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## Operation Restore Hope— A Logistical Challenge

Interview by Patricia Slayden Hollis, Managing Editor

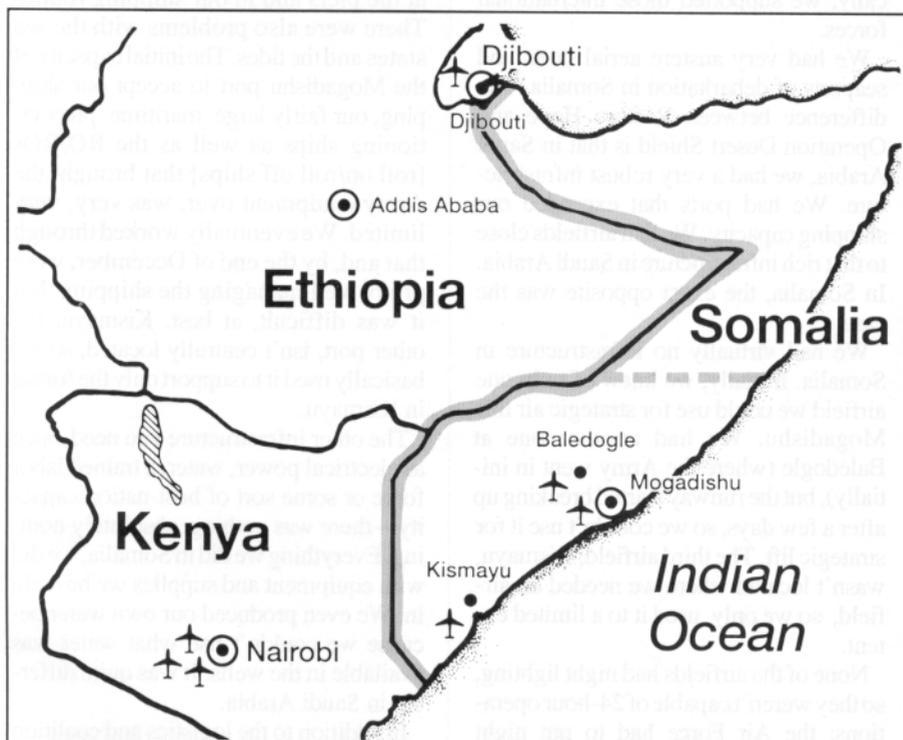
*At the time Field Artillery interviewed Major General Freeman in April, the US still had approximately 8,000 of its high of 21,500 troops ashore in Somalia in Operation Restore Hope. This included the United Task Force (UNITAF) headquarters plus 4,400 soldiers, 2,500 Marines, 775 sailors and 350 airmen; in addition, we had an amphibious ready group offshore providing support. Our troops had served with some 12,500 soldiers from 22 other countries in the US-led multinational task force, a coalition challenge.*

*When US forces deployed to Somalia in December of 1992, their mission was first to secure southern Somalia, the area most ravaged by famine, and next to provide security for relief efforts by international nongovernmental agencies. On the map of Somalia in the figure, the broken line approximates the northern limits of UNITAF's area of operations.*

*With Somalia warlords and gangs marauding against civilians and each other, each with its own agenda and often oblivious to the desperate needs of the Somali population, the US mission has been complicated, demanding joint and coalition peacemaking operations—a form of low-intensity conflict. In addition, the infrastructure in Somalia is very primitive, further complicating operations.*

*In April, after accomplishing the mission, the US was transferring control of the task force to the UN peacekeeping command. The US was to provide the UN command between 3,000 to 4,000 troops for logistical support plus a quick-*

*reaction force to remain in Somalia. Eventually, the number of US logistical troops in Somalia will decline as private contractors take over most of the support missions. Total UN troops committed for the long term could reach 28,000 with up to 23 nations participating.*



Operation Restore Hope in Southern Somalia. The broken line approximates the northern limits of UNITAF's area of operations.

**Q** How do you define the "threat" in Somalia, and how did you "package" the US portion of UNITAF to face that threat?

**A** Somalia remains a dangerous and unpredictable environment, despite the security zones UNITAF has established. The specific threat our troops face is inter/intra-group violence and independent criminal activities in Mogadishu and Kismayu—sniping, hand grenades, ambushes, land mines, demonstrations and robberies. The inland areas have been relatively calm. The larger threat would be the renewed disruption of NGO [nongovernmental organization] relief efforts as a consequence of larger scale fractional fighting.



When we went in initially, we weren't sure of the kind of threat we'd face. We knew about the interclan fighting and the types of threats to NGOs, but we weren't sure what the reaction would be to our troops.

The Somali warlords had tanks, artillery and so on. So, we put a decisive conventional force on the ground very quickly, one that could overcome a force with heavy weapons. Fortunately, the actual threat has been more of lawlessness and individual sniping than organized resistance—although there have been a couple of instances of organized resistance that were quickly overcome.

In terms of packaging such a force, you tailor the force for Somalia the way you would a joint task force for any mission, based on METT-T [mission, enemy, terrain, troops and time available]. You package the force to handle the situation with the proper balance of cross-service capabilities, one that's relatively economical. Economy of force is particularly important in a situation like Somalia where the infrastructure is so austere; everything you send in has to be supported.

**Q** *In general, what are the rules of engagement [ROE] for Somalia?*

**A** The rules of engagement are always classified, so we can't go into details. The mission in Somalia was *peacemaking*, not *peacekeeping*. In a peacekeeping environment, the troops usually have rules of engagement that authorize self-defense but limit the amount of offensive power they can use.

For Somalia, because it was a peace-making situation, we crafted ROE that allow our troops more latitude. The UN authorized us to use force as necessary, and our ROE permitted our troops to use enough force to gain control in any situation. That means that, under certain conditions, we could shoot first, and we did.

One of the unheralded reasons for our success in Operation Restore Hope has been the quality of our troops—all troops, not just those in the Army. We have superbly trained NCOs and troops who have high standards and high moral values that enabled them to pull off an operation in a very dicey situation with a lot of class.

The judgement our troops displayed on a day-to-day basis has resulted in their using a minimum amount of force, as appropriate, and a very low loss of Somali

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lives. They made good decisions with, in some cases, rocks being thrown at them, sniping and other dangers or irritants. Our troops are smart, well-disciplined, well-trained and highly motivated. You put all these characteristics together and you have troops that can do anything.

**Q** *In deploying our forces to Somalia, what were the challenges?*

**A** The two biggest challenges we faced were logistics operations and putting together and managing a coalition force. By far, the biggest was logistics, but the two are intertwined.

The coalition force presented a political challenge, a military operational challenge of how to build the total force, but also a logistical challenge because, basically, we supported those international forces.

We had very austere aerial ports and seaports of debarkation in Somalia. The difference between Restore Hope and Operation Desert Shield is that in Saudi Arabia, we had a very robust infrastructure. We had ports that exceeded our shipping capacity. We had airfields close to that rich infrastructure in Saudi Arabia. In Somalia, the exact opposite was the case.

We had virtually no infrastructure in Somalia. Initially, we knew of only one airfield we could use for strategic air lift: Mogadishu. We had another one at Baledogle (where the Army went in initially), but the runway started breaking up after a few days, so we couldn't use it for strategic lift. The third airfield, Kismayu, wasn't located where we needed an airfield, so we only used it to a limited extent.

None of the airfields had night lighting, so they weren't capable of 24-hour operations; the Air Force had to put night lighting into Mogadishu airfield as a first priority. Moreover, none of the airfields had much ramp space or parking space,

limiting the number of airplanes you could have on the ground at any one time. We could only bring in about one airplane an hour as compared to at least 10 times that capacity in Saudi Arabia. It was like sucking through a straw.

If anything, the ports were an even bigger problem. The Mogadishu port hadn't been used in about three months and before that, only on a sporadic basis for almost two years because of the clan fighting. The clans would actually shoot at relief ships and dock personnel as they tried to off-load; the same was true at the airports before we went in.

We didn't know enough about Mogadishu port before—it wasn't much of a port to begin with. We had some aerial photos that indicated sunken ships were at the piers and in our shipping routes. There were also problems with the sea states and the tides. The initial capacity of the Mogadishu port to accept our shipping, our fairly large maritime prepositioning ships as well as the RO/ROs [roll on/roll off ships] that brought the Army equipment over, was very, very limited. We eventually worked through that and, by the end of December, were pretty well managing the shipping, but it was difficult, at best. Kismayu, the other port, isn't centrally located, so we basically used it to support only the forces in Kismayu.

The other infrastructure you need, such as electrical power, water, a trained labor force or some sort of host-nation capacity—there was nothing, absolutely nothing. Everything we did in Somalia, we did with equipment and supplies we brought in. We even produced our own water because we couldn't use what water was available in the wells. It was quite different in Saudi Arabia.

In addition to the logistics and coalition challenges, Somalia had no government. Restore Hope was necessary because of anarchy: widespread looting, robbery and



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Unlike, for example, the French, Italians and the Canadians, many of the smaller countries were willing to participate but needed a lot of support. We had countries that asked us to provide *everything*, down to and including uniforms and boots for their troops—which, logistically, we weren't prepared to do.

Having 23 countries involved in Restore Hope created a management problem in sequencing units and finding the proper place to employ them, given their capabilities and limitations. We worked most of this through the UN.

One way we helped solve the problem was to ask countries willing to participate to send a liaison officer to CENTCOM headquarters here at MacDill Air Force Base for initial planning. In addition, we asked them to send a small liaison team to Mogadishu a week or more before their troops arrived to coordinate their arrival and placement.

At CENTCOM, we discussed with the countries what was doable and what they were willing to do because, in some cases, countries placed limitations on employing their forces. For example, some said they'd go to Mogadishu but no place else. We began to have near grid lock of forces in Mogadishu that didn't want to go any place else.

The number of troops the countries contributed ranged from a couple of thousand, for example France and Italy, down to less than a hundred—smaller detachments of 50 or 60 people. In some cases, the smaller contributions were very useful, though, with unique skills or capabilities. The New Zealanders, for example, sent three Andover transport airplanes with crews, only about 87 people, to Mogadishu. They were very useful for airlift for the joint task force. Many of the contributions were company-sized units.

Because each country had unique requirements, our support for each was slightly different. Our logistical support for other nations ranged from providing almost nothing, as in the case of the Canadians, to almost everything, just short of

boots and uniforms, to others. The Canadians flew C-130s from Canada to their support base in Kenya and then also had a logistics ship to support their own troops. They required very little support, only petroleum and water.

**Q** *How should the Army increase the lethality and, thereby, the survivability of early deploying forces in any contingency operation?*

**A** My answer doesn't call for a technical solution; rather, it is to preposition heavy equipment and supplies ashore and on ships in the AOR [area of responsibility]. Such prepositioning permits a rapid build-up of combat power.

In our theater, it's virtually impossible to improve the early survivability and lethality of deploying units if they have to bring everything from the States. If we preposition most of a heavy force's major items of equipment in theater, much as we did in Europe for so long, we can bring troops over and marry them with the equipment, quickly achieving a large enough force for the imposing size alone to improve survivability. This is the classic power projection dilemma.

With prepositioning, we wouldn't find ourselves in the same situation as in the early days of Desert Shield. We rapidly deployed light forces, but once there, the soldiers felt like speed bumps for a while. They had the strategic mobility but not the heavy systems needed for lethality and survivability.

So CENTCOM is pushing for prepositioning of heavy forces with some success now.

**Q** *In combined combat operations, at what levels (battalion, brigade or higher) do you see the cross-attachment of US and foreign forces? What are the support and sustainment implications of such cross-attachments?*

**A** In my previous assignment at SHAPE [Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe] in Belgium, we looked very closely at the levels at which

murder. Lack of a legitimate government, a central authority, made our task more difficult because we operated in a vacuum.

The fact that we worked around such an austere infrastructure in Somalia under such conditions and delivered and sustained a US force of more than 20,000 attests to the resilience and flexibility of our people and of our strategic mobility.

**Q** *What were the challenges we faced as part of a multinational taskforce?*

**A** We welcomed allied support—the broader the better. But having 22 countries, in addition to the US, involved in Restore Hope did present some challenges. Integrating the countries' troops into the task force, establishing command and control and coordinating security operations were all challenges. But as I mentioned earlier, logistics remained our biggest challenge.

Initially when the US demonstrated commitment to solving the problem in Somalia, a number of allies immediately came forward and indicated their willingness to work with us. The French, for example, flew troops from Djibouti to Mogadishu on the first day. Others came forward fairly quickly and wanted to support and be integrated. As long as the number of countries was relatively small and those countries were capable of sustaining themselves, it was easily manageable. It became more difficult when a large number of countries all wanted to come to Somalia fairly quickly, many of which couldn't sustain themselves.



cross-attachments were feasible. We concluded that the lower the unit level cross-attached internationally, the more difficult it becomes, and it's best not to cross-attach below the division level. In other words, a multinational corps was possible if you had, say, a division from another nation attached to that corps.

Obviously, you can cross-attach below the division level. You can attach brigades to a US division in mid-intensity operations, but it's difficult. And in NATO, for years we've run exercises with brigades, even battalions, cross-attached and we've worked our way through it. But the number of problems you encounter increases dramatically as you lower the level of cross-attachments.

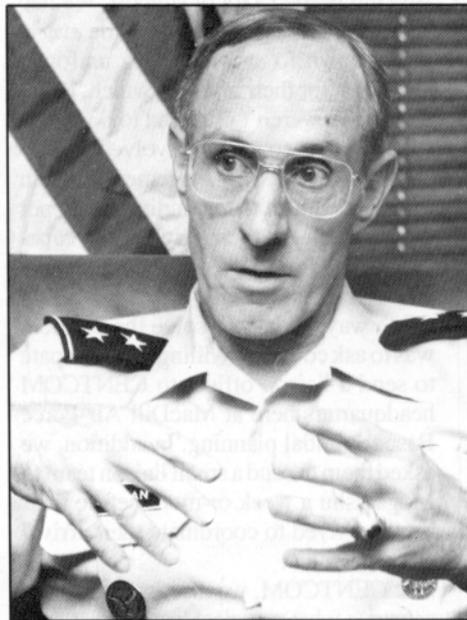
Example—language. Normally, if you're working, say, at the corps level and you've got a division attached from another nation, enough people speak each others language to handle all the liaison jobs and so on. But if you cross-attach at lower and lower levels, you're less and less likely to find people who have the language skills to provide all the interfaces necessary. Likewise, as you get down to lower levels, you get closer and closer to the front lines, in essence, where very tight coordination is absolutely critical to prevent fratricide or gaps.

Interoperability of equipment, standardized procedures, unique logistical support and maintenance requirements, doctrine—all these differences complicate cross-attachments with allies, and these intensify at the lower levels. So, the short answer is, the lower you go, the harder it gets.

But you can make it work at almost any level. And, by the way, we made it work in Restore Hope. We cross-attached units down to the company level, and it worked quite well. We had a US Marine company, for example, subordinate to the Belgians in the landing at Kismayu. All the forces over there under UNITAF were, in essence, OPCON to [under the operational control of] the US. But fortunately in Restore Hope, we did *not* face mid-intensity combat where the difficulties of integration, of communications and coordination, could have ended up costing lives.

**Q** CENTCOM has a joint targeting board [JTB] controlled by the deputy commander-in-chief [DCINC] and a joint

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targeting coordination board [JTCCB] controlled by the joint force air component commander [JFACC]. What's the relationship between the two?

**A** The JTB, run by the DCINC, is the CINC's targeting board that provides operational and strategic targeting and apportionment guidance. The JTCCB, run by the JFACC, ensures the JTB guidance is translated into a coordinated and integrated daily master plan, which ultimately results in an executable air tasking order [ATO]. It works the detailed breakout of resources to attack the targets and synchronizes all service systems into the overall fire support plan on a daily basis.

Both boards, of course, work for the CINC. The components are represented on both the JTB and JTCCB. If a component is unhappy with a particular resource allocation, then the issue is raised to the CINC for resolution. Let me give you an example. Let's say the Army wants a

certain set of targets attacked by Air Force assets and the Air Force has other priorities for those assets. That's an issue. If it can't be resolved by one of those two boards to the satisfaction of both parties, then it's elevated to the CINC. He decides, based on his resources and plan. He has a limited number of air sorties and other platforms, including Army platforms, to attack targets. He'll run out of platforms long before he runs out of targets. In practice, however, both boards clearly understand the CINC's

guidance, and any potential issues normally are ironed out at their levels.

**Q** What message would you like to send US Redlegs worldwide?

**A** Artillery, like all the branches and services, must remain focused on our core mission: warfighting. That focus plus quality troops and leaders and tough training won the Cold War and made us successful in Operation Desert Storm.

You're part of the best Army in the best armed forces in the world because of the high standards we set. We must not compromise those standards or change our focus as we chart a course through this turbulent decade.



Major General Waldo D. Freeman is the Deputy Commander-in-Chief and Chief of Staff of the United States Central Command, MacDill Air Force Base, Florida. His previous assignment was as Chief of the Policy and Programs Branch of Supreme Headquarters Allied Command Europe in Belgium. Other key assignments include Program Manager for the modernization of the Saudi Arabian National Guard in Riyadh and Assistant Division Commander of the 3d Infantry Division (Mechanized) in Germany. Major General Freeman commanded the 2d Brigade, 3d Armored Division in Germany; the 2d Battalion, 3d Training Brigade at Fort Dix, New Jersey; the 1st Battalion, 17th Infantry, 2d Infantry Division in Korea; and two rifle companies, one in Germany and the other during one of his two tours in Vietnam. He holds a master's degree in International Relations from the Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies.