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Managing "Command and Control" in the Persian Gulf War

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17 January 1991, the coalition air arms flew an average of 2,500 combat sorties each day. By the beginning of the ground offensive on 24 February, the Iraqi army had been devastated—nearly ninety thousand men had already deserted, and another ninety thousand would soon surrender with hardly a fight. In addition, thousands of tanks, artillery pieces, and armored vehicles had been destroyed from the air. Coalition ground troops completed the rout. It was the most lopsided victory in modern history.

Cohen and Keaney tell the story well, but dispassionately. They give air-power credit where deserved and list a number of its greatest accomplishments: total and uncontested air supremacy, the destruction of the Iraqi air force and navy, the shutdown of the electrical power grid, the complete disruption of all road and rail traffic en route to the front, and most important, the destruction of a corps-sized Iraqi attack at Khafji in late January, the first (and last) attempt by the Iraqis to launch an offensive and fight the war on their own terms.

There were also, however, serious shortcomings in the air campaign. Whereas it had been a coalition goal to destroy the Iraqi nuclear, chemical, and biological weapons capabilities, this was not done, largely because intelligence could not provide the extent of these programs or their locations. Precision weapons are only useful if you also enjoy precision intelligence—that was not the case in the Gulf. In addition, the attempt to eradicate the Scud menace was unsuccessful. Although the number of missile attacks decreased significantly,

it is questionable whether that was due to the large air effort. The authors conclude that it is unknown if *any* of the Iraqi Scuds were destroyed during the war.

To the rhetorical question posed by the book's title, the authors answer with a qualified "yes." Technologically, the Gulf war was a major leap forward in combat effectiveness: stealth, precision munitions, and near-real-time intelligence provided unprecedented success and point the way ahead. However, the authors add the caveat that the organizational structures and mindsets needed to utilize these new technologies most efficiently are not yet in place. When (if) such changes occur, a true revolution in military affairs will have been demonstrated.

Overall, this is an excellent, well written, and evenhanded book that includes dozens of maps, charts, and tables. This is by far the most useful and authoritative work to date on the air war in the Gulf. It is must reading for all students and practitioners of warfare.

PHILLIP S. MEILINGER
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Mandales, Mark D., Thomas C. Hone, and Sanford S. Terry. *Managing "Command and Control" in the Persian Gulf War*. Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 1996. 170pp. \$55

Mark Mandales, Thomas Hone, and Sanford Terry are all well qualified to analyze Gulf war command and control issues. They were the principal drafters of the command and control portions of the authoritative Gulf War Air

Power Survey (GWAPS) commissioned by the Secretary of the Air Force. In this book they borrow heavily from that experience but go beyond the facts as originally reported and interpreted, offering their own personal appraisal, unconstrained by the collegial or institutional pressures inevitable to some degree (in spite of disclaimers to the contrary) in a department-sponsored study.

However, prospective readers need to be warned that the title of the book is misleading. This is not an examination of command and control of coalition forces in the Gulf war. It focuses almost exclusively on *air* command and control issues and how they were managed. Ground and naval command and control issues are scarcely mentioned, and coalition issues are addressed only as they bear on aviation.

Nevertheless, this slim book is a major contribution to the command and control literature. Put simply, the authors have written the most exhaustive examination of the Gulf war air command and control experience yet published, going beyond the detail to analyze what it means. The authors' primary interest was to examine how chaos in planning and directing operations was managed—particularly by an Air Force leadership in-theater that was skeptical of the quality of their command and control support and believed in putting their highly personal stamp on problem solving. Although it is a truism that people are more important than systems in achieving effectiveness, the authors seem to believe that the on-site U.S. Air Force leadership went too far. Rather than fix flawed systems,

it improvised, at what the authors believe to have been a high price.

Lieutenant General Charles Horner (the Joint Forces Air Component Commander, or JFACC) comes through with his laurels largely intact (even though he delegated too much to his principal planning and execution subordinate, Brigadier General Buster Glosson, and did not do enough to make his staff joint). Glosson's effectiveness is admired, but his methods, abrasive style, and apparent contempt for systems, though often well founded, come in for criticism.

The conclusions of the analysis offer aphorisms that future air planners and JFACCs probably already know but need to keep in mind, such as: learning *precisely* what to do in war is not as important as learning *quickly* what to do; he who controls the target list and the sequencing controls the (air) war; it is difficult to translate air supremacy, and the surveillance made possible by it, into effective pinpoint targeting; and, because exercises do not replicate demands for bomb damage assessment, the assessment system is never tested, nor are needed resources provided. There are many others, enough to warrant distilling the collected wisdom in future JFACC handbooks. The critique of scripted air power application is the best that this reviewer has seen.

What are the book's shortcomings? Although a glossary is provided, the jargon and acronyms are so dense at times that only air command and control experts will understand the work. The author's description of the Scud hunt problem as analogous to the Navy's World War II antisubmarine

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warfare problem is an interesting perspective but is probably overdrawn. The reluctance to refer to parallel analytic studies of Gulf war command and control issues (journalistic accounts are cited) will appear as a shortcoming for serious scholars of the war. For example, I was unable to find any reference to Alan Campen's excellent *The First Information War* (AFCEA Press, 1992) in the text or in any of the copious and detailed endnotes.

But these shortcomings must be viewed in the context of the major contribution the work provides. This book should be on the shelf of any current or aspiring JFACC. It tells us what must be fixed and what must be avoided when we next enter combat, particularly if we face an enemy more capable than Saddam Hussein.

JAMES A. WINNEFELD
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Pape, Robert A. *Bombing to Win: Air Power and Coercion in War*. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell Univ. Press, 1996. 336pp. \$19.95

Professor Robert Pape's systematic critique of the effectiveness of strategic bombing as a decisive instrument of war will not be welcomed by air power enthusiasts, especially while the National Defense Panel prepares its recommendations on the shape, structure, and resourcing of the Department of Defense for the twenty-first century. Pape, one of the founding faculty members at the Air Force's premier School for Advanced Airpower Studies and now an assistant professor of government at

Dartmouth, logically analyzes the dynamics of modern military coercion by means of air power to demonstrate the historical irrelevance of strategic bombing as a way of achieving decisive effects in war. Studying cases ranging from the Spanish Civil War through Operation DESERT STORM, Pape concludes that "strategic bombing does not work. Strategic bombing for punishment and decapitation does not coerce, and strategic bombing is rarely the best way to achieve denial." Furthermore, contrary to the flamboyant—and ahistorical—claims of retired Air Force Colonel John Warden and other devotees of General Giulio Douhet (an advocate of the establishment of independent air units, strategic bombing, and the author of *Il dominio dell'aria*, 1921), the advent of precision-guided munitions is not likely to enhance the coercive effects of strategic bombing.

Touching on numerous attempts to use strategic air attack over the last half-century, Pape provides a detailed analysis of strategic bombing in World War II, Korea, Vietnam, and DESERT STORM. Contrary to the "historical" case built for the role of strategic bombing by air power enthusiasts, Pape concludes that strategic bombing has been generally ineffective and occasionally counterproductive. The one possible exception is LINEBACKER I, the air campaign devised to counter North Vietnam's invasion of South Vietnam in the spring of 1972. LINEBACKER I, however, was an interdiction campaign, albeit one with a strategic effect. It worked because the strategic objectives of the United States had changed from winning the war to withdrawing as