



Mitchell Institute for Airpower Studies

Presentation: “Reflections on Desert Storm”
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Gen. Charles A. Horner, USAF (Ret.)
Lt. Gen. David A. Deptula, USAF (Ret.)
Rebecca Grant, Director, Mitchell Institute

Dr. Grant: Everyone knows who this gentleman is here, but we are going to take a few minutes to formally introduce him and to mark the occasion.

Twenty years ago Operation Desert Storm demonstrated the dominance of the air and an effectiveness against enemy surface maneuver forces never before seen in the history of warfare.

[Applause].

Many of you here in this room shared in the responsibility for that victory. The rest of us watched your handiwork on CNN and marveled at what you were doing.

I want to say thank you to all of you who participated in Operation Desert Storm. Let's give each other a round of applause, please.

[Applause].

Of course there's an individual here who had a very interesting seat and perspective on this campaign. Of course that's Dave Deptula. Lieutenant General Dave Deptula who retired last October as Deputy Chief of Staff for Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance on the Air Staff.

But I want to talk for a minute about Lieutenant Colonel Dave Deptula. Now I'm not going to tell the story, you can ask Rick Lewis afterward about the SCUD attack, the gas mask, and Dave in his underwear. [Laughter]. I'm going to stick to what Rick Atkinson, the historian, had to say about Lieutenant Colonel Deptula circa 1990, and I quote: “Deptula had been lent to Checkmate from the Office of the Secretary of the Air Force where he had been a staunch advocate of strategic air power. Good humored and unassuming” — [Laughter] — “Deptula was an F-15 pilot, Fighter Weapon School alumnus with degrees in astronomy and engineering from the University of Virginia.” Atkinson goes on to say, “Soon after arriving in Saudi Arabia he gained Horner's confidence and became Chief Planner of the Iraqi Targeting Cell in the Top Secret cell later known as The Black Hole.”

Of course we've come to think of Operation Desert Storm as a campaign defined very much by targeting. The Iraqi target set, the strategic targets, were a small but vital and vivid piece of that campaign. Also arrayed in the Kuwait theater of operations was the best of Iraq's nearly half million man army and all their Soviet-made equipment. It took a tremendous effort by many — planners, commanders and airmen — to carry out this amazing six week air campaign that facilitated a brilliant lightning drive of four days to accomplish the coalition's objectives.

23,455 attack sorties were thrown against strategic targets including in this definition airfields and other counter-offensive air targets. 43,735 attack sorties flown against fielded force in the Kuwait theater of operations. Beyond this, U.S. Air Force tankers alone flew 15,434 sorties. Add it all up and the coalition together flew a total of 100,876 sorties from January 17th to February 28th, 1991, an achievement, as I've said before, never seen in the history of warfare.

The man who planned and commanded it all of course was General Horner. And here to introduce him formally, General Deptula.

[Applause].

Lt. Gen. Deptula: Thanks, Rebecca. It really is a privilege and pleasure to be here, too. I was supposed to introduce this gentleman, but no one in here really needs him to have a formal introduction so I thought what I'd do is I'd take my short period of time, and trust me I'm not going to hone into a lot of who you really came to hear, and that's this gentleman. However I did want to share with you an anecdote that gives you some insight into the kind of leader that General Horner is. It goes back to 20 or so years ago and it has to do with an event that occurred that goes to show how mission focused this first Joint Force Air Component Commander since the passage of Goldwater/Nichols — I want to take you back to that time. Some of you weren't born during that timeframe, but 1986, General Horner became the first Joint Force Air Component Commander in a major regional contingency since that time.

The story was, it occurred almost exactly 20 years ago. It was more like mid-February, but we're down there in that little planning cell that Rebecca related to you, most of you know it as The Black Hole, and the Marine Corps representative, Maj. [Jeffrey] Oly Olson, rest his soul. He passed away a couple of years ago from cancer of the pancreas. But he came to me one morning and he said, "Hey sir, I just wanted to let you know what I found out what the Marines are doing." I said, "What do you mean, what are the Marines doing." We'd put together the attack flow and then they'd go out to the units and they'd get squawks, identification friend or foe codes. Because General Horner had masterfully controlled what would have been lots of friction and frustration among the different services by saying hey, if you're not on the ATO you're not going to fly. [Laughter]. And Schwarzkopf backed him up and it worked very very well.

So Oly comes to me and says, "Here's what's going on. Yesterday you tasked the Marines to go over here in this particular location with a two-ship. What they did was

they took the codes, they went back, they worked the routing so that they could gain entry into the KTO, but instead of sending a two-ship, they sent 24, 48, whatever, so they could gain entry and they were on the ATO but then they went off and they did their own thing.”

Remember, this is the Marine that’s telling me this. We were all a very tight-knit group. I said well, that probably something General Horner ought to know.

So I go upstairs to his office in the Royal Saudi Air Force Headquarters. He’s sitting at his desk, I say, “Hey, General Horner, I just want to let you know this thing.” In his own inimical way, you know how he kind of pauses and looks up at me sideways like that and says, “Deptula, do you have enough F-16s to do what you want to do?” I went, “Yeah. But that’s not the point. Look what these guys are doing.” He goes, “Just go and use them, do what we need to do. We can’t afford to get in the middle of a doctrinal battle in the middle of a war and let’s just get the mission done.”

So it is not a huge story with a big punch line but it goes to show the mission focus of who I would submit to you was the finest Joint Force Air Component Commander in a major regional contingency that we have had, and he took that kind of mission perspective in everything that he did. And it did result, as Rebecca alluded to, and we’ve forgotten this. What the Desert Storm air campaign really did was it changed not the nature of war. The nature of war stays the same. But the character of war. The expectations of what comes out of conflict.

So it is my real honor and privilege to introduce the air boss who oversaw that historic effort, General Chuck Horner.

[Applause].

General Horner: Thank you.

What Zetar didn’t know is Royal Moore was a Marine two-star. He was their wing commander. He wanted to be the JFACC, so he was always fighting me on everything. What Royal Moore didn’t know that his Chief of Staff Bill Forney, Brigadier General Bill Forney, had been my DO in a previous assignment, and he and I were like brothers because I used to let him fly in the back seat of F-15s and he thought that was the greatest thing since sliced bread. So anything that Royal Moore did, I knew it before Royal Moore knew it. What they were doing was out killing the enemy, and that’s exactly what I wanted them to do, so go have fun.

I thought I’d just talk a little bit about what I gleaned from it and some of the things we did well and some of the things we didn’t do very well and how it applies now and in the future, particularly for the younger guys who are in the audience.

The JFACC or CFACC or whatever you want to call it, one guy running the air war, had not occurred in the past. When I was a major at TAC Headquarters, Spike Momeyer was our four-star and he’d been in North Africa in P-40s. What he’d do, he was in some

ways a really cool guy. In some ways he was kind of a wimp. His wife, we called her Big Red. She ordered him around. He was kind of like me. [Laughter]. But he would, after he'd have an accident briefing or something like that, he'd send all the senior officers out and we called ourselves the owls. We were upon the side of the room. Then he'd sit back and talk to the owls. He's talk to us about the importance of getting control of the air in terms of a single manager for the air or a single commander for air. He'd go through North Africa and the struggle that was and how it led to Kasserine Pass, Faid pass, and all the bad things. Then he went on to talk about his experience in Vietnam where finally Khe Sanh was the tipping point that allowed him to get control of the Marine Corps Air, but he never got control of Navy Air, he never got control of the B-52s. So even then it was an imperfect organization.

In Korea our air efforts tended to be service oriented. Again, the separation between the services so they could deconflict their operations physically. Hank Mauz, when he showed up in 1990 as the Naval Component Commander came to me and he says, "I've got a great idea." I said, "What's that?" He said, "What we'll do is we'll divide Iraq up into route packages and the Navy will take these." I said to him, "Admiral, if you try and pull that bullshit I will retire before I'll agree to it." He wasn't an airman. Then of course the Navy showed up with a real airman and we got along great.

It really was in Panama, as late as Panama. In Panama 12th Air Force was running the regular Air Force in Panama in whatever, Just Cause or whatever the name of it was. The Special Operations Air Force ran the Special Operations. They literally had AC-130s belonging to two different organizations firing through each other's orbits because they weren't on the same sheet of music.

Now part of the problem is 12th Air Force, that was really a Special Operations operation. They should have ceded everything to the one commander from the Special Ops. All we had was two [F-]117s go in and drop two bombs that hit in a cornfield. I got a call the day, supposed to go down that night. I got a call that day, of course it was very secret, and they said, "We're flying all the transports from Fort Bragg with the paratroopers right past Cuba. What if the Cubans do something?" I said, "No problem, we'll take care of it."

So the 33rd Wing at Eglin, I just called up the Wing Commander and said what I want you to do is, we had something called Coronet Lightning. It was designed to get 12 airplanes in the air real fast. [Inaudible] call a Coronet Lightning, send the crews into crew rest, tell them to show up about 11:00 o'clock at night and load live missiles on the jets. Then we'll tell you where to orbit and we'll get the tankers for you and all that.

So here I was at 9th Air Force being involved in the Panama operation. The Cubans never did anything about it, which is good, because I'm sure I'd have gone to jail if we'd shot somebody down, but — [Laughter].

We were never able to get our arms around the management of the air and it always really bothered me. I used to go to the joint exercises, I'd get in violent fights with Hal Gray, I was a two-star, he was a three-star. And Jim Lindsey, thank God for Jim. I'll tell

you what, Army guys, if they're Airborne Corps Commanders or they're Korea, you can work with them. If they come from Europe or they're Infantry or Mech, you've got to hit them with a 2x4 before they begin to understand. But it really worked.

When Schwarzkopf took over CENTCOM, he came to see me in November of '89. He says, "I don't know whether we're going to have a war. I don't even know if I'm going to have a command," because right then the issue before the JCS was to get rid of CENTCOM. He says, "But I'm really concerned because Saddam Hussein came out of the Iran/Iraq War with a huge military and deep debts, and he's sitting right next to the world's largest bank there in Kuwait and Saudi Arabia." So he said, "We're going to change our plan, we're no longer going to fight the Russians, but we've got to keep an eye on Iraq. My next exercise is going to be Country Orange, invades Kuwait from the north." This was November of '89.

So he says I want you to continue to be the Joint Force Air Component Commander. I said okay. Who's going to be the Land Component Commander? Because I knew the vitriolic feelings between the Marines and the Army, and yet if you're going to have one air commander you need one land commander so you can have somebody to beat up on. He said well, I guess it will have to be me. And I expected that. I said okay, now, I want you to understand something. I'm going to talk to you in a way that you're not going to like it because you're going to be ground centric and you're going to do things that are stupid and I'm going to tell you they're stupid. [Laughter]. And then you put on your Unified Commander hat, your JFC hat, and you decide what you're going to do and I will obey them and it will be different. But I'm going to talk to you, when we're in the planning stages or thinking stages, you're going to get a lot of stuff that's going to ruffle your feathers.

Now I never talked to him in public, always in private. But he always listened in private, and he really was a profound individual, very smart. His mind's gone now, he's kind of like me now. [Laughter].

He says it says in the joint regs the one thing I'm supposed to do as the Joint Force Commander is apportion air. He says you're going to have to do that. I have no idea how to apportion air. I said let me tell you something. Nobody knows how to apportion air. You can't do it. What you've got to do is tell me what you want done, how you want to do things. I will put together the best air plan to accomplish that or assist you in accomplishing that, and then after we fly it we'll say well, so many sorties for close air support, so many for interdiction, so many for counter-air. And that's the way you apportion air. It's all after the fact. It's all accountants, recordkeeping. Anybody that says well, we're going to do 30 percent close air support is a damn idiot. Fire them. [Laughter].

What we have today, and it began in Desert Storm — way before Desert Storm, but really it became focused in Desert Storm. There are kind of two schools of thought about warfare. One school says you have a situation, you've got political objectives you have to achieve militarily, you have climate, you have terrain, you have enemy forces, you have friendly forces. What you do is you take a look at that and you say what is the best mix,

what's the best strategy, what's the best way to get the job done? That often leads to things like effects-based operations, for example.

When you think about it you say well, what's the best way to get this job done? That's really what effect do you want to achieve, so what do you do about it? So that school of thought kind of emphasizes the approach of use the right mix with the right tools, and you have to have tools — land, sea, air and space tools. It doesn't say that one service is more important than another or one form of warfare is more important than another. It depends on the situation. It depends on what you're trying to do. I think airmen tend to think that way because they seek efficiency and effectiveness.

The second school of thought is characterized by, you'll hear terms like boots on the ground, you've probably heard that one. You'll hear terms like force on force. And what it says is this. It says that the reason we have military forces is to engage the enemy military forces. And it leads to things like attrition warfare.

There's no doubt about it, that's not an unreasonable position, but it tends to then skew the person into thinking well the reason you have air, naval and space forces is to augment the land forces because that's the only reason you fight wars is army against army. You can throw the Marine ground forces in there. That tends to then stifle thinking. So you've got to be careful of that.

In the case of Desert Storm we had the genius here was in charge of the strategic plan. So he mirror-imaged the enemy and says we'll strike his intelligence, we'll strike his electricity, we'll strike ta dee, ta dee, ta dee, ta dee, ta dee, ta dee.

Schwarzkopf, on the other hand, was concerned about the lives of his infantry. So he said what I want you to do is kill Iraqi armor and Iraqi tanks and artillery so when the ground war begins it will take away their ability to inflict casualties on our ground forces. That was his.

Now he had it right for the wrong reasons. We had it wrong for the right reasons. The way I discovered this, I was in London with John Olsen who has just published another book and Deptula wrote the forward to it, or afterwards to it. John Olsen said, "Would you like to have dinner with the Chief of Intelligence from Iraq?" a guy named [Afiq]. I said sure. So we met in a little Italian restaurant in London. We were having dinner. [Afiq] had to come out in '97 because he was getting ready to be executed by Saddam Hussein. So he and his family walked up through Turkey and came out. He spoke English. He said, "I was with Saddam Hussein all through the war." They were in a bunker under a residential area. He said, "Saddam Hussein started sobbing. He became so despondent." Then when we announce cessation of operations, offensive operations, he became euphoric. He says, "We've won."

The reason that Saddam took that approach is his goal was to maintain power in Iraq. That was his goal. It wasn't to defeat the Americans. If he had to defeat the Americans to maintain power that's the way he wanted it, but he was hoping he'd just inflict enough casualties that our people would get tired and bring us home.

When we took out his Republican Guard which was the basis of his power, we undercut his power structure and he was defeated that way.

Now Schwarzkopf's the guy that had us doing that. But he didn't know that was going to work. He didn't know that was the real center of gravity. And we didn't, on the air side we were thinking in terms like rational American airmen would think. Kind of stupidly. Sorry, Dave. [Laughter].

Lt. Gen. Deptula: You were the commander. [Laughter].

General Horner: Buster wouldn't let me call him stupid, would he? [Laughter].

You've got to be careful how you think about things. And quite frankly, ground forces, boots on the ground, carpet bombing, all those sayings that go with the land generals may or may not be accurate, but you as individuals, particularly the young guys, when you get in a situation of war you've got to think. You need to study your history, you need to study what's gone on in other wars and in the past. That to me is one of the most valuable lessons of Desert Storm.

Quite frankly, we did do effects-based operations and we did it by blowing up tanks and artillery pieces, the Republican Guard.

Airpower is very dependent and leverages technology probably better than any other service other than space. We catch a lot of hell for it because it's expensive. But if you think about the impact of stealth, precision munitions, ISR, we've fundamentally changed the way wars are fought and the way that people die in battle. That's a good thing. But we've got to continue with our technology development.

Unfortunately data that we get from say ISR isn't necessarily useful. You've got to have knowledge. What does it mean? You've got to ask those questions. Of course our intelligence services are not trained to think that way. They're trained to report numbers. They're trained to never go out on a limb lest they be wrong and then be embarrassed or not get promoted. And yet if you're going to do efficient, effective operations you've got to know what all this stuff you're getting means, and you've got to stick your neck out.

Chris Christian, our intel guy. Every night he'd get up and he'd philosophize. I told him, go for it. I'll never forget, we had a Navy commander who was doing analysis of the Iraqi transportation system. He gets up and says well today we dropped bridge so and so and did this and did that, and we hit this rail line. I said, "I don't care." He said, "What?" "I don't care. What do we have to do tomorrow? What is the impact of our operations?" And about three days he kept giving me the recap of what he thought the BDA was. I didn't care about BDA. What I wanted to know is what do I need to do?

Then he got really adroit at lying which I loved, because he'd say, "Okay, if we'll drop this bridge we'll cut their through-put 13.5 percent." He had no clue, but I'll tell you, he

was thinking right. [Laughter]. We've got to train our young intel people and our young targeteers to think that way. We've got to make them think about tomorrow, not yesterday.

I never got over the big BDA crisis that came out of Desert Storm. Everybody says oh, our BDA was terrible? Who gives a darn? [Laughter]. I don't care about BDA. I care about what I need to do. Now if BDA helps me define that, that's good. But I think it came out of part of the Vietnam scorekeeping. I thought that was really stupid, how many people you killed. Who cares? How many people do you need to kill? That's what you want to know.

Of course we know that air operations really constrained time and range. They really emphasized speed and range. Sometimes that escapes particularly our brethren from the Army and Marine Corps. They have trouble encapsulating the full theater. And one of the most tough things I had to do was keep Schwarzkopf informed in such a way that he'd accept it. The first time Buster brought the Block Hole briefing out, how did he say, it was "poorly prepared and violently received," because he gave an Air Force briefing. I said they'll never understand. Then I got to thinking, you know, they watch cartoons. So we built a cartoon.

We had a map in Iraq, Saudi Arabia, and then plastic overlays because the Army loves plastic overlays. Here we are at 1:00 o'clock, and the little airplanes are flying over Saudi Arabia. Here we are at 1:30, they're crossing the border. Here they are at 2:00 o'clock, little orange explosions on the sector operations, stuff like that. That briefing, they could follow it. They could understand it. It was a cartoon.

So you've really got to think about that. How are you going to talk to Army generals? Because it's not always easy.

Now Schwarzkopf was extremely intelligent. You could give him a concept and he'd get it halfway through the first sentence. He understood. And so I'm eternally grateful for that. But you've got to get people to grasp air power, and they can't. They don't have the basis for it. Airmen do. Marine pilots do. Navy pilots do. We can talk. But when you're dealing with a joint force commander, nine times out of ten the building's going to make sure it's a ground guy and there you go. So think about that.

The other thing we've got to do is decentralize. I hear Air Force generals saying we've got to get rid of the ATO process, it's too long. They don't understand. Speed and decision-making depend on two things — decentralization and command and control. It has nothing to do with the ATO process. All the ATO process does is get the bricks lined up so when you go to build a wall you've got the bricks right there and the mortar and the tools. And quite frankly, you need a two or three day ATO because you've got guys that have got to knock lumber off bombs down in the bomb dump. They have to know what the people are thinking about three days from now.

So if you go to a 12-hour ATO you're just going to screw the wrong people and you're going to jerk them around and you jerk maintenance and supply around and they'll sit

down on you because they lose confidence in you. [Laughter]. When you lost your maintenance and your supply all you are are a bunch of pretty boys in flying suits going to the bar. [Laughter].

Resist the temptation to shorten the ATO cycle. What you want is you want the best ATO you can possibly build, and if it is perfect you'll never change a thing. I haven't seen anything perfect other than my wife, and she's told me that she is. [Laughter]. So you need to then have a command and control structure in that can eventually make decisions.

The other thing is, if the generals are making decisions, you're screwing up. The generals' job is to provide guidance so that the captains, majors and colonels can make the right decisions, or at least if they make a bad decision they'd be willing to come and say I screwed that up. So you've got to have that kind of interrelationship. Bill Creech taught us that. Everybody thought Creech was a monster because he was so difficult to be around. But if you came and told him, boy, I screwed that up, he'd laugh. Because he'd screwed things up too and he'd tell you what times he'd screwed up. But make sure you didn't screw things up the same way twice. [Laughter].

We had four colonels — two on day, two on night — in the TACC. They'd all been wing commanders. They all were guys that were never going to get promoted. They were all super, super individuals, and they were empowered to make any decision. They could do anything. Then we had captains on the AWACS who could divert airplanes.

I remember one time I'm sitting there, I'm watching the air picture, I'm the world's greatest fighter pilot, I've got a microphone on front of me on the desk, I can talk to any airplane over Iraq. I see two Iraqis take off out of Balad and I see Wolf Flight right there. I go to reach for that mike because, the world's greatest fighter pilot, I'll know best what to do. And this lieutenant on the AWACS vectors a Tiger flight over there and they shoot them both down. Then I got to thinking about it. That was exactly the right decision. After that I used to sit on my hands. [Laughter]. Have you ever sat on your hands for 8 or 12 hours? They get all wrinkly. It looks like you've been in a swimming pool. [Laughter].

You cannot ignore training and organization. They're the key to success. Again, I'm a big Bill Creech fan. I was miserable serving under him. He just made you miserable because he was ever demanding. But the thing is, all our training was realistic and that doesn't mean hair on fire. But the things we did in training were the things you do in combat.

The other thing is, we had the Red and Blue Flags which preceded Bill Creech, and they were very very important because the Red Flag taught the pilots how to operate in large groups and it was good across all the services because the Navy and Marine Corps, Canada, Great Britain, the Saudis were even in Red Flags before Desert Storm. So it taught people how to work together in large groups, and it trained a whole bunch of force leaders.

The Blue Flags are where we practiced how to put an ATO together. I can tell you this, with the exception of the 9th Air Force, and maybe Korea. But in Korea you're only there a year or two years. I had guys that built ATOs for ten years. They were guys like Fang Feinstein, had been passed over. They were never going to get promoted and nobody wanted them. Well, I loved them. My guidance when I took over was guys, I don't care if you play golf every day, but when we go to a Blue Flag or we go to a joint exercise, you better know how to put an ATO together. And they'd been doing it for ten years. And they were gnarly. They didn't put up with truck from anybody, particularly the shiny ones like Deptula would come in there and get his tail burned and run back down to the Black Hole and hide. [Laughter]. But you need that training. I don't know where we are today on Red Flag, we're still doing, but unfortunately, I'll talk a little bit later about Suiter, but we're not integrating non-kinetic well enough in Red Flags. Because the Nellis attitude is the range controls everything, and flight safety, but flight safety doesn't have to be compromised. But they became slave to range control rather than getting the job done.

We are lucky in that we get to go to joint exercises. We used to call them solid wastes. [Laughter]. I always had to go. I was the two-star at Langley. The four-star, Bob Russ, was the component commander like Wes McDonald over in CINCPAC. Well, all these unified commanders wanted to have their joint exercises, so guess who always got to go and be the air component commander? Me. That's where I learned a lot about working with senior officers from other services. If you ever become a Joint Force Air Component Commander, coalition commander, you better learn what we call JFC management, Joint Force Commander management. You've got to fit your personality to his or hers, I guess nowadays, and you've got to be able to influence them in a meaningful way. And probably what I did better than anything else in Desert Storm, because I didn't do a lot of intellect work. I used to come, and he'd brief me every day, but was that I kept Schwarzkopf on the right track, and he was smart enough to understand that and appreciated it. Of course his motivation was he wanted to save the lives of soldiers because of his Vietnam experience.

One trick I did, and it's sort of dishonest but not really, he'd say, "Chuck, I think we ought to do such and so." I'd say, "Sir, that's a great idea." He'd say, "What's the matter?" I said, well — He says, "No, no, we need to do it. No, Chuck, what's the matter?" "Well, if we do that, they're going to say this about it after the war." He worried about his image after the war. He'd say, "Well maybe —". I'd say, "No, we're going to do it. I really want to do it." Then I'd go manic on him and he say, "Now Chuck, slow down, slow down." [Laughter]. You've got to learn a little play acting, a little actor's studio, or you get in trouble.

I worry about the orientation of our young people. This is codger talk now. When I came in the Air Force most of our majors and above were World War II guys and not many of them had been to college. They were a pretty rowdy group of people. Smoke cigars, drink, stay out all night.

I'll never forget my first squadron, F-100 squadron in England. Being the second lieutenant I'm on the flying schedule for the 6:00 o'clock go. I come in and make coffee

at 4:00. Finally about 5:00 o'clock I hear the commander, a major, comes in. We were in this little Quonset hut that's now used to store pop cases I think behind the 492nd. And he walks up the stairs and he's in his office. I go up there, and he's drinking a cup of coffee, smoking a cigar, reading *Stars and Stripes*. I said, "Sir, I hope you don't think I'm not eager, but I've never flown in weather before." You couldn't see the airplanes in front of the squadron. The fog was — You couldn't see your hand in front of your face. I said, "I want to fly, but I've never flown in weather before."

He turned down the paper, looked over his glasses and said, "You don't expect me to fly in this shit, do you?" [Laughter]. We lost six airplanes the first two months I was in the wing. Fired the wing commander, probably right.

But nowadays we are so pretty. I hope that somewhere out there occasionally somebody gets in a bar fight and gets their uniform torn. I hope occasionally that somebody pukes on the commander. We're warriors. We're not pretty people. And we need to be a little rough and tumble. Now that doesn't mean be stupid. You should never hurt somebody intentionally. You should never do mean things. But there's nothing wrong with putting syrup in the commander's boots, particularly if he's kind of a weenie, or putting the lawn mower in his BOQ room at Wheelless and then throwing pop bottles under it while the lawn mower is running so he can't get out of bed. [Laughter].

Even Creech. I said, it's hard to have fun anymore. He says, "Remember, I'm the one that brought Dead Bug back." Because it was politically incorrect. He came in and he walked into a bar. Here's Creech, the perfect person, and he walks in and yells "Dead Bug". People didn't know, what am I supposed to do?

So if you have an opportunity to let people have some fun, let them have some fun. Let them knock the rust off their warrior spear.

I had a little trouble in Space [Air Force Space Command]. When I got to Space they thought of themselves, their orientation was technology. They thought of themselves as builders of masterful spacecraft. Builders and flyers of masterful spacecraft. And I said you're all a bunch of nerds, a bunch of weenies, a bunch of geeks. I said the only reason you exist is to fight wars. I want to see some spirit.

The older guys hated me. The younger guys liked it. They took to it like water. I'll never forget this. The next morning I went out to my staff car and my license plate said, "Geek-1". [Laughter]. I drove it that way for two and a half years. But then when Joe Ashley was coming in I said guys, you probably ought to take that off the car. [Laughter].

I'm over in Osan doing a base visit. We had a space unit there up on the hill. I'm visiting. Then I have to go down and buy my wife a purse or something, I don't know. I go by this topless, bottomless, hairless bar and on the front window is Tiger Squadron, and F-16s, and Marine F-18s, and ta da, ta da. And there, lo and behold, a Space Command patch right there on — I go, "Yes!" [Laughter].

I never went to a joint force exercise lessons learned meeting that wasn't absolute pure bullshit. In fact my guy says you've got to say this, you've got to say that. Guys, these are love-ins. Oh, this was the best exercise I've ever seen, and the cooperation between" ta da, ta dee, ta dee, was just perfect and we never had a problem. I've only seen one lessons learned session and that was done at CALCAR by a German three-star and Mike Short was the U.S. representative. Mike has a way of saying things.

He got up first and said here's where we screwed up. We screwed this up, we screwed that up, we screwed — Then the Italian guy got up. This is what we screwed up. Then the German guy, the Dutch guy, the English guy, everybody got up and told the truth. I've never seen that before. I was just — And it was very useful.

But you yourselves, I'm talking mostly to the young guys because the old guys know this. But you're going to have to have courage and admit your mistakes and admit the mistakes other people make and think about them.

The greatest thing that ever happened to me in terms of why what we did in Desert Storm was [inaudible] was Vietnam. You can't believe how screwed up Vietnam was. It was terrible. It was horrible. What happened is, it got so bad that those of us who were flying in North Vietnam, we'd just come back and debrief whatever they wanted to hear. We lied. Once you lie, once you lose your integrity, it's a slippery slope. I hated it. But they wanted to hear 45 degree bomb, reaching 4500 feet at 450 knots. All the bombs in the target. That was our debriefing. And then they dutifully made data out of that and built books and stuff like that.

You need to have integrity in your system, you need to have the willingness to admit mistakes. One thing Creech always allowed you to do was make mistakes. He would never allow anybody to do a crime, but if you made a mistake, if you told him I screwed this up. And quite frankly, it was some of the most fun we had.

Vietnam, they picked the targets in Washinton. That was one thing I was very sensitive about in Desert Storm. I was not going to allow any target — I didn't care where we got information from. That was not the point. It was up to the Black Hole to nominate the targets and then it was up to the people executing the war to strike them or not strike them depending on how things changed.

We had a lot of problem with the Army because I had all these different armies. Walt Boomer, Marine Corps, was really good to work with. He's a class act. We had a U.S. Army general, I won't say his name, but he was an idiot. And he saw everything as a zero sum game. He was a guy from Europe. He'd send us 102 targets. Then we had Gary Luck, the next corps commander, he'd send us three targets. Then the Army would say you're not hitting our number one target. I'd say what is your number one target? Well it's this, this, this, this and this. They'd give me five number ones. I'd say hold it, boys. There's only one number one. [Laughter]. So working the target list with the Army was a struggle, but what we did is we let an Air Force colonel, Sam Baptiste, and an Army lieutenant colonel, they'd sit down and say this is number one, number two, number three. Of course the generals never knew what was going on. All they'd do is

howl and — not all. Certainly Boomer never did. Certainly Gary Luck never did. People don't understand the targeting process.

The other thing was ROE. We were blessed by political leadership in Desert Storm that was absolutely wonderful. We had a President who worried about people dying in combat. And he was talking about enemy, too. When we briefed him at Camp David, I was shocked because, at first I thought he was talking about Americans dying, he's trying to keep from having casualties. Then I was concerned about he meant coalition dying. Then I realized he was talking about the Iraqis as well. This is coming out of Vietnam where the measure of merit was how many people you killed. You didn't care whether they were combatants or not, just as long as they were bodies. That was wonderful.

We also got a military mission, a political objective that was militarily achievable. Eject the Iraqis out of Kuwait. That's the problems we've got now. I'm not saying what we're doing in Iraq and Afghanistan isn't good and wonderful and all that, but it's not militarily achievable what we're trying to do. We can see the sink hole that leaves. So at some point in time the military has to speak up to the political leadership and say boss, I love you, but this is bullshit. Now I don't know of anybody who does that, but certainly we had that privilege.

ROE. Rules of Engagement. Oh, my God. I felt that I had to do the rules of engagement. The reason is because if I didn't do it, then they'd do it in the Pentagon. If they did it in the Pentagon you'd have to carry a law book to the cockpit. I wanted the rules of engagement to be something that somebody could remember when they're being shot at.

We only had about two or three rules of engagement, and the rest of it is just common sense. Use your head.

I got a lot of push-back from some of the foreign air forces because their political leadership didn't trust the military. But I stayed firm. I said you tell me what you think it ought to be and I'll consider it. But I maintained tight control over ROE and I had top cover from Schwarzkopf and Cheney, by the way. Cheney was wonderful, let me tell you. So you've got to watch the ROE.

Strategy. Everybody studies strategy. If you don't have good political objectives then it doesn't matter what strategy you have. You're not going to succeed. So that's why the military has to be involved in the political objectives of the conflict. This is where the senior guys have to suck it up.

I'll say this, our Air Force guys have stood in the face of anger and been fired. I think of Fogelman retiring early, certainly Moseley, Wynn. That takes courage. But if you're not willing to be fired, you shouldn't have the job. You have to be articulate. You don't have to bitch slap them, you just go and say sir, that's a wonderful idea, but I wouldn't do it. Things like that.

For senior guys, I wrote my letter of resignation during Desert Storm. I forget what we'd done. Oh, we shot down Iraqis in Iran. So I called Schwarzkopf and said I've got good news and bad news. He said what's the good news? We shot down two Iraqis. What's the bad news? We shot them down 40 miles inside Iran and we knew we shouldn't have been there but fangs came out and they missed the street signs and they went roaring past. I knew he'd call the Pentagon.

I knew the Pentagon would start wringing their hands about how do we keep this from happening again, and there would be some lawyer on the third floor that would say what we need to do is this, this and this. And Vietnam was a buffer zone on the Chinese border, and I knew about it because I used to go up and fly in it because the enemy knew it was a buffer zone and they didn't have any SAMs there. So I could go up and into China and then come in from the north and wouldn't get shot at until we got to the target area. So I wasn't going to put our people through that.

I'm sitting there writing all the reasons out about why we can't do buffer zones or whatever they're going to come up with.

So I go to that meeting that night and I'm waiting for Schwarzkopf to say Chuck, come up to the office, I need to talk to you about something, and I'd go up there and he'd say ta da, ta da, and I'd say ta da, ta da, and he'd say do it.

So I turned a page on my notebook and I wrote my letter of resignation. Because the generals didn't write their letter of resignation in Vietnam. They tried to cope with idiocy. I'll tell you, it was the saddest moment of my life in that particular phase of my life. I went the next night and I'm waiting for the shoe to drop, it doesn't drop. Went the next night, the next night, the next night. Finally I lost the letter. I wish I had that letter to this day. [Laughter].

That was a lesson for me from Vietnam. The captains flying the missions want the generals to give them something that's reasonable and we didn't always do it.

You need to study history. For tactics. I go to the 4th Wing, they get their F-15Es. I get up in front of the pilot's meeting and I says, "When war comes along you guys ain't going to fly at low level." They looked a time like I was from Mars. They've been indoctrinated by low level. Been running around the Nevada desert at 50 feet. I said I don't mind you flying low level in peacetime, it's legal buzzing. Enjoy it, have fun. But when people are shooting at you and you're at low level, you're stupid. You're a target. It took them one night. It took the Brits a week, because they were locked into low level with their equipment and their tactics and everything. But our worst loss rate on the U.S. F-15E. Its loss rate and the British low level loss rate was 50 times that. So that gives you things you learned as a captain that you need to carry forward.

Wing commanders have learned how to fight forces. They've learned how to fight their wing. I don't know what the ORIs are like now, but I know when Creech had TAC, you were prepared to go to war. As a wing. As a unit. Certainly I've already talked about the Blue Flags and the joint exercises. We need that.

The thing that hits you when you go to war is as a general you don't know what to do. You've got some clue, but in terms of really getting into planning and things, the only thing you know is what intel tells you. And the trouble is, in peacetime we all tell the intel guy, go write a script. He does. He gets up and says okay... Okay, sit down now.

What you're going to do is we're going to cross the ridge here then you take the right and I'll do the left. The operators, the guys flying combat, blow off intel. The trouble when war comes along, you don't know what to do other than what intel tells you. And we've never trained them. We've never forced them to think. We've never forced them to stick their neck out. They feel isolated, so they put on their intel suit.

I'm telling you this. If you can tell the difference between a person that's an operator and a person that's an intel, you're going to lose because the intel people have to think like operators and the operators have to think like intel. In Desert Storm the big intel shop was down there in the Black Hole as much as it was up in the skiff.

The other thing we did is when war comes along you cannot have compartmental information from your allies because coalitions depend on trust. And we just cut the code words off and handed it out. You'll find that all those classification gestapos that live over in Bolling and places, they're cowards. They will not call you on it.

We didn't do it blatantly or brazenly, but we did it because it was more important that the foreign air forces we were fighting alongside with knew that they had access to the same information we did. And quite frankly, a lot of this intel stuff we protect. The only reason we protect it is beyond me because a lot of it is perishable. The enemy knows. I'm not talking about sources and method. I'm talking about product, information, understanding.

We tend to view our enemies as we view ourselves. You've got to understand culture. Where we screwed up with the Iraqis is we tended to think they think like we do.

I was in Pakistan in '88 and I was having dinner at a hotel with a Pakistani pilot, the Russian had thrown him out of Baghdad. He'd been instructing the Iraqi Air Force, and he was teaching them tactics and the Russians didn't want that. They threw him out. All he was supposed to do was teach them how to take off and land and cross-country.

I listened to him and he explained what they couldn't do. It was the Russian close control. They could only do what they were told to, and that was fundamental to Puba's party. The thing that we used to shock the Iraqi Air Force the opening night. We played on that culture. We didn't think they were like Air Force pilots or even, well, any free world pilot. We thought of them as Russian pilots. It gave us a big leg up. As a result, the control of the air was seized within seconds of the opening shot.

Larry Henry deserves a lot of credit for that. Also Spear. Spear was a Black program, Navy. It's now called the Joint Warfare Analysis Center. What they did is they did an analysis of Russian infrastructure for the PsyOps. They're guys like electrical engineers

who build power plants, so they'd look at a photograph of a Russian transfer station and say okay, those are so many kilowatt things or whatever, and they'd say okay, if we bomb this one then that will dry up this whole line over here. So they did analysis. That's going to be more and more important as we start bringing together non-kinetic and kinetic effects on the enemy. So we need that.

We ignore the support which is the foundation of air power. I'm talking about maintenance, supply, I'm talking about the bio-engineers. We deployed to the Middle East. I'd go down to Al-Dafra, and even the docs were standing in line at the porta potties holding up IVs. They're giving themselves IVs, waiting for their turn to go into the crapper. What happened is they got some bad ice and the whole base went down, boom, just like that.

Before I always thought it was kind of stupid, these guys from biomedical engineering coming around sticking thermometers in the ham salad just when they were going to build me a sandwich, but you've got to pay attention to all of that. And we did very well. We never lost a sortie, really, to maintenance, because of not getting a part some place or things like that. There were two colonels that made that happen. I mean they had wonderful captains working for them, but our maintenance and support and supply support in Desert Storm was absolutely wonderful. They put up bases in the middle of the desert. I'm very proud of the United States Air Force for the way it builds its support.

Do not go to the Army for supply support. [Laughter]. The Army shot three percent of all the munitions they deployed to the Middle East for Desert Storm. They unlocked seven percent of the ConExes they deployed. Ninety-three percent of the ConExes they deployed never got opened. Their concept is you build a mountain and that way you never run out.

Think about what that does to airlift, for example. Think about the more intelligent things you can do with the transportation system if you don't have that gross — and it comes back from Napoleon. That's what they're thinking about. So you've got to take them.

Role of the media. The media is fundamental — We see it now with Twitter and the texting and what's going on in Egypt and Libya and all that. And quite frankly, old people don't understand it.

My only approach on the media was this. If I didn't want to talk to them, I didn't talk to them, but I felt what we were doing was the right thing so I would talk to them. They get gnarly, and they try and make you look like an idiot, and in my case that's pretty easy to do. But nonetheless, if you're suspicious of the media it says you're really suspicious of the American people because the media is nothing more than a window to the American people. They'll skew it. They'll try and do a fast ball. But if what you're doing is God's work, then they're going to have to report it eventually and get it correct. If you try and fool them, you're a fool because they're smarter than you are. So just be honest. Limit what you say to what you know. Don't try and become a talking head. But I think we

scored a huge media advantage in Desert Storm and we didn't do it because we planned it that way. We did it because what we thought we were doing was the right thing, and we felt you know, we're doing the best we can. If you don't like it, go someplace else. I think it pays off, but you've got to pay attention to the media. I don't have any clue and I've never found a PA guy that could really help me all that much because they're afraid of them.

Coalition warfare. People around the world look up to the United States Air Force but they do not want to be overshadowed by the United States Air Force. So they know we know pretty much what we're doing. So it's incumbent on the United States Air Force people to listen to their allies very carefully. It's incumbent that the American Air Force never act like they're in charge.

Now they'll let you lead, but you have to do be sensitive. Schwarzkopf was good at that. Here he is, the most bombastic person in the world but when he was dealing with allies he was always very deferential and listened. He and Khalid used to have rows, but that was on things like T-shirts with the American flag planted in Riyadh and things like that. But I found working with the coalition, we never had a problem.

We started off with a problem with the French because the Minister of Defense in France hated Americans. He loved Iraqis. As a result, we cleared off the ramp at Dhahran to put the French Air Force there, and lo and behold, they wind up down in this camel market that was fly infested, it was a horrible place. Well, their Minister of Defense would not allow them to be collocated with the American Air Force.

What we did is we got the Minister of Defense fired. Cheney and Bush got him fired, and we got a [inaudible] in there, Jacques, who was a good guy.

The Brits were a problem in that in their system the politicians don't have enough to do so they try and run the military. Literally run the military. We had a guy named Patty Hein who was an Air Chief Marshal. He just would say I've got it sir, we'll take care of that right away. Then he'd put it in his bottom desk drawer and forget about it. That took courage.

So the political side of things was really good. One time Prince Khalid threatened to pull the RSAF, the Saudi Air Force, out of the coalition. He didn't. We talked about it.

We had some big failures. One thing we didn't anticipate, the ballistic missile, we looked at it in technical terms, in terms of damage ability, not in terms of psychological. We were able to get that fixed by putting the Patriots in Israel, and that helped there. We didn't understand the enemy. We mirror imaged. And we didn't do — The biggest thing, I wish I had a V8, we did not have an intelligence collection plan post-conflict. So Army guys were throwing grenades in SU-27s instead of having a C-5 land at Talil and load up with — So I sure hope we do that better in the future.

We also did not have State Department participation. The end of the war came and they said Schwarzkopf, go negotiate with the enemy. He said that's not my job. My job is to

kill them. You send somebody else up there. They said we don't have anybody else. We never thought about it. So he had to go up there. Then of course they got to fly and we saw what happened to the uprising.

The things I find best about Desert Storm was the political leadership, Bush and Cheney were wonderful. One time Cheney called me direct? Scuds were raining on Israel and Israel was really giving them a hard time. He says, Chuck you've got to do something. I said we're doing the best we can, we can't do it. We got them so they'd only fire when the ceiling was 3,000 feet or less, so they knew we wouldn't be down there seeking them out.

I really felt bad. I really wanted to succeed. I'm coming in and I've got this pained look on my face and Achmed Behari, the head of the Saudi Air Force sat next to me and he says, "Chuck, what's the matter? You look like you're in pain." I said, "Achmed, I hate to tell you this, but I'd rather the Iraqis fired the Scuds at your country where I am than at Israel." He says, "What?" "Yeah, the Israelis are giving us a hard time." He says, "I'll tell you what. If you'll take out the Israeli Air Force, I'll take out the Palestinians and we'll be done with this matter." [Laughter].

The other thing that really was great was the coalition cooperation we had. The coalition really worked, and I was worried about that because if you read the history of World War II, the hardest thing you have is being in a coalition.

Then quite frankly, our service cooperation was very very good. Walt Boomer is a hero. Stan Arthur is a hero. And John Yeosock was my roommate. The only problem we had was the underling generals that would try and stir the pot. But that was great.

Do we have time for questions?

Question: I know you want to talk more about ISR, but tell us what it's like to [inaudible].

General Horner: At night. [Laughter]. Then we had the F-15 guy that shot the truck. Everybody got upset about it. His call sign is now Wheels. [Laughter]. He came back, he was a wing man. The lead says hit that truck. He goes in, he strafes it and gets it with an F-15 air-to-air C model. And so he comes back and lands and then everybody says you did what? So his crew chief says hey, and he painted a truck on the side of the airplane. [Laughter].

Guess who's the next pilot to climb up the ladder of that airplane? His wing commander. He was scared that we were going to get in trouble. I said look, if you beat up on everybody for something, maybe you ought to sit and talk about it and maybe there's a smart way to do it and a dumb way to do it, but if you beat up on everybody for using a little initiative pretty soon it will be everybody sitting on their hands.

Question: [Inaudible] talk about Moody, too?

General Horner: Moody, we were together at Nellis for a long time, then we were in the Pentagon together. Of course the non-kinetic kill program is Project Suter, named after Moody Suter. It's called Fight Dirty. And the trouble is, we do not, we have yet to, despite the really good efforts in the Pentagon to clear people who are going to fly combat into these programs and things. The way it got started, after the ship got captured by the North Koreans off the coast. What happened is the intel people knew the North Koreans were going to steal the ship but they couldn't tell the operators. They were separated by a wall in the AOC in Osan.

So the Chief of Staff of the Air Force then was Jack Ryan, so he said okay, he brought five of us into the Pentagon and we could not be denied a clearance. Some of these clearances, you couldn't leave CONUS for years after you were debriefed. We could not be denied a clearance and we could fly combat the next day after being debriefed. That was a big gulp for the intel community. But it led to a thing called T-Ball which fundamentally changed air-to-air operations over North Vietnam.

We're at that stage now, but the trouble is we're not making progress. We're going to finally get a funded program, I guess, beginning year after next, but we need people that have all kinds of security clearances, that think, and that know dropping bombs, shooting, strafing, and also know putting electrons at the right place at the right time. They've got to have trust and they've got to work together.

Quite frankly the space guys, I rubbed their nose in it and now they're pulling back because they think of it as sort of their domain. It's everybody. We're all in it together.

Dr. Grant: On behalf of the Mitchell Institute I want to thank General Horner. And it's time to open the bar. Thank you.

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