CP, neither the division G3 nor division chief of staff have any memory of such a conversation. There is also no evidence of it in the available division staff journals. The division main CP had been left behind in the division's rapid advance and did not catch up until after the cessation of offensive actions. Its records for the period are incomplete. There is, consequently, insufficient documentary evidence to draw any firm conclusion about the fate of this message that, at 2300, was only an "on-order" mission that would require a subsequent execution order for implementation in any event.

The division's leaders were still looking eastward, toward the Basrah-Kuwait City highway and the coastal road beyond, as they quite properly would have in the absence of any order to the contrary. It is clear that Franks' intent for possible future actions had not been transmitted effectively to ensure it reached the one person whose full understanding was to be essential to the desired results, General Rhame. The division commander continued to focus his division's energies on execution of the last orders received.

Meanwhile, at 2100 (1300 Eastern Standard Time), General Schwarzkopf had conducted "The Mother of All Briefings."<sup>9</sup> It was, in fact, a declaration of victory. Although the CINC did indicate that armored battles were ongoing and that useful work remained to be done, he indicated in response to one question that he would be glad to stop the fighting when so ordered.<sup>10</sup> Interestingly enough, the *Washington Post* reported that the president "had seen only snippets of the televised briefing. . . ." According to the *Post*, General Powell recounted Schwarzkopf's briefing for the president. That led to the decision to halt the offensive.<sup>11</sup>

At 2230 (local), Schwarzkopf received a call from Powell speaking from the Oval Office of the White House. After indicating the president's wish to stop the offensive as soon as possible, Powell asked if there were any military reasons not to stop the attack now?<sup>12</sup>

Schwarzkopf called his component commanders to poll them on the same question. He called General Yeosock at 2300 and indicated that the "national command authority" (a euphemism for the president and secretary of defense) were considering a cease-fire at 0200Z (or 0500 local) the following morning, the 28th. He asked if that left sufficient time to get the word out to the troops on the cutting

edge.<sup>13</sup> Yeosock informed the corps commanders and instructed the G3 to prepare an order to that effect.

Yeosock called Franks at VII Corps at 2310, the 27th, and indicated that the order was a warning order only, that the corps was authorized to use fires until 0500, that it should conduct no deep operations, and that the corps should be prepared to resume offensive operations on order. The emphasis was clearly on stopping the attacking forces in the field without exposing them, thereby, to enemy counterattack. The VII Corps wrote specific instructions for a cease-fire at 0500. By 0130 on the 28th, VII Corps forces had assumed postures of local security with an immediate mission of force protection.<sup>14</sup> Around 0200, ARCENT FRAGO 67 was published. Although it was titled "POTENTIAL TEMPORARY CEASE-FIRE," the content clearly seems to be an order for an 0500 temporary cease-fire. It was taken as such by both corps.<sup>15</sup>

Sometime between 2300 on the 27th and 0300 on the 28th, Powell called Schwarzkopf back and told the theater commander that the president intended to order the "cessation of offensive operations" for midnight Eastern Standard Time, 0800 local in Saudi Arabia: a 100-hour ground war. Negotiating a cease-fire would be left to the United Nations under whose authority the United States and the coalition acted. According to Schwarzkopf, Powell said that the conditions the president intended to set were to contain the stipulation that "Iraqis in the war zone must leave their equipment and walk north."<sup>16</sup> Schwarzkopf, at the urging of his chief of staff, Marine Corps Major General Robert Johnston, pointed out to the chairman that this would be impossible to enforce. "If we call this cease-fire," Schwarzkopf said, "we're going to see Republican Guard T-72s driving across pontoon bridges."<sup>17</sup> The decision in Washington was to accept that.

At 0300, Schwarzkopf called Yeosock to set the effective time for suspension of hostilities to 0800 local, three hours later than that noted earlier and announced to the corps in the ARCENT order.<sup>18</sup> The whole tone of the discussion at 0300 was in sharp contrast to that of Schwarzkopf's 2300 call. At 2300, the emphasis had been on force protection and separation of forces. Now, there seemed to be a frantic concern for inflicting the maximum possible damage on remaining enemy forces prior to the announced cessation of offensive actions five hours hence.<sup>19</sup> The goal was maximum destruction of enemy equipment. In addition, in discussing the arrangement of the battlefield at the "cessation," Schwarzkopf and Yeosock agreed to the

assignment of a mission to secure a road junction just north of the Kuwaiti-Iraqi border near the town of Safwan.

At 0330, ARCENT published FRAGO 68, titled, "CONTINUE WITH OFFENSIVE OPERATIONS." This message changed the cease-fire time to 0800 and instructed subordinate commands to resume the offensive. The VII Corps was ordered to "attack in zone to destroy enemy armored vehicles and to seize the road junction vic. QU 622368 [north of Safwan]." The road junction was the sole terrain objective assigned by Third Army to VII Corps (though VII Corps had assigned terrain objectives to its divisions, e.g., Objective Denver).<sup>20</sup> Possession of the road junction would acquire wholly unanticipated importance within the next forty-eight hours. In light of later developments, and the importance Schwarzkopf places on the distinction, it is important to note as well that FRAGO 68 referred throughout to a cease-fire—four times in the coordinating instructions—specifically stating in the first subparagraph, "*cease-fire commences 280500Z FEB 91 [emphasis added].*"<sup>21</sup> Diplomatic distinctions did not carry very far from CENTCOM that night.

Franks' orders came by phone. The corps commander does not remember, and there is no evidence currently available to indicate whether he personally saw a copy of the written order before the "cessation of offensive actions," though it did get to the corps sometime that morning. The ARCENT liaison officer at the corps' main CP had a copy by 0455. He had received telephonic notice of its contents at 0350. The corps' TAC CP file contains a copy of the message without the dispatch time indicated. The corps' TAC CP file contains no cover sheet or date-time of receipt.<sup>22</sup>

Franks' actions that morning indicate that he did not fully understand that his mission with regard to the road junction in question was seizure rather than attack. In fact, the word most often used by VII Corps to address its actions later was "to interdict," not seize.<sup>23</sup> In light of the fact that VII Corps had been involved to this point in a force-oriented, rather than terrain-oriented, operation (no less that the 1st Infantry's Objective Denver would come close to accomplishing the same goal albeit fifteen or so miles to the south), such a misunderstanding is not surprising. This is particularly the case given the pressures of the moment (to restart a multidivision corps attack just believed halted). Viewed through the exhaustion of the leaders in the field, now beginning their fifth day of ground combat in abysmal weather, the orders themselves, to start again only to stop in five (or less) hours, must have been difficult to understand. By this point, Schwarzkopf seems like a man trying to drive an eighteen-

wheeler truck with expectations of the responsiveness of a sports car. Not surprisingly, he did not get it—from either corps.

General Franks and Colonel Cherrie did try to move forces toward Safwan. Although the town would naturally have been in the sector of the 1st Armored Division, that division had just finished a long fight with two RGFC divisions and was still distant from the road junction. The 1st Infantry Division was closer, although a move to Safwan would require changing that division's boundary with the 1st Armored Division and changing the 1st Infantry Division's direction of attack (at least for some part of the division) by 90 degrees. By that time in the fight, the friction in the machine was simply too great to overcome in the time available.

At 0406, the VII Corps commander ordered his divisions to execute the missions assigned the night of the 27th with a line of departure time of 0600.<sup>24</sup> For the 1st Infantry Division, operating in ignorance of any instructions to the contrary, that meant continuing to attack to the east. The 11th Aviation Brigade was instructed to consider attacking the designated road junction with AH-64s. The choice of an aviation unit is consistent with the view that the mission was understood to be interdiction as opposed to seizure. The intention to launch the 11th Aviation Brigade against the road junction was reported to the 1st Infantry Division at 0502. In response, the 1st Infantry reported the location of their northernmost unit to corps at 0507 to avoid the possibility that the corps aviation unit would mistake them for retreating Iraqis. This concern led to cancellation of the 11th Brigade mission.<sup>25</sup>

At 0515, the corps added a new sector to the 1st Infantry Division zone. The intent was to form a small box, perpendicular to the current division orientation, that included the road junction and the northern extension of the Basrah-Kuwait City highway to the southern boundary of XVIII Corps, in which the 1st Infantry Division could take action against the road junction. This, too, seems to have been subject to confusion. The corps' journal records the instruction: "Danger 7 [General William Carter, the assistant division commander] given a sector 50 N/S grid line as western limit and 50 E/W grid line as their northern limit. Will go west of 50 N/S grid line [?]." The division staff journal reads, "Jayhawk 3 [Colonel Cherrie] told us to go out to 50 N/S grid line (Stay East of 50 N/S grid line)."<sup>26</sup> In the division journal, this message follows immediately an entry indicating that the division aviation unit had just been ordered to reconnoiter to the east of the division objective, to the coastal highway that intersected the Basrah-Kuwait City highway at the road junction in question to a point just

short of the road junction itself.<sup>27</sup> General Carter has written that “the guidance from corps was to check the box east of the highway and interdict any escaping enemy—we found none—also to go north and look for enemy. . . . no mention was ever made in any order to seize the RJ [road junction] north of Safwan.”<sup>28</sup> At 0520, the division was given priority in close air support.

While the 1st Infantry continued to report progress in their eastward movement, the corps evidently believed they were now oriented to the north. At 0533, the ARCENT mobile CP received a report from the VII Corps TAC that indicated that the 1st Infantry Division would be moving at 0530 to the road junction in question to establish a blocking position. This would not occur.<sup>29</sup> At 0555, the corps informed the 1st Armored Division on the left that the 1st Infantry Division was going to attack *to interdict* the highway and instructed the 1st Armored to clear all fires forward of Phase Line Kiwi (to the east) through the corps headquarters.<sup>30</sup>

The 1st Infantry Division reported crossing its line of departure at 0545 and by 0615 reported closing on Objective Denver—its primary objective cutting the Basrah-Kuwait highway in the original sector. At 0626, the division declined additional aviation support (presumably from the 11th Aviation Brigade), believing, no doubt, that its own aviation brigade was equal to the reconnaissance-interdiction mission.<sup>31</sup> There is no mention of the Safwan road junction as a specific terrain objective in messages to the 1st Division recorded in the corps’ operations logs.

While all this was going on, the division commander was out of direct communications with his higher headquarters. General Rhame, who had been conducting an exploitation since breaking through the RGFC, commanded his division from a small command group built around two M1 tanks, in which he and his G3 were located with the forward brigades. Orders from the corps commander to the division commander had to be relayed through the division tactical command post.<sup>32</sup> That is not to say that any error was introduced by the division TAC, rather to point out that conducting the sort of clarifying discussion that ensures fullness of understanding between commanders was not possible the morning of the 28th. Whatever was intended by ARCENT and the corps, the division focus remained to the east, getting across the Basrah-Kuwait highway south of Safwan (Objective Denver) in accordance with existing orders.

At 0500 on 28 February, Saudi time (2100, the 27th in Washington), while the commanders in the field attempted to restart

their offensive, the president announced the "suspension of offensive combat operations" would occur at midnight Eastern Standard Time, 0800 in Baghdad.<sup>33</sup> In the desert, the ground offensive, once halted, was proving difficult to restart everywhere.

At 0723, a reported incident of fratricide (incorrectly reported it turned out) brought the action to a halt. The road to the designated road junction had been cut by troops of the 1st Infantry Division. The road junction, however, had not been occupied by ground forces, nor had Objective Anvil, an XVIII Corps objective dominating the same road complex farther north, been taken. The 24th Division only succeeded in firing an artillery preparation and launching attack helicopters toward the Basrah escape hatch. Initial reports to CENTCOM indicated the junction was secured when in fact it was not. The evidence of where the reports became garbled is inconclusive but would seem to have their origin in staff officers at corps or army failing to distinguish between an attack by aviation rather than an attack by ground troops, a significant difference.<sup>34</sup>

Immediate concern on the morning of the 28th, at all levels, was for locating all friendly forces and protecting the force from further losses. The status of the Safwan road junction at that point was a matter of detail, at least in ARCENT. Moreover, although it was clear by the morning of 1 March that the RGFC Hammurabi Division was in the Basrah pocket,<sup>35</sup> no move was made to prevent its withdrawal north of the river, something the coalition leadership could have ordered as a condition for continued suspension of offensive actions (in other words, a mutual freeze in place), and something the aviation assets of the CENTAF air armada, or even the 101st, could have enforced, as the latter had on the 27th when it interdicted area of operations (AO) Thomas.

Without such instructions, it was increasingly unlikely that the remaining Iraqi heavy forces would be destroyed, short of a willingness for the ground forces to engage in battle in the urban area of Basrah. And there is no evidence to date that the high command was willing to contemplate that at this point in the war. The fact was that, by the night of the 27th, the ARCENT attack was pushing the Iraqi heavy forces back on their remaining line of retreat as opposed to cutting them off from it. Of the forces on the ground, it appears that the 24th Division in the north (in XVIII Corps) was in the best position to cut the Iraqis off from Basrah. But the division had to negotiate the Rumayulah oil fields, which were then believed to be a greater obstacle than they turned out to be. In any event, the 24th had already slowed for refueling before resuming the attack—an attack not

delivered due to the actions described above. The "Victory" Division had not intended to resume its advance until 0400 the following morning.<sup>36</sup> It did fire counterbattery fires throughout the night. The XVIII Corps, too, found getting off the mark difficult when the revised instructions arrived early on the morning of the 28th.

The VII Corps ground forces were effectively stopped in place by 0130 on the 28th. Although, strictly speaking, this anticipated the execution order from CENTCOM, the action must be viewed in light of the context in which these events occurred. The CINC's questions at 2300 indicated that the concern at the political level was for stopping the offensive and safeguarding U.S. forces. Schwarzkopf's speech made clear that the military objectives had largely been accomplished. Indeed, he would say as much in an interview with David Frost in March.<sup>37</sup> The Iraqi Army in Kuwait was clearly destroyed as a coherent force, whatever elements succeeded in withdrawing. The RGFC, if not annihilated, had suffered severe losses in manpower, equipment, and no doubt pride, and what remained intact was in full retreat and trapped between a water obstacle and a superior force, like Napoleon on the Berezina.

More Iraqis might have been killed, but it seems unlikely that any major formations would have been cut off. The destruction of an enemy army does not require killing every enemy soldier. This achievement is a moral as well as physical act and involves the imposition of will on a resisting opponent. That within days U.S. forces were able freely to impose an occupation of northern Iraq should be some evidence that the Iraqis knew themselves to be defeated and recognized the ability of the coalition forces to go where they pleased, at least on the Iraqi periphery. The hulks littering the battlefield were mute testament to the extent of their army's destruction. Indeed, VII Corps would destroy abandoned Iraqi equipment for the next eight weeks.<sup>38</sup>

The general objection, later, that some of the forces that did escape were used to defeat local insurrections, though correct, is another matter. The objection assumes significantly more could have been done to destroy those forces, but given the U.S. reluctance to fight inside Basrah, the case remains to be made. The argument mistakes the forces in the Kuwait theater of operations for the entire Iraqi Army. According to Schwarzkopf, much of the Republican Guard (presumably infantry divisions) had already fled north of the Euphrates.<sup>39</sup> Moreover, it is by no means clear that all the fleeing Iraqi soldiers took part on the government side of the insurrectionary activities. One cannot posit with assurance that, had the forces in the

Basrah pocket been destroyed, Saddam would not have triumphed against his domestic enemies anyway.

What Schwarzkopf seemed to be complaining about to Frost was being denied a few more hours to slaughter the fleeing Iraqis north of the Euphrates River, as if the hecatombs of southeastern Iraq were not adequate evidence of his victory.<sup>40</sup> Moreover, there seems to have been no impediment, if it had been felt necessary, to have ordered a freeze in place as the cost of the cessation and then to have placed the onus for its violation upon the enemy. In any event, such actions were the responsibility of Schwarzkopf and his superiors, not the men on the ground who were trying to figure out what a "suspension of offensive action," as opposed to a cease-fire, really meant.

The overthrow of the Iraqi government was never a coalition goal and, whatever its emotional preference, the United States was a partner in the coalition and supported the legitimacy of its endeavors.<sup>41</sup> The coalition goal, the liberation of Kuwait, had been achieved. There was no apparent or obvious successor to Saddam. It also seemed that little more was required to consolidate Saddam's Sunni power base in Baghdad than simultaneous risings of the Kurdish and Shiite minorities in northern and southern Iraq. Nor was anything more likely to discomfort America's Turkish and Saudi allies than the rebels' long-term success on their international borders.<sup>42</sup> Moreover, if U.S. forces were to be free to depart the theater soon, it was not in anyone's long-term interest to create a power vacuum in Baghdad that might require a prolonged U.S. presence. Unfortunately, the forces required to maintain a viable Iraqi state were also capable of continuing that state's more despicable methods of dealing with domestic political opponents. Debate over the consequences of the escape of some Iraqi units would follow later. During the night of 27-28 February, the chief consideration of commanders in the field was the safety of U.S. forces.

From the outset, U.S. operations were marked by a concern for casualties. Prewar simulations had indicated losses would be heavy, and for a variety of reasons, the military leadership did not look on that prospect with equanimity. Certainly commanders were conscious that they were responsible for the lives of their soldiers, who were not just cannon fodder but fellow citizens, the sons and daughters of the American people. They were also conscious that, in the volunteer Army built up over fifteen years, losses in men and materiel were largely irreplaceable. And as veterans of the Vietnam War and witnesses to the U.S. reaction to the losses in smaller incidents, like the Beirut bombing, U.S. leaders believed there was little tolerance for

casualty reports on the home front, American or even Iraqi civilian ones. The public reaction to the bombing of the Baghdad bunker filled with civilians and the Scud attack on the U.S. billet in Dhahran only heightened this concern. In short, the Iraqi and American leaders were in some agreement as to the location of the U.S. moral center of gravity, and American political concern for avoiding unnecessary casualties was always present.

Throughout the war, concern for avoiding fratricide was especially high, increasingly so after Khafji and losses suffered during the counterreconnaissance battle prior to G-day. As the density of U.S. armored systems increased with the shrinkage of maneuver space, concern about the potential for fratricide became particularly acute.

When the initial instructions on the suspension of offensive operations went out at 2300 the night of the 27th, these emphasized the separation of forces and the protection of friendly units. Yeosock was conscious that orders to stop offensive operations would have to penetrate nine levels of command to be effective: from the CINC to ARCENT, the corps, divisions, brigades, battalions, companies, and finally to the men who issue all effective orders, the platoon leaders and sergeants on the firing line. That is rarely done quickly or cleanly, and now the soldiers and their leaders were at the end of four days of continuous advance and intermittent combat. It was likely recognition of these facts of military organization and human endurance that led the ARCENT and VII Corps commanders to assume, in the absence of other instructions, that the cease-fire would take effect at 0500 local, as originally indicated, and to issue orders for its execution early when no word came from CENTCOM. The alternative would have risked trying to get the word down the chain of command within a diminishing time period. Restarting an army halted after four days of battle was not likely to be accomplished in short order under any circumstances. Whatever the reason for the extension, the ground operations ended at 0800 on 28 February with Iraqi heavy forces still in the Basrah pocket undestroyed. The road junction in the vicinity of Safwan was unoccupied.

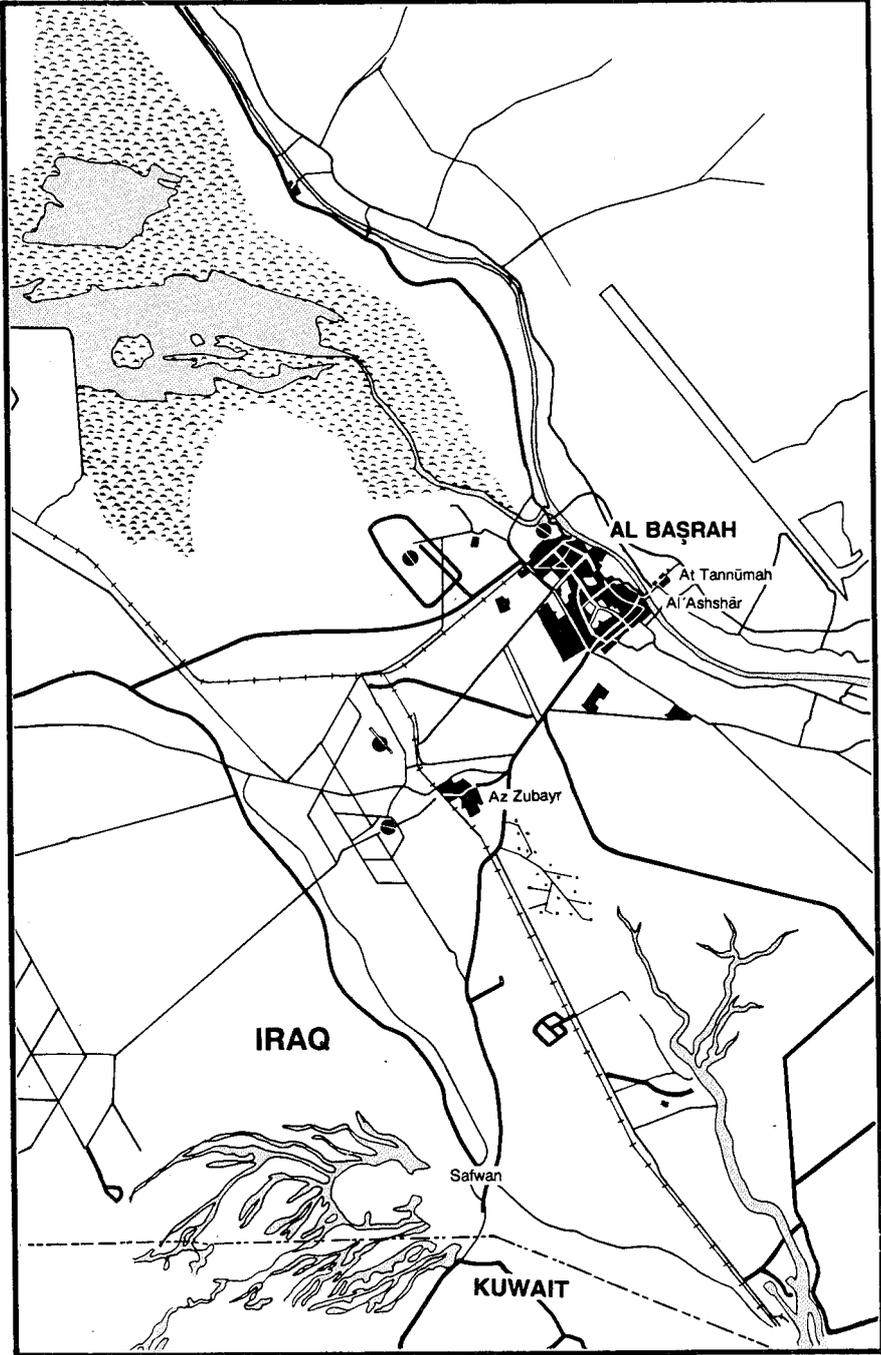
On the morning of the 28th, after the suspension of offensive actions, the first priority was organization of the battlefield. This was a particularly complex task, as armored warfare, especially in the desert, involves by-passing pockets of enemy forces. Armed forces of both armies were extensively intermingled, and because the communications systems of the Iraqi Army had been disrupted, it was

not at all clear that the by-passed enemy would know of the new situation.

On the allied side, there were equal concerns for force protection and for establishing the continuity of coalition lines. Obtaining guidance on rules of engagement that squad leaders and soldiers could understand became an important issue. Initial guidance from the ARCENT commander was that continuity of friendly lines should be established. "If the Iraqis do not cooperate," he directed: "lay siege to them. Destroy them if they fire on us."<sup>43</sup> In a call to the commander of VII Corps at about 1200, Yeosock satisfied himself that this was being done. Following the daily component commanders meeting with Schwarzkopf at 1900, Yeosock instructed the G3 that the top priority was safety and security of the force.<sup>44</sup> (See map 14.)

At 2100, Yeosock received a call from Major General Robert B. Johnston, the CENTCOM chief of staff, who requested recommendations for a meeting site where the coalition commanders could hold cease-fire talks with the Iraqi military commanders. The ARCENT commander's desire was to hold such talks in Iraq and as far north as possible. He nominated three sites: Shaibah, near Basrah; Jalibah, on the Euphrates; and some point near the causeway across Lake Hammar and the Euphrates, one of the two remaining lines of retreat for the Iraqi forces (the other being the Basrah pocket). Shaibah was in Iraqi hands; Jalibah, occupied by U.S. forces; and the ground around the causeway, a no man's land that would be the site of a major engagement by the 24th Division on 2 March. Following these discussions, Yeosock believed the site would likely be Jalibah, and instructions were issued to the XVIII Corps to prepare the site.<sup>45</sup> He then left his office for his quarters. At 2345 (1545 Eastern Standard Time), the president announced the Iraqis had accepted the proposal to hold talks and the conditions required to do so. The time and place were not announced.<sup>46</sup>

Meanwhile, Schwarzkopf was trying to prepare a message for the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff outlining his intentions for the cease-fire talks. The site was a key element and time was of the essence. Sometime after Yeosock arrived at his quarters, he called Schwarzkopf to inform him that Jalibah was not a good site because of the amount of unexploded ordnance spread around it. At that point, Safwan became the site of choice. This required recalling the message to the chairman and did not leave Schwarzkopf in the best humor. His temper would soon get worse.<sup>47</sup> Thus began, perhaps, the most painful and least creditable period for the Desert Storm high command, one



Map 14. Basrah

which, like most errors of the high command, would be redeemed by the soldiers on the ground.

Sometime thereafter but prior to midnight, ARCENT was informed that the meetings would be held at 0500Z (0800 local) on 2 March, near Safwan just north of the Iraqi-Kuwaiti border. ARCENT sent a warning order to VII Corps concerning the talks. The sites proposed included the road intersection that had been the sole terrain objective assigned VII Corps at the resumption of hostilities the night before; the airfield; and the old Iraqi custom post located nearby.<sup>48</sup> VII Corps was told to recommend a better site if they had one. The site was to be in Iraq, preferably with a large open building or series of buildings. Administrative requirements for the conduct of the meeting were also included.

Sometime after 0125 and prior to 0300, Yeosock called Franks and asked if the 1st Infantry Division could determine if the airfield near Safwan was secure for use as the conference site. This was the first time that the airfield itself had assumed any particular importance for the corps, and the duty log of the tactical command post reported that the "1st ID has not had eyes on airfield. Area in vicinity has extensive damage to personnel & equipment."<sup>49</sup> This report made its way up the chain of command and led to an explosion at CENTCOM.

Meanwhile, at 0308, Franks ordered the division to reconnoiter the site and *not to become decisively engaged*. This order was almost immediately modified (at 0320) in accordance with guidance from Yeosock, who ordered the search at first light. Yeosock had called General Rhame and General Carter direct, as he would regularly throughout the following day, to check on the status of what was being done. At 0430, Franks called Rhame and stated his intent. The tactical command post log records: "Intent is do not take any casualties. Unopposed move. No casualties. If you run into enemy forces, then stop and report to CG VII Corps." Interestingly enough, the VII Corps log indicates that Schwarzkopf's permission would be required to initiate hostilities.<sup>50</sup>

The tenor of the discussion among the senior officers is evident from the question posed Rhame by the corps commander. Franks asked Rhame "if the mission ever got to him to *interdict* road junction at QU 622370? If not, why not? Was there any traffic through that road junction? Did you have any eyes north of the northern limit from 1-4 Cav?"<sup>51</sup> Rhame had just gotten to sleep after 100 continuous hours of battle. His division had conducted the corps' main attack on G-day,

advanced as corps reserve, passed through the 2d Armored Cavalry Regiment at night on the 26th while in contact, battled through the Iraqi armored screen, and finished as the eastern-most U.S. unit in Schwarzkopf's great wheel, situated across the major south-north line of retreat. He was now caught in a "Who shot John?" (meaningless blame fixing) exercise to appease an irate theater commander. Rhame was understandably nonplused.

At the other end of the chain of command, Schwarzkopf's dark side was in full control as he raged at Yeosock that his orders had been willfully disobeyed. In his memoir, Schwarzkopf complains not only about the misinformation that he unquestionably received but also about the importance of the entire complex to his control of by-passed Iraqi forces as well as a cache of Scuds nearby. Apparently, when he spoke to Yeosock (or perhaps because he did so at 0300) the morning of the 28th, a number of his concerns had not then been clear to the army commander. Schwarzkopf now required from the two commanders who had delivered the victory on the ground at an unbelievably low cost a written account of their actions with regard to failing to secure an obscure road junction in southeastern Iraq, the importance of which had apparently only become vital after offensive operations were halted by the CINC's commander in chief.<sup>52</sup>

In judging the conduct of events for the next fifteen hours, it is necessary to remember that the principals were all exhausted after the events of the preceding four days. Moreover, Yeosock, just returned, perhaps prematurely, from surgery in Germany, was visibly operating at less than his full physical powers. All three commanders were powerful men with heavy responsibilities. They now found themselves confronting the friction and fog of war in a most sensitive problem that seemed, at the time, to threaten the accomplishments of the past four days, achievements toward which they had invested the greatest part of their professional life and for which they had risked, and in some cases lost, the lives of their men. There was understandable fear that what seemed to be the success that would redeem the Army's post-Vietnam War reputation might now be compromised by a postoperational embarrassment sure to be blown up in the media. Implicit in Schwarzkopf's response was the threat of unwarranted public disgrace, a threat that weighed heavily on all concerned.

The units of the 1st Division upon which the task of securing the airfield and road junction fell were the 1st Squadron, 4th Cavalry, commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Robert Wilson, and the 2d Brigade, 1st Infantry Division, commanded by Colonel Anthony A. Moreno. Wilson received his mission from Rhame at 0240 the morning of 1

March at his position on the Basrah-Kuwait City road. The actual line of departure time was finally 0615. The squadron occupied the airfield unopposed but, while pushing north to secure the area, ran into an Iraqi unit, apparently an armored brigade of the Republican Guard Forces Command, in defensive positions.

About 0900, an Iraqi colonel arrived on the scene to ask why the Americans were in Iraq. The squadron officers—first, the troop commander of A Troop, Captain Ken Pope, then, the squadron commander—told the colonel he and his troops would have to leave the site. The colonel responded he could not do so without orders and departed to consult with his commanders. He returned at 1020 and stated that he still did not have orders to leave. He was told that either he had to leave or he would be attacked by coalition air forces. When General Carter arrived by helicopter at 1100 to see what was going on, the Iraqis had still not departed. The Iraqi commander finally relented and ordered his troops out of the area. By 1200, most of the Iraqis in the squadron sector were withdrawing toward Basrah.<sup>53</sup>

The division had ordered the 2d Brigade to join the cavalrymen at the airfield. That meant moving up the road to Basrah, through Safwan, a movement that proved more difficult than the clearing of the airfield. The brigade commander notified his task force commanders to prepare to move north to assist in securing the airfield and city of Safwan at about 0630 the morning of 1 March. Units started moving within thirty minutes. While most of the brigade moved overland, as had the cavalry squadron, the 4th Battalion, 5th Artillery, moved north up the road. At Safwan, they found their way blocked by an Iraqi infantry company from Tikrit, Saddam Hussein's home town. The Iraqis had no intention of moving and, indeed, indicated they would resist if the U.S. forces tried to move farther north.<sup>54</sup>

Colonel Moreno arrived at the site at 1100 and asked for a senior Iraqi officer to come speak to him. Two Iraqi generals and a civilian official arrived at about 1230 and read a prepared statement to Colonel Moreno. The statement indicated that Iraq wanted to meet in Geneva and asked who the United States would send as a representative. Moreno explained his mission was to secure the town and airfield for the negotiations. The Iraqis responded that they needed instructions from Baghdad and departed.<sup>55</sup> During the day, both General Carter and General Rhame would arrive to oversee what was being done, but Colonel Moreno would conduct all discussions with the Iraqis, largely

to avoid requiring further delay should the Iraqis feel obliged to raise the rank of their "front man."<sup>56</sup>

While the contretemps took place in the vicinity of Safwan, the pressure continued on Third Army. Schwarzkopf had ordered Yeosock to destroy radars on a hill overlooking the airfield but, cognizant of the sensitivity of the situation on the ground, Yeosock decided to disobey that order. At 1045, he reported the situation as he knew it to General Waller, the deputy commander in chief, and requested new instructions. Waller also had orders from Schwarzkopf, who was sleeping, that he (Schwarzkopf) not be disturbed. Waller declined to disobey these orders.<sup>57</sup> At 1105, Yeosock called the CENTCOM chief of staff and repeated his request.

At 1115, Yeosock was informed that Brigadier General William Carter, the assistant division commander of the 1st Division, was en route to the airfield. Meanwhile, the Iraqis were observing the cessation of hostilities. At 1215, the ARCENT commander provided an update to the CINC. Schwarzkopf directed that the Iraqis were to withdraw from the area and instructed Yeosock to look for an alternative site in Iraq, in the XVIII Corps area. This was done soon after.<sup>58</sup>

At 1336, the CINC and ARCENT commanders again discussed the situation. Schwarzkopf's guidance was that, if the Iraqi brigade would not withdraw as requested, ARCENT was "to commit overwhelming force to surround him, use attack helicopters, talk to him, capture him if he refuses to withdraw. *If he attacks you, then return fire is permitted.*"<sup>59</sup> Schwarzkopf indicated to Yeosock that this was ordered by General Powell, who was upset that the road junction had not been taken, because the contrary had been reported to the White House. Moving the talks to an alternate site now was out of the question.

Schwarzkopf acknowledged the situation was delicate but insisted that the Iraqis had to be moved and, indeed, said he would move them himself if necessary. He reiterated that all this was to be done without firing a shot. Yeosock restated his mission to the CINC as he understood it: "My mission is to go into the Sawarah [*sic*] Airfield with overwhelming combat power; to surround the Iraqi forces and to have the Iraqi forces withdraw or be captured and to do so without the use of offensive operations."<sup>60</sup>

Yeosock passed the mission to Rhame, largely as indicated above. Rhame has indicated that, in discussing the mission, he was told to give the Iraqis an ultimatum to move or die by 1600. There was no

doubt in his mind that the ultimatum was genuine.<sup>61</sup> At 1415, he instructed Colonel Moreno to tell the Iraqis that he would attack at 1600 if they had not moved.<sup>62</sup> Moreno repositioned his forces to constitute a visible threat and delivered the ultimatum when the Iraqi officials returned at 1500. The Iraqi commander requested a twenty-minute extension, which Moreno granted. At 1620, the 2d Brigade forces moved forward from two directions and occupied the town behind the withdrawing Iraqis.<sup>63</sup>

At 1650, Rhame reported to Yeosock that the airfield was secure with a five kilometer zone cleared around it. A cordon was being established along the access road, and the route from Kuwait was being cleared. Efforts now turned to setting up the negotiation site in accordance with the CINC's guidance.<sup>64</sup> The meeting was ultimately delayed until 3 March due to undisclosed "technical difficulties."<sup>65</sup>

The incident at Safwan that Yeosock referred to later as his greatest challenge in the war was essentially over by 1847 the night of 1 March. The 1st Squadron, 4th Cavalry, and 2d Brigade had achieved their mission by pluck and face, without losing lives, U.S. or Iraqi. Only the humiliation of defending their earlier actions in writing against the charge of willful disobedience remained for the corps and army commanders. This was done that night. Franks' response was delivered the following day.<sup>66</sup>

That night, after the evening CINC's conference, Yeosock brought back a list of tasks ARCENT would have to accomplish to support the cease-fire conference. He assembled his staff and personally worked through the night to see that the assigned and implied tasks were done. Among these was the drawing of a line of demarkation along which the forces could be separated. Yeosock established the line himself on a 1:50,000 map sheet that filled a wall in the ARCENT headquarters. He sent the proposed line to CENTCOM the following morning for use in the cease-fire talks. It would not take effect until after the meeting on 3 March, too late to avoid one more battle, brought on largely by the fog inherent in stopping armored warfare short.<sup>67</sup>

The incident at Safwan was the result not of willful disobedience but of bad reporting and the difficulty that higher headquarters had in determining just what "ground truth" looked like in detail even hours after the cessation of the offensive. Ironically, Schwarzkopf's scrupulous use of the chain of command, rather than calling division commanders directly (as he could have) to see what was really happening on the ground, probably added to the confusion and

subsequent frustration. In the end, like the French soldiers in the novel *Paths of Glory*, the 1st Division was sent "to take with bayonets what a G.H.Q. ink-slinger already inadvertently captured at the point of his pen!"<sup>68</sup>

Events were indicative of the larger problem of friction in war. The heat of Schwarzkopf's response must be viewed not only in light of the immediate pressure on him to work out the details of the cease-fire talks—all of which required clearance from Washington—but also in the context of an estrangement between Central Command and ARCENT and VII Corps, at the root of which lay differing visions of armored warfare. The road junction near Safwan was not captured because at each echelon of command, from theater to division, the situation on the night of the 27th was understood differently. Because each commander understood the context differently, orders were misunderstood. And since orders were frequently passed orally, rather than in writing, execution depended on the understanding achieved, not necessarily on what was intended.

What was not getting transmitted was the commander's intent. At ARCENT, the commander had seen the CINC's press conference on CNN and understood the explanation of the chairman's questions in that light. At VII Corps, operations were slowed anyway as the corps prepared for the next day's attack, and given the apparent intent to stop the offensive, there seemed no immediate reason to begin new operations that were unlikely to be completed by 0500. The 1st Division was "in the clear," headed east, and the commander, in his tank near the lead brigades, was looking eastward not north to Basrah. That he received his instructions through a relay seems to have filtered out much of the commander's intent as well. Once halted and told to protect the force after four days of attack, the fighting units were unlikely to be postured, physically or psychologically, for immediate resumption of the offensive. Furthermore, the distinction between a cessation of hostilities and a cease-fire, which is so important at theater and national level, did not mean much at the level of company and platoon, where such things must ultimately be sorted out. Moreover, the requirement to obtain the CINC's permission before engaging Iraqis at Safwan only confirmed the view already spreading that there was a cease-fire, albeit a temporary one.

In an interesting commentary on fatigue that seems relevant to this experience, Douglas Southall Freeman notes that, during the American Civil War, "in the Army of Northern Virginia the men could stand almost anything for four days, but the fifth day in almost every instance they would crack." When judging the apparent unraveling of

tight control on the night of 27–28 February by men who had had little rest for four days of movement and combat, one may well remember Freeman's warning: "Beware of the fifth day. . . ." <sup>69</sup> Interestingly enough, Major General Rupert Smith of the 1st U.K. Armored Division began issuing written, rather than oral, orders to avoid confusion due to fatigue on the part of sender and receiver. <sup>70</sup>

At higher headquarters in the early morning hours of the 28th, the road junction must have appeared very close. However, to reorient the thinking of the tactical commanders, especially given the fatigue of the moment, some indication of the value of holding that point should have been transmitted along with the mission. This does not seem to have been done. The obvious value of holding the point on the night of the 27th was that the road junction cut the Basrah-Kuwait highway and the coastal highway. But the first highway had already been cut, and as no large enemy presence on either road was evident when aviation forces were finally sent east and north, the tactical commander might have believed he had accomplished the ARCENT's intent. Moreover, had another site been selected for the cease-fire talks, in all probability no one would have given a second thought to the road junction, which had been assigned to VII Corps as an objective, or to the airfield and town, which never had.

The cessation of offensive actions lasted from 0800 (Saudi time) on 28 February until the morning of 3 March when the two sides met to establish the terms of a military cease-fire. The ambiguity of this situation also led to a major incident in the zone of the 24th Division on 2 March, an engagement in which the division, on the authority of the division commander, and in the name of force protection, advanced to close one of the Iraqi lines of withdrawal to the north side of the Euphrates River and, in the process, destroyed an Iraqi armored force moving to safety across the division's front.

At the declared cessation of offensive operations, the 24th Division reported it was deployed along Phase Line Axe, some twenty to thirty kilometers east of a causeway across Lake Hammar, which served as one of five Iraqi lines of withdrawal out of the ARCENT encirclement. <sup>71</sup> During the 28th, the division reported pushing out a security zone to Phase Line Knife, ten or so additional kilometers to the east of the division but still west of the causeway. The move was apparently made to secure the site of a downed 1st Division UH-60 helicopter in which ten U.S. service members had died. <sup>72</sup> That put the division's security element within ten kilometers of the causeway.

The Iraqi behavior at Safwan, treating with, rather than engaging, U.S. forces, demonstrated that some Iraqi forces in the north were aware of President Bush's declaration of a cessation of offensive operations. While waiting for the convening of cease-fire talks, the Iraqis continued to withdraw their forces in that area, where they were not cut off by coalition forces.<sup>73</sup>

Until the meeting at Safwan on the 3d, there was no agreed on line of separation between the forces nor any agreed on principles to prevent one side or the other from running into its enemy. Because the 24th Division sat astride Highway 8, which runs from Basrah to the northeast, south of the Euphrates, it blocked the only major alternate line of withdrawal available to the Iraqi forces in the Basrah pocket. Rules of engagement passed to the division by XVIII Corps on 1 March directed that

Enemy personnel will not be allowed to depart KTO.

They will be collected and processed as EPW.

Commanders are authorized to take any measure necessary to protect installations, aircraft, units or personnel from enemy attack or *imminent attack*. Iraqi forces are still considered hostile. Wartime ROE are still in effect with the following exceptions.

No offensive actions will be executed without prior approval of CDR XVIII ABN Corps

If an enemy vehicle approaches with its turret turned opposite the direction of travel, the enemy vehicle will be considered indicating a non-hostile intent. If these conditions are not present, the vehicle will be considered having a hostile intent. *In either case*, all attempts will be made to allow the occupants of the vehicle to surrender before U.S. Forces will take hostile measures.

Roadblocks are authorized to prevent the escape of enemy personnel and vehicles.<sup>74</sup>

The limitation on offensive actions would seem to imply that the prevention of escape was to be limited to those areas under friendly control. What constituted friendly control, however, was itself ambiguous.

Forces under command of the 24th Division had reported some minor incidents of combat after the announced cessation of offensive operations on the 28th. The 3d Armored Cavalry Regiment, acting under division command on the 28th, had been forced to fight its way forward to secure the site of the downed 1st Division helicopter. The regimental fight against an Iraqi tank company and artillery battery

lasted from about 0930 to 1530 on the 28th. In another incident the same day, two bus loads of Iraqi soldiers drove into a roadblock established by the 2d Battalion, 7th Infantry. Soldiers in the first bus surrendered. Those in the second opened fire. U.S. soldiers returned the fire, killing six Iraqis, wounding seven, and taking nine prisoners.<sup>75</sup>

These actions were typical of events throughout the ARCENT sector, where isolated Iraqi forces ran into U.S. forces or resisted capture by U.S. units imposing order on the areas by-passed in the coalition advance. In many cases, captured Iraqis expressed surprise that coalition forces were even in southeastern Iraq. Still, CENTCOM expressed concern about the report that the two buses had been destroyed, asking if all occupants were male and why, and if only passengers in one bus had fired, why were the two destroyed.<sup>76</sup> The tenor of the questions indicates someone at higher headquarters expected greater than normal discrimination in the use of force in such matters. Against this, of course, was the guidance quoted above, not to let Iraqis get away.

The incident on 2 March was somewhat different, certainly in scale and also in the questions it appeared to raise about the extent to which the president's guidance to cease offensive operations was being observed by forces in the field. At 012207, the 24th Division reported to the corps' tactical operations center (TOC) that it was "moving forward in zone" to a line (QU15 N.S. line) short of the causeway road complex "looking for abandoned equipment." According to the entry in the corps' main log, the troops were to adhere to General Luck's guidance, which was to "Remind them not to get into a fight."<sup>77</sup> According to the division G3, Lieutenant Colonel Pat Lamar, the division believed it was adhering to guidance about clearing the division zone to the line of advance at the cease-fire because the division had reconnaissance elements beyond the causeway.<sup>78</sup> But 1st Brigade logs suggest, to the contrary, that division and brigade reconnaissance elements were moving into the causeway area the morning of the 2d. The order to the battalions of the 24th Division's 1st Brigade the morning of the 2d indicated that the brigade was to occupy the fifteen north-south grid line (west of the causeway) with platoon-size elements from each battalion task force, then pass the 2d Squadron, 4th Cavalry, screen line forward. The order addressed only the clearing of the area west of the fifteen north-south grid line. The order stressed safety and directed that "Approaching enemy who refuse to surrender will be killed." It also relayed the division commander's intent: "CG's INTENT: PROTECT FORCE, AWAIT RESULTS OF NEGOTIATIONS,

**MAINTAIN CBT PWR, DO NOT DRAW FIRE IF WE RESPOND TO FIRE DO SO WITH OVERWHELMING VIOLENCE** [emphasis added].<sup>79</sup> As events developed it would prove difficult to advance (move east) and not draw fire.

At ARCENT, attention seems to have been focused on the location of the main line of resistance some distance to the west. ARCENT FRAGO 68 addressed destruction of "by-passed enemy equipment," and General Arnold had clarified the order to XVIII Corps, speaking of "going back" to destroy everything in the zone until 0800.<sup>80</sup>

According to the division's reports, the incident itself began at about 0720 when the 1st Brigade, 24th Division, on the left side of the division zone across Highway 8, observed forty Iraqi vehicles moving west into the division security zone.<sup>81</sup> Later, General McCaffrey would speculate that the column missed its right turn to bring it onto the causeway and blundered into the division there to the west.<sup>82</sup> The 1st Brigade's duty log indicates that the causeway was blocked and that the enemy column tried to turn back on itself, producing an apparently aimless milling around in front of the U.S. forces.<sup>83</sup>

At 0725, the divisional air cavalry was ordered to engage the Iraqi forces if the vehicles continued into the 24th's sector. At about 0800, the brigade attempted to "encourage the Iraqi forces to change direction and surrender. When U.S. troops were engaged by sagger and other direct fire weapons from trail enemy forces . . .," the brigade returned the fire. According to a report submitted to ARCENT by Brigadier General Scott, the assistant division commander of the 24th, the action had opened at 0809 when the brigade reported that Iraqis had fired an RPG (rocket-propelled grenade) at them. At 0815, there were reports of T-72s moving west on heavy equipment transporters. At 0817, Task Force 2-7 Infantry reported receiving direct fire and, at 0821, destroying two T-72s.<sup>84</sup> At 0855, XVIII Corps reported to ARCENT that six T-72s, two T-55s, four BMPs, and two BRDMs had been destroyed by C Company, 2-7 Infantry.<sup>85</sup> The enemy was reported to have turned north.

After the first engagement, about 0925, McCaffrey concluded that the enemy intended to regain contact with division forces and, at 0940, ordered an AH-64 attack helicopter company to attack the enemy force. Later, a second attack helicopter company was committed. Using two infantry battalion task forces to block enemy forces moving west, an armored battalion task force, the 4-64th Armor, was maneuvered to the south (the rear of the enemy column moving north across the causeway) then swept north.<sup>86</sup> At 1407, a final damage assessment

was received by ARCENT. It listed destruction of eighty-one Iraqi tanks, ninety-five armored personnel carriers, eight BRDMs, five artillery tubes, two BM21s, eleven FROG launchers, and twenty-three trucks.<sup>87</sup> The division moved its security zone forward another ten kilometers, far enough to control the causeway line of withdrawal.

The picture at company level was understandably a little different. C Company, 2d Battalion, 7th Infantry, was the company of the 24th Division, 1st Brigade, that was advancing down Highway 8 on 27 February on the division's left (northern) flank. The company commander, Captain Richard Averna, has indicated that he did not receive notice of revised rules of engagement until early the morning of 2 March.<sup>88</sup> From the morning of the 28th until around noon on 1 March, Captain Averna's company occupied a road block on Highway 8 around fifteen to twenty kilometers from the causeway exit. Around noon on 1 March, his battalion was ordered to advance and clear to their front. C Company advanced around noon and, from 1200 to 2100, fought a series of minor skirmishes in which they captured two tanks and destroyed a platoon of air defense 37-mm guns. The following morning (2 March), they were ordered to advance again. The rules of engagement now (for the first time, according to Averna) were that C Company was not to fire unless fired upon.<sup>89</sup>

C Company's advance began at 0530. Almost at once, one of the C Company platoons captured two T-72s and a BMP (Russian-design infantry fighting vehicle) parked along the road. Around 0615, the 3d Battalion, 7th Infantry, to the north reported a large number of vehicles moving along the road to the north across the causeway. The same movement was reported by C Company and D Company, 2d Battalion. The response by the commander of the 2d Battalion was to move forward to make contact but not to fire unless fired upon. Once the enemy was identified, the battalion commander denied a request to open fire. Then he permitted fire by artillery only, reportedly as a means to cause the Iraqis to surrender.<sup>90</sup>

While C Company waited for the artillery fire, the 3d Platoon ran into a squad-sized element of a BMP and a BMD in a defensive position with seven dismounted infantry. The Iraqis' dismounted infantry engaged with RPGs, and their armored carriers moved out to engage with SAGGER antitank weapons. With that, the 3d Platoon engaged and sent dismounted troops to seize the trench line. Two T-72 tanks, probably attracted by the developing engagement approached from the east rather than turning north along the causeway road. C Company massed its fires on the road junction of Highway 8 and the causeway access road. The artillery requested earlier finally arrived, and at the

end of ten minutes, six T-72s, two T-55s, and ten BMPs were destroyed, principally by direct fire. Simultaneously, the companies to the north engaged the forces retreating over the causeway, and then attack helicopter units began to work the highway. At around 0930, C Company was ordered to capture the road junction and, supported by D Company, it did. Thereafter, the 64th Armor passed through and continued the attack to the north, killing whatever was left on the access road to the causeway. No U.S. losses were recorded in C Company that day.

The destruction of over 200 enemy vehicles, with a loss of only one U.S. tank (when an enemy tank next to it exploded) and one U.S. soldier wounded, was no small affair, and from the description given from the various reports, it is hard to resist the conclusion that the local division commander had done more than limit himself to defensive actions in the engagements in question. The facts are, however, that the rules of engagement passed to commanders for the period of cessation of offensive operations did not anticipate the situation that confronted the 24th Division—a threat of a collision with major enemy forces. There seems little question that the initial response by C Company was warranted, and the results of the C Company fight were not disproportional. The company was directly threatened, was fired upon, and took appropriate action.

It is the subsequent brigade attack on forces moving to the north that seems somewhat disproportional, but here one must keep in mind the position in which the commander on the ground found himself. He was confronted by a major enemy formation moving close enough to his own lines that, by its size and proximity, it represented a clear *potential* threat. Moreover, he had been fired upon by one force already, and he could only guess at the intentions of the main body in front of him. The choice he had to make was to await events and risk subjecting his force to a coordinated attack or preempt the threat by using his superior mobility and tactical vision of the battlefield. Once begun, the attack was bound to run its course. The disproportional effects were not markedly different from those in every other engagement in Desert Storm and, once battle was joined, were probably inevitable unless extraordinary restraint was practiced.

In judging the choice made, it is well to remember the guidance provided by the ARCENT commander, guidance that presumably reflected that of the theater commander. The guidance from Yeosock was that "War is not over; we have suspended offensive operations pending talks. This is not a cease fire. Must be prepared to resume offensive operations. COMUSARCENT's first priority is the safety and

security of the force."<sup>91</sup> By that standard, the choice made by General McCaffrey at the causeway seems capable of justification.

The remaining question, then, involves the justification for the 24th Infantry Division's presence on the causeway at all. Was this a defensive or offensive action? In fact, it was both. From the standpoint of the Iraqis firing at Captain Averna's Bradleys, it was the Iraqis who were defending themselves against an immediate threat; Captain Averna's troops, by their advance, were being offensive. On the other hand, to protect a force on a mechanized battlefield, it is essential to maintain contact with the enemy or to restore contact if it has been lost. In that light, McCaffrey's action that led to the offensive against the Iraqi troops at the crossroad was defensive and the Iraqi advance to the west inherently hostile. Such questions on the battlefield are pure sophistry. This engagement was the consequence of the inherent difficulty of separating intermingled forces where no terms of reference have as yet been agreed upon or dictated. The situation was highly unstable, and the weaker side paid the price for the ambiguity.

In his magisterial work on Clausewitz' treatise, *On War*, the late Professor Raymond Aron conducted a lengthy discourse on the identification by Hans Delbrück of two forms of strategy in Clausewitz' writings. These are (1) a strategy of annihilation (*Vernichtungsstrategie*) or overthrow (*Niederwerfesstrategie*) and (2) a strategy of attrition (or exhaustion) (*Ermattungsstrategie*).<sup>92</sup> These strategies differ not only in the nature of the military objectives each requires but also in the kind of process that provides for the resolution of the political issues that caused the conflicts to begin with. In the first case, resolution comes about as a result of the acceptance, by one side, of the dictated terms of the other—because the former has no other recourse. In the latter, resolution is produced by negotiations based upon an economic calculation that the cost of doing otherwise would be excessive.<sup>93</sup>

In the Gulf War, the national strategy was one of attrition or exhaustion carried out by political and economic means. Within this comprehensive strategy, military operations played a significant part and, in so far as freeing Kuwait, they were decisive. The military overthrow of Iraq was never contemplated by the coalition, although Saddam's conduct of the war left his country extraordinarily dependent on the coalition's lack of extreme intent for its continued survival after 28 February. By locating most of his army in Kuwait, Saddam made it his stake in the contest, and no doubt to his surprise, he lost his wager to a military operational strategy of annihilation. Nonetheless, because of the nature of the national and coalition

strategy, the final resolution of the conflict did not come with the destruction of the Iraqi Army. Indeed, as of this writing, the economic blockade continues, and Iraqi compliance with the United Nations' resolutions is negotiated in council chambers, on CNN, and in parking lots outside Iraqi nuclear facilities.

Of the two events that have been the subject of this chapter, the first, the incidents at Safwan, are simply indicative of confusion and haste. The Iraqis appeared to have had better control over their forces around Safwan than the allies expected and, with that control, the possibility of unintended conflict was probably less than it appeared. Of course, there was no way for the combatants to know that, and as the issue was made highly personal by Schwarzkopf, Safwan probably remains the more painful of the two.

The paradox is that the events of 2 March at the causeway seem to have raised so little concern at the time, locally or politically. Later, someone was concerned enough about them that an investigation was conducted by the Army, but nothing visible seems to have come of it, perhaps because the ambiguity of the instructions to the forces on the ground would have made any disciplinary action highly dubious. In retrospect, the act may well have added to the pressure on the Iraqis to comply with the proffered cease-fire terms. In short, the destruction of the Iraqi column may have met the coalition needs of the moment.

It is reasonable to believe that the information about the initiation of the action on 2 March, which came to the division commander by radio from troops in contact, may not have been precise in addressing the circumstances under which the combat began or was effectively ended before the sweep north of the 64th Armored. Experience tells one it probably was not. Moreover, a judgment by Captain Averna that most of the killing was done by the two-battalion fixing force in a very short time may also be correct. One can continue to be troubled, however, with the fact that most of the Iraqis killed seem to have been headed north or simply milling around—and not into the defender's lines, notwithstanding that some of their number quite clearly seem to have initiated the combat by opening fire when U.S. forces approached their position. Given that the Iraqi position had been fifteen or so kilometers beyond the 24th Division's front lines (taken as the main line of resistance, at any rate) at 0800 on the 28th when the president announced cessation of offensive operations and that only a small number of Iraqis seem to have acted with hostility that morning, the outcome remains somewhat disturbing. The above situation, however, may be irrelevant from the perspective of the men

on the ground. With the events described, the conduct of the war passed from the battlefield to the council chambers.

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# Notes

1. "The Award Winning Staff of U.S. News and World Report," *Triumph Without Victory: The Unreported History of the Persian Gulf War* (New York: Times Books, a division of Random House, 1992), 399-406. The precise term used by the president was "suspension of offensive combat operations." Text is in "Kuwait Is Liberated: Military Objectives Are Met, Bush Says," from the Associated Press in *The Washington Post*, 28 February 1991, A27, A34. The president was clear that the "suspension was not yet a cease-fire."
2. Yeosock told Schwarzkopf he needed twenty-four hours to finish the RGFC in response to a question from the CINC on the afternoon of the 27th. Schwarzkopf, *Doesn't Take a Hero*, 467.
3. HQ, ARCENT, Command Group, (Executive Officer's) Daily Memo, 27 February 1991. On the issue of concern for a mechanism for war termination, the author was present at a meeting between General Yeosock and Generals Franks, McCaffrey, and Griffith in early February when General Franks raised this issue. Lieutenant Colonel Mike Kendall, General Yeosock's executive officer, indicated this was an issue the night of the 27th in comments to the author upon review of this chapter.
4. Interview with General Frederick Franks at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, 6 March 1992, 26-39.
5. Daily Staff Journal, VII Corps TAC CP, 27 February 1991, entry 51 (an attachment with corps commander's instructions to divisions). Daily Staff Journal, VII Corps Main CP, at 1846 on 27 February 1991, item 38. Handwritten note, "VII Corps Update," 271940C, February 1991, note is account of VII Corps LNO Report to ARCENT Main CP. HQ, ARCENT, Command Group, (Executive Officer's) Daily Memo, 27 February 1991, 4. HQ, VII Corps TAC CP, Fact Sheet, Issue: To Provide Information on ARCENT Mission to Interdict Basrah-Kuwait City Highway and Seize Road Junction at QU 662368 Prior to 280800C February 1991.
6. Rhame interview, 26 July 1991, 15. Diagram 8, HQ, 1st Squadron, 4th Cavalry, Narrative History, 7 March 1991. Diagram 14 to HQ, 1st Squadron, 4th Cavalry, Memorandum for Record, Subject: 1-4 Cavalry History for Operation Desert Storm, dated 27 March 1991, an enclosure to HQ, ARCENT, Memorandum thru Awards Board, U.S. Army Forces Central Command, Subject: Recommendation for Award of Valorous Unit Award for 1st Squadron, 4th Cavalry, 1st Infantry Division, n.d.
7. Colonel Greg Fontenot to the author. Fontenot commanded the 2d Battalion of the 34th Armor. His vehicles became intermingled with those of Lieutenant Colonel Pat Ritter's 1/34th in the "valley." Fontenot asked for permission to halt long enough to sort out the confusion about the time the whole allied offensive was closed down at about 2200 by the events described below.
8. Daily Staff Journal, VII Corps Main CP, at 2300 on 27 February 1991, item 52. Daily Staff Journal, VII Corps TAC CP, at 2316 on 27 February 1991, item 48. Both journals, kept in two locations, reflect this conversation. HQ, VII Corps TAC CP, Fact Sheet. Discussion of possible combined 1st ID-1st U.K. attack to the north along Basrah-Kuwait City highway, Colonel Stan Cherrie to author.

9. CENTCOM news briefing, General H. Norman Schwarzkopf, USA, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, Wednesday, 27 February 1991-1:00 P.M. EST.
10. *Ibid.*, 16.
11. Ann Devroy and Dan Balz, "Bush Relaxes Effort to Abase Saddam," *The Washington Post*, 28 February 1991, A27 et seq.
12. Schwarzkopf, *Doesn't Take a Hero*, 468-71. Colonel Joseph Purvis to the author. Colonel Purvis was in the CENTCOM Operations Center when the call came in from General Powell to General Schwarzkopf. According to *The Washington Post* chronology, the president's briefing was at 1430 Washington time, 2230 in Saudi Arabia.
13. HQ, ARCENT, Command Group, (Executive Officer's) Daily Memo, 27 February 1991, 7. The precise timing anticipated remains an issue (see below).
14. *Ibid.* Daily Staff Journal, VII Corps TAC CP, 27 February 1991, item 51 and attachment. HQ, VII Corps TAC CP, Fact Sheet.
15. Message, 270920Z FEB 91, FM COMUSARCENT MCP//G3 OPS//, Subject: FRAGO 67 to ARCENT OPORD (Desert Storm 001), Potential Temporary Cease-Fire. Date-time group is incorrect. Dispatch time appears from various logs to have been around 2300-2400 local.
16. Schwarzkopf, *Doesn't Take a Hero*, 470-72.
17. *Ibid.*, 472.
18. HQ, ARCENT, Command Group, (Executive Officer's) Daily Memo, 28 February 1991, 5.
19. Lieutenant Colonel Michael Kendall to author. This change of tone was also remarked on by Colonel Cherrie with regard to instructions from ARCENT to VII Corps.
20. Message, 280030Z FEB 91, FROM COMUSARCENT, Subject: FRAGO 068 to ARCENT OPORD (Desert Storm 001), Continue with Offensive Operations.
21. Message, 280030Z FEB 91, FM COMUSARCENTMAIN, Subject: FRAGO 068 to ARCENT OPORD (Desert Storm 001), Continue with Offensive Operations.
22. VII Corps TAC CP Logs are held at the USACGSC Combined Arms Research Library, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas.
23. HQ, VII Corps TAC CP, Fact Sheet, Issue: To Provide Information on ARCENT Mission to Interdict Basrah-Kuwait City Highway. This is also the word used in the VII Corps Daily Staff Journal in a message to the 1st Armored Division at 0555 the morning of the 28th, and it is consistent with the actions taken by VII Corps to conclude that the mission as understood was interdiction, not seizure.
24. Daily Staff Journal, VII Corps Main CP, at 0406 on 28 February 1991, item 6.
25. HQ, 11th Aviation Brigade, Memorandum for Commander VII (U.S.) Corps, Subject: Executive Summary to After-Action Report, 11th Aviation Brigade, Operation

- Desert Storm, dated 18 March 1991, 2. Daily Staff Journal, 1st Infantry Division TAC CP, at 0502 and 0510 on 28 February 1991, items 18 and 20.
26. Daily Staff Journal, VII Corps TAC CP, at 0515 on 28 February, item 11. Daily Staff Journal, 1st Infantry Division TAC CP, at 0511 on 28 February, item 20. See comments by Colonel Terry Bullington, 1st ID G3, on confusion in order, transmission in Rhame interview, 26 July 1991, 27-28, 37.
  27. *Ibid.*, 0510, item 19.
  28. Note on draft manuscript written by Brigadier General Bill Carter.
  29. Message Form #18, 28 February 1991, attached to Daily Staff Journal, ARCENT Mobile CP, 28 February 1991. Message was logged in at 0858.
  30. Daily Staff Journal, VII Corps TAC CP, at 0520 and 0555 on 28 February 1991, items 14 and 16.
  31. *Ibid.*, 0602, 0615, and 0626, items 17, 20, and 22.
  32. Rhame interview, 26 July 1991, 31, 36. Daily Staff Journal, 1st Infantry Division TAC CP, at 0510 on 28 February 1991, item 20, reflects the mission to the aviation unit to reconnoiter the road to the north. At 0645, item 34 reflects execution of the mission.
  33. Andrew Rosenthal, "Military Aims Met: Firing Ending After 100 Hours of Ground War, President Declares," *The New York Times*, 28 February 1991, A1.
  34. Reported friendly fire incident is in Daily Staff Journal, VII Corps TAC CP, at 0724 and 0741 on 28 February 1991, items 29 and 34. HQ, ARCENT, Command Group, (Executive Officer's) Daily Memo, 28 February 1991, 1, indicates that on the morning of the 28th, the ARCENT Main CP believed the road junction had been occupied. The VII Corps Main CP, Message file, Unit Locations, 281000C February 1991, does not indicate any ground unit near the road junction. HQ, ARCENT, briefing slides, "ARCENT Update, G+5 (28 February)," slide titled, "Combat Unit Locations," as of 281200C February 1991 shows the 1st ID well south of the junction. These slides were prepared daily in the ARCENT Command Group for the CINC's daily component commanders' briefing. That same morning, the author asked at the mobile CP if the road complex in question had been occupied by either corps and was told it had not. Rather, both corps had sent aviation units only into the area in question. The incorrect report is reproduced in Schwarzkopf, *Doesn't Take a Hero*, 473, as a chapter header. The report in fact relates the final objectives, that of XVIII Corps, far beyond the 24th's capabilities from a standing start (which never took place) the morning of the 28th, given cessation at 0800.
  35. Message, 010300Z MAR 91, FM COMUSARCENT MAIN//DT//, MSGID/ SITREP/ USARCENT/G+5/MAR//PERID/280300Z/TO:010300Z/ASOF:010300Z,1-2.
  36. HQ, ARCENT, Command Group, (Executive Officer's) Daily Memo, 27 February 1991, 6. HQ, ARCENT, Command Group, (Executive Officer's) Daily Memo, 28 February 1991, 3.
  37. Schwarzkopf, *Doesn't Take a Hero*, 469-70. Transcript of Schwarzkopf interview with David Frost, dated 22 March 1991, 22. The text of the transcript reads: ". . . he

and I discussed have we accomplished our military objectives. The campaign objectives. And the answer was yes. There was no question about the fact that the campaign objectives that we established for ourselves were accomplished. The enemy was being kicked out of Kuwait, was going to be gone from Kuwait, that we had destroyed the Republican guard [sic] as a militarily effective force." It was Schwarzkopf's discussion of what constituted destruction (which generally followed the line above) that led to the controversy in the press. Ibid. "General's Account of Gulf War's End Disputed by Bush," *The New York Times*, 28 March 1991, 1.

38. The VII Corps formed a special headquarters to document destruction of enemy materiel to include plotting hulks on map. TF Demo reported 619 tanks, 685 APCs, 865 artillery and air defense weapons, and over 4,000 other vehicles destroyed prior to the corps' withdrawal into Kuwait and Saudi Arabia. HQ, 7th Engineer Brigade, AETS-EB (840), Memorandum for Commander, VII Corps, Attn: Military History, Subject: Command Report--Operation Desert Shield and Desert Storm, 9 April 1991, paragraph 10, page 3.
39. Schwarzkopf in Frost interview, 23.
40. Ibid. Colonel Doug Craft who worked in the CENTCOM Operations Center has related, however, that according to his memory of the events of that night, the CINC and the NCA were both concerned about "wanton destruction" of the fleeing forces. Interview with Colonel Douglas Craft at the Army War College, 19 April 1991, 19. Provided to the author by Colonel Craft.
41. This is made clear by the UN resolution providing a basis for the cease-fire talks passed on 2 March. The resolution affirms "the commitment of all member states to the territorial integrity of Iraq and Kuwait" and the intention "of the member states cooperating under paragraph 2 of Security Council Resolution 678 (1990) to bring their military presence in Iraq to an end as soon as possible consistent with achieving the objective of the resolution." "Text of Measure Approved by the Council in 11-1 Vote," *The New York Times*, 3 March 1991.
42. A well-informed, contrary view is in Laurie Mylroie, "How We Helped Saddam Survive," *Commentary* 92, no. 1 (July 1991): 15-18.
43. Lieutenant Colonel John M. Kendall, Memorandum for Colonel Swain, Subject: Chronology for 27 February-1 March 1991, dated 19 September 1991, 3. Lieutenant Colonel Kendall was General Yeosock's executive officer. He kept notes of all CG's meetings and at request of the author reviewed his notes for the dates in question and provided a summary in this memorandum. Guidance from ARCENT Main CP to XVIII Corps was: "... if Iraqi units enter our area then we are authorized to attempt to get them to surrender. If they don't we are authorized to use force to stop them and force them to surrender. We were specifically concerned with Highway 8. Same applies since it is in our sector." HQ, XVIII Corps, G3, FM Form 2768, CTOC Journal Sheet, DTG received 2045 28 February 1991, journal entry no. 70. The question which remains is what exactly constitutes "our area."
44. Kendall, Memorandum for Colonel Swain, Subject: Chronology for 27 February-1 March 1991, dated 19 September 1991, 3.
45. Ibid., 3-4. The XVIII Corps logs show that from 010045 March to 010400 March, the corps was involved in preparing to host the cease-fire talks at Jalibah. At 0400, they

were told to stand down on that. From noon on the 1st until the end of the meeting on the 3d, the 24th ID was on standby with a site on Highway 8, well inside the division sector west of the causeway.

46. Andrew Rosenthal, "Allied Generals and Iraqis to Meet Soon on Cease-Fire: Bush Stresses P.O.W. Return," *The New York Times*, 2 March 1991, 1. "The Persian Gulf War: Excerpts of the President's News Conference," *The Washington Post*, 2 March 1991, A12.
47. Memorandum for Record, Subject: Colonel Doug Craft's Memory of the Period 271800C to 281800C at CENTCOM HQ, prepared by author based on phone conversation. Interview with Colonel Douglas Craft at the Army War College, 19 April 1991, 10-12. Provided to the author by Colonel Craft. The public story is in the *Army Times*, "The General's War: How Commanders Fought the Iraqis . . . and Among Themselves," by Tom Donnelly, 8, 16-17. Schwarzkopf's account in Schwarzkopf, *Doesn't Take a Hero*, 473-78.
48. Message, 010010Z, FROM COMUSARCENT, SUBJECT: WARNORD NEGOTIATION SUPPORT. Message, 010315Z, FROM COMUSARCENT, Subject: FRAGO 070 to OPOD Desert Storm 001, Negotiation Support.
49. Daily Staff Journal, VII Corps TAC CP, no time given, 1 March 1991, item 3; 0125, item 2. Within item 3 is a note concerning a message from General Franks at 0308.
50. Ibid.
51. Ibid.
52. Testimony as to General Schwarzkopf's frame of mind has come largely from discussions by the author with staff officers who were witness, in one way or the other, to the events in question. There has been a marked reluctance by direct participants to discuss these events. However, given knowledge of the witnesses and General Schwarzkopf's reputation in the Army, as well as having personal knowledge of his temper when crossed, the author feels no compunction in accepting these accounts on face value. The content of the discussion is reproduced from notes in a Memorandum for Record, Subject: Situation at the Safwan Airfield, dated 1 March 1991, prepared by Lieutenant Colonel John M. Kendall at General Yeosock's direction. This memorandum will be retired with General Yeosock's personal files at the Military History Institute, U.S. Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania.
53. An account of the actions of the 1st Squadron, 4th Cavalry, is in HQ, 1st Squadron, 4th Cavalry, Memorandum for Record, Subject: 1-4 Cav, 1st ID(M) Narrative History of Operation Desert Storm, 24 January-1 March 1991, dated 7 March 1991. See also Steve Coll, "Talks, Site Remind Iraqis Who Won," *The Washington Post*, 4 March 1991, A-1, et seq. Note from Brigadier General Bill Carter on draft manuscript.
54. HQ, 3-37 Armor, History of Task Force 3-37 Armor, Operation Desert Storm, 8.
55. Copy of handwritten note by Colonel Moreno. Jim Tice, "Taking a Town by Shooting the Breeze," *Army Times*, 26 August 1991, 18.

56. Rhame interview, 26 July 1991, 45. Note from General Carter.
57. Memorandum for Record, Subject: Situation at the Safwan Airfield, dated 10 March 1991, 1.
58. *Ibid.*, 2-3.
59. *Ibid.*, 4.
60. *Ibid.*
61. Rhame interview, 26 July 1991, 25-27.
62. Note by Colonel Moreno. Tice, "Taking a Town by Shooting the Breeze."
63. *Ibid.* HQ, 3-37 Armor, History of Task Force 3-37 Armor, Operation Desert Storm. Memorandum for Record, Subject: Situation at the Safwan Airfield, dated 10 March 1991, 3-6.
64. Memorandum for Record, Subject: Situation at the Safwan Airfield, dated 10 March 1991, 6.
65. Ann Devroy and Guy Gugliotta, "Cease-Fire Talks Delayed by 'Technical Details,'" *The Washington Post*, 2 March 1991, A1.
66. Interview with Colonel Cherrie. Comments by Lieutenant Colonel Mike Kendall to author.
67. HQ, ARCENT, AFRD-XO, Subject: Taskers in Support of Negotiations Meeting, dated 1 March 1991, and comments by Lieutenant Colonel Kendall, the author. There were twenty items to be accomplished.
68. Humphrey Cobb, *Paths of Glory* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1987), 21.
69. Douglas Southall Freeman, "Morale in the Army of Northern Virginia," in *Douglas Southall Freeman on Leadership*, ed. Stuart W. Smith (Newport, RI: Naval War College Press, 1990), 71.
70. De la Billiere, *Storm Command*, 297-98.
71. Message, 281800C, FROM COMMANDER 24TH INF DIV, TO COMMANDER XVIII ABN CORPS, Subject: Combat Operation Summary, Period, 271800C FEB 91-281800 CFEB 91, 2.
72. Message, 1100Z [*sic*, actually 011800Z], FROM COMMANDER 24TH INF DIV, TO COMMANDER XVIII ABN CORPS, Subject: Combat Operation Summary, 2. HQ, ARCENT, Command Group, (Executive Officer's) Daily Memo, 28 February 1991, 1. Routes of withdrawal are listed in the intelligence portion of Message, 020300Z MARCH 1991, FM COMUSARCENT MAIN, TO AIG1173, MSGID, SITREP, USARCENT, G+6 MAR, 1-2. A report at 1400 to ARCENT LNO with XVIII Corps indicates the same dispositions in the north along the causeway. HQ, ARCENT, G3 Main CP, ARCENT Spot Report No. 06015, journal entry F-15.

73. Message, 020300 MARCH 1991, FM COMUSARCENT MAIN, TO AIG1173, MSGID, SITREP, USARCENT, G+6 MAR, 1-2.
74. Message, 011120Z, FM CDRXVIIIABNCORPS, Subject: FRAGO #79 to XVIII Abn Corps OPOD Desert Storm, 4.
75. Message, 282330C FEB 91, FM CDR, 3RD ACR, TO CDR, XVIII ABN CORPS, Subject: Commander Daily SITREP (As of 282315C FEB 91), 1. HQ, ARCENT, Command Group, (Executive Officer's) Daily Memo, 28 February 1991, 4 (LNO report of 3 ACR fight). Message, 281800, FROM COMMANDER 24TH INF DIV, TO COMMANDER XVIII ABN CORPS, Subject: Combat Operation Summary, 2 (2-7 Inf affair).
76. HQ, XVIII Corps TAC CP, FB Form 2768, Message Form/CTOC Journal Sheet, DTG 010455C FEB 91, journal entry no. 50. Form passes question from corps main CP to corps TAC. Message indicates CENTCOM called direct to corps main CP.
77. HQ, XVIII Corps TAC CP, FB Form 2768, Message Form/CTOC Journal Sheet, DTG 012207 MAR 91, journal entry no. 16.
78. Memorandum of interview with Lieutenant Colonel Pat Lamar at Fort McPherson, Georgia, 16 December 1991.
79. HQ, 1st Brigade, 24th Infantry Division, Spot Report File, specifically FRAGO DTG 020011C March 1991, VOCO Bde Cdr to All Units, journal entry no. 15, 16, and various other early morning spot reports for the 2d. Quotation is taken from VOCO.
80. HQ, ARCENT, Message, 280300Z FEB 91, FROM HQ ARCENT MAIN//, Subject: FRAGO 068 to ARCENT OPOD (Desert Storm 001), Continue with Offensive Operations. HQ, XVIII Corps TAC CP, FB Form 2768, Message Form/CTOC Journal Sheet, DTG 280320C FEB 91, journal entry no. 39. This sheet records guidance from General Luck to the TAC CP. It is offered only to demonstrate that ARCENT and XVIII Corps seem to have been thinking mainly in terms of moving backwards in zone, not forwards.
81. There are a number of accounts of the 24th Division fight on 2 March. The ARCENT commander's executive officer wrote a memorandum providing an account of the incident as it was reported to ARCENT, Memorandum for Record, Subject: 24 ID Engagement, 2 March 1991, an attachment to HQ, ARCENT, Command Group, (Executive Officer's) Daily Memo, 2 March 1991. The incident is laid out briefly in Message, 021800Z MAR 91, FM COMMANDER 24TH INF DIV (M) TO COMMANDER XVIII ABN CORPS; Subject: Combat Operation Summary, Period, 011800C MAR 91-021800 MAR 91, 2-3; and in Message, 030300Z MAR 91, FM COMUSARCENT MAIN, TO AIG 11743, MSGID, SITREP, USARCENT, G+7 MAR, 15-16. General McCaffrey testified before Senator Nunn's Senate Armed Services Committee on 9 May 1991. Draft transcript of a briefing from Major General Barry R. McCaffrey, USA, Commanding General, 24th Infantry Division (Mechanized), and Members of the 24th Infantry Division on the Conduct of Ground Operations in Their Tactical Area of Responsibility During Operation Desert Shield/Storm, 42-44.
82. Testimony of General McCaffrey before the Senate Armed Forces Committee on 9 May 1991, 42.

83. HQ, 1st Brigade, 24th Infantry Division, Duty Summary (notes by duty officer) (012029-021722 Mar 91), entries for 0802-0807.
  84. Message, 021800Z MAR 91, FM COMMANDER 24TH INF DIV (M) TO COMMANDER XVIII ABN CORPS, Subject: Combat Operations Summary, Period, 011800C MAR 91-021800C MAR 91, 2. General Scott's reports are summarized in Memorandum for Record, Subject: 24th ID Engagement, 2 March 1991, 1-2. The numbers of tanks destroyed vary, no doubt friction in the reporting system.
  85. Memorandum for Record, Subject: 24th ID Engagement, 2 March 1991, 2.
  86. Ibid., 1-2. Message, 021800Z MAR 91, FM COMMANDER 24TH INF DIV (M) TO COMMANDER XVIII ABN CORPS, Subject: Combat Operation Summary, Period, 011800C MAR 91-021800C MAR 91, 2-3.
  87. Memorandum for Record, Subject: 24th ID Engagement, 2 March 1991, 2. The 24th Division operational report lists, only thirty-one tanks destroyed. This is inconsistent with all other accounts.
  88. Interview with Captain Richard B. Averna, at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, on 27 November 1991. Captain Averna was a student in the Combined Arms and Services Staff School at the time of the interview. The following account comes from that interview except where noted.
  89. Ibid., 8.
  90. See command account above, HQ, 1st Brigade, 24th Infantry Division, Spot Report File, and HQ, 1st Brigade, 24th Infantry Division, Duty Summary (notes by duty officer) (012029-021722 Mar 91).
  91. Message, 020300Z MAR 91, FM COMUSARCENT MAIN, TO AIG 11743, MSGID, SITREP, USARCENT, G+6 MAR, 14.
  92. Raymond Aron, *Clausewitz: Philosopher of War*, trans. Christine Booker and Norman Stone (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1983), 70.
  93. Ibid., 76.
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