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The Effect of Organizational Culture and Institutional Identity on the Twenty-third Air Force

Lt Col Ioannis Koskinas, USAF

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Lieutenant Colonel, USAF

CADRE Paper No. 24

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Foreword

On 1 March 1983, the United States Air Force activated the Twenty-third Air Force to consolidate the Air Force Special Operations Forces (AFSOF) and the Air Rescue and Recovery Service (ARRS). The Twenty-third Air Force's stewardship of AFSOF and rescue forces lasted until 1989, when the Military Airlift Command separated the two communities. Although brief, the Twenty-third Air Force's experience provides sufficient data for a thorough analysis of the effect of organizational culture and institutional agendas on the evolution of a nascent organization. The basic hypothesis explored in this paper is that organizational culture and institutional agendas significantly affected the rise and fall of the Twenty-third Air Force.

The significance of this research effort is clear considering the 1 October 2003 merger of Combat Search and Rescue (CSAR) and AFSOF under the aegis of the Air Force Special Operations Command (AFSOC). In light of recent events, this study's ultimate goal is to provide a preview of how culture may affect AFSOC's endeavors to strengthen CSAR capabilities. By studying the past, this paper looks for glimpses into the future.

DANIEL R. MORTENSEN
Chief of Research
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About the Author

Lt Col Ioannis "Gianni" Koskinas holds a BS, University of Connecticut; MS, Troy State University; master of military operational art and science degree (MMOAS), Air Command and Staff College (ACSC); and master of strategic studies degree (MAAS), School of Advanced Air and Space Studies (SAASS). A military parachutist and a senior navigator with 128 combat hours and more than 2,700 hours in the AC-130U and MC-130P/N, he has served in numerous joint assignments, including tours with the Joint Special Operations Command (JSOC), Fort Bragg, North Carolina; North Atlantic Treaty Organization's Combined Air Operations Center (CAOC) 7, in Larissa, Greece; and as chief of the strategy-plans team, Operation Iraqi Freedom, CAOC, Al Udeid AB, Qatar. He is currently reassigned to JSOC. Lieutenant Colonel Koskinas is a distinguished graduate of Air Force Reserve Officer Training Corps and Squadron Officer School. He earned the coveted William T. Ryder award (top officer graduate), US Army Airborne School, Fort Benning, Georgia, and was a top-15-percent graduate of ACSC. Most recently, he graduated in the top 2 percent from SAASS. Lieutenant Colonel Koskinas is married and has one daughter.

Acknowledgments

USA, retired. Their support and mentoring throughout my career have been "above and beyond" the call. Ultimately, however, the two individuals who deserve the greatest tribute are my wife and daughter. I could not have done this without their support and patience.

Chapter 1

Introduction

The farther backward you can look, the farther forward you can see.

—Winston Churchill

History must be learned in pieces. . . . Assemble what pieces there are, contrast and compare, and try to remain in their presence till [you] can begin to see and hear . . . what living men and women once saw and heard.

—Peter Cahill

In a move to consolidate its Air Force special operations forces (AFSOF) and the Air Rescue and Recovery Service (ARRS), the United States Air Force (USAF) and the Military Airlift Command (MAC) activated the Twenty-third Air Force on 1 March 1983. When interviewed, the former ARRS commander and new Twenty-third Air Force commander, Maj Gen William J. Mall, offered a reason behind the creation of the new numbered air force:

> We created [the] Twenty-Third AF [Air Force] primarily to enhance the special operations (SOF) mission. The move capitalized on the synergism that exists between SOF and the combat rescue forces because their mission, training and equipment [are] very similar. . . . It makes sense to manage the training, tactics, maintenance, and supply from one headquarters. By equipping and training our forces under a common, event centered standard, we provide the military with the capability to move our forces from one mission area to another to best accomplish both tasks. This actually gives us more assets and greater flexibility if a contingency arises.[1]

Although this merger lasted only until 1989, the Twenty-third Air Force experience provides sufficient data for a thorough analysis of the internal effect of organizational culture and institutional agendas. This study seeks the answer to the following question: how did organizational culture affect the institutional growth of the Twenty-third Air Force? To answer the question, this study explores the impact of organizational culture on the evolution of the ARRS and AFSOF up to 1989. By exposing the

reader to the effects of institutional agendas on the organizational growth of the Twenty-third Air Force, this research paper looks for hints into the future by studying the past.

The significance of this research effort becomes evident considering the 1 October 2003 merger of Combat Search and Rescue (CSAR) and AFSOF under the auspices of the Air Force Special Operations Command (AFSOC). The AFSOC commander, Lt Gen Paul V. Hester, in a message welcoming CSAR to AFSOC, offered the following explanation for the merger: "The history of teamwork [between AFSOF and CSAR professionals] is one of the powerful reasons behind the realignment. Our forces use similar weapon systems, training and operating concepts to conduct personnel recovery missions. . . . Our objective is to improve the mission, training, equipment and career opportunities for the entire AF CSAR community. Ultimately our goal is to enhance AF CSAR capabilities."[2] By analyzing the Twenty-third Air Force experience, this paper seeks to provide a preview of how organizational culture may affect AFSOC's current endeavors to strengthen CSAR capabilities.

Much of the evidence presented in this paper is derived from interviews and personal correspondence with some of the leaders who shaped the Twenty-third Air Force. Additionally, it draws on documents preserved at the Air Force Historical Research Agency (AFHRA) that were declassified specifically for this project. The research also utilizes previous School of Advanced Air and Space Studies (SAASS) theses and other professional military education research projects. In presenting the evidence, the paper intends to structure the argument in a way that documents an important segment of the CSAR and AFSOF histories, codifies their institutional identities, and considers the influence of their cultural biases on the Twenty-third Air Force.

Chapter 2, "Understanding Organizational Culture," introduces the reader to organizational theory and identifies some of the cultural factors that obstruct organizational change. It also codifies the cultural identities of the military services that have had the most significant influence on the organizational growth of AFSOF and CSAR, namely the United States Army and Air Force.[3]

Chapter 3, "Heritage and Culture of Air Force Special Operations Forces," introduces the reader to the secretive world of USAF special operations. It traces the history of the air com-

mandos from their early struggles to create a unique capability, through their ascendancy in war, and to their downward spiral in peacetime. It accounts for historical experiences that have significantly affected AFSOF's cultural identity, which is distinct from that of the dominant Air Force tribe. It also attempts to draw some lessons from AFSOF's experience and codify its culture on the eve of Desert One, the failed attempt to rescue the US hostages from Iran.[4] These experiences are sometimes similar to and, at other times, different from those of CSAR.

Chapter 4, "Heritage and Culture of Air Rescue," is a tale of two extremes. During most of their history, rescue units either have existed in a noncombat role in peacetime or fully combat-capable role in wartime. This chapter reviews the "rescue" heritage from its infancy in 1946 to the aftermath of the Vietnam War. It accounts for the distinctly different rescue experiences in combat and in the relatively peaceful interludes between wars that have shaped the character of this community. The chapter concludes with a review of CSAR's post-Vietnam cultural identity. Collectively, chapters 3 and 4 provide an account of the AFSOF and "rescue" heritage and detail the distinct character of these communities. A thorough account of the collective heritage of the two subcultures provides the bridge between organizational theory and Twenty-third Air Force practice.

Chapter 5, "Organizational Change: The Rise of the Twenty-third Air Force," examines some of the early organizational challenges associated with the merger of the AFSOF and "rescue" communities. It begins with early efforts to consolidate the USAF helicopter force under a single manager. From there, it briefly reviews Desert One, the most significant event of the 1980s for AFSOF and CSAR. Additionally, the chapter evaluates various tribal reactions to Air Force transformation efforts by reviewing several cases in which culture, institutional agendas, and leadership affected the organizational growth of the Twenty-third Air Force.

Chapter 6, "Organizational Change: The Fall of the Twenty-third Air Force," analyzes the AFSOF/ARRS reactions to three initiatives that proved critical in the evolution of the nascent organization and contributed to the fall of the Twenty-third Air Force. In light of these proposals (initiatives 16 and 17, and Forward Look), the chapter investigates how institutional pri-

orities and biases influenced the leaders charged with the task of integrating the two communities. Additionally, the chapter explores the effect of interservice friction between the Air Force's priorities and those of the United States Special Operations Command (USSOCOM). Together, chapters 5 and 6 examine the reasons behind Twenty-third Air Force's inability to balance the differing interests of its two primary constituent forces—CSAR and AFSOF.

Based on the Twenty-third Air Force experience, chapter 7, "From the Past, the Future," proffers possible solutions to recurring issues and tries to preclude friction by identifying cultural fault lines. Based on the evidence presented in the previous chapters, this chapter answers the thesis question and offers ways to improve current and future CSAR capabilities.

Notes

(All notes appear in shortened form. For full citation, see the appropriate entry in the bibliography.)

1. "Major General William J. Mall, Jr.," pp. 1–3.

2. Hester, "AFSOC Welcomes CSAR Units," p. 2.

3. The United States Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) also exerted its "service-like" influence on the Twenty-third Air Force. This entity is analyzed in chaps. 6 and 7.

4. Officially, the code name Rice Bowl was associated with the planning stages, while Eagle Claw denoted the execution phase of the attempted rescue. Unofficially, the term *Desert One* is colloquially used to describe the entire operation. The term originated from the code name assigned to the infamous landing zone. Chap. 5 and the appendix address this operation in greater detail.

Chapter 2

Understanding Organizational Culture

To point out to a person of another culture some behavior we might find incomprehensible risks offending that person. So we tolerate rather than confront culturally based communication breakdowns, and this makes matters worse because we develop a mutual fiction that we understand each other when in fact we don't. The poor performance of many mergers . . . can often be explained by the failure to understand the depth of cultural misunderstanding that may be present.

—Edgar H. Schein

As in all cultures, all facts, truths, realities, beliefs and values are what the members agree they are—they are perceptions.

—J. Steven Ott

CSAR and AFSOF are but small entities in a loosely aligned federation of different tribes inside the United States Air Force and an even smaller part of an interservice struggle to advocate service-oriented agendas.[1] This observation is the lynchpin in understanding the institutional reactions to the merger of the ARRS and AFSOF in 1983. This chapter begins with an overview of Edgar H. Schein's theory on organizational culture and an analysis of Warren G. Bennis's ideas on the cultural factors that obstruct organizational change. This segment defines culture, establishes a link between culture and leadership, analyzes this interaction in different stages of organizational development, examines cultural factors that obstruct organizational change, and identifies challenges to organizational mergers. The majority of the chapter, however, evaluates the cultural identities of the military services that have had the most significant effect on CSAR and AFSOF, namely the Army and the Air Force.

Organizational Culture Theory: A Conceptual Base

Throughout the twentieth century, organizational theorists and management experts have searched for a better understanding of the inner workings of institutions. The already sizeable and still growing body of literature offers many working definitions of organizational culture.[2] An analysis of several models of organizational theory reveals certain similarities that are perhaps best summarized by Schein's theorem on institutional identity.

Schein describes culture as "a pattern of shared basic assumptions that the group learned as it solved its problems of external adaptation and internal integration, that has worked well enough to be considered valid and, therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems." He bases his definition on the premise that "certain things in groups are shared or held in common," suggesting that culture "is not only shared but deep and stable."[3] To clarify, Schein sees the commonalities that bind groups into a coherent whole as the essence of culture.

Another organizational theorist, Ralph Kilmann, argues, "The real power of culture resides in the tacit assumptions that underlie it. These habitual ways of seeing and thinking about the world are like automatic pilots. They are powerful because people rarely think about them, though they influence almost everything people do."[4] Although Schein agrees that the integration of values, climate, rituals, and patterns of behavior defines a group's culture and thus, over time, defines the group's organizational culture, he views leadership as providing "the attitude and motivation" behind culture. Schein argues that perhaps the most important factor in the development of institutional identity is leadership: leaders have a significant influence on an organization as it develops through the different stages of organizational development, namely from infancy, through midlife, and to maturity.[5]

In the early stages of institutional growth, Schein suggests that leaders must "recognize their own role not only in creating the culture but also their responsibility in embedding and developing culture." By emphasizing the influence of leadership

on the process of culture creation, he argues that leaders can become more aware of the impact of "their own assumptions about what is right and proper, how the world works, and how things should be done" on various enterprises.[6]

In the organizational midlife phase, institutional identity is firmly established. Hence, Schein proposes that "culture becomes more of a cause than an effect. . . . Because culture serves an important anxiety-reducing function, members cling to it even if it becomes dysfunctional in relationship to environmental opportunities and constraints." In response, midlife leaders must distinguish between cultural assumptions that promote institutional health and those that hinder the organization's capacity to accomplish its mission. According to Schein, successful leaders must be able to recognize the influence of organizational subcultures. Additionally, culture becomes less tied to the leader's personality and perhaps more influenced by what Schein calls "sacred cows [and] holdovers from the founding period."[7]

In Schein's schema, the final stage of organizational development occurs when an organization, bound together by a strong unifying culture, matures to a point that "culture now defines what is to be thought of as leadership . . . and how authority and power are to be allocated and managed." In this stage, culture may blindly perpetuate itself and in effect resist adaptation to new environmental realities. He maintains that a leader must evaluate the cultural assumptions that bind an organization to a particular behavior pattern and, if necessary, initiate a transformation process based on a new set of alternative assumptions. Although some of these leaders may come from within the organization, Schein offers that "formally designated senior managers of a given organization may not be willing or able to provide such culture change leadership." Accordingly, the theorist suggests that "leadership then may have to come from other boundary spanners in the organization or from outsiders. . . . [This outsider] first learns what the present state of the culture is; unfreezes, redefines and changes it; and then refreezes the new assumptions."[8]

Bennis builds on Schein's ideas but takes a more pessimistic approach to organizational culture. He argues that an "unconscious conspiracy in contemporary society prevents leaders

from taking charge and making changes." According to Bennis, within any institution, "an entrenched bureaucracy with a commitment to the status quo undermines the unwary leader." Partly to blame for this phenomenon are social forces that reflect a friction between common good and individual rights that oppose a leader's desire to take charge of an organization and effect change—especially during turbulent times such as organizational mergers. Bennis offers a way to "counter the turmoil and inertia that threaten the best laid plans": effective leadership that empowers an organization to create a system that facilitates a leader's vision rather than "being preoccupied with checks and controls of people who want to beat or exploit the system."[9] In the end, both Bennis and Schein agree that organizational culture and leadership are equally important in determining the effectiveness of an institution. This is particularly true when considering the turbulent environment of organizational mergers.

Although most material on organizational fusions and acquisitions is focused on business dealings, Schein's approach to this specialized area has significant transfer value to military mergers. He argues that leaders initiate mergers in order to make the resulting organization more competitive. Leaders, however, have a natural propensity to ignore the cultural aspects of such restructuring until after the merger is under way. In fact, he suggests that "most leaders make the assumption that they can fix cultural problems after the fact." To the contrary, Schein contends "that leaders must make cultural analysis as central to the initial merger/acquisition decision as is the financial, product, or market analysis. . . . Leaders must understand their own culture well enough to be able to detect where there are potential incompatibilities with the culture of the other organization." Beyond a thorough cultural analysis of the organizations, leaders must communicate the potential synergies, conflict areas, and other cultural realities to all those involved in the decision process. Ultimately, Schein warns against getting "caught up in the political processes that prevent the cultural realities from being addressed until after the key decisions have been made."[10]

Transitioning to military-specific organizations, the next section deals with the interservice and intraservice cultural dif-

ferences that had an effect on the evolution of Air Force combat rescue (CR) and SOF. Identifying the cultural realities that influenced the organizational development of CSAR and AFSOF is a prerequisite to gaining a better understanding of the heritage of these two Air Force subcultures.

Military Service Culture: The Masks of War

Carl H. Builder argues that "like all individuals and durable groups, the military services have acquired personalities of their own that are shaped by their experiences and that, in turn, shape their behavior." He elaborates that "it is one step to attribute a personality to an institution; it is an even larger step to imbue that personality with motives." This study maintains that Builder's approach has shortcomings; nevertheless, he succeeds in taking the complex concept of service culture and extracting the *fundamental* servicecentric ideas. These are ideas, according to Builder, which have "become so familiar as to be hidden from view." In effect, Builder is able to see past the facade that services use "to screen some of their motives or self-interests: the masks of war" and hypothesizes that by becoming aware of a service's culture, one can "understand the past, present, and future behavior of the services."[11]

Understanding the personality of the Air Force and Army is a prerequisite to gaining an appreciation of the institutional assumptions that have perpetuated a consistent aversion towards maintaining robust CSAR and AFSOF capabilities during peacetime. Deciphering certain cultural assumptions can help break the cycle of Air Force abuse of CSAR and AFSOF in the immediate aftermath of war. This way, the Air Force may not have to recreate capabilities and, in effect, reinvent these organizations once emergencies occur.

The following analysis of service identities is limited to the Army and the Air Force because of their overwhelming and recurring influence on the CSAR and AFSOF communities.[12] This study follows Builder's method of analysis by examining five areas that purposefully hope to reveal differences between the two services: altars of worship, concerns with self-measurement,

preoccupation with "toys versus the arts," insecurities about service legitimacy and relevancy, and the influence of intra-service distinctions among elites and subgroups.[13]

Altars of Worship

The term *altar of worship* refers to the principle or ideal that each service treasures the most. Builder offers a few examples: "for the knights of old, the altar might be the code of chivalry. For the hippies or flower children of the 1960s, it might be love."[14] At the most basic level, the Army sees itself as the service that most identifies with the American citizenry.[15] According to Builder, "if the Army worships at an altar, the object worshiped is the country; and the means of worship are service."[16] This conviction is deeply embedded in the US Army psyche. For example, the 1981 edition of Field Manual (FM) 100-1, *The Army,* states that "the Army ethic must strive to set the institution of the Army and its purpose in proper context—that of service to the larger institution of the nation, and fully responsive to the needs of the people."[17] Although one could make the same argument for all the other services, what makes the Army unique is that it sees itself as the most faithful servant of the people of this country.[18] Essentially, intensity of outward expression of service beliefs is just as important as the substance of the institutional self-perception.

Most observers readily accept Builder's argument that the US Air Force worships at the altar of technology—"[the USAF] has identified itself with the air weapon, and rooted itself in a commitment to technological superiority."[19] He observes that, unfortunately, "the dark side of this commitment is that it becomes transformed into an end in itself when aircraft or systems, rather than missions, become the primary focus."[20] To early airpower advocates, the airplane was the ultimate manifestation of the gifts of technology.[21] After all, technology helped to secure the Air Force's independence from the US Army in 1947.[22] But the USAF fascination with technology does not stop with the airplane, its most recognizable artifact. The Air Force has demonstrated its affinity to technology in the way it has nurtured highly technical mission areas such as the use of space.[23]

Although Builder's argument focuses on the negative aspects of the Air Force's fascination with technology, there are some practical reasons for the USAF affinity that Builder ignores. For example, flight operations require a more technically capable force than do terrestrial activities. Although all the armed services have an aviation component, the Air Force has the preponderance of aviation assets, and, thus, its culture is more influenced by technology than that of the other services. As a result, the support personnel that make up more than 80 percent of the Air Force population are more technically capable than the corresponding support force in the other services.[24]

As later chapters show, CSAR and AFSOF personnel represent a curious blend of the Army and Air Force altars of worship. Although influenced by the greater Air Force fascination with technology, the CSAR and AFSOF communities are heavily affected by a profound identification with their unique specialization. CSAR forces worship at the altar of altruistic sacrifice embodied in their motto "that others may live."[25] AFSOF worships at the altars of mystery and secrecy. Fighting the nation's wars in the shadows, as embodied in their motto "the quiet professionals," has deeply affected AFSOF personnel.

Measuring Themselves: Institutional Standard of Health

When considering institutional health, one quickly realizes the importance of the budget. Arnold Kanter advocates that "for the military services, the size of their budgets—both absolutely and relative to those of the other services—is the measure of organizational success."[26] Considering that the service shares of the budget have remained remarkably stable over the past 40 plus years (fig. 1), however, one must search deeper in order to distinguish how each service measures itself and how important these measurements are to them.[27]

The salient measure of the Army's ability to fight and win the nation's wars is focused on the common soldier and the size of the force, argues Builder.[28] In support of this argument, Harold R. Winton, a professor at SAASS and a retired Army officer, observes, "To most Army officers it is axiomatic that ground soldiers with weapons decide the outcome of any war."[29] According to Builder, the Army's emphasis on numbers of troops
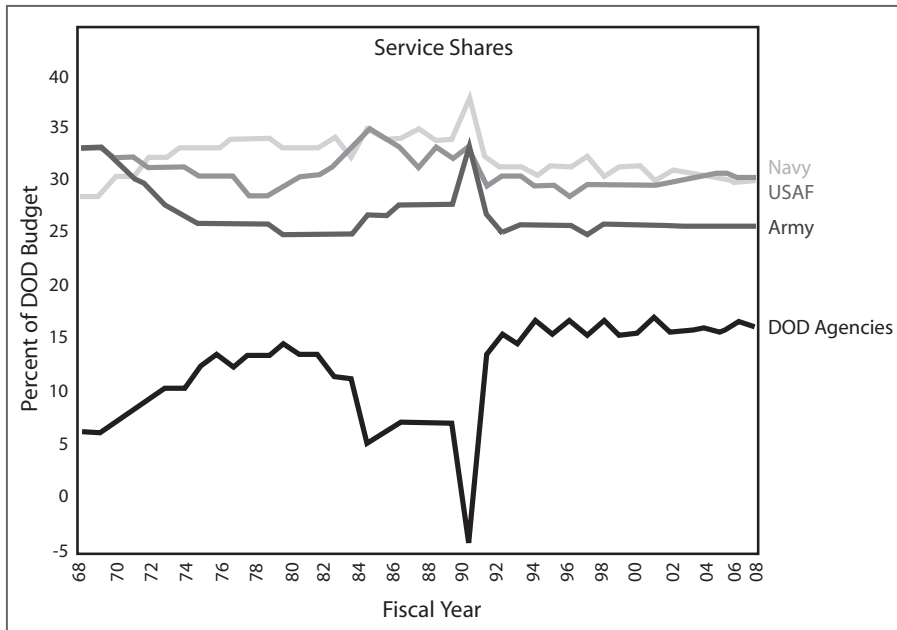
Figure 1. Percent of the Department of Defense (DOD) budget. Regarding the military services, the trend for over 40 years has remained approximately the same: Army 25 percent, Air Force 30 percent, Navy 30 percent. (Reprinted from "Budgets," *USAF Almanac 2003, Air Force Magazine Online* [May 2003], p. 77.)

should not come as a surprise because the Army's "combat success is traditionally measured in the taking and controlling of territory. . . . The controlling (secure occupation) of territory remains a task mostly for people—lots of them. . . . [Therefore] when the Army does talk about its size, it tends to be in terms of people, not equipment."[30]

Almost entirely antithetical to the Army's position, the Air Force has an institutional craving for newer and more technologically advanced equipment.[31] According to Mike Worden, this obsession with technology was quite specific. He points out that, even in its infancy as a service, "the Air Force funneled most of its research and development funds towards making bigger airplanes fly faster, higher, and farther at a time when many in the Army and a few in the Air Force were calling for

alternative technologies as well as smaller airplanes that flew slower, lower, and closer."[32] As a result, the Air Force measures itself more in terms of aircraft (technological) superiority than the actual number of available aircraft (quality over quantity).[33] Builder provides the perfect example of the quality-over-quantity preference when he suggests that "the Air Force does not lament the size of its bomber force so much as it does the age of its B-52s. . . . [USAF] concern about self-measurement becomes acute only if its qualitative superiority is threatened. . . . To be outnumbered may be tolerable, to be outflown [*sic*] is not."[34]

Later chapters demonstrate that the CSAR and AFSOF communities measure their institutional health in a way that blends the Army and Air Force positions. As in Army studies, an examination of CSAR and AFSOF culture suggests that humans are more important than hardware. But in accordance with the Air Force measurement of institutional health, the CSAR and AFSOF communities prefer quality to quantity.

Toys versus the Arts: Institutional Preoccupation

Each service puts a different emphasis on its equipment and/or its basic skills as soldiers, Airmen, sailors, or marines. The Army and Air Force offer polar comparisons of this phenomenon. The Army has historically preferred basic soldiering skills over equipment.[35] In support of this assertion, Builder notes that "[an Army artilleryman's] pride is in the art of laying a battery of guns for accurate fire. The kind of gun . . . is incidental; the power and satisfaction is in the knowledge and skills required to do something that is more important and general to warfare." At the same time, he qualifies his statement by suggesting that, in the 1980s, "the Army seems to be moving towards the other services in an attachment to machines. . . . The Army is getting hooked on toys too." Builder attributes this shift in emphasis partially to the rapid technological changes confronting the post-Vietnam-era Army. He also suggests that the Army's desire to increase its budget slice in "a toy-oriented defense program" has played an increasingly decisive role in Army procurement strategy.[36]

Still, the Army is not as preoccupied with equipment as is the Air Force.[37] According to William C. Thomas, "the USAF

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fascination with machines breeds a tendency toward occupationalism."[38] Builder expounds on Thomas's observation by suggesting that when it comes to the Air Force's raison d'être (i.e., flying airplanes), "Air Force pilots often identify themselves with an airplane: I'm a [C-] 141 driver. . . . I flew buffs," and warns that the affinity towards occupationalism may lead to extremes. The danger exists, he speculates, when the pride of association with a particular aircraft or occupational code overshadows loyalty to the institution. Then, he argues, "If the machines were somehow moved en masse to another institution, the loyalty would be to the airplanes (or missiles)."[39] This assertion is not that far-fetched when one considers early Air Force history. After all, aviators such as Billy Mitchell and his disciples saw themselves as pilots first and Army officers second.[40]

One notable variation of the Air Force tendency towards occupationalism exists in special mission units such as CSAR and AFSOF. These are small communities with a strong sense of mission that have retained the Air Force's traditional fascination with particular aircraft but have developed a very narrow focus. CSAR and AFSOF operational capabilities and missions are unique and, therefore, are distinguished from their mainstream Air Force counterparts. In that sense, these two communities tend to identify with their special missions as well as their particular weapon system. Because of their relatively small size and the high-risk/high-gain types of missions assigned to the two communities, their institutional histories have played a significant role in their organizational development.

According to Col Ken Pribyla, USAF, retired, former director of operations for the ARRS, "in every unit that wore the rescue patch and especially the units that were designated as ARRS's, the heroics were constantly reiterated . . . splashed in magazines to remind all."[41] Pribyla's comment hints of the emotional attachment to the "rescue" mission. Besides their institutional identity with their collective past, however, rescue personnel also tend to relate heavily to their particular aircraft. As Lt Col John F. Guilmartin, USAF, retired, a distinguished historian and former rescue pilot, notes, "Flying the H-53 [rescue helicopter] was like a passionate love affair with a beautiful nymphomaniac with a nasty temper and a black belt in karate: there were times

when it was lots of fun, and there were times when it scared the hell out of you; it always had your attention."[42]

Similarly, AFSOF personnel tend to identify both with their mission and their aircraft. For example, Col Billy Napier, USAF, retired, a longtime gunship aviator, argues that the designation "special operator" relates to both the air support to customers such as Army Rangers and special forces, as well as to the specialized aircraft that air commandos fly.[43] This camaraderie with their customer has colored the gunship identity perhaps more than the tendency to associate with a particular airplane (e.g., AC-47, AC-130A, etc.). Col Gordon F. Bradburn, a former commander of the 14th Air Commando Wing (ACW) in Southeast Asia, supports Napier's observations. In the official history of the 14th ACW, Bradburn noted, "I think we're going to find that the 14th Air Commando Squadron is the greatest thing since sex, so far as protecting a base is concerned."[44]

Col Thomas Beres, USAF, retired, an MC-130E navigator who participated in the 1980 attempt to rescue the American hostages from Iran, gives this colorful description of the "Talon" culture in the late 1970s: "In MC-130s you had *no, none, zip, nada*, MAJCOM [major command] identity, only an aircraft identity, MC-130s Combat Talons, *but*, if you liked to be a part of a close crew flying unattached around the world doing a neat mission, the MC-130 was for you! We knew we were doing things no one else in the world was doing with C-130s. That was what made us special, not that we were in something called special operations" (emphasis in original). He also suggests that the Talon community attracted a particular kind of crewmember, in that what newcomers to the units "were made to realize was that: if you wanted a career you should *not* be in MC-130s! You should go into MAC C-130s or better yet C-141s or C-5s or anything else that either TAC [Tactical Air Command] or MAC had since they had a career track. . . . Because we did not have a good career track we either got folks who loved independence and the mission *or* cast offs from TAC and MAC" (emphasis in original).[45] As the next chapter will demonstrate, these observations on career progression, or lack thereof, were representative of the whole AFSOF community. But in the end, as was the case with their parent service, the collage of AFSOF subcultures—Spectre, Talon, and Pavelow mafias—has been deeply wedded to specific airframes.

Institutional Legitimacy and the Struggle for Relevancy

Builder defines *institutional legitimacy* as "the confidence of the service in its rightful independent status" and *relevance* as "the persistence of [a service's] missions and capabilities." Of all the services, the Army is most secure in its absolute organizational legitimacy and continuing relevance. As Builder points out, the Army has remained resolute in its idea that "there may be air campaigns and support from the sea, but in the end, someone [had] to take and hold the ground."[46] In effect, the Army is confident that the other services exist to support the ground-force commander.[47]

For example, in the aftermath of the Vietnam War and with a clear and present danger of a Warsaw Pact invasion in Europe, the Army realized that it could not win the ground battle without help from the Air Force.[48] Particularly in the 1970s and 1980s, the Army developed an increasingly disproportionate dependence on USAF support on the battlefield. Expounding on Builder's ideas, Winton suggests that although Airmen depend upon soldiers to protect them from the enemy, this reliance is not as strong as the soldiers' reliance on air support: "The asymmetry of this dependence lies at the root of many of the tensions that exist between the Army and the Air Force regarding air-ground operations."[49]

The Air Force, conditioned by its early experience under the control of the Army, although confident of its relevance, has displayed an attitude of insecurity regarding its institutional legitimacy. Even though its fight for autonomy officially ended in 1947 with its establishment as an independent service, it took a long time for the Air Force to come to terms with the concept of organic air support embedded in the sea and land services.[50] For instance, the Air Force has always been uneasy about the Navy's ability to retain, rely upon, and control organic aviation support. To the Air Force, the naval arrangement creates a dangerous precedent. If the Navy controls aviation in support of naval operations, why should the Army not control aviation support for ground operations?[51] In fact, one hypothesis for the Army's motivation behind the creation of attack aviation was the "Army mistrust of the Air Force's ability to provide badly needed Close Air Support (CAS)."[52] As Builder

suggests, the Air Force's "legitimacy as an independent, autonomous institution still rests on the decisive and independent nature of the air war. Support of the ground troops and interdiction . . . may be the ultimate ends, but the means to those ends is success in waging the air war and that is the true business of the Air Force."[53]

By the 1950s, Air Force relevance was defined in terms of deterrence and readiness. Gen Curtis E. LeMay, one of the most influential USAF leaders of the 1950s and early 1960s, made it clear that the mission of the Air Force was to deter war by "maintaining general aerospace supremacy" and if deterrence failed, "to repel and defeat the aggressor's forces." His reason for maintaining a strong Air Force was "to respond to any kind of military challenge the Communists may make."[54] The pervasiveness of the deterrence mission in all aspects of Air Force thinking is clearly annotated: Air Force leaders must understand their "responsibility to further the mission of deterrence and *readiness*" (emphasis in original).[55] Shannon Brown suggests that the Vietnam experience helped dislodge the Air Force from this single-minded approach to Air Force legitimacy and relevance, convincingly arguing that "competing operational missions clearly were eroding the deterrence mission that had served as a touchstone for basic Air Force leadership doctrine for over a decade."[56]

Eventually, as the Air Force matured as a service, it became more confident and secure in its role as an equal partner to the other services.[57] An example of this evolution is the Army and Air Force commonality of purpose associated with the AirLand Battle doctrine of the post-Vietnam era. At the time, like the Army, the Air Force was increasingly concerned with the possibility of a Warsaw Pact invasion of Western Europe. The Army and Air Force cemented a symbiotic partnership that dictated their force-structure initiatives in the 1980s due to the Soviet threat, as well as the lessons gleaned from the 1973 Arab-Israeli War: "the clarity of the Army's vision" of how the United States would fight a future war, and the close cooperation between the chiefs of the two services.[58] For example, in the 1970s and 1980s, the Air Force remained marginally sensitive about its legitimacy as an independent service and remained supremely

confident of its relevance and its ability to produce decisive re-sults in war.[59]

In terms of organizational relevance, CSAR and AFSOF sub-cultures did not fit either the USAF deterrence model of the 1950s and early 1960s or the Army-devised AirLand Battle doctrine of the 1980s. The rescue and special operations Air Force subcultures have had to exist within the deterrence and AirLand Battle worlds, but never played a significant role in the mainstream Army and Air Force missions. CSAR forces have struggled to justify their existence in peacetime. In limited wars like Korea and Vietnam, rescue forces proved extremely valu-able. For example, Earl Tilford remarks, "As the [Vietnam] war dragged on, the cost in aircraft and aircrews rose and the res-cue of aircrew members became even more crucial."[60] But in peacetime, CSAR did not compete well with USAF institutional priorities such as deterrence and AirLand Battle doctrines.

Like CSAR forces, AFSOF was not an Air Force organizational priority. In fact, both the Air Force and Army looked down upon their respective special forces. Or as Susan Marquis puts it, "Special Forces were generally regarded by their conventional leadership as something to be tolerated, an assignment to fill in the time between serious conventional assignments."[61] As a consequence, the AFSOF and CSAR communities have evolved along different paths from those of conventional US military culture. Ultimately, beyond the interservice issues that affected the evolution of the Army and Air Force cultures, several intra-service issues equally impacted the institutional identities of each service and resulted in a change of organizational focus.

Intraservice Distinctions:
The Stratification of Subgroup Culture

Builder, Worden, and others contend that intraservice dis-tinctions, particularly among officers, are based on one's spe-cialty and occupation. Builder suggests that the Army and Air Force are "quite similar in their intra-service distinctions. . . . Both have divided their officers into two groups that stand on different levels . . . a two-caste system of status." He contends that in the Army, the split is between "the traditional combat arms (e.g., infantry, artillery, and armor) and all others, who

are seen in support roles to the combat arms." In the Air Force, Builder argues, "the division is between pilots and all others."[62]

The service elites who rise to the top of their respective services dictate which "tribe" controls the destiny of the institution. This statement is important in understanding the stratification of different subgroups inside an institution and the influence they may exert over the organization's destiny. According to Builder, the combat-arms branches have controlled the direction of the Army.[63] Schein calls this the "line of succession."[64] Paradoxically, Army branch distinctions do not have an outright effect on promotion opportunities and power within the service.[65] Kanter clarifies this assertion further by noting, "It is perhaps symptomatic of the relatively low salience of intra-Army cleavages that when Army officers are promoted to flag grade, they remove their branch insignia from their uniforms."[66]

As mentioned earlier, the Air Force intraservice distinctions are primarily associated with a system that distinguishes between pilots and others. More important to this study, however, is a deeper understanding of the Air Force's caste system that creates dominant clans within tribes. The most extreme, and thus most emblematic, example of Air Force tribalism is the changing of the guard between bomber and fighter pilots in the years between the Vietnam War and Operation Desert Storm. Until 1960 Strategic Air Command (SAC), charged with the ultimate mission of delivering atomic weapons to the enemy's heartland, had the greater part of the military budget.[67] General LeMay, commander of SAC (1947–53), used to say, "Flying fighters is fun. . . . Flying bombers is important."[68] The Vietnam experience influenced the professional and intellectual growth of the generals who would lead the USAF in the 1980s and beyond. Simply put, the formative experiences of the USAF officer corps in Vietnam led to a leadership transformation within the USAF.[69]

This change in leadership affected the way the USAF conducted business in the 1980s, and arguably still influences Air Force behavior.[70] A new outlook on joint warfare accompanied Air Force leadership's changing of the guard from "bomber barons" to "fighter mafia." The new leaders were used to supporting ground operations and, therefore, were not as adverse to a new concept of aerial warfare that supported the Army's Air-Land Battle doctrine. When Charles A. Gabriel became the first

fighter pilot chief of staff of the Air Force (CSAF) since Gen Hoyt S. Vandenberg, he initiated a paradigm shift in the USAF organizational focus.[71] As Bruce Danskine argues, "warfighting, rather than deterrence, became the priority."[72] This initiative became the sine qua non of the Army and Air Force partnership in the 1970s and 1980s. But more importantly, Army doctrine heavily influenced the way the Air Force shaped its force to fight the next war.

Air Force doctrine describes and guides the institutionally accepted use of air and space forces in war.[73] Danskine argues that as USAF doctrine evolves, it reflects changes in tribal preeminence. His analysis clearly makes the connection between tribal supremacy and the establishment of budget priorities. For over three decades, SAC's mission was the cornerstone of Air Force doctrine; thus, the ruling hegemon received the lion's share of the budget. Danskine suggests that "as doctrine focused more on limited warfare, fighter tribe generals came into power. Budget spending favored tactical weapon systems."[74] So we see that AirLand Battle doctrine not only affected Air Force doctrine, but also influenced the USAF budget.[75]

Builder argues that, in contrast to the Army combat arms that reflect "a brotherhood of guilds" which acknowledge "their interdependence and pay tribute to their siblings," the Air Force elites are more apt to believe that they can "get the job done largely on their own."[76] Col Tom Ehrhard, a professor at SAASS, attributes the Army and Air Force institutional behavior to the predominant leadership styles adopted by the two services. He suggests that the Army operates under a "feudal system," whereas the Air Force prefers a "monarchic" style of leadership.[77]

Ehrhard agrees with Builder that the Army senior leadership has habitually made decisions based on consensus. The Air Force has charted its institutional course according to the dominant tribe in power. This distinction is crucial when one considers the way the USAF elites (first bomber and then fighter pilots) have treated culturally diverse communities such as CSAR and AFSOF throughout the years. Since the Air Force chief of staff (the monarch) has always risen through the ranks of the dominant tribe that controlled this branch, its leadership considered CSAR and AFSOF combat supporters and, as such, more often as an afterthought than a priority.[78] The heritage of

these two communities suggests that they are not part of the core institutional vision of the dominant Air Force subgroups—bombers and fighters. Therefore, it should come as no surprise that neither CSAR nor AFSOF have rated high in USAF organizational priorities throughout their distinguished histories.

These ideas are further developed in following chapters, but by now the reader should have a better appreciation of USAF organizational culture. Beyond interservice cultural cleavages, Kanter fittingly observes that "each of the services is itself a complex organization composed of numerous subsidiary units and components."[79] Additionally, as Ehrhard aptly concludes, "The Air Force's centralized power structure . . . [led] to rigidities not conducive to the development of innovation except during the period of fighter-bomber conflict. . . . The Air Force required external agencies (namely the [National Reconnaissance Office] and [Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency]) for innovative development during its monarchic stages, but also had a great capacity for innovation when backed by powerful chiefs of staff."[80] In the context of this paper, the United States Special Operations Command (SOC) played a significant role in AFSOF's cultural development in the 1980s.

It appears, then, that organizational culture matters. It affects institutional identity, growth, and leadership dynamics. As Schein contends, culture establishes the paradigm of basic assumptions that defines institutional identity; over time, this pattern shapes what the organization considers as "right and proper, how the world works, and how things are done."[81] Blending Schein's ideas on organizational culture with Builder's propositions on Air Force and Army motives and self-interests, this chapter has explored service culture. Only when armed with a better understanding of generic intraservice and interservice cultural differences that color the growth of combat rescue and SOF can the reader begin to understand the impact of culture on the organizational development of these two communities.

This chapter has also introduced the concept that AFSOF and CSAR forces are two minor mission areas within a loosely aligned federation of different tribes inside the Air Force. "Each service," Stephen Rosen argues, "is far from monolithic. . . . [They are] complex political communities."[82] Within the Air Force, the dominant tribes have been first the bomber and then

the fighter communities. Throughout their organizational growth, the AFSOF and CSAR secondary subcultures have struggled for survival within a service that has advocated dominant tribe-oriented agendas. Although this chapter makes the organizational development of AFSOF and CSAR appear homogeneous, we must more deeply analyze their histories before addressing one of the most significant phases of their developmental process—the Twenty-third Air Force experience. The cultural identities of the AFSOF and CSAR cannot be derived from generic intraservice discussions. On the contrary, in order to better understand these communities, one must examine them in the context of their historical experiences.

Notes

1. Schein, *Organizational Culture,* p. 378. The term *tribe* is interchangeable with subcultural groups, but denotes that kinship rather than formal ties bonds the members of the tribe. Schein suggests that leaders tend to ensure that their successors keep the culture in "an appropriate direction."

2. Morgan, *Images of Organization,* p. 397. Morgan borrows from Kroeber and Kluckhohn to make this point. In *Culture*, their classic work on the meaning and use of culture within the social sciences, these two authors identify almost 300 definitions and provide a detailed analysis for 164 of the 300.

3. Schein, *Organizational Culture,* pp. 8, 10, 12; Ott, *Organizational Culture Perspective,* pp. 50–51; Pacanowsky and O'Donnell-Trujillo, "Organizational Communication," p. 50; Dennison, *Corporate Culture,* p. 2; and Peters and Waterman, *In Search of Excellence*. In terms of other organizational models, this author summarizes the research as follows: Morgan, in *Images of Organization*, describes culture as shared meaning, shared understanding, and shared sense making, "an active living phenomenon through which people jointly create and recreate the worlds in which they live" (pp. 141–42). Ott takes a similar approach to Morgan's and posits that organizational culture is a dynamic, evolving concept rather than a static "thing" that can be discovered and analyzed through empirical research (pp. 50–51). Pacanowsky and O'Donnell-Trujillo go as far as to suggest that "organizational culture is not just another piece of the puzzle, it is the puzzle." From their point of view, "a culture is not something an organization has; a culture is something an organization is" (p. 50). Dennison, on the other hand, takes a much more practical approach when he posits that "culture refers to the underlying values, beliefs, and principles that serve as the foundation for an organization's management system as well as the set of management practices and behaviors that both exemplify and reinforce those basic principles" (p. 2). For a listing of the elements of organizational culture see figure 3-1 in Ott, p. 53.

4. Kilmann, Saxton, and Serpa, *Gaining Control of the Corporate Culture*, pp. 267–68. Kilmann argues that the term *culture* refers to the "conclusions

a group of people draws from its experience . . . what people believe about what works and what does not . . . ranging from conventional practices, to values, to assumptions." Ibid.

5. Schein, *Organizational Culture*, pp. 10, 377.

6. Ibid., pp. 376–77.

7. Ibid., pp. 377–78.

8. Ibid., pp. 379–80.

9. Bennis, "Why Leaders Can't Lead," pp. 220–27.

10. Schein, *Organizational Culture,* p. 385.

11. Builder, *Masks of War*, pp. ix, 7, 8, 10, 12, 14. Builder admits that, "even for individuals, personality sketches can be misdrawn; the discernment of personality remains an art, not a science" (p. 8). Additionally, he argues that institutions, which are usually made up of a large number of individuals, are more complex than the sum of the members of the organization. In the end, as former senator Sam Nunn argues, "Builder provides us with a better understanding of some of these key national security institutions—the American military services" (p. ix). Note that Builder makes the distinction that while the institutions hold up the mask of war to cover the pursuit of service interests, the warriors within the services do not hide behind any masks (p. 14).

12. If the author (Koskinas) has been successful, the link between USAF and United States Army (USA) influence on CSAR and AFSOF will be established in the CSAR and AFSOF heritage chapters.

13. The "five faces of the service personalities" are first introduced in Builder, *Masks of War*, p. 17.

14. Ibid., p. 18.

15. Palmer, *25-Year War,* p. 209. Builder suggests that "evidence of the Army's roots in the citizenry is to be found in its composition—over a third of the Army's force structure (as measured in divisions) is vested in National Guard units." Builder, *Masks of War*, p. 209n8.

16. Builder, *Masks of War*, p. 18.

17. Army Field Manual (FM) 100-1, *The Army*, 14 August 1981, p. 24. For further evidence of the lasting relevance of these concepts, see FM-1, *The Army*, 14 June 2001, chaps. 1 and 5. According to the latest version of the document, "the Army's nonnegotiable contract with the American people is to fight and win our Nation's wars. . . . The Army's purpose is to serve the American people, protect enduring national interests, and fulfill national military responsibilities" (ibid., p. 1).

18. Builder, *Masks of War*, p. 20. For more examples of what the Army thinks of itself, see *The Army*, FM 100-1, 29 Sept. 1978, p. I; and *The Army*, FM 100-1, 14 Aug. 1981, p. 24.

19. Builder, *Icarus Syndrome*, p. 6.

20. Ibid.

21. Builder, *Masks of War*, p. 19.

22. This relates to aircraft as instruments of war and, more specifically, the strategic-bombing mission.

23. Builder, *Masks of War*, p. 19. For more on the militarization of space and further examples of the USAF's adoration of technology, see Hays et al., "Spacepower for a New Millennium"; and Lambeth, *Mastering the Ultimate High Ground.*

24. Ehrhard, "Armed Services and Innovation," pp. 7–8, 23. He argues that due to the practical requirements of the profession, Air Force enlisted personnel are typically more educated and technically capable than the enlisted force of the other three services and stay in the service longer. For instance, 79 percent of Air Force enlisted members have college experience, compared to 3 percent in the Marine Corps, 5 percent in the Navy, and 10 percent in the Army.

25. Discussed in great detail in chap. 3.

26. Kanter, *Defense Politics,* p. 8.

27. Ibid., p. 18.

28. Builder, *Masks of War*, p. 22. He expands on this subject by suggesting that other quantitative measurements, such as the number of active divisions, are often considered alternative indicators of the Army's health status.

29. Winton, "Ambivalent Partnership," p. 401.

30. Builder, *Masks of War*, pp. 22, 210n17. In this context, Builder draws a parallel with the Central European "Fulda Gap" model. In terms of force structure, the Army liked the idea of fighting a war in Central Europe. It promised to be the largest land war in which the United States might conceivably take part. For more reasons, see p. 142.

31. Ibid., p. 21.

32. Worden, *Rise of the Fighter Generals,* p. 37. See also Caddell, "Orphan of Unification," pp. 303–6. According to Caddell, the Air Force's narrow focus on strategic bombing hampered the development of "rocket/missile technologies, drones, transport, and fighter-bomber aircraft" (p. 306).

33. Builder, *Masks of War*, p. 21. See also Smith, "Air Force Culture and Cohesion," p. 44.

34. Builder, *Masks of War*, p. 22.

35. Ibid., p. 24; see also Chinnery, *Any Time*, pp. 70–71. Chinnery's observations support Builder's argument. Chinnery suggests, as noted in chap. 3 of this paper, that air commandos were the first to receive the AR-15 rifle, while the Army retained its M-14 weapons.

36. Ibid., p. 24.

37. Ibid., p. 23.

38. Thomas, "Cultural Identity of the US Air Force." Builder agrees with Thomas's assertions but suggests that this propensity is stronger with pilots and with time in the service. He credits this to the USAF's dependency on technology and specialists. Additionally, Builder concludes that "it will be difficult to slow the tendencies toward occupationalism if the institution has no core identity." *Icarus Syndrome*, pp. 8–9.

39. Builder, *Masks of War*, pp. 23–25.

40. Davis, *Post War Defense Policy,* p. 120. Davis draws a powerful distinction between Navy and Air Force pilots. Although an in-depth discussion of naval aviation is beyond the scope of this paper, Davis makes a convincing

argument that while Billy Mitchell advocated an aviation service separate from the Army, Navy fliers had always been Navy officers first and aviators second.

41. Pribyla to author, e-mail, 13 Jan. 2004.

42. Guilmartin, *Very Short War,* p. 187.

43. Marquis, *Unconventional Warfare,* p. 56.

44. Ballard, *United States Air Force in Southeast Asia*, p. 42.

45. Beres to author, e-mail. Colonel Beres later commanded the 8th SOS and 353rd Special Operations Group.

46. Builder, *Masks of War*, pp. 27, 30.

47. JP 1-02, *Department of Defense Dictionary*. JP 1-02 defines *supported commander* as follows: "the commander having primary responsibility for all aspects of a task assigned by the Joint Strategic Capabilities Plan or other joint operation planning authority. In the context of joint operation planning, this term refers to the commander who prepares operation plans or operation orders in response to requirements of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. . . . In the context of a support command relationship, the commander who receives assistance from another commander's force or capabilities, and who is responsible for ensuring that the supporting commander understands the assistance required."

48. Winton, "Ambivalent Partnership," pp. 400, 402, 407.

49. Ibid., p. 402.

50. Note that for the land services, the Air Force had to start dealing with Army organic air-support assets only in the 1960s. This phenomenon reflects the introduction of Army helicopters in sizeable formations and air-assault units.

51. Builder, *Masks of War*, p. 27.

52. Winton, "Ambivalent Partnership," pp. 413–14.

53. Builder, *Masks of War*, p. 28.

54. Air Force Manual (AFMAN) 50-3, *Air Force Leadership*, p. 10.

55. Ibid., p. 11.

56. Brown, "Sources of Leadership Doctrine."

57. Based on observations earlier in the chapter, Schein would call this the midlife organizational development stage.

58. Winton, "Ambivalent Partnership," pp. 405–6. Winton points out that, during the 1973 Arab-Israeli War, the Israelis and Egyptians lost more tanks and artillery pieces than the United States had in its entire inventory. Gen William E. DePuy, commander of Training and Doctrine Command (TRADOC), applied the lessons learned during this war to "the fashioning of an American Army tactically capable of repelling a Warsaw Pact invasion in Europe" (p. 430). For more on this see Herbert, *Deciding What Has to Be Done*, pp. 30, 33.

59. Builder, *Masks of War*, p. 28.

60. Tilford, *Search and Rescue*, p. 81.

61. Marquis, *Unconventional Warfare*, p. 41.

62. Builder, *Masks of War*, p. 26.

63. Ibid.

64. Schein, *Organizational Culture*, p. 378.

65. Builder, *Masks of War*, p. 26.

66. Kanter, *Defense Politics*, p. 108. Builder adds the following to Kanter: "This may be definitional [rather] than symptomatic: The name 'general' was originally intended to apply to those officers capable of commanding all the branches in a combined arms force." *Masks of War*, p. 211.

67. Worden, *Rise of the Fighter Generals*, p. 55. Note that this statement does not encompass the Korean War experience (1950–1953).

68. Ibid., p. x.

69. Ibid.

70. Ford, "Air Force Culture," p. 60. According to Ford, in 1960 bomber generals held 77 percent of the top Air Force leadership positions, vice 11 percent of the positions held by fighter pilots. In 1975 the ratio had changed to 43 percent bomber and 41 percent fighter pilots. By 1990 the ratio was 18 percent bomber and 53 percent fighter pilots.

71. Vandenberg, biography. Gen Hoyt S. Vandenberg, the second Air Force chief of staff, was a "fighter general" since he spent the majority of his flying career as an attack/pursuit pilot.

72. Danskine, *Fall of the Fighter Generals*, p. 55.

73. Air Force Doctrine Document (AFDD) 1, *Air Force Basic Doctrine*, p. 1. According to AFDD 1, "doctrine is a statement of officially sanctioned beliefs and warfighting principles that describe and guide the proper use of air and space forces in military operations" (p. 1). In essence, USAF doctrine represents the Air Force's "common frame of reference" and helps shape the way Airmen organize, train, and fight. Roughly speaking then, doctrine is the Air Force's cultural manifesto. The effect of doctrine is further explored in chap. 6.

74. Danskine, *Fall of the Fighter Generals*, pp. 70–71. Danskine contends that Air Force nuclearcentric doctrine, from 1960 onward, began to evolve to slowly account for "lower end" warfare. My research confirms his assertions. According to AFMAN 1-2, *USAF Basic Doctrine* (1953), the Air Force wanted to deliver a "decisive blow upon any chosen point. . . . The consequent need for a force capable of immediate employment makes it imperative that airforces be maintained in instant readiness to launch a full-scale attack immediately upon the outbreak of hostilities" (pp. 16–17). AFMAN 1-1, *USAF Basic Doctrine* (1964), suggests, "No longer can there be a strict distinction between peace and war in the pre–World War II sense. Instead, there exists a vast spectrum of conflict within which infinite variations of conflict intensity and character are possible. At one extreme is . . . thermonuclear war; at the other is a realm of economic, political, social, and educational competition. War is possible in many parts of this spectrum and can occur at different intensities" (p. 1-1).

75. Since doctrine reflects Air Force cultural norms and accepted beliefs, AirLand Battle doctrine influenced the greater Air Force culture significantly. Later chapters will demonstrate that the Air Force is not as homogeneous as the previous assertion suggests. Nonetheless, it is safe to assume that just as AirLand Battle doctrine significantly affected basic Air Force doctrine, it also affected basic Air Force culture.

76. Builder, *Masks of War*, pp. 27, 33. Builder calls the Army branches a brotherhood of guilds because they are organized according to their skills. He further suggests that the "family bonds" of groups of craftsmen that take the

"greatest pride in their skills joined together in a brotherhood because of their 'dependency upon each other in combat'" (p. 33).

77. Ehrhard, "Armed Services and Innovation," p. 12.

78. Ibid., pp. 11–12.

79. Kanter, *Defense Politics*, p. 18.

80. Ehrhard, "Armed Services and Innovation," pp. 25–26.

81. Schein, *Organizational Culture*, pp. 376–77.

82. Rosen, *Winning the Next War,* p. 19. In "Armed Services and Innovation," Ehrhard argues convincingly that the services are engaged in continuous "ideological struggles, not just with each other, but internally" (p. 2).

Chapter 3

Heritage and Culture of Air Force Special Operations Forces

Attempting to capture the history of USAF special operations from the beginning of the cold war to the end of the Second Indochina War is an exercise in humility, the historian's worst nightmare in some respects. The clandestine or covert nature of their worldwide operations, their need (and talent) for deceptive cover stories, and their support to intelligence agencies and special forces of US and foreign countries all combine at different times and places to mislead the unwary researcher.

> —Col Michael E. Haas, USAF, Retired

When the hour of crisis comes, remember that 40 selected men can shake the world.

> —Yasotay (Mongol warlord)

As Colonel Haas suggests, the surreptitious nature of AFSOF and the worldwide scope of its activities make it difficult to document that organization's heritage. But fighting the nation's wars "in the shadows" has deeply affected the AFSOF culture. For that reason, this chapter highlights the experiences that have most significantly influenced the organizational ethos of this community. This chapter exposes the reader to the rich history of the secretive community collectively known as AFSOF, draws a number of lessons from the AFSOF experience from World War II to 1980, and evaluates AFSOF culture based on the historical experience. It makes the case that SOF prior to Twenty-third Air Force was not a homogeneous organization but a collage of loosely connected subcultures with their own institutional identities shaped by their unique experiences and heritage.

Origins of Air Force Special Operations Forces: Building a Capability

In preparation for Operation Overlord, the cross-channel invasion of France, small numbers of Allied special operations

forces began infiltrating Europe as early as 1942.[1] The Office of Strategic Services (OSS) was responsible for US clandestine activities in occupied Europe preceding Overlord.[2] OSS covert actions included guerrilla warfare, sabotage, and support for indigenous resistance fighters. Starting in 1940, its British counterpart, the Special Operations Executive (SOE), used Royal Air Force (RAF) aircraft to infiltrate agents into Axis-held territory and resupply resistance forces. In addition, SOE personnel often coordinated partisan activities.[3] In the summer of 1943, when the OSS was finally ready to start large-scale operations in occupied Europe, a significant capability was missing. Based on a review of OSS official records, Bernard Moore suggests, "[For the OSS] the last major element needed to begin operations on the Continent, and to France in particular, was their own clandestine air capability. . . . [The] OSS needed a dedicated air capability of its own, and it needed one fast."[4]

In August 1943, Gen Carl A. Spaatz, at the time the commander of North African Air Forces, allocated three B-17 bombers to support OSS activities.[5] After two months of intensive night low-level training, a single, specially modified B-17 from the Special Flight Section of the 5th Bombardment Wing, Twelfth Air Force, "dropped ten containers of weapons, ammunition and other items to a group of Maquisards."[6] This mission marked the start of the ever-expanding special air activities in the European theater by specially trained aircrews that came to be known as *carpetbaggers*.[7]

In October 1943, General Spaatz authorized the creation of a special air unit in Africa. At the same time, Gen Henry "Hap" Arnold, commander, Army Air Forces, approved the activation of an American special air unit in the China-Burma-India (CBI) theater of operations.[8] Lt Col Philip Cochran became the first commander of the 1st Air Commando Group (ACG).[9] The 1st ACG's primary task involved support for Lord Louis Mountbatten's British commando forces in the CBI. With Arnold's backing, Cochran assembled a "composite wing" made up of different aircraft: C-47 and UC-64 transports, P-51 fighters, L-1 and L-5 utility aircraft, CG-4A and TG-5 gliders, B-25 bombers, and four YR-4 helicopters.[10] In fact, the first combat use of the helicopter involved an Airman from the 1st ACG.[11]

After the war, air commando and carpetbagger units were disbanded. Clay Blair notes that by 1947, the newly created USAF "shrank from 218 to 38 groups, only 11 of which were rated operationally effective. . . . Lost from memory as if it had never existed was the Unconventional Warfare (UW) expertise learned at such cost in World War II."[12] As the USAF shrank, AFSOF capabilities and special equipment developed by the special units in the European and the CBI theaters simply disappeared.[13] Following its creation as a separate service, the USAF focused almost exclusively on strategic bombing, the mission that most prominently justified its divorce from the US Army.[14] Although not all Air Force leaders supported this monolithic approach to strategic bombing, the USAF "monarchic" system guaranteed that in times of fiscal scarcity, most resources would be allocated to the supreme mission and, by default, to the dominant tribe.[15] In light of the apparent primacy of strategic bombing, the Air Force did not see a requirement for a UW capability during peacetime. As Haas explains, the consequence of this inattention was that the USAF had to "reinvent the wheel all over again on the bloody Korean peninsula in 1950."[16]

The Korean War 1950–53

In the first months of the war, Air Force special operations supported a variety of military and Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) initiatives. The Far East Command Liaison Group (FEC/LG) controlled all special operations military activities on the Korean peninsula. Specifically, it was responsible for the infiltration of partisans and covert operatives by land, sea, and/or air into territory held by North Korea.[17] The FEC/LG tried to keep its activities separate from those of the CIA's Joint Advisory Commission–Korea (JACK) because the latter jealously guarded its operational independence from military control. Ultimately, the Air Force, stuck in the middle of an interagency controversy, provided air support to both organizations.[18]

The USAF had very little capability to conduct the clandestine insertions described above. When the North Koreans attacked, both the FEC/LG and JACK were in dire need of infiltration platforms. In response, the Air Force rushed Detachment

(Det.) 2 of the 21st Carrier Squadron to Taegu Air Base (K-2), South Korea, commanded by [then] Capt Henry "Heinie" Aderholt.[19] According to Aderholt, "I was taking all comers; if they wanted to do something, we did it."[20] Shortly after their arrival in South Korea, Aderholt's "special air missions" crews started resupplying frontline troops with badly needed ammunition. Additionally, Det. 2 participated in Operation Aviary, the code name for the paradrops far behind enemy lines.[21]

General Vandenberg, the Air Force chief of staff, addressed the USAF's inability to support the Korean UW requirements.[22] On 23 February 1951, seven months after the war began, Col Bob Fish, a former World War II carpetbagger, activated the 580th Air Resupply and Communications Wing (ARCW) at Mountain Home AFB, Idaho.[23] According to Haas and Kelly, the 580th was ostensibly the first of six wings with a twofold wartime mission—first, "to prepare, reproduce, and disseminate psychological warfare materials as directed by the theater commander," and second, to introduce, evacuate, and resupply partisans.[24]

The activation of the 580th Wing marked the rebirth of AFSOF. In April 1951, the USAF activated the 581st ARCW at Mountain Home AFB, and in July 1952, the 581st relocated to Thirteenth Air Force, Clark Air Base, the Philippines.[25] The 581st ARCW would become the key element of the USAF's unconventional warfare activities in Korea.[26] As was the case with World War II–era air commando groups, the 581st ARCW was made up of several different types of aircraft organized into one flying and five support squadrons.[27] The 581st Air Resupply Squadron represented the business end of the ARCW spear. The unit consisted of specially modified B-29 bombers, C-119 heavy transports, C-54 transports, C-118 transports, SA-16 amphibious aircraft, and H-19A helicopters.[28] According to official records, the 581st ARCW and all the other USAF units that supported UW during the Korean War performed brilliantly; but as was the case at the end of World War II, when the United States signed the armistice on 27 July 1953, much of the capability developed during the Korean War was quickly lost overnight. The 581st shrank from a wing to a group, losing three of its six squadrons, with personnel manning plummeting in the remaining squadrons to approximately 50 percent of authorized strength.[29] This rapid drawdown of SOF forces is emblematic of

a pattern of benign neglect in peacetime that has influenced the way AFSOF crews think of their organizational relevancy within the Air Force.

Action beyond Korea during the Cold War—Supply versus Demand

In the decade between the Korean and Vietnam wars, the USAF—specifically, the 580th ARC Group (ARCG)—engaged in an interservice (Army–Air Force) and interagency (Department of Defense [DOD]–CIA) struggle "for ownership of the nation's unconventional mission."[30] Haas argues that by 1952 "it was beginning to look like the Air Force really was going to take the lead Department of Defense role in unconventional warfare. . . . The ARCS's [Air Resupply and Communications Service] hot enthusiasm and three years of experience supporting the CIA appeared to give the Air Force the lead role in DOD psy-war/special operations."[31] In fact, Air Force UW capabilities went far beyond mere support to the CIA. The 580th ARCG, one of three active groups providing a UW capability globally, got directly involved in UW on the ground as well as in the air. For example, the 580th Holding and Briefing Squadron put USAF officers in nearly identical roles with their Army special operations and CIA guerrilla-warfare counterparts.[32]

As the Cold War intensified, the need for psychological warfare support in countering Soviet propaganda around the world increased.[33] The official history of the ARCS notes that as early as April 1953, the USAF expressed its desire for that service to confine itself to projects that concerned the Air Force.[34] Haas argues that the USAF did not appreciate that it "was picking up the financial and manpower costs for what were essentially national-level propaganda programs."[35] The Air Force's problem was that the demand for infiltration, exfiltration, and other UW activities continued to grow at a time when the USAF wanted to limit its involvement in UW activities. In the end, due to budgetary constraints and competing priorities, the USAF elected to deactivate the ARCS on 1 January 1954. Haas suggests that this action "signaled the end of [Air Staff] interest in a special operations force at a service command level."[36] Although the CONUS

(continental United States)-based ARCS ceased to exist, the Air Force had three active ARCGs overseas. From agent-support missions on the edge of the Iron Curtain (Greece, Germany, Iran, etc.) to the insertions of Tibetan guerrillas "on top of the world," Air Force special operators conducted their duties in "silent success."[37] These missions had a significant effect on the culture of the shadow warriors. The AFSOF institutional identity was shaped by missions on the fringes of what was possible, with little public recognition of their sacrifices.

In spite of AFSOF's silent successes, the USAF attempted to minimize the manpower and equipment cost of supporting UW activities. The Air National Guard (ANG) came to the rescue of the USAF in 1955 when California, West Virginia, Maryland, and Rhode Island agreed to activate ARCGs in support of the USAF UW mission.[38] The mission was identical to that of the active duty units, but the 1956 deactivation of the three overseas ARCGs resulted in the complete deterioration of AFSOF capabilities. Fortunately, the ANG stepped in to fill the vacuum in the late 1950s. In addition to providing support to intelligence operations around the world, the ANG helped train the Cuban-exile pilots who led the Bay of Pigs invasion.[39] More importantly, when the USAF decided to revive its active duty UW force with the highly classified "Jungle Jim" program, the ANG provided training for the precursor to the 1st ACW and Special Air Warfare Center (SAWC).[40]

In retrospect, it appears that the USAF was unwilling to commit limited resources to the UW mission, even though national objectives required a UW capability. Although the evidence supports this hypothesis, it is important to understand that the Air Force was still in the early stages of its institutional growth.[41] Schein's proposition that successful leaders must be able to recognize the influence of organizational subcultures becomes relevant here. Additionally, culture becomes less tied to the leader's personality and perhaps more influenced by what Schein calls "sacred cows [and] holdovers from the founding period."[42] In this segment, the reader should recognize that the concept of strategic/atomic airpower represented the sine qua non of airpower thinking. UW and, consequently, AFSOF health are habitually not an Air Force priority in the interwar years.

The gift of hindsight may suggest that the USAF should have paid more attention to the UW mission. However, in the context of its time, the United States considered the Korean experience and UW a "sideshow." Dennis Drew suggests that for the US military, "the real threat remained in Europe, where the Soviets faced the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) with power-ful forces and a threatening attitude. . . . [There was not] much room for thinking about protracted revolutionary warfare in the years following the Korean conflict."[43]

Regarding USAF policies, Drew argues, "US airmen focused on organizational independence from the US Army and on mis-sions that best justified independence (i.e., strategic bombing and, to a lesser extent, deep interdiction)."[44] That is to say, in the years between the Korean and Vietnam conflicts, the USAF, much like the rest of the armed forces, struggled to develop a theory for the war it wanted to fight, not necessarily the war it would have to fight. Drew concludes that the USAF "assumed that preparation for global war meant preparation for wars of lesser magnitude. As demonstrated in the Philippines, Malay, and Indochina, the problem was not wars of a lesser kind but wars of a fundamentally different kind."[45]

While the desire to keep Air Force money, people, and equip-ment oriented towards more traditional Air Force activities is understandable, doing so had an effect on special forces. The USAF's institutional approach towards special operations would remain an issue of contention between AFSOF and its parent service well beyond the 1950s. Special forces were not able to get popular support because their successes remained neces-sarily hidden from public view due to the veil of secrecy that shrouded AFSOF involvement—covert activities, by definition, do not get much publicity.[46] This leads to yet another factor that diminished special forces: in a sense, the clandestine nature of AFSOF's activities concealed the erosion of its capabilities.[47]

Drew paints an accurate picture of the USAF approach to special operations and low intensity conflict, explaining that "wedded to the concept of atomic airpower (and its power to justify an independent Air Force) . . . American airmen virtually ignored the problem of insurgent warfare until they entered the Vietnam War."[48] What Drew does not mention, however, is that

beyond the intellectual neglect of revolutionary warfare, the Air Force had eliminated all its UW capability from active service.

Once again, AFSOF crews had to accept that, as "special" as their missions might be, they would have to contend with a conventionally minded Air Force that did not appreciate their contributions to the US national security and, thus, was not willing to support their activities. This inattention and lack of appreciation was deeply ingrained into the AFSOF culture and inculcated into incoming air commandos. The fact that they received little recognition became a badge of honor for AFSOF crews, as they began to see themselves as "special operators" first and "Airmen" second.

The Vietnam Air Commando Revival

The incentive to revive the capabilities of active duty air commandos resulted more from world events and interservice rivalry than USAF initiative. On 6 January 1961, Soviet premier Nikita Khrushchev gave a speech in which he summarized a wide-ranging strategy for Soviet world domination.[49] According to James Corum and Wray Johnson, Khrushchev's plan tried to exploit instability and anticolonial anger in the developing world by "promoting revolutionary insurgency."[50] In 1961 Pres. John F. Kennedy signed National Security Action Memorandum Two "instructing the armed services to develop a counterinsurgency capability."[51] In other words, a national countervailing strategy to the Soviet-sponsored "wars of national liberation," not an appreciation of the role of counterinsurgency (COIN), spurred the USAF to reestablish a robust UW capability. An additional motivating factor was the Air Force's desire to counter Army efforts to dominate the emerging UW mission.[52] A Thirteenth Air Force message to Headquarters Pacific Air Forces (PACAF) describes this struggle over roles and missions:

> USAF interests are suffering in SEA [Southeast Asia]. The trend toward an Army dominated and controlled COIN . . . effort is clear. Because the USAF position in COMUSMACV's [Commander United States Military Assistance Command Vietnam] structure is weak in both numbers and rank, the Army is able to impose their will. . . . Their case will cost the USAF in roles and missions and will cost U.S. lives in future actions. Army people are, in effect, being trained to consider our tactics ineffective and our capability limited, while being oversold on Army organic air.[53]

In response, on 14 April 1961, TAC activated the 4400th Combat Crew Training Squadron (CCTS), nicknamed Jungle Jim, at Eglin AFB, Florida.[54]

Composed of 124 officers and 228 enlisted men and equipped with 16 C-47s, eight B-26s, and eight T-28s, the 4400th CCTS had a charter to teach counterguerrilla tactics to South Vietnamese aircrews, among others.[55] As stated in the unit's official records, the USAF charged Jungle Jim with the task of "preparing small cadres for conducting—at the scene of insurgency activity—the training of friendly foreign air forces in counterinsurgency operations."[56] But Jungle Jim was not simply a training organization; it also represented America's initial cadre of special-operations advisers to foreign air forces. The latter mission brought air commandos to Laos and South Vietnam.

As part of Project Mill Pond, air commandos deployed 12 B-26s and two RB-26s to Thailand. The aircraft were "sanitized" by removing any USAF markings. Similarly, the pilots assigned to Mill Pond went through the formal process of resigning from active military duty. According to Haas, these measures were part of a deception plan for any such pilot that offered the USAF the opportunity to "deny any involvement or knowledge of his activities should he be killed or captured by the Communists. Faceless and a long way from home, he is totally on his own if things turn sour."[57] Describing his experiences while assigned to Mill Pond, Lt Col Jerome Klingaman, USAF, retired, offers this unique insight:

> During the war in South East Asia, for instance, I was a combat aviation adviser with Lao fighter pilots who had no operative parachutes, survival vests, or beepers, and I used their equipment. At the time, however, we were operating out beyond conventional Air Force control and supervision. We cast our lot with the Royal Lao Air Force guys and sometimes suffered the same fate, so no one should be surprised that the advisers identified closer with the Lao combat pilots than with their USAF counterparts at the big bases in Thailand. This is not a criticism or qualitative judgment on the state of affairs; it was just a fact of life. At that time, I did not think anything about it.[58]

Concurrent with Project Mill Pond, air commandos from the 4400th Combat Crew Training Group (CCTG) deployed to South Vietnam. Responding to the requirements listed in Headquarters PACAF Operation Plan (OPLAN) 222-61, in August 1961, the 4400th deployed a detachment of 41 officers and 115 Airmen

(with four RB-26s, four SC-47s, and eight T-28s) to Bien Hoa Air Base in South Vietnam.[59] Code-named Farm Gate, Det. 2's original mission focused on advising, training, and assisting South Vietnamese air force pilots in interdiction and CAS operations.[60] This renewed Air Force interest and commitment to the UW mission, however, had some unintentional consequences. For example, interacting with foreign crews, enduring prolonged exposure to exotic locations, and flying sanitized aircraft as a "civilian" bred a culture of self-sufficiency, self-reliance, and secrecy.[61]

Air commandos played a major role in the growth of the South Vietnamese air force from 4,000 airmen in 1962 to almost 13,000 in 1965.[62] By 1965, however, US senior political and military leaders had decided on a more robust US presence and, consequently, a more active role in the counterinsurgency campaign. As conventional USAF involvement in the process of the Americanization of the war increased, focus shifted from the UW mission to a much more conventional approach towards defeating the Vietnamese insurgents. US military attention moved from solely targeting the COIN struggle in South Vietnam to coercing North Vietnam to end its support for the Vietcong. In effect, the US military forgot that in COIN operations, "both antagonists have the same center of gravity—the people."[63] Colonel Haas warns of the danger in this approach by contending that "once the killing starts, it's difficult to remember that nation building was the original plan."[64]

The Americanization of the war in Vietnam involved an evolutionary process closely related to the early air commando activities in South Vietnam. On 6 December 1961, Farm Gate was authorized to conduct offensive operations against the Vietcong.[65] Initially, the only stipulation was that Farm Gate crews had to fly with at least one South Vietnamese crew member on board; but soon the Vietnamese pilots realized that they had become a mere "cover" for US aircrews to conduct strike missions. According to Corum and Johnson, "Farm Gate veterans recalled afterward having to incarcerate these Vietnamese passengers (for that is all they were) to ensure that they would not run away before missions. . . . In less than five years, Vietnamese pilots moved literally and figuratively from the front seat to the rear seat to being pushed aside altogether."[66] Before

long, Farm Gate abandoned the pretense of training, and American crews replaced the Vietnamese markings on their aircraft, conducting the strike missions without any Vietnamese pilots on board.[67]

General Aderholt, who became commander of the 1st ACW in 1964, suggested that this transition occurred primarily because of a leadership failure in Saigon. According to Aderholt, Gen Rollen H. Anthis, commander of the 2nd Advanced Echelon,[68] "didn't know [sh--] from shinola about [counterinsurgency] warfare. . . . We should never have had our regular Air Force and Army units over there. It should have been dealt with as an insurgency, and it should have been the Vietnamese's fight and not ours."[69] Although the conventionally minded 2nd Advanced Echelon leadership was clearly unfamiliar with the UW mission, it is important to understand that its behavior was emblematic of more significant intraservice cultural differences. General Aderholt's comments, albeit much more colorful, are quite in line with Schein's ideas on potential clashes of organizational culture. General Anthis was not mindful of what Schein calls "the power [that leaders] have to impose on those enterprises their own assumptions about what is right and proper, how the world works, and how things should be done."[70] Anthis did not understand the intricacies of UW. Sadly, he represented the majority of USAF leaders. His approach was symbolic of a USAF institutional notion that COIN operations were an inferior, rather than a fundamentally diverse, form of war.[71]

In a 1961 interview, Gen Thomas D. White, CSAF, noted that "our [USAF] philosophy is based on the fact that offense is the best defense . . . [yet,] the original mandate of the Farm Gate was to provide training support to the South Vietnamese in a strategically defensive effort."[72] At best, this suggests that the air commando mission was uncharted territory for the US Air Force; at worst, Farm Gate's mission ran counter to US Air Force theory and doctrine.[73] Although the Air Force had experimented with COIN operations during the Greek Civil War and the anti-Huk campaign in the Philippines, this was the first time it had created a unit for the COIN mission.[74] But as Drew suggests, the idea that the COIN mission ran counter to USAF doctrine is more plau-

sible than the possibility that it represented a new central tenet of airpower theory.

According to Drew, "Air Force airmen seemed either supremely uninterested in the subject, or assumed that in terms of air-power, protracted revolutionary warfare was just conventional warfare writ small."[75] Air commando activities throughout SEA suggest, however, that traditional Air Force thinking eventually yielded to unconventional tactics and procedures, not as a matter of forethought but due to necessity and practicality.[76] Two projects that represented USAF support for the UW mission and also provided examples of AFSOF's overt and clandestine activities, respectively, were the debut and evolution of the side-firing gunship and the activities of the 75th Air Studies Group (ASG).[77]

The evolution of gunships in Vietnam was closely associated with COIN operations and the effort to counter Vietcong activities in South Vietnam. When the first air commandos arrived in South Vietnam, the Vietcong operated throughout rural areas with near impunity.[78] In response, the South Vietnamese government introduced two-way radios to isolated villages and outposts. As the South Vietnamese air force became more capable with help from Farm Gate, it responded to Vietcong attacks in a timely manner.[79] A lack of night attack capability restricted these quick-response missions to daylight operations. Air commandos adapted by using C-47s and C-123 transports as "flareships," dropping flares in order to illuminate the battlefield during Vietcong attacks.[80] The flareship tactics were so effective that the Vietcong would terminate their assaults 70 percent of the time when confronted by aircraft deploying flares.[81] But the Vietcong soon adapted their own tactics. Capitalizing on the limited number of transport aircraft, the Vietcong would "simply outwait the flareship's fuel endurance before resuming the attack."[82]

Not to be outdone by the Vietcong, the USAF modified the flareships and transformed the Air Force concept of CAS.[83] Capt Ronald W. Terry, assigned to the Aeronautical Systems Division, Wright-Patterson AFB, Ohio, developed a way to maximize the orbiting flareship's value by adding 7.62 mm miniguns to the platform.[84] Although many in the fighter community were openly skeptical of the gunship concept—particularly

Gen Walter Sweeney, Jr., commander of TAC—the CSAF over-ruled Sweeney and authorized the operational testing of this concept in Indochina.[85]

The gunship "trials" were so successful that on 14 November 1965, the USAF deployed the first 20 FC-47s of the newly acti-vated 4th Air Commando Squadron (ACS) to Tan Son Nhut Air Base (AB), South Vietnam.[86] In trying to satisfy the "gunship-hungry" Seventh Air Force, the US Air Force activated a second AC-47 squadron, the 14th ACS, to Nha Trang in January 1968.[87] By the end of the same year, the Air Force deployed the AC-119G/K as an interim step until the AC-130 could be brought online.[88] According to Jack Ballard, the biggest differ-ence between early gunship models and the AC-130A was that while the AC-47s and AC-119s had only the capability to de-fend "allied troops *from* trouble," the AC-130A was to be able to "conduct a far more predatory mission, one that sent the huge gunship actually looking *for* trouble" (emphasis in original).[89] Although the AC-130A/E (fig. 2) capabilities improved over time, their primary missions remained the same: armed recon-naissance and CAS. Throughout the war, spurred by the ap-plause of MACV ground units, the USAF recognized gunship heroics publicly and repeatedly.[90] But there was a "black" side to the air commandos that received little or no recognition due to the secrecy associated with its mission—the 75th ASG.

The 75th ASG was the air arm of the Joint UW Task Force, responsible for the execution of OPLAN-34A. In January 1964, Pres. Lyndon B. Johnson approved OPLAN-34A: its objective was similar to that of the better-known Operation Rolling Thunder. Both plans sought to put pressure on North Vietnam and re-duce Hanoi's ability to aid the Vietcong in South Vietnam.[91] But while Rolling Thunder was an overt operation, OPLAN-34A sought plausible deniability. Although official US policy restricted military ground activities within the confines of South Vietnam, OPLAN-34A authorized clandestine actions in "South and North Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, Burma, the southern provinces of China and Hainan Island in the Gulf of Tonkin."[92] These activi-ties were so secretive that Gen William C. Westmoreland, MACV commander, created the MACV Studies and Observations Group (SOG), a bland name for the anything but bland UW

GUNSHIP EVOLUTION

1964	1965	1966	1967	1968	1969	1970	1971	1972	1973

C-131

Three 50-caliber Guns

AC-47

Three 7.62mm Miniguns

AC-119G
Gunship III

4AC-47

Four 7.62 mm Guns

Ten 30-caliber Guns

AC-47 SQDN
Deployed to Sea

AC-119K
Gunship III

Four 7.62 mm Guns
Two 20 mm Guns

Gunboat

AC-130A Study

Gunship II

Four 20 mm Guns
Four 7.6 mm Guns

Prototype
ACFT 626

Seven AC-130As

Surprise Package

Two 20 mm Guns
Two 7.62 mm Guns
Two 40 mm Guns

Little Brother (Study)
One 7.62 mm Minigun

ACFT 490

Nine AC-130As

Pave Spectre

Eight AC-130Es

Figure 2. Gunship evolution. Note that the weapons configuration for the AC-130s ranged from a combination of four 7.62 mm miniguns and four 20 mm cannons (earliest models), to twin 20 mm cannons and twin 40 mm guns for the AC-130E (Surprise Package). In February 1972, the AC-130E (Pave Aegis Package) was modified to carry twin 20 mm cannons, a 40 mm gun, and a 105 mm howitzer. (Reprinted from Jack S. Ballard, *The United States Air Force in Southeast Asia: Development and Employment of Fixed Wing Gunships, 1962–1972* [Washington, DC: Office of Air Force History, 1982], pp. 139, 173.)

task force of air commandos, Green Berets, SEALs, and Marine Corps personnel.[93]

The 75th ASG was also the air arm of SOG operations behind enemy lines.[94] In contrast to the gunship crews that primarily performed "white SOF" or conventional operations, MACVSOGs were considered "black SOF," whose missions the US government could plausibly deny. This distinction played a major role in the way white SOF and black SOF communities fared after the war and the way that unit identities developed over time.[95] Although little is written about the 75th ASG itself, its activities can be divided into two main categories: fixed-wing and rotary-wing operations.

Fixed-wing operations were primarily utilized for the infiltration and exfiltration of SOG personnel deep into enemy territory.[96] In May 1964, the air commandos at Hurlburt Field, Florida, started training all-Asian crews in C-123 aircraft for low-level infiltration of SOG operators behind enemy lines. On 15 July, these crews formed Det. 1, later designated "First Flight," 75th Troop Carrier Squadron, in Nha Trang, South Vietnam.[97] Partially due to the success of the First Flight project and partially due to the increased use of American SOG operators along with their Asian counterparts, the USAF created an even more secretive American counterpart to Det. 1. In 1965 the USAF directed the conversion of 14 C-130Es to a UW configuration under the project name Stray Goose. The SEA element was designated Combat Spear, and eventually all aircraft became known as Combat Talon.[98]

Rotary-wing operations primarily centered on OP-35 activities—the infiltration of reconnaissance teams or the recovery of downed US aircrews in Laos, Cambodia, or North Vietnam. The problem was that the United States had no UW helicopter capabilities in 1965. When the 20th Helicopter Squadron (HS), nicknamed Pony Express, first arrived at Tan Son Nhut AB on 8 October 1965, it was simply a transport squadron.[99] But by June 1966, three of the four flights assigned to the 20th HS and 11 of its CH-3s moved to Udorn AB, Thailand, to support UW activities.[100] In June 1967, a number of UH-1F Huey helicopters from the 606th ACS, the Green Hornets, were assigned to the 20th Special Operations Squadron (SOS) as well.[101] In September 1967, the Dust Devils of the 21st HS joined the Pony Express crews in the UW mission, and both squadrons were redesignated SOSs in August 1968.[102] The 20th and 21st SOS, together with the South Vietnamese 219th HS, comprised the SOG's rotary-wing assets.[103] These crews were not UW experts when they were first given the mission, but they adapted quickly—unfortunately, not without casualties.[104]

The 20th SOS experiment offers a good example of how these units transformed, to the SOG's relief, under fire. Maj "Smokey" Hubbard, one of the UH-1F pilots who transferred to the 20th SOS, perhaps put it best: "the crews were primarily trained to carry toilet paper and people to the missile silos in the Midwest."[105] The UH-1 pilots made up for their inexperience with

their valor and eventually became "the preferred [helicopter] unit for SF [Special Forces] operations across the borders."[106] Or as John L. Plaster, a SOF veteran, puts it, "The Green Hornets . . . were the prime reason a lot of SOG men came out of Cambodia alive."[107] This transformation from a squadron carrying toilet paper to a unit that earned the respect and gratitude of the elite MACVSOG significantly affected the 20th SOS mind-set. Haas argues that in a span of a few months, the 20th SOS crew members transitioned from B-Team status "into the starting lineup in the big leagues."[108]

While few operations associated with the SOG ever received national recognition, one stands out as the exception—Operation Kingpin, the SOG raid on the prisoner of war (POW) camp at Son Tay, North Vietnam. Although the raiders failed to recover any POWs, the performance of the air component of the operation was remarkable, considering the poor state of preparedness within both AFSOF and Air Rescue Service (ARS) at the start of the conflict in SEA.[109] The raid on Son Tay offers a good example of how far the AFSOF and ARS capabilities had progressed since 1965. At the same time, it presents an operational model of the way that Air Force special-warfare units, like AFSOF and ARS, can complement each other.[110]

By 1970 the 20th SOS's rotary-wing assets consisted solely of UH-1Fs/Ps, while the 21st SOS began to transition from CH-3s to CH-53Cs.[111] According to Guilmartin, the 21st SOS's CH-53s did not have an air-to-air refueling capability. But as Guilmartin argues, the "Knives" achieved the extended range "required for special operations with . . . 650-gallon external tanks."[112] Although not ideal, the addition of the CH-53C to the AFSOC inventory provided a clear signal of the Air Force's combat commitment to strengthen its SOF rotary-wing capabilities. But as the force modernized, America was disengaging from SEA; and soon after the Vietnam War came to an end, America's AFSOF shrank considerably. After a string of hijackings and a number of successful recoveries of the hostages by Israel in 1976 and Germany in 1977, the US government formed an elite army commando unit at Fort Bragg, North Carolina. But no senior military leader warned Pres. Jimmy Carter of the fact that the USAF had eroded its capability to carry this force to its objective—most likely, overseas.[113] The

result was the Desert One debacle, the failed attempt to rescue US hostages from Iran in 1980.[114]

Lessons Learned and Relearned

H. G. Wells wrote, "Human history becomes more and more a race between education and catastrophe."[115] Like that of the ARS, AFSOF history is gallant and rich, offering numerous examples of lessons learned and relearned. We continue with an admittedly brief survey of AFSOF history through the Vietnam War by reviewing three recurring lessons that military and civilian leaders consistently failed to recognize between 1946 and 1980.

First, according to what is now accepted as a "SOF Truth," "competent [Air Force] Special Operations Forces cannot be created after emergencies occur."[116] Similar to the ARS experience, the USAF ignored the lessons from World War II and the Korean War, allowing its active duty special-operations capabilities to deteriorate to a critical point. When the country called on the Air Force to respond to the danger in SEA, it had little, if any, residual capability. As Col Jerry Thigpen, USAF, retired, noted, "None of the original Air Force personnel assigned to MACSOG [Military Assistance Command Studies and Observation Group] had any previous background in UW operations," resulting in the failure of the USAF to maintain its UW capabilities.[117] This historical survey of AFSOF heritage clearly demonstrates that these forces, though very valuable in war, are often neglected in peacetime. It also suggests that time and training are key requirements for these units to mature and reach a high level of competence.

Although some of the units had stringent selection criteria for the Airmen recruited for AFSOF duty, like the original Jungle Jim advisers and special-access programs such as the Stray Goose and Combat Spear projects, other programs such as the gunship and rotary-wing units were constituted in an ad hoc fashion that cost the lives of many inexperienced crew members.[118] Additionally, according to TAC's official history documents, "the aircraft were selected simply because the Air Force had no better alternative on hand for the kind of bush warfare described vaguely in military directives as sublimited [*sic*] warfare and guerilla operations."[119] Unfortunately, not having

learned from its past experiences, as the Vietnam War began winding down, the USAF allowed its SOF capability to erode once again.[120]

The second lesson relearned is that technology matters. As Colin S. Gray so aptly reminds us, "[special operations forces] need every advantage that technology can provide . . . [because they], virtually by definition, are acting at the edge of the envelope of military feasibility."[121] This chapter should make it clear that America relied heavily on SOF to counter the "wars of national liberation" in the 1960s and early 1970s. But the need to maintain a healthy UW force had to compete with other Air Force institutional priorities. According to Col James H. Kyle, deputy commander for the failed attempt to rescue the US hostages from Iran in 1980, AFSOF had to "fight for its existence each budget cycle as the bucks [went] up for grabs. The emphasis and most of the funds [were] lavished on new generation fighters, bombers, missiles or transports."[122] This observation points to the third and, by far, the most important lesson examined in this chapter.

Although SOF, in general, enjoyed many tactical successes, in order for special operations to reach their maximum potential, they need "an educated consumer, political and military patrons who appreciate what SOF should, and should not, be asked to do."[123] President Kennedy and Secretary of Defense (SecDef) Robert S. McNamara supported UW and SOF. General Westmoreland (MACV commander) and the Vietnam-era Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) leadership, however, did not. According to Richard Shultz, Army leaders were against special warfare and tried hard to neutralize President Kennedy's vision. They believed that "conventionally trained infantrymen could accomplish the counter-insurgency mission."[124] Essentially, they saw the UW mission as peripheral to the main effort in Vietnam. As far as the JCS was concerned, the UW campaign was a burden that the White House had forced on the Pentagon. But because much of the military establishment, including the MACV commander, saw little value in the UW mission, they focused on winning the war via conventional means.

Because the senior military commanders in-theater neither appreciated nor valued SOF, no credible military leaders could protect SOF from "President Johnson's unrealistic expectations

for the utility of SOF."[125] According to Gray, "Johnson believed that light cross-border raiding could reduce Hanoi's will to fight on. Moreover, he hoped to achieve momentous results cheaply and quietly." The military elites could have compensated for Johnson's inexperience and lack of appreciation for the SOF Truths, but the conventional military establishment did not have a firm grasp on the UW/SOF intricacies either.

AFSOF and CSAR histories demonstrate that the two communities can regenerate after years of neglect. But this regeneration comes at a cost in blood and treasure. The 20th SOS experience described earlier provides a great example of a unit that was created under fire and performed magnificently. But the 20th SOS history, like many SOS and ARS unit histories, is written in blood because the organization had to mature under extremely difficult conditions. AFSOF and ARS/ARRS crew members received their specialized training while flying over enemy territory. Their extreme experiences bound them together in tight-knit groups and microcultures common in special-warfare units but foreign to most conventionally minded service leaders.

After World War II, the Korean War, and Vietnam, in the face of shrinking budgets, America's specialized airpower—AFSOF and CSAR—has struggled to remain healthy and viable through peacetime. Perhaps the sum of the three lessons outlined above is that these two communities face their greatest challenges in peacetime rather than in war. As Gray concludes, if special forces are to fulfill their strategic potential, "they must have sponsors in the unified commands, in the military service and central civilian bureaucracies, and in the White House and the Congress."[126] This concept will play a significant role in later chapters that explore the rise of AFSOF in the 1980s and the demise of the USAF CSAR forces.

In the end, SOF personnel cannot wait for emergencies to occur before they educate their civilian and military masters. The onus is on the SOF community to ensure that its respective service and civilian leaders understand their capabilities and limitations. As the next chapter demonstrates, the same caveat applies to the CSAR community.

The Culture of Air Force
Special Operations Forces

What elements of an AFSOF culture emerge from that organization's experience? This review of the air commando heritage demonstrates that the AFSOF community was not a homogeneous entity but rather a collage of subgroups with their own identities, accepted assumptions, and beliefs. In the years between Vietnam and the AFSOF/CSAR merger in 1983, Air Force special operators were divided in three distinct cliques—Talon, Spectre, and Helicopter.[127] These communities developed their distinctive characteristics and group identity in relation to their aircraft and missions. Here we dissect the three subcultures that survived the post-Vietnam drawdown, compare their impression of one another, and consider the interaction between these subcultures and the Air Force. We conclude by analyzing a distinct capability eliminated from the Air Force arsenal—air-commando aviation advisers.

Col Jerry Uttaro, USAF, retired, a legend in the Talon community, argues that if he had to put a label on the one thing that made Talon crews feel special it would have to be their unique mission.[128] Uttaro describes the Talon community as follows: "We knew what we did was different and special. We flew special type aircraft. We supported Special Forces from other services and countries. Every mission was different. Every mission was at night, low level, and we were either picking up something important or inserting something important. You got this feeling in the school house, in the squadrons, and at the bar. . . . I would always hear some ranking officer say—there ain't nothing special about special ops. That's when I knew we were really special."[129]

Another Talon legend, Col Gordy Ettenson, USAF, retired, describes the post-Vietnam Talon ethos as focused on the long-range, single-ship infiltration. Ettenson argues that the Talon's cultural identity focused on "total self-sufficiency that tended to breed distrust of anyone outside our own system and the absolute reliance on you and your crew. This was a distinguishing characteristic, but also one that, no matter how good we really were, made it difficult for us to play nice with others. It did breed arrogance. Some of us recognized it, some didn't."[130]

Ettenson further describes the Talon culture by suggesting that this was the only community within AFSOF with international flair. Although SOF helicopters had a detachment in Panama, two Talon units (1st and 7th SOS) were the only AFSOF squadrons stationed overseas. In the 1970s, according to Ettenson, the Talon community "truly felt themselves to be the international force, the only ones in the know about theater requirements. . . . Only Talons were [permanently] assigned overseas, and it was mostly Talon people who staffed the few theater SOF staffs that existed then."[131] In that sense, the Talon community was further segmented by theater. Ettenson argues that once a crew member was assigned to the Pacific or Europe, the tendency was to associate him with that geographical niche. Therefore, Talons developed quite differently than the rest of AFSOF.

Much like the Talon mission, SOF helicopters delivered teams and equipment behind enemy lines. According to Guilmartin, these helicopters often had air support on call, "but it was not ordinarily required or even desired." In order not to compromise the customer's landing zones, SOF helicopter crews tried to avoid enemy detection during their ingress to the objective. Guilmartin indicates that "as a rule, special operations helicopters worked independently, either individually or in small formations. . . . By nature, special operations missions were covert and planned in detail well in advance. . . . [Their] mission was conducted in the shadows."[132] The secrecy associated with their mission shaped the SOF helicopter approach to war. Simply put, their Vietnam experiences molded their cultural identity so as to value independence of action over coordination with conventional forces. The crews preferred self-reliance to dependence on conventional support.

Much like the Talon crews, SOF helicopter aviators developed an "alone and unafraid" tactical style that centered on the grim determination to complete their mission with little coordination with the rest of the Air Force.[133] There was one exception to this rule, however. Towards the end of the Vietnam War, the 21st SOS's Knives handled most of the rotary deep-infiltration missions. But as mentioned earlier, the Knives were not air refuelable. In order to compensate for this deficiency, rescue helicopters augmented the 21st SOS for those missions that demanded this unique capability.

Col Gary L. Weikel, USAF, retired, who flew UH-1Fs with the 20th SOS before transitioning to HH-53s in the 40th ARRS, sheds light on this complementary relationship, arguing that the 40th ARRS and the 21st SOS conducted "most of the SOF/ UW missions interchangeably." Weikel suggests that the ability to conduct air-to-air refueling was a big discriminator (for differences in special operations and search and rescue missions, see table 1, chap. 4). According to Weikel, "More distant objectives, be it the SOF or CSAR, drove the selection of the aerial refueled bird/unit and not organizational affiliation. When the 20th was restarted in late 1975, it was populated with guys who flew together in Super Jollies and Knives and all participated together, so there really was not a lot of them/us."[134]

Although the 21st SOS and 40th ARRS were collocated and worked well together, there was tension between the two squadrons.[135] Guilmartin argues that rivalry between the two units "was stupid at the time, [and it is] stupid now!" He also suggests this tension was largely due to the organizational culture of the two communities. Administratively, AFSOF helicopters belonged to TAC. The fighter community was the heart and soul of the TAC culture, while, according to Guilmartin, the 21st SOS saw itself as a TAC stepchild. To the contrary, the 21st SOS considered the 40th ARRS "the MAC fair-haired boys."[136] Imagine two collocated units flying equally dangerous missions and the 40th ARRS getting credit and recognition for its aircrew recovery exploits, while the 21st SOS remained in the shadows. Col Steve Connelly, USAF, retired, a rescue and AFSOF legend, explains that "the rescue guys were getting all the medals and the SOF guys didn't like it."[137]

Guilmartin offers another example that describes differences between the two squadrons, suggesting that the Knives (21st SOS) were "stalkers"—meaning that the nature of their missions required them to be meticulous in their planning and secretive in their implementation. As he points out, the "Jollys" (40th ARRS), on the other hand, were reactive and overt because "they had to launch on incomplete information. . . . [They resembled] a bar room brawler." But the ARRS mission in Vietnam was "high visibility, high profile, [and] popular with the fighters."[138] This popularity with the fighter community had

some perks that added fuel to the rivalry between AFSOF and ARRS helicopter crews.

Since the 21st SOS did not have its own maintenance at Nakhon Phanom, it had to depend on TAC support. Guilmartin argues that "TAC priorities were getting fighters in the air, not fixing SOF helicopters."[139] The 40th ARRS, on the other hand, had its own maintenance support. Maintenance envy is but another example of the AFSOF perception that the rescue guys were treated well, while the AFSOF counterparts were not. Chapter 4 addresses this issue from the rescue perspective, but in terms of the AFSOF helicopter community, a genuine rivalry between the 21st SOS and 40th ARRS reflected the rift between the two cultures.

Unlike the Talon and helicopter communities who conducted their missions in the shadows, Spectre crews relished the lime-light. As mentioned earlier, gunship crews focused on the CAS of US troops in contact with the enemy.[140] Although they did not operate in the same low-level environment with other AFSOF platforms, they shared the notion that they normally worked independently of conventional air forces. Unlike the SOF helicopters and Talons, gunships relied on US air superiority in order to carry out their missions. Due to their flight characteristics, gunships had to operate at night and in a limited threat environment. Although gunship missions differed significantly from those of conventional and other SOF aircraft, most American commanders in SEA recognized and appreciated their contributions. This exposure to MACV and the Seventh Air Force ensured that Air Force leadership fully acknowledged these gunship accomplishments.

In 1971 CSAF Gen John D. Ryan remarked, "One of the most successful developments arising from our experience in SEA is the gunship. . . . We intend to keep this capability to deliver a tremendous volume of sustained, accurate firepower in the tactical force."[141] If the United States were to remain vigilant against the so-called wars of national liberation, it would have to expand its capabilities to deliver surgical firepower, a mission tailored to the gunship array of sensors and weapons. In the end, the gunship's cultural personality was heavily influenced by the concept of precision firepower and the close relationship with the ground customers.[142] Also, the gunship legacy

differed from that of the rest of AFSOF in the sense that AC-130 crews worked in the limelight while Talons and SOF helicopters operated in the shadows.

Although USAF and MACV leadership in SEA honored 16th SOS crews with medals for combat performance, the corporate Air Force did not recognize their institutional value with promotions. According to Dr. David Mets, a professor at SAASS and former 16th SOS commander, "The promotion rates were rotten, and there were many people who had been passed over in other commands who were forced into gunships by MPC [Military Personnel Center] merely to fill the MPC squares for remote tours and the like. When I got into the 16 SOS, I believe we had 26 lieutenant colonels in the squadron and more than half had been passed over."[143]

The other AFSOF subcultures—Talons and helicopters—experienced similar promotion rates.[144] They demonstrated the Air Force's lack of appreciation for the clandestine sacrifices of AFSOF crew members, thus creating a feeling of discontent among those individuals. The gunship culture developed along a different path than did the rest of AFSOF because the AC-130's organizational development differed slightly from that of the other AFSOF subelements. Nonetheless, although the Talon and helicopter experiences were more comparable, the AC-130 community eventually shared the same fate as its AFSOF cousins. Ultimately, the common bond between the gunship, Talon, and AFSOF helicopter communities was the fact that none of them integrated well within the conventional Air Force structure.

In the context of AFSOF's collective history, the Talon, helicopter, and gunship experienced similar organizational growth. Although the subgroup cultures differed, the AFSOF community slipped into relative anonymity following its departure from SEA. Alternatively, as Haas aptly puts it, "The force lapsed into the backwaters of Air Force priorities."[145] Nonetheless, this trend started to dissipate after the 1980 failure to rescue US hostages held in Iran. SOF failed to recover the hostages but succeeded in renewing national interest in the unique capabilities resident in America's special forces. As far as AFSOF was concerned, the Iran hostage-rescue attempt catalyzed change and innovation, providing the impetus for a paradigm shift in AFSOF's organizational development.

This look at AFSOF culture has attempted to codify the institutional identity for the three aviation subcultures that survived, albeit barely, the post-Vietnam budget cuts and organizational purging. Simply put, the Air Force chose to ignore the UW lessons learned during the first three decades of its existence. After the Vietnam War, AFSOF was almost eliminated. To stay relevant by drawing itself closer to its parent service, AFSOF began moving away from the UW mission (most likely, however, it did so to separate itself from the Vietnam experience). As Klingaman contends, "When AFSOF came back on line in the late 1970's, they were geared for direct action (DA) airlift and gunship operations, not for training and advising foreign aviation forces, the mission for which they were originally created. That is when AFSOF departed from the traditional special operator role to the more conventional side of things in the airlift and gunship realms."[146]

Chapter 5 further addresses the Air Force's neglect of AFSOF, but for now, the reader should understand that the Air Force was not alone in eliminating the UW mission. In the 1970s, the Army removed the word *counterinsurgency* from its lexicon.[147] The long-term consequence of this conventionally minded leadership decision was that, in the 1980s, an entire generation of Air Force and Army leaders chose to deliberately ignore a mission area that had been a central element of US national policy.

In the end, AFSOF heritage, in many ways, is the story of an organization that has proved its worth in combat but has struggled to convince the Air Force of its relevance in peacetime. The next chapter explores the Air Rescue Service, an entity that has developed along a similar organizational path.

Notes

1. Moore, "Secret Air War," p. 6; and Ambrose, *Band of Brothers*, pp. 71–89. Note that the reference to "Fortress Europe" has been widely used to describe Axis-held continental Europe during World War II.

2. Ibid. For insight into the intelligence-gathering activities of the OSS, see Troy, *Donovan*, pp. 5–8.

3. Foot, *SOE in France*, pp. 74–79.

4. Moore, "Secret Air War," p. 12. Note that Moore cites (n. 36) JCS 170/1, OSS/NATO Records, Miscellaneous File, National Archives, Records Group 226, Entry 97. According to JCS 170/1, the OSS plan had requested covert

air transport in 1942 in order to support OSS/Algiers. Although General Eisenhower approved the concept in theory, the OSS plan did not bear fruit until August 1943, when General Spaatz agreed to provide three aircraft to OSS/Algiers. See also Moore, "Secret Air War," pp. 14–18.

5. Ibid., p. 18.

6. Ibid., p. 20. The term *Maquisards* was commonly used as a nickname for the resistance fighters in the southern half of France. It is derived from *Maquis*, a scrub plant common to the arid hills of southern France and Corsica. The French resistance army itself was often known as the Maquis (ibid., p. 62).

7. For more of the exploits of the Army Air Forces' special operations in Europe, see ibid., pp. 20–55.

8. Chinnery, *Any Time*, pp. 16–17.

9. Ibid., p. 17. Chinnery notes that Lt Col John R. Alison was initially co-commander but soon became the deputy to Lt Col Philip G. Cochran. Also, the 1st ACG is the final name of the organization that Colonels Cochran and Alison created. The unity was first called Project 9, then Project CA 281, 5318th Provisional Unit (Air), and Number 1 Air Commando Force, before evolving to the 1st ACG.

10. Ibid., pp. 24–35. Aircraft listing also found in 16th Special Operations Wing (SOW), *16th Special Operations Wing Heritage.* For more on Operation Thursday, arguably the most notable air commando operation in the CBI theater, see Kelly, *From a Dark Sky*, pp. 3–36; and Chinnery, *Any Time*, pp. 19–24. For more on the Chindits (the nickname of the special force in the CBI theater), see Kirby, *War against Japan*; and Chinnery, *March or Die.* Many historians list the 1st ACG as the first ever composite wing.

11. Ibid. In April 1944, 2d Lt Carter Harman, a YR-4 helicopter pilot, extracted US/British commandos from a crash site, making him the pilot of the first helicopter combat rescue.

12. Blair, *Forgotten War*, p. 9.

13. Kelly, *From a Dark Sky*, p. 103.

14. Rearden, "U.S. Strategic Bombardment," pp. 384–85, 445–51. Drew ("Air Theory," p. 327) suggests that "US airmen focused on organizational independence from the US Army and on missions that best justified independence (i.e., strategic bombing and, to a lesser extent, deep interdiction)."

15. Crane, *American Airpower*, p. 5. Crane argues that Lt Gen Otto P. Weyland was "one of the few senior USAF leaders who retained his faith in tactical airpower after World War II." For reference to the Air Force "monarchic" system, see Ehrhard, "Armed Services and Innovation," p. 12. In terms of organizational culture, chap. 2 explored this concept in more detail.

16. Haas, *Apollo's Warriors*, p. 9.

17. Ibid., p. 16. Note that the FEC/LG later designated Covert, Clandestine, and Related Activities–Korea as CCRAK. Haas points out that the CCRAK acronym had both a classified and an unclassified interpretation. The Covert, Clandestine, and Related Activities—Korea was the classified version, while the unclassified version was Combined Command for Reconnaissance Activities–Korea. Although other organizational titles were used throughout the Korean

War history of SOF, in the name of consistency, the author uses *CCRAK* as the term that describes this organization throughout the conflict.

18. Ibid., p. 18. Haas documents that by the end of 1952, the CCRAK force included over 16,000 partisans.

19. Ibid., p. 13. Note that Det. 2 had no special UW training. According to Haas, "Lost from memory as if it had never existed was the unconventional warfare expertise learned at such cost in World War II by both the Carpet-baggers and the Air Commandos. It would have to be learned all over again."

20. Kelly, *From a Dark Sky*, p. 104.

21. Ibid., pp. 104–7. The agents were supplied by the Koreans; the Americans called them "rabbits." Some rabbits were men; some were women. All in all, about 1,000 "rabbits" parachuted behind enemy lines. Some of these missions went all the way up to the Yalu River. According to Aderholt, the CIA sponsored most of the deep infiltration missions, while the Far East Command was more concerned with the reconnaissance and surveillance of enemy troop disposition. For Operation Aviary, see Haas, *Apollo's Warriors*, p. 19. For more on Captain Aderholt and the exploits of Det. 2, 21st Troop Carrier Squadron (otherwise known as Unit 4), see Haas, *Apollo's Warriors*, pp. 30–39.

22. Kelly, *From a Dark Sky*, pp. 112–13. The USAF recognized its deficiencies in UW in the early winter of 1950. As the rest of the paragraph suggests, it would take several months until the UW capability materialized with the creation of the ARCW wings.

23. Ibid., pp.112–14. General Vandenberg's vision was to establish an ARCS and six ARCSs that supported paradrops of propaganda material and agents anywhere in the world. General Vandenberg wanted to divest these missions from the CIA and establish them under the Air Force. ARCS aircraft would include B-29s, C-119s, C-54s, SA-16s, and later H-19A helicopters. Chinnery points out that although the plan called for six wings, only three materialized. Of the three wings—580th, 581st, and 582nd ARCWs—only the 581st ARCW saw action in Korea. *Any Time*, p. 58.

24. Kelly, *From a Dark Sky*, pp. 113–14; and Haas, *Apollo's Warriors*, p. 79.

25. Haas, *Apollo's Warriors*, p. 79.

26. The 581st ARCW is used as an example of USAF activities in the Korean War. Another key element of the AFSOF heritage was the activities of a number of Fifth Air Force units; most notably, the activities of B-Flight, 6167th Operations Squadron, Fifth Air Force, and of the 6004th Air Intelligence Support Squadron (AISS) (Dets. 1, 2, and 3). Stationed at Seoul City Air Base (K-16), B-Flight conducted classified missions involving the transporting and resupplying of personnel deep behind enemy lines, dropped leaflets or conducted other psychological operations such as "speaker missions," and carried out "firefly operations" (flare drops that aided ground units and bomber aircraft in night attack of the enemy). Det. 1 of the 6004th AISS provided technical intelligence, Det. 2 provided positive human intelligence, and Det. 3 handled the support for escape and evasion activities. A detailed explanation of all of these units goes well beyond the scope of this paper, but for more information on these endeavors, see Haas, *Apollo's Warriors*, pp. 40–65; and Schetta, *Guerrilla Warfare.* With reference to the 1950s air activities in

Vietnam, see Corum and Johnson, *Airpower*, p. 236. They suggest that "the United States became increasingly committed to the defense of South Vietnam, and when President Eisenhower became alarmed about 'falling dominoes,' U.S. analysts pressed for direct American military intervention." Chinnery, *Any Time*, p. 58. Also, according to Chinnery, the 581st ARCW, although mostly focused on operations in Korea, also supported UW activities in Indochina (1953) (ibid.).

27. History, 581st Air Resupply and Communications Wing, Operations Plan 3-52. Haas also lists the other squadrons in the wing: 581st Maintenance Squadron, 581st Air Materials Assembly Squadron, 581st Holding and Briefing Squadron, 581st Communications Squadron, and 581st Reproduction Squadron. Haas, *Apollo's Warriors*, pp. 79–80, 92. For more on their individual squadron missions, see ibid or OPLAN 3-52.

28. History, 581st ARCW, pp. 40–65. According to OPLAN 3-52, the 581st ARS had 28 aircraft (12 B-29s, four C-119s, two C-54s, two C-118s, four SA-16s, and four H-19As). In addition to other missions flown directly from Clark AB, OPLAN 3-52 outlined the following concept of operations: Four B-29s were sent on 60-day rotations to the 91st Strategic Reconnaissance Squadron, Yokota AB, Japan. Each aircrew flew a total of 15 tactical leaflet-drop missions. Four C-119s and crews were placed on 90-day rotations supporting the 315th Air Division (AD). The 315th AD commander alone designated the particular unit to be supported—most of these sorties were conventional troop-carrier missions. Two SA-16s were placed on "extended temporary duty" in support of the UW activities of B Flight, 6167th Air Base Group, Seoul City Airport (K-16), Korea. Painted black for obvious reasons, since they flew at night, these amphibians were responsible for the infiltration and exfiltration of covert operatives behind enemy lines. Four H-19As were also stationed at K-16. Parked next to the H-19 helicopters of the 2157th Air Rescue Squadron, their mission was the same as that of the SA-16s. Additionally, as a secondary mission, the 581st H-19As aided in the rescue of downed aircrew members. The C-118s and C-54s were used for special missions in support of a number of USAF and CIA initiatives. Information on the concept of operations is derived from a letter that Col George Pittman, USAF, retired, sent to Haas in 1994. See Haas, *Apollo's Warriors*, pp. 80–81.

29. Haas, *Apollo's Warriors*, pp. 92–93.

30. Ibid., p. 113.

31. Ibid., p. 107.

32. Ibid., p. 113. Also, for more on the H and B training, see ibid., pp. 113–15, in which Haas outlines the 580th's Special Warfare Course and the ARCS Individual Training Standard 50-2-2 (proficiency requirements).

33. Ibid., pp. 107–8. A good operational example of the DOD role in UW activities was Operation Think (the high-altitude balloon and low-altitude resupply missions in support of CIA and DOD intelligence and counter-propaganda activities).

34. History, Air Resupply and Communications Service, 1 July–31 Dec. 1953, p. 20.

35. Haas, *Apollo's Warriors*, p. 108.

36. Ibid. Even though the ARCS experiment had grown far beyond the USAF's expectations, Department of the Air Force Letter 322, supported by General Order 174, directed the organizational dissolution of the ARCS.

37. For more on US efforts to counter communist expansion in the Greek Civil War, see Corum and Johnson, *Airpower*, pp. 93–110. The comment "top of the world" refers to Tibet and the Himalayas (for more, see Haas, *Apollo's Warriors*, pp. 137–45). "Silent Success" was the unofficial motto of the 580th ARCG; its official motto was *Libertas per Veritatem*, Freedom through Truth (Haas, *Apollo's Warriors*, p. 121).

38. Cole, "Maryland Air Commandos," pp. 262–73; Haas, *Apollo's Warriors*, pp. 129–35; and Elliot, *Modern Army*, pp. 103–4. The term *special air warfare* (SAW) encompassed the air aspects of counterinsurgency, unconventional warfare, and psychological operations. As a frame of reference, Elliot points out that prior to 1960, the Continental Command supervised the ANG. Cole and Haas suggest that UW activities were controlled by a number of different commands, contributing to a lack of unified direction toward a particular USAF UW mission vision.

39. Haas, *Apollo's Warriors*, pp. 147–61. Although not part of the air commando groups in the ANG, Major Aderholt (who was working for the CIA at the time) and 80 guardsmen from the ANG's 117th Tactical Reconnaissance Wing based in Birmingham, AL, and the Arkansas ANG helped train the Cuban exiles for Operation Pluto, the Bay of Pigs invasion. When the invasion took place on 15–19 April 1961, four of the 16 Alabama and Arkansas ANG crew members flying in the initial assault were killed in the aerial combat over the Bay of Pigs. See also Persons, *Bay of Pigs;* and Ferrer, *Operation PUMA.*

40. Kelly, *From a Dark Sky*, pp. 124–39. There were other significant missions that took place during the 1950s that are not covered in this paper—events such as the planned CIA rescue of Allen Pope using the Fulton Recovery System or the early US activities in Laos—but the size and scope of this paper do not allow the in-depth analysis of every AFSOF mission.

41. Schein, *Organizational Culture*, p. 377.

42. Ibid.

43. Drew, "Air Theory," p. 327; and Haas, *Apollo's Warriors*, pp. 107–8. Besides the Soviet threat, however, the USAF had to contend with an interservice turf battle over roles and missions. Although in 1952 the Air Force appeared poised to assume the lead UW role, by 1956 the USAF had moved all its UW capability to the National Guard.

44. Ibid., pp. 328, 349. According to Drew, "The professional journal of the US Air Force published only two significant articles concerning airpower and the ongoing insurgencies in Southeast Asia during the entire decade of the 1950s." One of the articles was on the Huk rebellion in the Philippines and another on airpower and limited war. The latter included a harsh critique of the French use of airpower in Indochina (ibid., pp. 38, 349).

45. Ibid., p. 328.

46. In later chapters, I address the negative influence of the veil of secrecy on the careers of AFSOF officers. This indifference damaged AFSOF morale and created a mutual distrust between Air Force elites and special operators.

47. Drew, "Air Theory," p. 327. Drew suggests that military budget cutting by the Eisenhower administration "played directly into the hands of people who believed that atomic airpower could deter all forms of warfare." Separately, the author of this thesis suggests that the covert nature of SOF hides the community from the view of the very people who could keep pressure on the USAF to maintain a robust AFSOF capability—the civilian leadership. Chaps. 5 and 6 demonstrate how DOD/congressional support helped strengthen AFSOF capabilities.

48. Ibid., p. 347.

49. Corum and Johnson, *Airpower*, p. 237. The authors outline Khrushchev's speech as follows: "According to Khrushchev, war could be divided into three categories: general war, which he rejected as too dangerous; local, or limited wars, which he feared because of their potential to develop into general war; and *wars of national liberation* [emphasis added], which he endorsed as inevitable and desirable." President Kennedy recognized the danger. As early as 1954, Kennedy had warned about the problem of insurgency. He had read the works of Mao and Che Guevara and studied the counterinsurgency campaigns in the Philippines and Malaya. For Kennedy's wisdom on COIN, see p. 474 of Corum and Johnson.

50. Ibid., p. 237.

51. "Urgent National Needs," p. 906.

52. In other words, had the Air Force not responded promptly, the Army might have taken advantage of the USAF indecision and created an organic air capability to support its UW ground forces. This observation previews a point that will be further explored in later chapters (i.e., when the USAF acts indecisively in the defense of certain roles and missions, the USA tries to create organic capabilities to compensate for USAF uncertainty).

53. Message, 240807Z OCT 62, cited in Tilford, *Search and Rescue*, pp. 44–45. According to a 13 June 1980 letter from the Det. 3 HQ ARRS commander, Colonel Henjum, to the ARRS commander, by 1966 the Army and Air Force reached an agreement in which Army helicopters would concentrate on theater airlift and AF helicopters would handle the SOF mission. This was the first formal agreement establishing the demarcation of Army and AFSOF helicopter missions.

54. Chinnery, *Any Time*, p. 68. Regarding the interservice controversy, see Corum and Johnson, *Airpower*. The authors suggest that for the US Air Force, "the creation of a tiny special unit for counterinsurgency was considered adequate" (p. 273). The USA, on the other hand, wanted to "secure the dominant position in conflict less than general war." Ibid.

55. Corum and Johnson, *Airpower*, p. 245.

56. Hildreth, *USAF Special Air Warfare*, p. 2.

57. Haas, *Apollo's Warriors*, pp. 170–71. According to Haas, pilots' credentials were "sanitized" when they resigned from active duty, but their military records "were sent to a special intelligence unity, while substitute, authentic-looking records continued through the military's out-processing system. . . . The process of being sanitized, or sheepdipped as it is widely called in the special operations community, is not a program taken lightly by the potential

volunteer." In effect, the individual had to provide a cover story for friends and family for his retirement/separation from active duty, and so forth.

58. Klingaman to author, e-mail, 18 Mar. 2004.

59. Chinnery, *Any Time*, pp. 68–71. By March 1962, TAC had renamed the 4400th CCTS as the 4410th CCTS and had activated the 4400th Combat Crew Training Group at Hurlburt Field. Det. 3 was activated in April 1962 with the mission of providing counterinsurgency and civic-action training to personnel from Latin American countries. In May, Det. 3, code-named Bold Venture, relocated to Howard AB, Panama. The unit operated two of each of the following aircraft: C-46, U-10A, T-28, and B-26. That summer the 4400th CCTG, redesignated the 1st ACG, trained in hand-to-hand combat, received the most up-to-date weapons (they received the Colt AR-15 rifle, while the Army retained the M-14 rifle), and worked on the design and installation of a public address system for psychological operations on all the aircraft assigned to the group. Although the 1st ACG kept busy at Hurlburt and in Panama, the bulk of the air commando activity took place in Southeast Asia.

60. Assistant Director for Joint Matters, *Book of Actions*, pp. 961–64.

61. Haas, *Apollo's Warriors*, pp. 163–89.

62. Corum and Johnson, *Airpower*, p. 248.

63. Drew, "Air Theory," pp. 325, 334. As conventional USAF involvement in the process of the Americanization of the war increased, there was a shift in focus from the UW mission to a much more conventional search for the enemy's center of gravity. As the USAF focus shifted from solely targeting the COIN struggle in Indochina to focusing on coercing North Vietnam to end its support for the Vietcong, the US military, in effect, forgot that in COIN operations, according to Drew, "both antagonists have the same center of gravity—the people."

64. Haas, *Air Commando!* p. 64.

65. Corum and Johnson, *Airpower*, p. 246.

66. Ibid., p. 475.

67. Ibid.

68. Farm Gate organizationally fell under the control of the 2nd Advanced Echelon, Thirteenth Air Force. As Aderholt's comments suggest, this relationship was rocky from the start because the air commandos quickly found out that General Anthis, commander of 2nd Advanced Echelon, neither grasped nor understood the value of the UW mission.

69. Trest, *Air Commando One*, pp. 123–24.

70. Schein, *Organizational Culture*, pp. 376–77.

71. Drew, "Air Theory," pp. 332–33. Drew suggests that while air commandos at the Special Air Warfare Center were "doing their homework" on the classic concepts of insurgency warfare, USAF "doctrine (and by inference, its thinking and theory) remained where it had been since the advent of nuclear weapons and the creation of the independent Air Force."

72. "Are We Abusing Technology," p. 45.

73. Corum and Johnson, *Airpower*, p. 272. Conventional Airmen have resisted any adaptation to the central tenets of airpower theory—the inherent offensiveness of airpower, the necessity for air superiority, the dominant role

of strategic bombardment, and the need of independence (control of air units and overall institutional autonomy). Ibid., p. 269. This does not suggest that the air commandos had all the right answers and that the 2nd Advanced Echelon had it all wrong. The author of this research paper uses Corum and Johnson's argument to suggest that the USAF treated the Vietnam War as a "conventional war" without realizing that, unless the Vietcong massed as a conventional force, the American approach was not going to work against irregular forces. This issue will be expounded later in this chapter.

74. Although the idea of airpower supporting UW operations is nearly as old as the airpower experience itself, extensive employment of such a strategy did not come about until well after World War II. For more on the first time that UW was coupled with airpower, see the Arab Revolt (1916–1918). T. E. Lawrence used aerial raids to augment the Arab guerrilla campaign against the Turks. Lawrence, *Seven Pillars*, 341–42. Corum and Johnson discuss the Greek and Filipino COIN campaigns. The Greek Civil War (1943–1949) and the Philippine government's struggle against the Hukbalahap (Huk) Insurgency (1946–1956) were primarily land operations, but airpower played a significant role in each COIN campaign. In both campaigns, US advisers helped the "Cinderella" service (Air Force) in Greece and in the Philippines in becoming a decisive factor in COIN operations. For more on the subject, see Corum and Johnson, *Airpower*, pp. 93–138. According to Corum and Johnson, the lessons of greatest importance from both campaigns were first, the need to integrate all of the instruments of national power—economic, information, military, and diplomatic—in the pacification effort; and second, the need for inspired leadership—Alexandros Papagos (Greece) and Ramon Magsaysay (Philippines)—in the sense that these leaders inspired the loyalty of the armed forces and the genuine support of the majority of the people: Military effort was most successful when subordinate to political goals.

75. Drew, "U.S. Airpower Theory," pp. 815–16.

76. The necessity and practicality are associated with the US containment policy and political emphasis on UW. "The US wasn't the only country alarmed at the prospect of North Vietnamese expansionism. The Thai government offered a small number of its military pilots to Water Pump for combat over Laos." Haas, *Air Commando!* p. 50. Please note that Water Pump was the code name for Det. 6, 1st ACW, Udorn, Thailand, deployed March 1964. Det. 6 deployed to Thailand as part of Project 404, the highly classified joint operations against North Vietnamese intrusion into Laos in order to resupply the Vietcong along what became known as the "Ho Chi Minh Trail." Because of the 1962 Geneva accords that were supposed to guarantee the neutrality of Laos, Water Pump could not, theoretically, fly missions against the Ho Chi Minh Trail; therefore, Det. 6 produced the Thai and Laotian pilots who supported the Laotian government in countering Communist Pathet Lao. Haas reviews the process in which Water Pump trained "Air America" pilots in the T-28 to fly combat-rescue support over the trail. Haas, *Air Commando!* pp. 48–50. Another aspect of the air commando contributions in Thailand was that of the Air Force Military Civic Action Officer Program designed to neutralize the potential Communist insurgent threat to the multiple

Thai air bases that were home to USAF units fighting the war against North Vietnam. Haas, *Apollo's Warriors*, pp. 239–45; and Berger, *United States Air Force in Southeast Asia*, p. 292. Note that Det. 6 later became part of the 606th ACS (1966), which later became the 56th ACW (1967). Haas, *Air Commando!* p. 51. The 56th Wing would later contribute (1970s) to the foreign internal defense mission against the Khmer Rouge in Cambodia.

77. This is to distinguish fixed-wing (side-firing) gunships from rotary-wing (forward-firing) gunships.

78. Haas, *Apollo's Warriors*, pp. 258–59.

79. This is a classic demonstration of COIN operations via airpower. Airpower was able to assure the South Vietnamese peasants that their government was able to protect them from the Vietcong. For more on COIN operations using airpower, see various examples in Corum and Johnson, *Airpower*.

80. Napier, "Air Commandos in Vietnam," p. 140. According to Napier, air commandos used C-47 and C-123 transports to initially drop 50,000-candlepower and, later, 3,000,000-candlepower flares.

81. Ibid.

82. Haas, *Apollo's Warriors*, p. 259.

83. Ibid.

84. Ballard, *United States Air Force in Southeast Asia*, pp. 1–3, 8. The initial proponent for the contemporary gunship idea was Ralph E. Flexman, an assistant chief engineer with Bell Aerospace Company, Buffalo, NY. He had read of missionaries in South America who delivered mail to remote areas by flying their aircraft in a pylon turn and lowering the mail by line. He shared his ideas with a number of Air Force professionals, including Capt John C. Simons, who made the original test arrangements for a proof-of-concept demonstration (pp. 3–7). Captain Terry, a test pilot with Air Force Systems Command who had prior combat experience in South Vietnam, took Flexman and Simon's ideas and developed a tactical scenario employing the side-firing weapon system that might defend hamlets and forts. In August 1964, the USAF tested this concept as part of Project Tail Chaser, using a C-131. Convinced of the C-131's capabilities, the air commandos (using the General Electric SUU-11A 7.62 mm minigun) quickly recognized the value of this new technique.

85. Ibid., pp. 12–14. General LeMay, CSAF, and Gen John P. McConnell, the then vice-CSAF and future CSAF, both supported the air-commando gunship initiative. But Ballard notes that General Sweeney was opposed the side-firing gunship tactics because, theoretically, it placed a "highly vulnerable aircraft in a battlefield environment in which I [General Sweeney] believe the results will not compensate for the losses of Air Force personnel and aircraft." Additionally, as Ballard points out, "[Sweeney] saw a successful gunship weakening the Air Force in its battle with the Army over the use of helicopters in offensive fire-support missions. Conceivably this might encourage the Army to use [organic to the Army] transports in a ground support role." Ballard notes that Captain Terry "conned his way through the CSAF's outer office in a moment of administrative confusion to deliver his pitch for the gunship." See also Haas, *Apollo's Warriors*, p. 260.

86. The 4th ACS was created in July 1965. Of the 20 aircraft assigned, 16 were used for combat activities, while four were used for command support and attrition. See Napier, p. 34; and Ballard, pp. 28–32 (reference operational testing in South Vietnam), p. 33 (reference 4th ACS movement to Vietnam, code name Sixteen Buck), and p. 34 (aircraft numbers and initial organization under the 2nd AD and 6250th Combat Support Group). Note that by May 1966, the 4th ACS aircraft were given the designation AC-47. Also cited in Chinnery, *Any Time*, pp. 98–103.

87. The 14th was redesignated the 3rd ACS in May 1968. The 3rd and 4th ACSs were part of the 14th ACW. The wing achieved three major milestones in 1968. It was awarded the Presidential Unit Citation in June 1968; it reached the 100,000th mission mark by 13 July (successfully defending 2.284 allied outposts); and on 1 August 1968 the wing was renamed the 14 SOW, 3rd and 4th Special Operations Squadrons. Ballard, *United States Air Force in Southeast Asia*, p. 63.

88. Haas, *Apollo's Warriors*, pp. 268–73. The first AC-119 gunships were employed under the flag of the 71st SOS (December 1968). Later, the USAF activated the 17th SOS and 18th SOS (AC-119G/K). The AC-119s employed two 20 mm cannons and four 7.62 mm miniguns. For a detailed account of AC-119 activities, see Ballard, *United States Air Force in Southeast Asia*, pp. 176–220.

89. Haas, *Apollo's Warriors*, p. 276. Note that the Seventh Air Force kept the AC-47s and AC-119s in South Vietnam and placed the new AC-130s in Thailand. In the early 1970s, when the United States started transferring the older gunships to the Vietnamese (part of the "Vietnamization" of the conflict), the USAF streamlined to one type of aircraft. The only AC-130 unit in Southeast Asia was the 16th SOS stationed at Ubon, Thailand (primarily, although the AC-130s initially moved to Saigon's Tan Son Nhut airport in response to the Tet offensive of 1968). Ballard, *United States Air Force in Southeast Asia*, pp. 90–121; and Haas, *Apollo's Warriors*, pp. 278–82.

90. Ballard, *United States Air Force in Southeast Asia*, pp. 52, 69. Although the USAF clearly recognized and decorated the gunship crews accordingly, more important to the crews was the praise they received from their ground customers. Ballard documents several examples of gunship heroics and of the close relationship they developed with the ground units that they supported. The pages I've listed describe the Spooky (4th ACS) exploits in support of I Corps and in COIN operations in northern Laos.

91. Rosenau, *Special Operations Forces*, p. 14. Rosenau provides a good overview of OPLAN-34A activities. For Operation Rolling Thunder objectives, see Thompson, *To Hanoi and Back*, especially pp. 20–31; see also Hone, "Strategic Bombardment," pp. 495–500.

92. Chinnery, *Any Time*, p. 106.

93. Saal, *SOG: MACV Studies*, p. 79. See also Conboy and Andradé, *Spies and Commandos*, pp. 81–100 (reference Operation Switchback and the origins of OPLAN-34A). For more information on the activation of MACVSOG, General Order no. 6, see Shultz, *Secret War against Hanoi*, pp. 37–40.

94. Haas, *Apollo's Warriors*, p. 293; see also Rosenau, *Special Operations Forces*, p. 16. Note that OPLAN-34A had several subsets. These are summarized in p. 15 of Rosenau. OPLAN-32 dealt with the air activities, OPLAN-33 and OPLAN-39 accounted for psychological operations, OPLAN-34 was associated with the insertion of indigenous forces, and OPLAN-35 addressed the infiltration of reconnaissance teams or the recovery of downed US aircrews. One should note that in addition to the aircrews described here, AFSOF played a key role in the SOG ground activities. The USAF contribution to the ground element of SOG and to countless forts and hamlets (such as Khe Sahn) came in the form of Butterflies and Ravens. These were the call signs for the USAF combat controllers assigned in Vietnam. For more see Kelly, *From a Dark Sky*, pp. 175–92.

95. The organizational development and cultural identity of black SOF units were distinct from those of white SOF units. Later chapters address the white SOF and black SOF concept in greater detail. Partly due to classification issues and to some extent due to the nature of the missions, 75th SOG personnel had very little in common with the Green Beret mission. For more, see Haas, *Apollo's Warriors*, pp. 291–313; and Saal, *SOG: MACV Studies*.

96. Their customers were involved in OPLAN-34 activities (insertion of US and indigenous forces) and OPLAN-33 and OPLAN-39 (psychological operations). Haas, *Apollo's Warriors*, p. 293; and Rosenau, *Special Operations Forces*, p. 16.

97. Chinnery, *Any Time*, pp. 106–7. According to Chinnery, Duck Hook was the first Big Safari project undertaken by Lockheed Aircraft Services. Air commandos trained 38 Nationalist Chinese and 22 South Vietnamese aviators and interpreters (10 were of the latter category). Chinnery points out that these crew members were later designated Det. 1, 775th Troop Carrier Squadron. Their squadron patch had seven stars in it for the seven geographical areas/countries outlined in endnote 75. See also Plaster, *SOG*, p. 24.

98. Thigpen, *Praetorian Starship*, p. 17. For more on evolution of the Combat Talon, the 1st SOS, 15th SOS, and 90th SOS, as well as more on the overall Combat Talon activities in Vietnam, see ibid., pp. 19–120. This book is a true labor of love. Thigpen's detail and thorough research are truly remarkable, considering the secretive nature of the Talon activities.

99. Chinnery, *Any Time*, p. 110. Dates and locations were confirmed with the AFHRA, 30 Jan. 2004.

100. Ibid.

101. Ibid., p. 114. Chinnery accounts for the transfer of UH-1F Hueys from the 606th ACS to the 20th HS. These Hueys retained the call sign Green Hornet, and some were modified as helicopter gunships (redesignated UH-1Ps).

102. Ibid., p. 113. The 21st SOS also flew CH-3 helicopters.

103. Chinnery, *Any Time*, p. 111. Please note that the 219th HS, the King Bees, flew H-34s. The infiltration and exfiltration of special forces teams in Laos were known as Prairie Fire, while similar missions in Cambodia were given the code name Daniel Boone (p. 114).

104. Haas, *Apollo's Warriors*, p. 308. It should be noted that the Green Hornets paid a big price for their lack of experience and the dangers associated with the UW mission.

105. Ibid.

106. During their tour of duty in SEA (that ended in 1972), they lost 19 helicopters—13 in direct combat. Mutza, "Covertly into Cambodia," pp. 26–28.

107. Plaster, *SOG*, p. 109.

108. Haas, *Apollo's Warriors*, p. 308.

109. Both ARS and AFSOF aircraft took part in the "raid" on Son Tay. Although interesting and deeply ingrained in the organizational memory of both ARS and AFSOF personnel, the story is not pertinent to the discussion. It is but one example of how these two communities can work together to achieve a common objective. If successful, my attempts to describe the heritage of the two communities in chaps. 2 and 3 should make the Son Tay raid yet another example of the professional cooperation and of the honorable and gallant performances that this paper has established as the norm, not the exception, during contingency operations. For more information, see Schemmer's *Raid*, perhaps the most authoritative book on the rescue attempt on Son Tay. See also Tilford, *Search and Rescue*, pp. 103–12; and Thigpen, *Praetorian Starship*, pp. 139–58.

110. The Son Tay model is discussed in the conclusion of this chapter.

111. Haas, *Apollo's Warriors*, p. 311.

112. Guilmartin, *Very Short War*, p. 42.

113. Chinnery, *Any Time*, p. 223.

114. Please note that Operation Rice Bowl was the code name for the planning phase of the failed attempt to rescue the American hostages held in Iran. Operation Eagle Claw was the operational phase of the mission. Desert One is an unofficial term often associated with the rescue attempt. Although, technically, Desert One was the code name for the first landing zone in Iran, in order to prevent confusion, this chapter uses this well-known term to refer to the entire rescue mission. Even if not totally accurate, it is sufficient for this chapter. Chap. 5 and the appendix examine the Desert One experience in greater detail.

115. Wells, *Outline of History*, chap. 41.

116. USSOCOM, *SOF Truths*.

117. Thigpen, *Praetorian Starship*, p. 15.

118. Mutza, "Covertly into Cambodia," p. 26. As the statistics on the Green Hornets suggest, inexperience costs lives. Again, according to Mutza, during their tour of duty in SEA (ending in 1972), the Green Hornets lost 19 helicopters, 13 in direct combat.

119. History, *Tactical Air Command*, 1 Jan.–30 June 1961, p. 433.

120. In 1974 AFSOF was redesignated the 834th Tactical Composite Wing (TCW), "effectively bringing to a close the most aggressive, far-reaching effort by the USAF to support unconventional warfare. In July 1975, the USAF renamed the 834 TCW as 1 SOW, and by 1979 it was the only SOF wing in the Air Force." In the wing, AFSOF retained some capability, namely AC-130H Spectre gunships, MC-130E Combat Talons, and CH-3E Jolly Green and UH-1N

Huey helicopters; this, in effect, meant that AFSOF no longer possessed a long-range infiltration via helicopter capability. Two MC-130 Combat Talon squadrons of four aircraft each remained overseas. The Air Force Reserve (AFR) retained an AC-130A gunship group at Duke Field, FL, and one HH-3E Jolly Green squadron at Davis-Monthan AFB, AZ. AFSOC, *Heritage of Quiet Professionals*, p. 9.

121. Gray, "Handfuls of Heroes."

122. Chinnery, *Any Time*, p. 224. Comments by Col James H. Kyle, the deputy commander of the joint task force (JTF) assembled after the Iran hostage crisis in 1980.

123. Gray, "Handfuls of Heroes."

124. Shultz, "Great Divide," p. 92.

125. Gray, "Handfuls of Heroes."

126. Ibid.

127. Beres to author, e-mail, 6 Mar. 2004. The term *SOF mafia* is a comparable synonym often associated with AFSOF, but the term would not come into widespread use until the mid-1980s. For example, AFSOF helicopter crews flew three airframes (UH-1, H-3, and CH-53) between Vietnam and the Twenty-third Air Force merger. After the merger, the AFSOF helicopter mafia would slowly evolve into the Pave Low mafia, referring to the MH-53 aircraft that became the vanguard of the AFSOF helicopter force under the Twenty-third Air Force stewardship.

128. Uttaro to author, e-mail, 18 Feb. 2004.

129. Ibid.

130. Ettenson to author, e-mail, 4 Mar. 2004.

131. Ibid., 10 Mar. 2004.

132. Guilmartin, V*ery Short War*, p. 40.

133. Ettenson to author, e-mail, 4 Mar. 2004.

134. Weikel to author, e-mail, 8 Mar. 2004; and Green to author, 6 May 2004. Green argues that the ARRS helicopters had the extended range and, thus, more flexibility. The 21st SOS helicopters compensated for their limited range by prepositioning (mostly via airdrop) fuel in "Lima sites" along the ingress route.

135. Guilmartin, speech to Air Command and Staff College (ACSC).

136. Ibid.

137. Connelly, interview with author, 30 Jan. 2004, Fort Walton Beach, FL. See also Green to author, e-mail, 26 Mar. 2004. The promotion-rate issue was a particular concern amongst the enlisted force. AFSOF crews, due to the classification of their missions, did not receive medals as frequently as did other communities, such as ARRS helicopter crews, who sometimes flew interchangeable missions. Since medals count towards enlisted promotions, there was a level of animosity between enlisted crews because, all other things being equal, enlisted crew members in ARRS helicopters (in SEA) were promoted ahead of their AFSOF peers.

138. Guilmartin, speech to ACSC.

139. Ibid.

140. Ettenson to author, e-mail, 4 Mar. 2004. See also JP 1-02, *Department of Defense Dictionary*, reference terms "contact report" and "contact procedures." In land warfare, the phrase "in contact" is used when forces have detected the enemy. In aerial warfare, it is associated with established communications between aircraft and/or ground-control agencies.

141. Ryan, "Transitional Adjustments," p. 11; see also Ballard, *United States Air Force in Southeast Asia*, p. 258. Ballard also quotes Gen William W. Momyer, TAC commander, as saying, "With its multiple sensors, I think this is the best weapon for either air or ground support of a night engagement" (p. 258).

142. Ballard, *United States Air Force in Southeast Asia*, p. 232; and Haas, *Apollo's Warriors*, pp. 278–82. For example, in just the five months between Nov. 1971 and Mar. 1972, allied aircraft damaged or destroyed 10,609 trucks along the Laotian panhandle. The top three truck killers, in descending order, were the AC-130, AC-119, and the F-4. In terms of hamlet protection, all types of gunships played a critical role in the defense of South Vietnamese cities during the 1968 Tet offensive. Haas relates the story of a single AC-130 saving the lives of 1,000 Army of the Republic of Vietnam solders from certain death or capture during the siege of the Ben Het Ranger camp on 5 May 1972. Please note that I am focusing on the AC-130 (vice AC-47 or AC-119) because by 1972 all non-C-130 gunships had been turned over to the South Vietnamese.

143. Mets to author, e-mail, 7 Mar. 2004. While deployed to SEA, Lieutenant Colonel Mets, USAF, retired, became the 16th SOS commander.

144. Connelly, interview with author, 30 Jan. 2004.

145. Haas, *Apollo's Warriors*, p. 282. Haas notes that the AC-130s redeployed to the United States in Dec. 1975. The 16th SOS became the sole active duty gunship squadron in the USAF's sole remaining SOW—the 1 SOW.

146. Klingaman to author, e-mail, 18 Mar. 2004.

147. Corum, "Terrorism and Small Wars."

Chapter 4

Heritage and Culture of Air Rescue

Our development . . . has been a history of relearning lessons already learned by someone else, but who unfortunately could not or did not document it for others to profit by it.

—Col Frederick V. Sohle, Jr.

[These things we do] . . . that others may live.

—Code of Air Rescue, coined by
Brig Gen Richard T. Kight

The last chapter offered insight into the development of the traditions and norms of special forces. This chapter explores the evolution of the legacy and cultural identity of the Air Rescue Service, later designated Air Rescue and Recovery Service. Recounting the events that shaped the early organizational development of a combat-rescue capability—wartime experiences in World War II, Korea, and Vietnam, as well as the interwar periods between conflicts—provides the background required to assess the institutional identity of the Air Force rescue community in 1980. This review accounts not only for the organizational development, but also for the institutional principles that define the *rescue culture.* Following a brief analysis of three lessons learned and relearned between 1946 and 1979, this chapter constructs a model of rescue culture that grew from three decades of experience. This analysis also reveals the institutional biases that affected ARRS organizational behavior in the 1980s.

Origins of Air Rescue Service:
Building a Capability

In the late 1920s the Consolidated Air Corporation developed a "flying boat" for the United States Navy, which became the first aircraft used in a search and rescue role.[1] During the interwar years, the United States never developed a doctrine for airborne SAR; but even without defined rescue procedures, the

Army Air Corps (AAC) performed the rescue mission on land, while the Navy and Coast Guard were responsible for rescue at sea.[2] The AAC did not pursue a comprehensive approach to air SAR until World War II. As a result, the United States entered the war with almost no air-sea rescue capability.[3]

Gen Henry "Hap" Arnold, chief of the AAC, approved the first plan for global air rescue on 6 July 1943.[4] This initiative led to the creation of dedicated air-sea rescue units, dubbed emergency rescue squadrons, in the European and Pacific theaters of operation. While a hodgepodge of rescue assets, these units assumed responsibility for rescues along transoceanic flight paths.[5] Based on the enemy threat and the long transoceanic routes, US SAR activities were primarily centered at sea early in World War II.

As the war continued, however, US military leadership became more conscious of the requirement for a variety of rescue capabilities on land as well as over water. Throughout the war, Airmen explored various alternatives for the recovery of personnel in different environments. According to Frank Ransom, an ARS historian, "the need for a land rescue capability led to the development of the helicopter as a rescue machine."[6]

Even in the early years, however, the debate over rescue went beyond possible platform options. Organizational issues were contentious. At the end of the war, US armed forces could not agree on which service should bear responsibility for the rescue function. The issue was not settled until Lieutenant General Vandenberg, assistant chief of staff at Headquarters Air Corps, struck a bargain with the Coast Guard late in 1945, a deal which led to the creation of the ARS.

Headquarters ARS was established on 1 March 1946 at Andrews Field, Maryland. Its primary mission was to provide for and oversee all SAR activities in the United States.[7] Within a few months, however, ARS was responding to rescue and humanitarian relief operations not only in the United States, but also abroad. From delivering thousands of pounds of food to blizzard-struck sections of the American Midwest, to rescue operations in Greenland and Bolivia, ARS's reputation as a life-saving organization grew.[8] Concurrently, in the five years between World War II and the Korean conflict, the ARS began

forming its organizational identity. Institutionally, this identity was quite different from that of the rest of the Air Force.

According to Builder, the nascent Air Force was entirely oriented towards strategic bombardment. He argues that by associating the USAF with nuclear war, General Vandenberg "connected the Air Force mission directly to the security of the nation."[9] But while the Air Force was competing with the other services for the lion's share of the defense budget, the ARS had to compete within the Air Force for a mission that was not directly associated with the USAF's primary mission area—strategic bombardment.[10] In other words, from the very early stages of institutional development, the ARS and USAF foci were incongruent: one concentrated on saving lives; the other on nuclear deterrence.

Air Rescue Service and the Korean War

On 25 June 1950, North Korea attacked its southern counterpart, and the ARS had to adjust its organizational agenda from peacetime activities to combat rescue and recovery. Conrad C. Crane, a historian of the Korean War, suggests that much like the rest of the USAF, the ARS "lacked the resources and competence to carry out [its] assigned missions."[11] ARS leadership and aircrews proved ill-prepared for war, but they responded as best they could.

On the first day of the war, elements of the 3rd Rescue Squadron were dispatched to Kimpo Airfield, Seoul, South Korea, in case an evacuation became necessary.[12] Throughout the war (1950–53), the 3rd Rescue Squadron (later redesignated 3rd Air Rescue Group) rescued nearly 10,000 United Nations personnel, including nearly 1,000 combat saves.[13] Of the latter, 170 were USAF Airmen shot down behind enemy lines.[14] Additionally, during the Korean War the helicopter "demonstrated its value in the medical evaluation role. The rough Korean roads made the evacuation of wounded by land vehicle slow and arduous, while helicopters transported the injured [to mobile hospitals] smoothly and quickly."[15] In the end, the ability of the ARS in Korea to effect rescues depended on the ability to reach the crash or parachute site quickly.[16]

ARS achievements were highlighted when the 3rd Air Rescue Squadron became the first unit to be awarded the Presidential Unit Citation for actions during the Korean War.[17] The Air Rescue Service's impressive record during the Korean War demonstrated the need to preserve combat-rescue capabilities in peacetime. But beyond the medals and the unit citations, the ARS had gained a reputation for risking its crew members' lives in order to save others. Thus, Brig Gen Richard T. Kight, ARS commander, coined the motto "that others may live," an adage that would serve as the guiding principle for all rescue men who would follow.[18]

But even in the earliest stages of its cultural development, the ARS faced the dilemma of having to fit into a military that, at least initially, did not share its single-purposed enthusiasm for this particular, albeit noble, mission. For example, early Air Force doctrine insisted that airpower was inherently offensive.[19] Heavily influenced by their World War II experiences, General of the Army Douglas MacArthur, the Combined Forces commander, and his top Air Force commanders targeted offensive operations.[20]

As it would turn out, offensive operations (e.g., strategic bombardment, air interdiction, etc.) and air rescue were not mutually exclusive. As rescue capabilities improved, ARS crews contributed to the primary mission of offensive operations by returning downed aircrews to flying duties and denying the enemy the opportunity to exploit the intelligence and propaganda value of an American POW. Additionally, ARS exploits improved the morale of US aviators who knew that ARS would do its best to rescue them if they were shot down.[21] Unfortunately, the Air Force did not want to use the Korean model as the blueprint for its post–Korean War force structure. Because Air Force leadership considered the limited war experience in Korea an anomaly, it tended to ignore lessons learned during the war and instead chose to harness all its efforts, and limited resources, on nuclear deterrence. Wayne Thompson sums up Air Force priorities:

> The Air Force had entered the [Korean] war committed to the heavy bomber armed with atomic weapons . . . [and] a strategy of deterrence. . . . Far from undermining these principles, three years of limited warfare had reinforced them, persuading the leadership of the Air Force that the

United States should stand ready to attack the Soviet Union and not divert its strength against aggression by proxy. . . . [In General Vandenberg's] opinion the North Korean invasion of the South did not mean that deterrence had failed—after all, the Soviet Union had not taken advantage of the war in the Far East by attacking elsewhere. . . . The threat of total devastation seemed the likeliest means to prevent aggression by the Soviet Union and its satellite states, or so it appeared in 1953.[22]

It was evident that by the end of the Korean War, the ARS and the USAF had different priorities. Whereas the ARS motto, "that others may live," had become the defining axiom of the rescue subculture, the Air Force slogan could just as easily have been "that others may die." Although the rescue forces had demonstrated their relevance in recovering Americans in limited war, military leaders considered the Korean War an anomaly. Even if Air Force leaders appreciated the benefits of the ARS in the Korean War, its importance depreciated in the context of massive nuclear retaliation.[23]

The Years between the Korean and Vietnam Wars: 1953–64

Even though the Air Force reduced ARS manning between the Korean and Vietnam wars, the scope of the ARS peacetime commitments widened. The Air Force scaled back Rescue Service from a peak force of 54 squadrons and 7,900 Airmen in 1954 to 11 squadrons and 1,450 men in 1961.[24] On one hand, rescue units continued to support the USAF's worldwide commitments; on the other, according to ARS official records, the USAF became "responsible for coordinating SAR activities in the contiguous United States (or inland region)."[25] In turn, the USAF delegated this mission to the Continental Air Command and the ARS.

Additionally, the domestic support mission was formally documented in the *National Search and Rescue Plan*, a document first published in May 1956.[26] In the same month, Headquarters (HQ) Air Force assigned the local base rescue mission to ARS.[27] The ARS had to make major adjustments in order to respond to the ever-increasing peacetime responsibilities with ever-decreasing rescue resources. A USAF directive,

published on 25 September 1958, described the new emphasis of the post–Korean War ARS:

> ARS will be organized, manned, equipped, trained, and deployed to support peacetime air operations.
>
> *No special units or specially designed aircraft will be provided for the sole purpose of wartime search and rescue. . . .*
>
> Wartime rescue operations will be dictated by the capabilities of equipment used for peacetime SAR, and will be conducted in accordance with JANAF [Joint Army, Navy, Air Force] and Standard Wartime SAR procedures.[28] (emphasis added)

Although the ARS kept the mantra "that others may live," the organization degraded slowly to a skeleton command whose technical orientation centered on the space recovery mission and local base rescue rather than the recovery of aircrews under combat conditions.[29] This is not to suggest that Air Force leaders did not appreciate the concept of combat SAR. After all, as Blumentritt indicates, "many of [the] senior airmen had flown in Korea" and had witnessed the benefits of a rescue force in combat.[30] This degradation supports the widely accepted notion that Air Force leadership considered the limited war experience in Korea an anomaly and, therefore, realigned its efforts and budgetary priorities on nuclear deterrence.

This organizational neglect of the combat-rescue mission suggests that the ARS was severely handicapped in the early stages of the SEA conflict. This was due not to some conspiracy to hamper ARS capabilities, but rather to the same benign neglect discussed in chapter 3. After all, in the 1950s, the US doctrine of massive nuclear retaliation remained the central theme of US defense policy. Thomas C. Schelling calls this the "diplomacy of violence," stating that "we have a Department of Defense but emphasize retaliation—to return evil for evil."[31] At the strategic level, the USAF was working under the assumption that the Soviet Union was America's most likely and most dangerous adversary.[32] In this context, Air Force leadership did not see the need to maintain a credible aircrew-recovery combat capability because in case of nuclear war, according to US defense policy, the crews would not have much to come home to.

With the Soviet threat in the forefront, USAF force structure, doctrine, and mind-set remained enthralled with strategic nuclear airpower. As Drew submits, Air Force basic doctrine

"seemed to assume that the struggles in Southeast Asia did not exist and, for the most part, that the Korean War had not happened."[33] The ARS's link to the strategic nuclear mission was via supporting the local base-rescue initiative and, later, by providing helicopter support to the remote missile-silo locations. The consequence of the USAF's inattention to the CSAR mission in peacetime was that ARS crews were ill-prepared to face the difficulties of a war short of the massive retaliation model.

When ARS units first arrived in SEA in March 1964, crews and aircraft proved unprepared for their wartime mission.[34] Limited funds forced the ARS to relinquish most of its helicopters in the 1950s.[35] Unfortunately, as time would show, helicopters would prove to be the most effective platforms for the recovery of aircrews in the jungles and mountains of Vietnam.[36] In terms of organizational culture, almost a decade's worth of ARS aviators was exposed only to noncombat applications. In fact, the ARS was so successful in its peacetime role that this generation of aviators identified itself with a critical, albeit noncombat, mission.[37] They considered themselves relevant regardless of the fact that combat was not emphasized.

Ultimately, the lack of USAF forethought, evident in the 1958 USAF directive restricting the ARS mission and the severe reduction of ARS manning, meant that the ARS was poorly equipped for any wartime tasking.[38] The ARS had become what the USAF wanted it to be—a peacetime-oriented organization. Between the Korean and Vietnam wars, CSAR skills atrophied due to a lack of combat-oriented training. Because the ARS had not trained for combat since the Korean War, its crews and planners had to learn under fire—not the preferred training environment.

The Vietnam War Experience: 1962–75

In his survey of ARS history, John L. Vandegrift argues that the ARS leadership "was not convinced that it had a legitimate wartime rescue mission."[39] One cannot make this evaluation without considering service-doctrinal considerations and political sensitivities. The assumptions of ARS headquarters were endemic to the accepted military and political establishment's mind-set of the late 1950s and early 1960s. Robert D. Schulzinger contends that "throughout this period of gradually increasing

American participation in the fighting, the Johnson administration struggled to limit the US role" in Vietnam.[40] In fact, President Johnson made it clear early in his presidency that the United States was "not about to send American boys 9 or 10,000 miles away from home to do what Asian boys ought to be doing for themselves."[41]

On balance, it is easy to put the blame for having a low combat priority on the ARS leadership 40 years after the fact. Placed in the context of the times, however, one may begin to understand that the ARS mentality was emblematic of the existing attitudes perpetuated by its military and civilian leaders. Tilford perhaps puts it best: "Rescue was no less ready for the very different and difficult kind of warfare in Indochina than any other organization in the Air Force, or the entire U.S. military."[42]

In line with Tilford's comments, the USAF had to convince US Army leadership in charge of MACV that a "dedicated and trained rescue force was needed in Vietnam."[43] In short, while the Air Force lacked the foresight to maintain a CSAR capability during the interwar years, once it realized that it needed CSAR in-theater, it could not convince the MACV leadership (mostly populated with Army officers) of the importance of a properly trained and adequately equipped Air Force CSAR force. Concurrently, this ill-trained and poorly equipped rescue force had to contend with Air Force/Army controversy over roles and missions. According to Tilford, the Air Force had a hard time convincing the Army that "the recovery of downed aircrew members involved more than hovering and dropping down a rope, [while] the Army insisted it could handle the mission as part of its regular helicopter activities."[44] In essence, this was an interservice controversy over roles and missions that went beyond just CSAR procedures.[45]

The debate between the two services was partly due to doctrinal incompatibilities and a clash of personalities between the Air Force and the Army-dominated MACV leadership. The relationship between commanders improved almost instantaneously with the arrival of Maj Gen Joseph H. Moore in March 1964.[46] According to Tilford, General Westmoreland (MACV commander) and General Moore (2nd Air Division commander) were childhood friends; thus, the cordial relationship between these two

key personalities "provided the biggest booster of tactical air support in Vietnam."[47]

As noted in chapter 2, Schein proposes that leaders have a significant influence on an institution as it advances through the different stages of organizational development.[48] The interaction between Generals Westmoreland and Moore reinforces Schein's hypothesis. General Westmoreland allowed more leeway to the Air Force contingent in Vietnam because he trusted General Moore. Although relations improved, the doctrinal differences proved much more troublesome and enduring.

Regarding CSAR, a major problem between the Army and Air Force was that each service had its own method of dealing with personnel recovery (PR) operations.[49] A good example of the lack of joint procedures and lack of Air Force capabilities, stemming from its pre–Vietnam War lack of combat attention, is the story of A1C William Hart "Pits" Pitsenbarger.

On 11 April 1966, Airman Pitsenbarger, a pararescue jumper (PJ) assigned to Det. 6, 38th ARRS, Bien Hoa AB, South Vietnam, distinguished himself above and beyond the call of duty.[50] On that day Pitsenbarger was the PJ on board Pedro 73, one of two HH-43 helicopters on alert at Bien Hoa. Pedro 73 and Pedro 97 were launched in order to evacuate approximately 25 wounded soldiers of Charlie Company, 2nd Battalion, 1st Infantry Division (US).[51] Robert L. LaPointe, a Vietnam veteran and longtime PJ, states that "because of the triple canopy jungle, a hoist equipped helicopter was needed."[52] For that reason, the ARRS helicopters responded.

SSgt David Milsten, the noncommissioned officer in charge of the PJ section at Bien Hoa AB, wrote, "We know these Army recovery missions are no picnic, but till now we have been real lucky. These [medical evacuations] are not our job. . . . [The Army] Dust Off UH-1s do a great job, but must land to pick up casualties. Air Rescue could do a much better job with HH-3s, picking up 10–15 at a time. But as long as we only have our HH-43s, we're stuck."[53] Milsten was referring to the HH-43 capacity to carry a maximum of two wounded soldiers at a time. The PJ on board would ordinarily treat the patients on the way to nearby field hospitals, but because of Charlie Company's unfamiliarity with the "Stokes litter," Airman Pitsenbarger volunteered to go with the Army soldiers in order to

facilitate faster extractions.[54] Pitsenbarger, with complete disregard for his own safety, treated numerous wounded soldiers awaiting evacuation and defended the perimeter while the two helicopters worked feverishly to evacuate the casualties. After four hours of continuous fighting, Pitsenbarger was killed by enemy fire.[55] Lt Martin L. Kroah, 3rd Platoon commander, C-Company, recalled, "I am certain the death count would have been much higher had it not been for the heroic efforts of Airman Pitsenbarger."[56] He was awarded the nation's highest military honor, the congressional Medal of Honor, posthumously on 8 December 2000.

Airman Pitsenbarger's mission was exemplary not only of the sacrifices that ARRS personnel made throughout the Vietnam War, but also of the doctrinal shortfalls between the Army's and Air Force's personnel recovery assets. In Pitsenbarger's Medal of Honor award ceremony, Secretary of the Air Force F. Whitten Peters said, "Amid the gloom and waste of war, we see, occasionally, a brief but brilliant flash of personal valor: of heroism so radiant that it lights up everything and everyone near it."[57] But beyond their valor and utility in combat, PJs hold another coveted position in CSAR history. According to Guilmartin, PJs have always been the "soul and conscience of combat rescue." He points out that their "strong sense of institutional continuity and an unshakeable faith in the importance of the combat rescue mission" have been instrumental in the CSAR organizational development.[58] But as the war became increasingly unpopular in the United States and strategically unviable in SEA, the question became, why risk ARS personnel in order to recover downed crew members?

Marcus Flavinius, a Roman centurion, emphatically proclaimed, "If it should be otherwise, if we should have to leave our bleached bones on these sands in vain, then beware of the anger of the Legions!"[59] Col Darrel Whitcomb, USAF, retired, a historian and Vietnam veteran, provides a much simpler explanation: "The survivor is one of ours and we never leave our people behind."[60] He suggests that because the Vietnam War was a conflict with limited objectives, the nation was willing to pay only a limited price for waging the war. Although the goals were narrow, the experience had a powerful influence on the cultural identity of the ARS community. The Vietnam War codified

an unspoken covenant that has since bound Airmen together. Whitcomb eloquently describes this bond: "By 1972, after eight years of war, we were still fighting there without any real dedication to a cause, except withdrawal. Like warriors from earlier wars, we fought for each other. We kept that article of faith that if we went down, the Jolly would come for us. In fact the helicopter became the symbol of that bond or covenant. To the rescue crews, it was a call sign. To the rest of us, it was a prayer. To many, it was salvation. It was the bond."[61] This contract, written with the blood of ARS crew members like Pits Pitsenbarger, sent a message to Airmen that whether or not the United States won the war, American aviators were not expendable.

Although this bond was prevalent in combat, it lay dormant in peacetime.[62] For a decade, the Air Force had considered the Korean War experience—oriented towards limited objectives—an anomaly and, thus, remained resolute about the primacy of the massive-retaliation strategy.[63] In a war between the two superpowers, the Air Force did not need a robust CSAR capability. With the survival of the nation at stake, it made no sense to expend resources for the recovery of downed aircrews. The Korean and Vietnam experiences, however, demonstrated a need to maintain a healthy CSAR component within the Air Force arsenal. At least in the immediate aftermath of the war, it appeared as if the Air Force had learned from its experience.

Lessons Learned and Relearned

Ultimately, the ARS was successful in SEA due to the "imagination and innovation within a system receptive to change [that] brought improvement through the introduction of novel tactics and new equipment."[64] ARS, and later ARRS, personnel saved 4,120 lives, with 2,780 considered combat saves.[65] The 1958-era maxim that "wartime rescue operations will be dictated by the capabilities of equipment used for peacetime" proved erroneous when confronted by the problems of combat aircrew recovery in the jungle and mountainous terrain of SEA.[66] Although most historians agree that the rescuemen risked their lives "so that others may live," one cannot help wondering whether more lives could have been saved had the USAF, ARS, and later the ARRS learned from their previous experiences.

The evidence suggests, however, that other organizational priorities had overshadowed solutions to CSAR problems.

Based on this review of the rescue heritage, one can only conclude that the organizational growth of the CSAR community is peppered with lessons learned and relearned.[67] By the end of the Vietnam War, CSAR capability included helicopter, tanker, and specific CAS units that specialized in CSAR procedures. Maj Gen Richard L. Comer, a veteran rescue and AFSOF pilot, declares the Vietnam War the "golden age of CSAR."[68] Reflecting on the Vietnam experience, three problem areas stand out and deserve greater attention.

The first lesson ultimately comes down to the following observation: the CSAR community struggled for survival and relevancy in peacetime because the USAF leadership did not see a need for a CSAR capability in its vision of future wars. Consequently, the USAF did not commit the necessary resources to maintain a healthy peacetime CSAR capability (fig. 3).[69] Although fiscally attractive, this reasoning appears flawed. *Maintaining a viable CSAR force costs money; reinventing it after hostilities begin costs lives.*

Since CSAR has not been a key element of the USAF's strategy between the Korean and Vietnam wars, it has not been an Air Force resource priority during interwar periods.[70] After all, to bomber pilots, the dominant tribe within the USAF for almost four decades, proper preparation for war entailed a monolithic focus on nuclear deterrence.[71] Therefore, ARS/ARRS organizational growth had to stem from its peacetime mission during the interwar years because it could not influence the dominant tribe's vision of war. Missile silo support, local base rescue, and space program support contributed to the USAF preoccupation with nuclear deterrence, but it did not prepare rescue forces for combat. Ironically, CSAR would become an Air Force necessity in wartime.

In hindsight it appears that, institutionally, the USAF concluded that if it were ready for the most dangerous scenario—nuclear exchange with the Soviet Union—it could handle any minor emergencies with its residual capabilities. But in the case of CSAR, these residual capabilities did not exist in peacetime. So, unable to outcompete more dominant tribes for resources, the ARS clung to a peacetime mission that allowed it
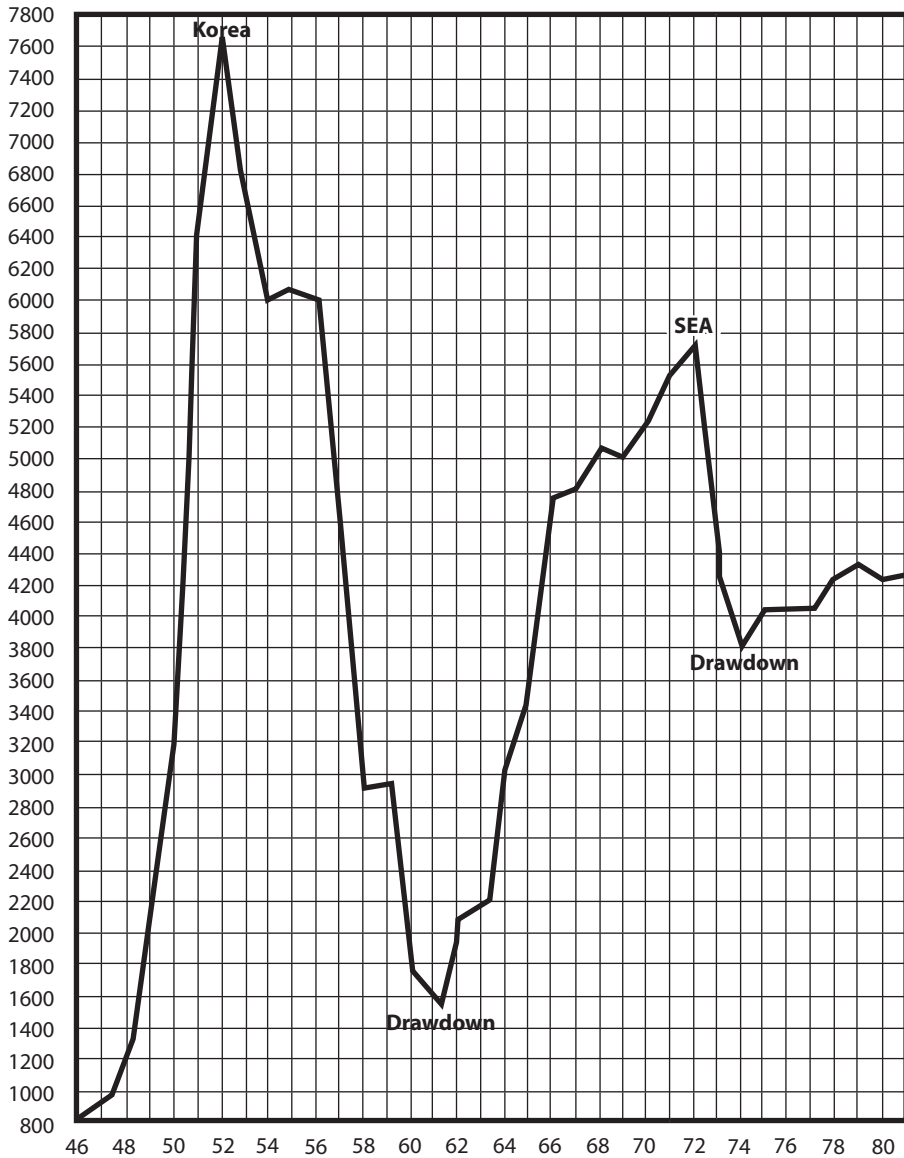
Figure 3. ARS/ARRS personnel assigned (vertical axis) between 1946 and 1981 (horizontal axis). (Reprinted from Donald D. Little, *Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Service, 1946–1981: An Illustrated Chronology* [Scott AFB, IL: Office of MAC History, Military Airlift Command, 1983], p. 72.)

to exist in a vegetated state until a national emergency revived it to a more potent wartime footing.[72]

As it would turn out, this proved to be a dangerous gamble. Both the Korean and Vietnam experiences suggest that flexibility and readiness of the peacetime force often make the difference between success and failure in combat.[73] Before the USAF deployed rescue assets in SEA, in the interwar period that Tilford refers to as "the dark age of CSAR," American Army and Marine aviators died in rescue attempts because "the available crews lacked rescue training and were ignorant of proper recovery procedures. There was a misconception . . . that rescue entailed nothing more than flying over a downed crewman and picking him up."[74]

The second lesson from the first three decades of CSAR experiences suggests that rescue doctrine, as well as tactics, techniques, and procedures, must be flexible. This is partially due to the extreme diversity of environmental factors that affect combat personnel recovery. If anything, the first three decades of rescue history suggest that rescue aircrews must be trained to respond in a variety of scenarios and conditions, and across the entire spectrum of conflict. This is especially true since CSAR's peacetime requirements commit them to global operations, but threat considerations and the terrain must dictate the way its forces approach their mission.

For example, in order to overcome the difficulties posed by the topography and enemy defenses in Vietnam, ARRS developed the Search and Rescue Task Force (SARTF) construct.[75] Although some SARTF-like tactics were employed during the Korean War, the coordinated use of helicopters (HH-3s, HH-53s) and fixed-wing aircraft (primarily A-7s, A-1s, OV-10s, AC-130s, and HC-130s) truly came of age during the Vietnam experience.[76]

The helicopters had the responsibility of recovering the downed aircrew member while the fixed-wing aircraft located the survivors, provided command and control, and suppressed enemy fire.[77] Unlike the SOF CH-53s that flew at night, and most often unescorted, the SARTF "packages" flew mostly during daylight hours and in good weather. As the war dragged on and the cost in American casualties rose, the USAF placed heavier emphasis on the rescue of downed aircrew members.

Tilford suggests that by 1967 rescue missions "generally took precedence over normal strike missions and aircraft were often diverted from their assigned targets to support the A-1s and rescue choppers."[78] None of these missions were ever the same, but with time SARTF procedures improved and became an integral part of the rescue modus operandi. As Americans grew more skeptical of US involvement in SEA, rescue forces became more determined not to leave anyone behind. This desire to do everything possible to recover American flyers—and more importantly, the Air Force institutional support (the ready diversion of aircraft from other missions) to effect those missions—has created, in the minds of rescue forces, the CSAR paradigm.[79] But as CSAR forces began to withdraw from Vietnam, SARTF tactics remained deeply ingrained in the rescue culture as the tactics that delivered them from the abyss of early Vietnam experiences.

Although SARTF procedures worked in the jungles of Vietnam, Tilford emphasizes that the SARTF concept would not be as effective "in the highly defended, relatively open areas of Europe, over the flat sands of the Middle East, or above the barren hills of Korea."[80] Edward Westermann supports Tilford's argument and warns, "Although SARTF may still have a place in certain threat environments, we must recognize that the proliferation, improved lethality, and portability of surface-to-air missiles (SAM) and antiaircraft artillery (AAA) jeopardize this method of recovery."[81]

The final lesson involves the need for an advanced rescue and recovery vehicle. In this regard, CSAR culture outwardly shares the Air Force's institutional fascination with equipment. The first helicopter that saw service with the ARS in Korea, the H-5, had no armor, possessed limited range, and could carry only four people, including the copilot and pilot.[82] Although the ARS later acquired the H-19, SH-21B, and H-43A/B, these helicopters were only marginally faster than the H-5; furthermore, they were based more on the peacetime requirements of local base rescue and space-program support than on wartime requirements of speed and ruggedness.[83] When one considers the relationship between response speed and the potential for a successful save, this is particularly important. A Korean War ARS newsletter explains this relationship: the time it took "to

react to downed aircrew members was frequently considered the primary measure of effectiveness."[84]

According to a 3rd Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Group study of SEA rescue experiences, "forty-seven percent of all unsuccessful rescue attempts resulted from the slow speed of the helicopters. For the downed airman this meant capture or death."[85] Platform capabilities not only made a difference to the survivor, but also improved the rescue helicopter's survivability. Perhaps no story outlines this observation better than the events surrounding the death of Airman Pitsenbarger, described earlier in this chapter.

Even with the introduction of the HH-3, however, the aircraft's speed and range proved insufficient. Likewise, when HH-53Bs arrived in the SEA area of operations on 14 September 1967, although able to fly faster and further, ARRS helicopters did not have the onboard systems required to perform rescues at night or in poor weather.[86] Despite the fact that the HH-53B/C "represented the best in rescue technology," an urgent need for the capacity to operate at night and in adverse weather conditions emerged from the SEA conflict.[87]

These lessons represent the 30-year sum total of the ARS and ARRS experiences between the creation of the service in 1946 and the drawdown after the Vietnam War in 1976. The ARRS took the lessons learned in Vietnam and tried to accommodate the requirements outlined in Southeast Asia Operational Requirement 114 by developing a night, adverse-weather platform that represented the future of ARRS: This platform was the HH-53H (Pave Low III), which after a lengthy testing phase became operational in early 1980.

The Air Rescue Service Culture

Whitcomb declared, "CSAR is combat, not just rescue."[88] The history of the ARS offers numerous examples of the community's dual personality. Rescue experiences both in combat and in the relatively peaceful interludes between wars have shaped the character of this community. Much like AFSOF, the CSAR community as a subgroup within the greater Air Force has enjoyed a substantial increase in resources and capabilities during wartime, only to have these assets erode in peacetime.[89]

Although AFSOF and CSAR forces share in this "feast or famine" experience, the CSAR community has had to bind itself to peacetime rescue requirements in order to ensure survival during the interwar years. In other words, to survive the interwar years marked by USAF institutional inattention to the rescue community, the ARS leaders insidiously reversed Whitcomb's observation, suggesting that CSAR was just rescue and not combat. Incredibly, as this chapter has demonstrated, the early post-Vietnam ARRS force structure represents the first time in the rescue community's history that the Air Force demonstrated the intent to maintain a robust CSAR capability during peacetime. Unfortunately, this commitment was starting to erode by 1979.

The following analysis addresses ARRS rotary- and fixed-wing airframes, specifically selected for two primary reasons. First, these assets represent the combat arm of the ARRS arsenal and, therefore, were most influenced by the ARRS wartime experiences.[90] Second, within the rotary- and fixed-wing subelements of the ARRS culture, potential friction points must be identified prior to an in-depth comparison of the ARRS and AFSOF cultures. This section demonstrates that the ARRS community, much like the AFSOF community, was not as homogeneous as Whitcomb makes it sound. Finally, in an effort to relate the rescue cultural analysis to its AFSOF counterpart, this chapter concludes with an evaluation of the most controversial friction point between the two Air Force subcultures—the relationship between CSAR and AFSOF helicopter communities (see table 1 for a comparison of CSAR and AFSOF missions).

The helicopter community includes two distinct ARRS subelements. Colonel Connelly argues that the helicopter community was segregated into "light-lift and heavy-lift" subcultures.[91] The light-lift (UH-1H/N/P) crew members flew primarily missile-silo support and local base rescue support (noncombat) missions. The crews of heavy-lift helicopters (HLH) (primarily HH-3s and HH-53s) flew a variety of combat-rescue missions.[92] The two subcultures reflected the dual personality of ARS/ARRS. The noncombat support missions dominated the ARRS agenda in the years between World War II and Korea, as well as in the interwar period between the Korean and Vietnam conflicts.

For the first time in its history, the post-Vietnam ARRS had the support of Headquarters Air Force to maintain a CSAR ca-

Table 1. Comparison of the CSAR and AFSOF mission areas

CSAR	AFSOF
• Rarely involves planned employment of ground forces	• Usually involves planned employment of ground forces
• Rarely joint in nature	• Usually joint in nature
• Reactive	• Proactive
• Result of other actions in the campaign plan	• Planned targets or objectives are part of campaign plan
• Results advertised	• Results rarely revealed
• Discovery by opposition does not usually end the mission	• Discovery by opposing forces usually means plan is compromised and aborts the mission
• Most effective during daylight	• Most effective at night
• Personnel recovery is only mission	• Personnel recovery is corollary activity to main mission objectives
• Not rehearsed	• Premission activities include extensive rehearsal
• Rely on general support	• Specialized support, intel, weather, logistics, etc.
• Require localized air superiority	• Air superiority not required
• [Most often] require task force	• [Most often] does not require task force

Source: Veda Incorporated, *Combat Search and Rescue Report to the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Executive Agent for Combat Search and Rescue: Combat Search and Rescue Requirements and Capabilities Study* (Washington, DC: Veda Incorporated, 10 Feb. 1997), p. 18. (Lieutenant Colonel Blumentritt graciously provided this document.)

pability during peacetime. According to the 1979 ARRS official history, "the foremost mission [of the ARRS] continued to be combat rescue (CR). Emphasis was placed on combat plans and exercises, and training was adapted to combat conditions in various environments."[93] At the same time, the ARRS retained custody of the noncombat rescue requirements most often associated with the interwar ARS/ARRS doctrine. To clarify, in the aftermath of the Vietnam War, the ARRS had to accommodate two distinctly different helicopter cultures. But the Vietnam experience had affected the two ARRS helicopter communities in different ways; therefore, organizational development progressed along different paths.

Doctrinally, the two communities had different institutional priorities. According to ARRS Regulation 55-6, "combat SAR continued to hold the top mission priority . . . for ARRS helicopters and HC-130 aircraft. Tropical storm reconnaissance held the

highest operations priority for WC-130s, and aerial sampling was the most important mission for WC-135s."[94] The regulation, however, identifies certain key exceptions: "[The] top mission priority for the H-1s of the 37 ARRS was SAC security support and the top priority for H-1s of Det. 2, 67 ARRS, was very important person (VIP) and distinguished visitor (DV) support."[95] The assets of the 37th ARRS and Det. 2, 67th ARRS, accounted for 57 percent of the ARRS active duty light-lift inventory.[96] In essence, 57 percent of the ARRS light-lift helicopter (LLH) force did not have CSAR as its primary mission. In contrast, the entire HLH force—70 airframes—retained a CSAR mission emphasis.[97] Col Ron Dietz, USAF, retired, sums up this situation: "There indeed were different communities within ARRS. . . . The light-lift folks did not have the CSAR as a core mission . . . so it should not be surprising that they were of a different mindset."[98]

In many ways, the light-lift force was symbolic of the ARS/ARRS of old, while the heavy-lift force represented the combat orientation of the ARRS.[99] Essentially, the lessons learned and relearned during the Korean and Vietnam wars mattered little to a light-lift community that primarily dealt with Cold War requirements such as security support for SAC missile sites, security assistance for convoy escorts, and peacetime SAR support.[100] On the other hand, the heavy-lift force considered the Vietnam War as its defining moment—a conflict that, at least in the minds of the HH-3/HH-53 helicopter crews, demonstrated the requirement for a standing CSAR force.[101] Combat veterans of heavy-lift forces, who primarily encompassed the ARRS institutional memory, reminded the Air Force leadership of the price of neglect by advocating a robust combat-rescue capability.[102]

The Vietnam experience had slowly imprinted the two helicopter communities with different cultural perceptions: Steven Ott summarizes the evolution of an organizational culture: "[The] facts, truths, realities, beliefs and values are what the members agree they are."[103] Both communities were totally convinced of their organizational relevance, but there were compelling differences between the two subcultures. For instance, according to the ARRS official history, some of the LLH detachments "were assigned the primary mission of combat rescue, but the [U]H-1 helicopters assigned to these detach-

ments had more limited range and capability than the HLHs. Most LLHs performed civil SAR or other specialized tasks," including missile site and convoy escort support.[104]

Although the Vietnam experience did not force the light-lift community to make major adjustments to its modus operandi and equipment, the war had been a catalytic event for the heavy-lift culture. For the first time in ARRS history, the Air Force supported the notion of a combat-capable rescue force in peacetime. In the late 1970s, the Air Force seemed committed to providing the necessary funds, equipment, and manning to support combat-rescue requirements.[105] Because of their combat experiences and reputation within the Air Force, CSAR aviators vigorously influenced the ARRS helicopter agenda.[106]

The following list of the top five ARRS readiness priorities in 1980 exemplifies this CSAR influence:

1. R&D [research and development] funding for the rescue H-X helicopters.
2. Funding for spares for rescue HC-130, HH-53, and HH-3 aircraft.
3. Acceleration of [rescue] H-3/HH-53 Analytical Conditioning Inspections . . . and the H-53 Maintenance Enhancement Program.
4. Accelerated purchase of night vision goggles [primarily used by rescue].
5. Accelerated procurement of the M-60 machine gun for [the] LLH.[107]

Furthermore, the replacement platform for the H-3, forecasted to reach initial operational capability (IOC) status in 1986, was a medium-lift airframe immensely influenced by the HLH force.[108] Complementing the H-X, the CSAR subelement of the ARRS helicopter community was able to secure funds to convert nine HH-53B/C helicopters to the HH-53H Pave Low.[109] In brief, unlike the interwar period between the Korean and Vietnam wars, the USAF had apparently recognized the need to maintain a robust CSAR capability in peacetime. Parallel to the HLH initiatives, the ARRS also attempted to improve the post-Vietnam HC-130 aircraft fleet, a key enabler to long-range, HLH operations.

In 1974, according to ARRS official records, Military Airlift Required Operational Capability (ROC) 4-72 "validated a requirement for conversion of 22 HC-130Hs to a tanker configuration [HC-130P/N]."[110] The Air Force and MAC, however, failed to fund this modification, and in 1980 USAF Program Manage-

ment Directive Requirement 0903(1) negated the earlier ROC-72. Although official records show that the ARRS "considered the priority for the modification of HC-130Hs to a tanker configuration second only to the acquisition of the H-X," the Air Force did not support this initiative.[111]

Simply put, the ARRS had a vision for its HC-130 fleet that the USAF did not want to fund. ARRS records indicate that in December 1978, the ARRS "requested funds for FY [fiscal year] 1981 to convert only four aircraft to the tanker configuration. . . . The 1978 cost [of modification] per aircraft was about $1,000,000 [cost in 1972 was $300,000]."[112] By 1 January 1980, 12 HC-130Hs belonged to Air Force Reserve (AFR) squadrons, four to the Air National Guard, and only six were left in the ARRS squadrons.[113] In order to compensate for this lack of USAF support, the ARRS had to make some organizational adjustments.

As an integral part of a deployable SARTF, the HC-130H/P/N community centered on helicopter-support operations. Unlike the LLHs (non-air-refuelable) dispersed in a number of small detachments, in order to accommodate the SAC missile-site support and local base rescue requirements, HLHs and HC-130s were combined in composite squadrons.[114] According to a 1980 ARRS capabilities document, these squadrons were "a deployable, self-contained [combat] rescue force. They contain[ed] a mix of HC-130P/N (tanker aircraft), HC-130H (non-tankers), and air refuelable HLHs. The combination of unit tankers and helicopters permit[ted] a rapid response to contingencies."[115]

The symbiotic relationship between HC-130 and HLHs was first cultivated in SEA, but even in peacetime, the two communities maintained their "supporting and supported" relationship.[116] According to Colonel Pribyla, an HC-130 navigator and former ARRS director of operations, "while the WC-130, WC-135, and missile-site support missions had been added to [the ARRS] fold, the overriding culture centered on the heroics of the brotherhood who had flown the Pedro [H-43], H-3 and H53 Jolly's in Vietnam. The HC-130 tanker and Airborne Mission Command (AMC) types shared in that heritage somewhat, so they basked a bit in the light as well."[117]

Colonel Pribyla convincingly attests that the HLH and HC-130 relationship was rough at times. He contends that the primacy of the helicopter in the CSAR subculture left the HC-130 community feeling unappreciated.[118] Colonel Connelly adds, "I am a helo guy so I can't speak about FW [fixed-wing] attitudes . . . [but tanker crews] will both go wherever they have to, to pump gas to a helo so the helo crew can get medals while the only acknowledgement the tankers get is, 'Can you give me another thousand pounds?' "[119] Regardless of their uneven relationship, however, the helicopter and HC-130 communities were integral in advocating a robust CSAR capability. Subsequently, although the Air Force was theoretically supportive of a healthy CSAR force, it failed to adequately fund the most significant ARRS/CSAR initiatives.

On 18 May 1979, after months of "sidestepping the highly volatile issue" of the H-X and the conversion of the HC-130H to the HC-130P/N, these programs were not funded in the FY 1981 budget.[120] Although doctrinally the USAF had accepted the need to maintain a healthy CSAR force following the Vietnam War, this new appreciation did not translate into financial support for the projects that could fulfill future CSAR requirements. In addition to the fiscal turmoil, however, the ARRS heavy-lift community had to contend with another friction point.

As noted in the previous chapter, during the latter half of the SEA experience, the 40th ARRS and 21st SOS had been collocated at Nakhon Phanom (NKP), Thailand. Through shared experiences, the two units developed a unique relationship that can best be described as a "sibling rivalry."[121] As with any relationship, there are good and bad aspects of the sibling bond. CMSgt Tom Green, USAF, retired, submits, however, that enlisted troops had positive feelings about the relationship between the two communities.[122] According to Chief Green,

> We would occasionally (less than often) chide each other about each fly-ing our own missions. Jolly chant—you crash, we dash; Dustys—you call, we haul. . . . As far as the enlisted crews, we shared a hootch bar, picnic area out back that was built by both unit's [sic] efforts, and volleyball net that assured outlets for friendly rivalry. . . . Some of this tension was fueled by an abundance of alcohol, . . . [but] we really were, for the most part, a good motley crew that watched out for each other

but understood that we each had our own mission and I believe shared a mutual respect for each other.[123]

Although Green states that there was "healthy competition" between the 40th and 21st crews, Guilmartin promotes the view that the competition sometimes turned to strife.

At times petty arguments and personalities created what Guilmartin calls "a hell of a lot of rivalry, hell of a lot of tension" between rescue and AFSOF helicopter crews.[124] According to Colonel Connelly, "the ARRS guys got lots of medals and the country was behind their efforts. The SOF guys were deep into an unpopular war, somewhat clandestine war in Laos, and their missions were hush hush, no medals. ARRS guys got promotions. A resentment built, although it might have been there long before I was aware of it."[125] Connelly adds a unique perspective to the sibling rivalry. In describing the relationship between the 40th and 21st, Connelly stresses each unit's self-perceptions and the subculture's relevance within the Air Force community. This assertion echoes the intraservice-relevance argument developed in chapter 2 (i.e., subgroup stratification inside the greater institution can influence the organizational development of the different subgroups). In this case, Connelly's observation concerning ARRS and AFSOF heavy-lift helicopters is indicative of the cultural differences between the ARRS and AFSOF subcultures.

These differences reflected the diverse ARRS and AFSOF organizational development throughout the Vietnam War. As mentioned in the previous chapter, the 40th ARRS HH-53 helicopters flew SOF missions interchangeably with the 21st SOS CH-53 helicopters, primarily when the CH-53s could not reach their objective due to fuel considerations. But after the Vietnam War, ARRS crews did not want to continue their association with AFSOF or the special operations mission. Nonetheless, "in 1975, the Vice CSAF, Gen William V. McBride issued a policy which said in essence that ARRS forces would continue to perform the combat-rescue mission and would be used for special operations only on a case-by-case basis."[126] A series of MAC and ARRS commanders struggled with the *white hat* versus *black hat* conundrum associated with the ARRS and AFSOF heavy-lift helicopter force. According to the official ARRS history,

MAC/ARRS had developed, over a period of many years a "white hat" image. The people of many countries equated MAC and ARRS with humanitarian missions and lifesaving missions. If the MAC/ARRS helicopters assumed regular missions involving covert operations in connection with unconventional warfare and special operations, then the people of the US and foreign countries might perceive MAC/ARRS in a "black hat" image. A "black hat" image might generate problems in achieving overfly clearances and use of foreign bases during exercise and contingencies.[127]

Interestingly enough, Connelly concedes that "the division [between ARRS and AFSOF crews was] stupid, petty, and only sustained by leadership. The lieutenants never cared where they served, and the captains seldom cared."[128] In reviewing over a decade's worth of historical documents, something that perpetuated the white hat/black hat conundrum was the fact that none of the ARS/ARRS commanders had any rescue experience prior to assuming command of the ARS/ARRS (see table 2).

One can deduce then, that ARRS often lacked the command vision to overcome any cultural idiosyncrasies, such as the white hat/black hat syndrome. This "bottom-up" approach to an ARRS vision colored the organizational development of the community and affected its institutional identity. An implication of the bottom-up cultural development phenomenon was that ARRS leaders, influenced by the prevailing cultural winds, steered away from AFSOF-like missions (e.g., Operation Rice Bowl) because they did not want to associate the rescue white-hat culture with the special black-hat image. These cultural perceptions significantly affected USAF efforts to merge the ARRS and AFSOF communities in the 1980s, spotlighted in the next chapter.

In the end, there is considerable evidence suggesting that the Air Force appeared willing to maintain a robust rescue force. The Vietnam experience had convinced Air Force and ARRS leaders of the value of a viable CSAR force in peacetime. After the Vietnam War, fighter pilots, who had benefited the most from successful CSAR operations in SEA, had a vested interest in retaining a healthy CSAR capability. One of the unintended consequences of the "rise of the fighter pilots" was that CSAR finally had an advocate within the Air Force's (soon to be) dominant tribe. Unfortunately, it was not lack of capability that kept the ARRS from responding to challenges of the 1980s, but rather poor ARRS leadership, as the next chapter demonstrates.

Table 2. ARS/ARRS commanders

ARS/ARRS Commanders	Dates of Command	Background
Col Wallace Ford	26 May 46–30 Nov. 46	Not Available (Interim Commander)
Col (later Brig Gen) Richard Kight	1 Dec. 46–8 July 52	Bomber/Transport Pilot
Col J. C. Bailey	9 July 52–18 Aug. 52	Not Available (Interim Commander)
Brig Gen Thomas DuBois	19 Aug. 52–31 July 59	Bomber/Transport Pilot
Brig Gen (later Maj Gen) Thomas Cunningham[a]	1 Aug. 59–21 June 63	Bomber/Airlift Pilot
Col Theodore Tatum	21 June 63–1 Aug. 63	Not Available (Interim Commander)
Brig Gen Adriel Williams	1 Aug. 63–7 Mar. 65	Airlift Pilot
Maj Gen Allison Brooks	8 Mar. 65–23 Apr. 70	Fighter/Bomber/ Airlift Pilot
Brig Gen Frank Everest Jr.	24 Apr. 70–25 Feb. 73	Fighter/Test Pilot
Brig Gen Glenn Sullivan[b]	26 Feb. 73–31 July 74	Bomber Pilot
Maj Gen Ralph Saunders	1 Aug. 74–28 Sept. 79	Bomber/Airlift Pilot
Maj Gen Cornelius Nugteren	29 Sept. 79–20 Aug. 81	Fighter/Airlift Pilot
Maj Gen William Mall[c]	21 Aug. 81–1 Mar. 83	Airlift Pilot

[a] Brig Gen Cunningham was the only commander promoted to a higher rank after commanding the ARS/ARRS.
[b] There is a discrepancy between the "dates in command" presented by Little and information on the Air Force Link. Little lists 26 Sept. 73 as the effective start date. Based on the Air Force Link information, this appears to be a typo, and thus the information in this table reflects the Air Force Link data.
[c] In addition to commanding the ARRS, General Mall had the honor of being the first commander of Twenty-third Air Force. The date 1 Mar. 83 reflects the activation of Twenty-third Air Force. Maj Gen Robert Patterson assumed its command on 20 Sept. 85 (this is covered in detail in the next chapter).

Source: Little, Donald D. *Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Service, 1946–1981: An Illustrated Chronology* (Scott AFB, IL: Office of MAC History, Military Airlift Command, 1983), pp. 64–65; and "Biographies," Air Force Link, http://www.af.mil/bios.

Notes

1. Tilford, *Search and Rescue,* p. 6.
2. Ibid., p. 5.
3. Ransom, *Air Sea Rescue,* p. 1.
4. Ibid., p. 4. General Arnold was the commanding general of the Army Air Forces (AAF) during the war (Tilford, *Search and Rescue*, p. 6). Tilford provides information on the 5th Emergency Rescue Squadron, responsible for 8th Air Force rescue activities (p. 7; see also Ransom, *Air Sea Rescue*, p. 38).
5. Ransom, *Air Sea Rescue*, p. 34.
6. Tilford, *Search and Rescue*, p. 7. See also Ransom, *Air Sea Rescue*, p. 175, for the contributions of air-sea rescue squadrons during World War II.

Although unorganized and undermanned, the air-sea rescue units were able to save nearly 5,000 AAF crew members.

7. Little, *Aerospace Rescue,* p. 1.

8. Ibid., pp. 2–3.

9. Builder, *Icarus Syndrome*, p. 149.

10. Meilinger, *Hoyt S. Vandenberg,* p. 195. Meilinger suggests that Vandenberg was an exceptionally well-rounded general officer who was able to secure $21.1 billion (nearly 50 percent of the defense budget) for the Air Force in 1953 (ibid.). In terms of ARS requirements, see Tilford, *Search and Rescue*, p. 9. Although both the ARS and USAF had to endure the same budget cuts and force limitations, ARS had a hard time competing with Air Force priority projects. Blumentritt proposes that "from a fiscal standpoint, this organization [ARS] competed poorly with US Air Force offensive weapon systems, such as the F-86 *Sabre* jets and the B-45 *Tornado* bombers" (emphasis in original). Blumentritt, "Playing Defense," p. 28.

11. Crane, *American Airpower,* p. 6.

12. Little, *Aerospace Rescue,* p. 3.

13. Ibid.

14. Tilford, *Search and Rescue*, p. 13. According to Tilford, this represented 10 percent of the 1,690 USAF Airmen who were shot down behind enemy lines. Additionally, ARS picked up 84 Airmen from other services and allied air forces (11 Navy, 35 Marine, five Army flyers, and 33 from allied airmen) (ibid.).

15. Ibid., p. 12.

16. Blumentritt, "Playing Defense," p. 13.

17. Tilford, *Search and Rescue*, p. 14.

18. Ibid., p. 119. This information comes from a 22 Apr. 1978 Tilford interview with the Korean-era commander of the ARS, General Kight.

19. AFMAN 1-2, *USAF Basic Doctrine,* pp. 7–8. This remains an enduring principle of Air Force culture today. For more, see AFDD 1, *Air Force Basic Doctrine,* p. 14.

20. Crane, *American Airpower*, pp. 40–42. Crane argues that Lt Gen George Stratemeyer, the Far East Air Forces (FEAF) commander, shared General MacArthur's faith in the potency of the air arm. According to Crane, Stratemeyer believed in the offensive nature of airpower and believed that, given enough aircraft, the FEAF could decisively repel the invasion of South Korea and coerce the Chinese to end their support to the North Koreans. General MacArthur, or the Air Force leadership for that matter, considered the capability to recover aircrews a major consideration in the development of their war strategy (ibid.).

21. AFDD 2-1.6, *Combat Search and Rescue*, p. 3. Today, Air Force doctrine suggests that a robust CSAR capability assists the joint force commander (JFC) in three ways. First, a successful CSAR restores "personnel to areas under friendly control." Second, it denies adversaries the opportunity to exploit the intelligence and propaganda value of captured personnel." Finally, it increases morale and, inherently, operational performance (ibid.). Although current doctrine reflects a much more advanced CSAR organiza-

tional development and a more enlightened Air Force outlook, it inadequately addresses the inherent worth of CSAR to the JFC.

22. Thompson, "Air War over Korea," p. 52.

23. By the end of the Korean War, ARS manning had grown to over 7,900 personnel. However, by 1961 budget restrictions forced a reduction to just 1,600. Tilford, *Search and Rescue*, p. 15.

24. Vandegrift, *History of Air Rescue Service*, p. 88. See also Tilford, *Search and Rescue*, p. 15; and Little, *Aerospace Rescue,* p. 18. According to Little, 14 squadrons were inactivated, leaving ARS with only three squadrons. This suggests that not only was rescue downsized, but it was also spread thin to accommodate the local base rescue initiative, equipment recovery for the space program, as well as SAR on a worldwide scale. For documentation on the SAR and the local base support plan, see Tilford, p. 15.

25. Little, *Aerospace Rescue,* p. 12.

26. Tilford, *Search and Rescue*, p. 16.

27. Military Airlift Transport Service (MATS) Special Plan 138-61, *National SAR,* 1 Mar. 1961 (cited in Tilford, *Search and Rescue*, p. 13). This initiative was based on data provided by USAF studies. According to this data, 70 percent of all aircraft accidents occurred within 20 miles of the base.

28. USAF to MATS, letter, 26 Sept. 1958, as cited in Tilford, *Search and Rescue*, p. 16.

29. Tilford, *Search and Rescue*, pp. 18–19; Little, *Aerospace Rescue,* p. 19. Of note, in order to accommodate the local base rescue mission requirements, between 1961 and 1962 the USAF increased the ARS authorized manning requirements from 1,500 to 2,700.

30. Blumentritt, "Playing Defense," p. 30.

31. Schelling, *Arms and Influence*, pp. 1, 7.

32. Thompson, "Air War over Korea," pp. 51–52.

33. Drew, "Air Theory," p. 331. Drew bases this comment on a survey of the 1953, 1954, 1955, and 1959 versions of Air Force basic doctrine (AFMAN 1-2) (ibid.).

34. Little, *Aerospace Rescue,* p. 24.

35. Tilford, *Search and Rescue*, p. 37.

36. Ibid.; Blumentritt, "Playing Defense," p. 30; and Little, *Aerospace Rescue,* p. 30. The one exception, perhaps, was the H-3, a helicopter originally developed as an antisubmarine platform that was later used in support of the US space program. But the first CH-3C (AFSOF variant) did not make its Vietnam début until 1965, while its rescue counterpart, the HH-3, did not log its first rescue in Vietnam until 11 June 1967.

37. Ibid., pp. 9–18. Little fills nine pages of ARS exploits during this time period. From recovery of aircrews as part of the local base rescue concept to the rescue of 26 Philippino passengers of a DC-7 that crashed off the coast of Polillo Island, ARS worked hard so "that others may live" (p. 18).

38. Little, *Aerospace Rescue*, p. 18. At the end of 1960, ARS had only three squadrons and 1,450 personnel (ibid.).

39. Vandegrift, *History of Air Rescue Service*, p. 168; and Tilford, *Search and Rescue*, pp. 31, 39, and 154. Although this segment addresses the Vietnam

War as a single entity, Tilford points out that "the fighting in Southeast Asia actually involved several wars" (p. 31). Rather than divide the rescue experiences between US actions in Laos prior to 1964, air support to forces in South Vietnam, or the air war over North Vietnam, this section will concentrate on the time frame between Apr. 1962 and Oct. 1975. The account begins with the 1 Apr. 1962 activation of the first official ARS unit in Vietnam, Det. 3, Pacific Air Rescue Center (Tilford, *Search and Rescue*, p. 39) and ends with the final withdrawal of rescue forces from Vietnam in Oct. 1975 (ibid., p. 154).

40. Schulzinger, *Time for War,* p. 154.

41. Johnson, *Public Papers of the President,* pp. 1390–91.

42. Tilford, *Search and Rescue*, p. 155.

43. Tilford, *Crosswinds,* p. 48.

44. Ibid.

45. Tilford, *Search and Rescue*, p. 49. Tilford suggests that the Army's appreciation that the large influx of ground forces meant that its helicopters and twin-engine transports (i.e., Caribou) alone could not handle the increased support requirements—with need comes compromise.

46. For rescue deployments to SEA and deconfliction with the Army, see Tilford, *Crosswinds*, p. 48. One of the biggest roles and mission debates involved COIN. (COIN is analyzed in depth in the next chapter.) Also, regarding roles and missions, the Army/Air Force controversy over duplication and redundancy of roles and missions had been a point of contention between the services long before Vietnam and would continue to plague service relations long after the end of the SEA conflict. This issue will be discussed more in depth when addressing the "31 initiatives" in later chapters. For more on the USA role in medical evacuation (or Dust Off) missions in Vietnam, see Cook, *Rescue under Fire.* For air mobility issues, see Futrell, *Ideas*, vol. 2, pp. 172–92, particularly p. 182. For Army refusal to put helicopter gunships under the single air manager construct, see Trest, "Legacy of Halfway Unification."

47. Tilford, *Search and Rescue*, p. 49. See also Henjum to ARRS commander, letter, 13 June 1980 (cited in History, ARRS, 1980, vol. 1, p. 22). Colonel Henjum's entire letter is in vol. 2, supporting document (supt. doc.) I-50. Although this improvement in "tactical air" issues does not directly translate into better relations regarding CSAR or USAF helicopter procedures, it signals a change for the better in the dealings between services. The USAF/USA roles-and-missions controversy over helicopters would not be resolved until 1966. According to Colonel Henjum, the USA would be responsible for the theater helicopter mission, and the USAF would be responsible for the helicopter special-operations missions. The CSAR "issue" remained in flux throughout the entire war.

48. Schein, *Organizational Culture*, p. 377.

49. AFDD 2-1.6, *Combat Search and Rescue*, p. 1. Although the term *personnel recovery* was used during Vietnam, its definition has evolved throughout the years. Since most readers of this paper are probably familiar with the current definition of the term, *PR* is used in this context according to the current USAF definition. According to AFDD 2-1.6, *PR* is the umbrella term for

operations focusing on recovering captured, missing, or isolated personnel from danger.

50. Little, *Aerospace Rescue*, p. 26.

51. LaPointe, *PJs in Vietnam*, p. 7. Charlie Company was inserted on 10 Apr. as part of Operation Abilene. The concept of operations was to insert the Army troops, reinforce them by USA helicopters, and support them with indirect fires (artillery) and a combination of USA helicopter gunships and USAF fighters. Unfortunately, the Vietcong drew Charlie Company into a carefully planned ambush (p. 8). Complicating matters for the ill-fated soldiers, USA artillery rounds, instead of silencing enemy mortars, fell accidentally on the US soldiers. Additionally, the triple-canopy jungle made it impossible for the USA helicopters to evacuate the wounded, since these helicopters were not hoist equipped.

52. Ibid., p. 8. This comment explains the rationale behind an ARRS helicopter response vice an Army helicopter extraction of the ambushed team.

53. Ibid., p. 17. Even today, the Army does not have any dedicated CSAR assets. CSAR is a secondary mission for medical evacuation and watercraft units. For more information see JP 3-50.2, *Doctrine for Joint Combat,* appendix A, p. A-1.

54. LaPointe, *PJs in Vietnam*, p. 9. The Stokes litter, the designation for a metal-wire basket/bed, was lowered through a hole in the jungle canopy; the patient was strapped in, and the litter was hoisted up to the hovering helicopter. If the jungle canopy was too thick to allow the litter to go through, the helicopter would lower instead a "forest penetrator." Pitsenbarger volunteered to go on the ground because the Army soldiers did not know how to strap in the wounded in the Stokes litter. Additionally, while Pedro 73 and 97 shuttled wounded to the rear, Pits was able to treat the ever-growing number of wounded soldiers awaiting transportation.

55. History, Det. 6, 38th Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Squadron, *Mission Narrative.*

56. USAF Collection, Written Statement, Martin L. Kroah's recommendation (cited in LaPointe, *PJs in Vietnam*, p. 14).

57. Correll, "Pitsenbarger Medal of Honor."

58. Guilmartin to author, e-mail.

59. JP 3-50.2, *Doctrine for Joint Combat*, p. 1-1. (Letter from Marcus Flavinius, Centurion in the 2nd Cohort of the Augusta Legion, to his cousin Tertullus, circa 50 BC.)

60. Whitcomb, "Combat Search and Rescue," p. 32.

61. Ibid., p. 33.

62. Green to author, e-mail, 6 May 2004. Chief Green emphasizes that although dormant, the bond between other aviators and the Jolly Green crews had its perks. For example, the "Jolly Greens" never had to buy a drink in a bar while a Vietnam-era fighter pilot was around.

63. DeBerry et al., "Flexible Response," pp. 169–71, 196–97. This point primarily addresses the "finite deterrence" favored by the Eisenhower administration. President Kennedy's "flexible response" policy focused on matching response to provocation.

64. Tilford, *Search and Rescue*, p. 156.

65. Little, *Aerospace Rescue*, p. 24. Also, according to Carl Berger, the ARS (later designated ARRS) saved 3,883 personnel. Berger, *United States Air Force in Southeast Asia,* p. 243. This number is also quoted in Tilford, *Search and Rescue*, pp. 155–56.

66. Tilford, *Search and Rescue*, pp. 13–16, 156.

67. This statement reflects a neglect of lessons learned during and between World War II, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War.

68. General Comer, USAF, telephonic interview with author, 9 Feb. 2004, Maxwell AFB, AL.

69. Chap. 2 addressed the distinction between the bomber/fighter-pilot tribes. So far this paper has covered the time period between the birth of the Air Force and the immediate aftermath of the Vietnam War. The next chapter will cover the 1980s in detail, while chap. 6 addresses the challenges of the 1990s.

70. In defense, throughout its history, the corporate Air Force adamantly adhered to the Roman aphorism *Qui desiderat pacem, praeparet bellum* (if you want peace, prepare for war). (For more see Flavius Vegetius Renatus, *Epitoma rei Militaris* [A Summary of Military Matters], Liber III [end of prologue], c. 390 AD.) This Roman proverb is often paraphrased as *si vis pacem, para bellum.* For the latter, and admittedly more widely known version of the proverb, see Luttwak, *Strategy,* p. 1. Luttwak uses this proverb, an axiom "worn down by overuse," to describe the paradoxical logic resident in the realm of strategy.

71. This idea is thoroughly discussed in chap. 2 of this paper. See also Brown, "Sources of Leadership Doctrine." Citing the original SAC motto, "Peace is Our Profession," Brown explains that by the early 1950s, the emerging role of the Air Force was clear: first, the US defense against the Soviet Union must be based on airpower; and second, in light of the possibility of thermonuclear war, the best way to assure preparedness was via a "strong air force in being" (p. 39).

72. General Comer, Peterson AFB, CO, telephonic interview with author, Maxwell AFB, AL, 9 Feb. 2004; Green to author, e-mail, 10 May 2004; and Tilford, *Search and Rescue*, p. 42. Comer and Green argue that after the Vietnam War, CSAR forces maintained some of their "combat edge" by attending Red Flag exercises. This was in stark contrast to the lack of combat training between the Korean and Vietnam wars.

73. For a lesson learned on Korean flexibility, see Tilford, *Search and Rescue*, p. 17. ARS became too hampered and fixated on the peacetime roles to the point that it completely neglected the wartime mission. For a lesson learned on Vietnam, see p. 156.

74. Ibid., p. 42.

75. For early experimentation with SARTF procedures, see Tilford, *Search and Rescue*, pp. 94–95.

76. Green to author, e-mail, 10 May 2004; and Lynch, *USAF Search and Rescue*, p. 43. Chief Green convincingly points out that "AC-130 involvement was minimal, if not rare. Simply [put], SAR was a daylight mission, [and thus] not compatible with gunship missions . . . in a high threat [daylight] environment." Lynch provides a comparison of HH-3 and HH-53 capabilities (p. 91).

77. Westermann, "Air Rescue Service."

78. Tilford, *Search and Rescue*, p. 96. For example, Tilford describes one mission, in Dec. 1969, in which US aircraft flew 336 sorties in support of a rescue mission to recover a navigator. Tilford quotes Col William M. Harris IV, 37th ARRS commander, as saying that "rescue efforts have called upon every conceivable military resource as well as . . . Air America, special ground teams, clandestine operations, frogmen, aircraft carriers, tanks, and so on." In addition to conventional aircraft, Tilford gives an example of when rescue forces used the AC-130 (pp. 135–36). For another account of rescue efforts taking priority, see Whitcomb, *Rescue of Bat 21.*

79. Tilford, *Search and Rescue*, pp. 81–133, especially 103–12. Tilford suggests that CSAR came of age between 1967 and 1970, as exemplified by the raid on Son Tay on 20 Nov. 1970 (pp. 103, 112).

80. Ibid., p. 156.

81. Westermann, "Air Rescue Service."

82. Tilford, *Search and Rescue*, p. 13.

83. Ibid., pp. 14–18; conclusions and lessons learned are deduced by this author and therefore represent his opinions.

84. "ARS Pilot Makes Two Minute Rescue," p. 3.

85. Tilford, *Search and Rescue*, p. 82.

86. Ibid., pp. 90, 92–93. See also Durkee, *USAF Search and Rescue*, pp. 18–19. Tilford uses information from Southeast Asia Operational Requirement (SAOR) 114, 3 Apr. 1967 (p. 92). SAOR 114 made several proposals to remedy the situation, primarily suggesting that infrared technology was the most promising direction. The first low-light-level television and viewing devices were installed on HH-53Bs at Udorn AB, Thailand, in Nov. 1969 (ibid., p. 93). However, the device was not considered reliable for night recovery of aircrew members until 21 Dec. 1972 (40th ARRS performed the first night-recovery-system pickup in HH-53 history). Little, *Aerospace Rescue*, p. 45. Even then, the system was not fully adequate for night or adverse weather conditions. For more on the limitations of the system, see Tilford, *Search and Rescue*, p. 93.

87. Tilford, *Search and Rescue*, p. 93.

88. Whitcomb, "Combat Search and Rescue," pp. 28–35.

89. *Combat search and rescue* is a term not commonly used in the early days of the ARS. In fact, it did not become part of the common vernacular until the early 1980s. I use this term because the commonly accepted term (*CSAR*) accurately describes the ARS community's activities. That is to say, although the term was not, technically, common in the early days of the ARS/ARRS, it accurately describes the combat nature of the community. Special thanks to Chief Green for pointing out this detail.

90. Guilmartin, *Very Short War*, p. 40. Admittedly one could argue that fire-support platforms were an integral part of the CSAR culture as well, but the evidence suggests that they were associates rather than charter members of the community. For example, according to Guilmartin, an A-7 squadron stationed in Korat, Thailand, was assigned the rescue escort mission. These pilots worked closely with the 40th ARRS, but their association with rescue crews lasted only as long as their assignment to said squadron. So although

the Air Force recognized the need for a habitual relationship between rescue and certain fighter units, this was an ad hoc relationship rather than a doctrinally mandated requirement. It therefore makes sense to concentrate on the helicopter and HC-130 aspects of the CSAR culture.

91. Connelly to author, e-mail, 21 Mar. 2004.

92. History, ARRS, vol. 1, 1980, pp. 43–44. Both light- and heavy-lift communities supported the "space shuttle recovery" missions. "The Space Shuttle missions were assigned the nation's highest priority, 1–2," and alert requirements for this mission included three UH-1N helicopters ("rotors turning") and HC-130s (airborne alert) (ibid., pp. 43–44). Chief Green argued that in practice, based on his experiences, HH-53s instead of UH-1s covered these launches. According to Chief Green, the HH-53s had to be airborne during the actual launch (Green to author, e-mail, 10 May 2004).

93. History, ARRS, vol. 1, 1979, p. 2. This history also notes that in 1979 MAC/ARRS was "considering a revision of AFMAN 2-36, Jan. 1967, which concerned the doctrine for search, rescue and recovery"; a proposed revision was submitted to HQ USAR/XOO on 10 Oct. 1979. Additionally, the history indicates that ARRS Regulation 23-3 was revised and updated on 30 Oct. 1979 with the following ARRS mission statement: "ARRS discharges USAF responsibilities for combat rescue, provides helicopter support for SAC missile wings, conducts aerial sampling and weather reconnaissance operations, provides search and rescue support for USAF global air and space operations, and fulfills other essential DOD/USAF requirements" (ibid.).

94. ARRSR 55-6, *Search and Rescue*, quoted in History, ARRS, vol. 1, 1980, p. 99.

95. Ibid., p. 99.

96. Ibid., p. 70. Note that the 37th ARRS had 46 UH-1s and Det. 2, 67th ARRS, had four UH-1s: of the 88 active duty UH-1s assigned to the ARRS, 50 airframes (or 57 percent) did not have combat rescue as their primary mission. That is not to say that these assets did not perform peacetime search and rescues, but CSAR was not their primary mission (ibid.).

97. Ibid., p. 71. ARRS heavy-lift helicopters, as of 1 Jan. 1980, consisted of 16 CH-53s, 22 HH-3s, one CH-53, 25 HH-53B/Cs, and six HH-53Hs (Pave Low) (ibid.).

98. Dietz to author, e-mail, 26 Mar. 2004.

99. Blumentritt, "Playing Defense," pp. 4, 33. While some light-lift pilots may argue that this assertion overstates the distinctions between the two communities, the evidence is convincing that within the ARRS light-lift helicopter CSAR capabilities were extremely limited compared to those of the H-3 and HH-53. For example, by 1979 there were no ARRS UH-1s stationed overseas, thus suggesting that the ARRS utilized its heavy-lift force primarily for CSAR and its light-lift force for missile and space support, as well as peacetime search and rescue. History, ARRS, vol. 1, 1979, p. 82. Green argues that some of the "near-animosity" between the light- and heavy-lift communities developed as a result of the heavy-lift aircrew perception that the light-lift crews did not help out during the Vietnam War by cross-training to the HH-53/HH-3 helicopters. According to Green, this would have eased the burden

of having to deploy on multiple extended rotations "back over to SEA." Green to author, e-mail, 10 May 2004.

100. History, ARRS, vol. 2, 1980, supt. docs. I-92-8, p. 2; I-92-12, p. 6; and I-92-18, p. 11.

101. Earlier in the chapter, I quoted Guilmartin, who suggested that para-rescuemen were the "soul and conscience of combat rescue" (see n. 58 in text). Since most of the CSAR capabilities resided in the heavy-lift force, it is safe to assume that the heavy-lift force, including the majority of PJs in the ARRS, remained the CSAR conscience of the ARRS.

102. History, ARRS, vol. 1, 1980, pp. 23–24.

103. Ott, *Organizational Culture Perspective*, p. vii.

104. History, ARRS, vol. 1, 1979, p. 9.

105. In comparison to previous postwar "drawdowns," ARRS fared well after Vietnam. See fig. 3. By 1980 the ARRS had over 4,200 personnel assigned to its collage of missions. The equipment was superior to that in any other interwar period in its collective history.

106. Connelly to author, e-mail, 26 Mar. 2004. See also Little, *Aerospace Rescue*, p. 73; Dietz to author, e-mail, 26 Mar. 2004; and Green to author, e-mail, 10 May 2004. According to Little, the CSAR community had been awarded two Medals of Honor and 35 Air Force Crosses. This evidence suggests that this segment of the ARRS helicopter population was certainly well-recognized and respected within the greater Air Force community. Please note that Little's list of award recipients includes one individual (Capt Leyland Kennedy) as receiving the Air Force Cross twice. The list in Little's book does not reflect the award of the Medal of Honor to A1C Pitsenbarger in 2000 (the figure above does) (p. 73). Colonel Dietz indicates that while there was an effort to balance leadership opportunities at ARRS headquarters between light- and heavy-lift aviators, the CSAR community was certainly in the majority (Dietz to author, e-mail, 26 Mar. 2004).

107. History, ARRS, vol. 1, 1980, p. 13.

108. Message, CINCMAC to CSAF, 23 July 1980. Cited in History, ARRS, 1980, vol. 2, supt. doc. I-54-1. The "H-X" refers to the next-generation helicopter. In this message, Gen Robert E. Huyser, commander in chief of Military Airlift Command (CINCMAC), asked Headquarters USAF to accelerate the H-X project from IOC in 1986 to 1984. (Subject is discussed in detail in the next chapter.)

109. History, ARRS, vol. 1, 1980, p. 19.

110. Ibid., p. 89.

111. Ibid., p. 90. As the next chapter demonstrates, in the early 1980s, USAF C-130 priorities (to some a contradiction of terms) started to shift towards support of a new aircraft variant. According to the 1980 ARRS history, the FY 1981 budget and FY 1982 program objective memorandum (POM) (created in 1979) "identified a new need for ten C-130 aircraft to be modified into EC-130s (C-130s equipped with electronic countermeasures equipment). As part of the USAF-wide search for alternative airframes to serve this need . . . five [ARRS] aircraft were identified for possible modification and reassignment to TAC" (ibid.).

112. Ibid., 1979, p. 111. Vol. 1 of the 1979 ARRS history reveals the low priority the USAF gave the ARRS at the time—based on the USAF plan to install a C-130 simulator at Kirtland AFB, NM, the "ARRS would receive the tenth of a series of ten MAC C-130 simulators" (ibid.).

113. Ibid.

114. Ibid., p. 9. The 1979 ARRS history notes that the ARRS was assigned five composite HC-130/HLH squadrons: "Three of these [units] performed combat rescue and other tasks in the western US and western Pacific areas, and two units . . . performed [the same] in the eastern US and western Europe." Additionally, there was one composite squadron with a similar mission in the AFR (305th ARRS) (ibid.).

115. Ibid., vol. 2, 1 Jan.–31 Dec. 1980, supt. doc. I-92-18. According to the "ARRS Objective Plan FY 1981–1985," the ARRS composite squadrons (33rd ARRS, Kadena AB; 71st ARRS, Elmendorf AFB; 41st ARRS, McClellan AFB; 55th ARRS, Eglin AFB; and 67th ARRS, RAF Woodbridge) had a common mission—CR and SAR (ibid.).

116. Pribyla, interview with author, Alexandria, VA, 6 Nov. 2003.

117. Pribyla to author, e-mail, 13 Jan. 2004.

118. Pribyla, interview with author, Alexandria, VA, 6 Nov. 2003. Reemphasized in Pribyla to author, e-mail, 1 Jan. 2004.

119. Connelly to author, e-mail, 21 Mar. 2004.

120. History, ARRS, vol. 1, 1979, p. 41. This volume also notes that the H-X ended up as the number-two unfunded MAC program. The MAC package of recommendations, in response to the USAF decision not to fund the highest ARRS priorities involved resubmitting their priorities in order: "1) H-X CSAR Rescue Replacement Helicopters, 2) Survival Avionics System, and 3) Increase in HC-130 Flying Hour Program" (p. 45).

121. Green to author, e-mail, 26 Mar. 2004.

122. Ibid., 25 Mar. 2004.

123. Ibid.

124. Guilmartin, speech to ACSC.

125. Connelly, interview with author, 30 Jan. 2004, Fort Walton Beach, FL. See also Green to author, e-mail, 26 Mar. 2004.

126. Henjum to ARRS commander, letter, 13 June 1980. Henjum notes that in 1966, the Army and Air Force reached an agreement in which Army helicopters would concentrate on theater airlift, and Air Force helicopters would handle the SOF mission. According to Colonel Weikel, the 21st SOS and 40th ARRS flew most of the UW/SOF missions interchangeably. Weikel to author, e-mail, 8 Mar. 2004.

127. History, ARRS, vol. 1, 1980, p. 15.

128. Connelly to author, e-mail, 21 Mar. 2004.

Chapter 5

Organizational Change

The Rise of the Twenty-third Air Force

After [a recent] study, TAC concluded that neither it nor the Air Force would benefit by a consolidation of special operations force TAC-gained units under [MAC]. . . . The disadvantages insofar as TAC was concerned clearly outweighed the advantages.

—History of TAC, 1980

This chapter analyzes the ARRS/AFSOF merger through the lens of organizational culture. By approaching this merger from a cultural perspective, the reader is exposed to the internal influences that resisted change, the external impetus to change, and the leadership vision that provided the direction for change. The chapter begins with a review of TAC's and MAC's reactions to Headquarters USAF's early efforts to consolidate the assets of AFSOF and ARRS. Next, it examines the Desert One debacle and considers the impetus and barriers to the AFSOF/ARRS merger.[1] Then it analyzes the AFSOF and ARRS institutional agendas that influenced the earliest stages of the Twenty-third Air Force merger and explores the different organizational priorities, what Builder would call the AFSOF and ARRS masks of war. The chapter concludes with a review of several examples in which culture, institutional agendas, and poor leadership impeded Twenty-third Air Force's organizational growth.

Early Consolidation Efforts

The merger between AFSOF and ARRS assets had its roots in a number of 1970s initiatives that attempted to designate a single manager for all USAF helicopters. Until 1983, MAC and TAC, the primary managers of the USAF helicopter fleet, could not reach consensus on the matter.[2] MAC/ARRS had the most helicopters in the USAF inventory and therefore appeared to be the likely candidate for the single-manager role. But ARRS

leadership had difficulty accepting an arrangement that merged the white-hat and black-hat communities.[3]

After the Vietnam War, according to official records, ARRS leaders opposed the idea that "traditional" rescue assets "should perform offensive military roles such as special operations functions as well as SAR and combat rescue missions."[4] An excerpt from the 1976 official ARRS history highlights the ARRS aversion to the AFSOF mission: "In 1972–1973, during the post-SEA planning, MAC and ARRS had reaffirmed the position that *rescue forces should perform combat rescue functions but should not perform covert combat operations*. This option was consistent with the concept of MAC as a humanitarian organization, performing airlift to people in need, aeromedical evacuation, aerospace evacuation, aerospace rescue, weather reconnaissance, and other services" (emphasis added).[5]

MAC, however, was not the only command apprehensive about the single-manager concept. TAC was equally as skeptical of a USAF-wide helicopter consolidation for a variety of reasons. The post-Vietnam TAC was mostly concerned with the Soviet threat in Eastern Europe because "the Soviets had closed the technology gap and were substantially outproducing the United States in the tactical fighter arena."[6] TAC's main priority was the modernization of its fighters because "the enemy [Soviet bloc] buildup in central Europe was recognized as substantially greater than the NATO tactical air forces."[7] Having designated its fighter modernization programs as its top priorities, TAC could not support a robust AFSOF capability in light of post-Vietnam budget cuts. Because of TAC's helicopter range-support requirements, however, it solicited help from MAC/ARRS in order to equip TAC AFSOF units.[8]

TAC wanted to control a robust helicopter force primarily for range support of its fighter aircraft but did not want to pay for it. In fact, it wanted MAC/ARRS to provide the aircraft for AFSOF and all range-support activities.[9] Ironically, TAC considered the entire AFSOF community as a collage of minor mission areas that should be in the Air Force Reserve (AFR) or ANG and not under TAC. Essentially, TAC's goal was to divest itself of what it considered extraneous resources. In an example of what is colloquially referred to as a "robbing Peter to pay Paul" solution, AFSOF helicopter squadrons, to include the 20th SOS,

were equipped with ARRS UH-1Ns and CH-3s.[10] In other words, MAC/ARRS had provided TAC with the assets necessary to reconstitute its meager post-Vietnam AFSOF rotor-wing capability.[11] Even though MAC controlled the preponderance of assets, TAC did not want to cede control of its helicopter force to MAC.

Colonel Beres, a Desert One veteran, offers this description of the AFSOF state of affairs in the late 1970s: "We only had some old H-3s and UH-1Ns so we did very little helo [helicopter] ops. Rotary was a dying mission area. In fact we all knew it was only a matter of time before the MC-130 and AC-130 mission ended up in the Reserves and ANG. In fact, in 1978–79 there was a drive at the Air Staff to put all MC-130s in the ANG."[12] Supporting Beres's comments, Colonel Kyle asserts, "The top brass at [TAC] . . . considered the program [AFSOF] an albatross and wanted to dump it. They resented—even despised—missions involving counterterrorism, counterinsurgency, and guerilla warfare because of the volatile political overtones and cost in manpower and funds."[13] Summarizing AFSOF's precarious position, Colonel Ettenson observes, "The best that could be said for AFSOF in the '70s was that we were beneficiaries of benign neglect by TAC. At the worst, we suffered foolish conventional interference. In fact, twice during my first tour at Hurlburt (1976–79) we were zeroed out of the USAF budget."[14]

While AFSOF units struggled to survive within the TAC environment, ARRS attempted to slow the erosion of its already thinly stretched assets. Although General Saunders, the ARRS commander, opposed the blending of black-hat and white-hat units, he recognized that TAC was sapping his resources to meet its demands.[15] In effect, although theoretically opposed to the notion of consolidation, General Saunders had no other practical option than to entertain the single-manager concept and, if it ever materialized, to propose that the ARRS would assume the lead role in this new arrangement.

The first initiative involving a more comprehensive helicopter consolidation took place in 1978. On 22 May 1978, General Vandenberg, Headquarters USAF director of operations and readiness, asked all MAJCOMs that possessed helicopters to submit their views on the single-helicopter-manager idea; however, little consensus emerged on the subject.[16] Again, TAC and MAC did not support the single-

manager idea because they could not agree on a "viable solution" to the organizational dilemma.[17]

Thus, although on the one hand the consolidation efforts were driven by a search mandated by Headquarters USAF for a possible solution to worldwide helicopter shortfalls, TAC was not interested in expending intellectual or fiscal capital on this issue.[18] On the other hand, MAC wanted to resolve this issue quickly because it felt that ARRS could manage the limited helicopter resources best. As an ARRS historian conveyed, "No new Air Force helicopters were being purchased, and every major mishap meant one less helicopter in the Air Force helicopter inventory."[19]

A key element of ARRS's uneasiness with the single-manager idea was leadership's reaction to the initiative. In September 1979, during his last ARRS commanders' conference, General Saunders declared that he did not favor the notion of an amalgamation of the ARRS and AFSOF missions.[20] His primary concern was with the consolidation of the ARRS/SOF mission in Europe, as Army aviation accounted for most of the SOF support activity in the theater. According to ARRS historian Don Little, General Saunders was "concerned that if ARRS assumed SOF functions, the Army might eventually absorb the ARRS resources; or the assumption of the SOF mission could lead to the exclusion of other ARRS missions, such as civil SAR."[21] His distaste for AFSOF matched his commitment to maintaining ARRS's white-hat image. In hindsight, it is hard to justify Saunders's rigid attitude, considering the practical benefits of an ARRS/AFSOF helicopter consolidation (e.g., a centralized personnel pool of ARRS/AFSOF aviators). In the end, the evidence suggests that the ARRS culture heavily influenced his decision-making process, suggesting that, at least in this case, culture rather than the commander's vision shaped the organizational development of the ARRS.[22]

Although he had over 11,000 (primarily airlift) flying hours, General Saunders had no connection to the rescue community prior to his assignment as ARRS commander.[23] Because the ARRS institutional identity was firmly established during the Vietnam War, one can assume that the ARRS identity after the war, in conjunction with a cadre of ARRS leaders affected by their combat exposure to SEA operations, heavily influenced Saunders's command vision. It appears then, as Schein claims,

that culture had become "more of a cause than an effect. . . . Because culture serves an important anxiety-reducing function, members cling to it even if it becomes dysfunctional in relationship to environmental opportunities and constraints." That is to say, the evidence suggests that the ARRS's culture was a key factor in Saunders's position. Regardless of the benefits of a greater consolidation effort, the ARRS culture gravitated toward what Schein called "sacred cows [and] holdovers from the founding period."[24]

On 29 September 1979, Brig Gen Cornelius Nugteren assumed command of the ARRS.[25] General Nugteren was more amenable to the ARRS assumption of the single-manager role for all USAF helicopters than his predecessor had been. On 15 November Nugteren briefed Gen Lew Allen, Jr., CSAF, on his vision for the single-helicopter-manager concept. The ARRS commander argued, "MAC/ARRS already controlled three-fourths of the USAF helicopter force, [so] it seemed logical to make MAC/ARRS the USAF single-manager, serving the needs of all USAF commands."[26] By late 1979, MAC/ARRS leadership reengaged Headquarters USAF on the single-manager concept.

Clearly, for most of the 1970s, specific organizational identities heavily influenced MAC and TAC resistance to the single-manager idea. In fact, major-command-level institutional priorities prevented resolution of the issue until 1980. Ultimately, according to official records, "The impetus for helicopter consolidation came from a different direction. National interest in helicopters, and in [the] special operations function, was reexamined as a result of the abortive Iranian rescue mission of April 1980."[27]

Desert One—Focusing Event and Impetus for Change

On 4 November 1979, supporters of Ayatollah Khomeini, the spiritual leader of the Iranian Islamic Revolution, stormed the US Embassy in Tehran and captured 63 hostages.[28] In response, the US government scrambled to put together an ad hoc task force to rescue those Americans.[29] Although an elite counterterrorism Army unit had completed certification training in No-

vember 1979, it had no Air Force counterpart. As the ensuing Desert One hostage-rescue attempt demonstrated, the USAF was not properly organized to deal with this contingency.[30]

On 24 April 1980, after six months of preparation, USAF MC/EC-130s and Navy RH-53D helicopters, flown by AFSOF and Marine Corps crews, respectively, infiltrated a 132-man ground element deep into Iran to a landing strip code-named Desert One. When three helicopters failed to reach their landing site, President Carter ordered the mission aborted based on established criteria and the recommendation of his field commander.[31]

Most SOF operators agree that the Desert One failure ushered in a new era for the ARRS and AFSOF.[32] Simply put, the Iran hostage-rescue mission was *the* catalyst for the reprioritization of US special forces within the DOD. Existing accounts of the failed attempt, however, still leave certain questions unanswered. One of these questions strikes at the heart of the cultural divide between the ARRS and AFSOF communities. Early on when joint task force (JTF) planners determined that the AFSOF helicopter force was unable to meet mission requirements, why did they not solicit helicopter and crew augmentation from the ARRS?

After several interviews with 23rd Air Force–era officers, the answer to this question appears as polarized and emotionally charged as the black-hat/white-hat discussion. On one side, ARRS veterans defend that they never "got the call"; on the other, former air commandos accuse the ARRS of "turning down the mission."[33] After examining a decade's worth of ARRS and TAC archives at the AFHRA, the author found no documentation to support the AFSOF assertion.[34] On the contrary, the evidence presented in the appendix suggests that the ARRS was neither officially consulted nor tasked for the assault portion of the first Iran hostage-rescue attempt.[35]

Ultimately, Desert One was a focusing event. According to John W. Kingdon, "Problems are often not self-evident by indicators."[36] Kingdon proposes that problems most often "need a little push to get the attention of people in and around government. That push is sometimes provided by a focusing event such as a crisis or disaster that comes along to call attention to the problem, a powerful symbol that catches on, or the personal experience of the policy maker."[37] In this example, even a

cursory survey of the 1st Special Operation Wing's (SOW) capabilities in 1979 would have indicated the decrepit state of AFSOF equipment. It appears, however, that the status of AFSOF's institutional health was directly proportional to TAC's low estimate of AFSOF's mission relevance. But, as noted earlier, TAC considered AFSOF an irrelevant mission area and recommended its relegation to the ANG or AFR.[38]

Supporting Kingdon's focusing-event hypothesis, the evidence suggests that the failed hostage-rescue attempt called attention to a preexisting problem; terrorism was on the rise, and the United States did not have the resources/capability to counter this emerging threat. Thus, Desert One produced the impetus for the revitalization of American SOF capabilities and provided a powerful symbol for policy makers and SOF leaders on which to focus their attention. In effect, Desert One was sufficiently important to gain SOF revitalization "a prominent place on the policy agenda."[39]

Similarly, Beres supports the idea that "a new mindset of SOF took hold" in the months leading to Desert One and in the training for Project Honey Badger (code name for the planning and rehearsal efforts in anticipation of a second rescue attempt).[40] According to Beres, "Before 1980 Air Force people thought in terms of . . . Unconventional Warfare (UW) as a subset of Special Operations, not SOF as an integrated joint operation. . . . Suddenly we needed a new bag of tricks to do a new mission called *joint* counter terrorism" (emphasis in original).[41] A modern joint SOF emerged from the ashes of Desert One. Beres affirms that "the Holloway Commission changed everything after the Desert One failure."[42]

Ultimately, the failed rescue attempt and the recommendations that came out of the Holloway Commission provided the impetus and basis for the creation of a standing counterterrorist joint task force (CTJTF) and the revitalization of SOF.[43] This transformation began when President Carter directed the immediate reconstitution of a second hostage-rescue force for another attempt to recover the Americans held in Iran. As part of Project Honey Badger, Headquarters USAF transferred nine Pave Low III HH-53Hs from MAC/ARRS to TAC/1st SOW.[44]

Project Honey Badger and the Cultural
Influence of the Pave Low III Transfer

In January 1980, the ARRS's flagship helicopter, the HH-53H, had nearly completed its production and operational-testing cycle.[45] Once operational, the Pave Low III would represent the most modern and advanced airframe in the ARRS inventory.[46] On 14 May 1980, Gen Robert C. Mathis, vice-chief of staff of the Air Force (VCSAF), ordered MAC/ARRS to transfer the nine HH-53H helicopters to TAC/1st SOW "at the earliest possible time."[47] On 18 May, eight of the nine Pave Low IIIs arrived at Hurlburt Field, home of the 1st SOW, on what they thought was an extended temporary duty (TDY) deployment.[48] Colonel Connelly, one of the initial cadre of ARRS pilots accompanying the Pave Lows to Hurlburt, reports that, at least initially, the ARRS crews "were well received with cold beer and red scarves."[49] Describing his first visit to the 20th SOS, however, Connelly adds, "[This was] my first and only experience of seeing a unit patch in a urinal—the ARRS patch was there. It was not something I was pleased about. I started forming opinions that the rivalry between navy pilots and AF [Air Force] pilots or bomber and fighter pilots, was nothing compared to ARRS and SOF helo pilots."[50]

Considering that this transfer was initially designed as a "temporary assignment," it seemed totally inappropriate for AFSOF leaders to allow this behavior. In light of the national importance of the Honey Badger mission, one would think that AFSOF's leadership would have tried to reduce, rather than increase, friction between the two communities in the early stages of this project. Another move highlighted the Air Force's neglect of cultural dynamics as Headquarters USAF abruptly declared the permanent reassignment of the Pave Low III airframes from MAC to TAC on 17 June 1980.[51] Overnight, the former ARRS crew members that represented the majority of the new 20th SOS's crews were forced to sever their connections with ARRS.[52] In the end, according to Maj Gen (sel) John Folkerts, the initial cadre of ARRS pilots and crews who transferred to the 20th SOS quickly became assimilated into the AFSOF culture as a result of the Honey Badger "shared experiences."[53]

From the rescue perspective, the ARRS felt slighted by what it perceived as a disproportional national emphasis on the AFSOF mission.[54] In an "eyes only" personal message to CINCMAC, CSAF General Allen outlined the USAF's reorganization rationale:

> Dutch, my staff has restudied problems associated with the transfer of Pave Low III helicopters. We are in the unfortunate position of having to allocate a scarce resource between two competing demands, combat rescue and the counterterrorist (CT) mission, and we cannot satisfy fully the requirement of both. The important contribution the ARRS makes in promoting a humanitarian image for the USAF is fully recognized; however, the national-level priority afforded the CT force necessitates Pave Low assignment against that mission.
>
> After reviewing what we have available in the CT capability, senior OSD [Office of the Secretary of Defense] officials are actively working the establishment of a permanent integrated force capable of achieving an effective response to future terrorist incidents. . . . Deemed essential to this structure are the unique capabilities of Pave Low.
>
> As you know, the principal Air Force contribution will be Fixed and Rotary elements from the 1st SOW. I have looked at alternatives to the Pave Low assignment but have concluded [that] these assets must be organizationally integrated into TAC. . . .
>
> The personnel sensitivities of this transfer are well understood. . . . Your staff, in coordination with TAC and MPC, should develop the required manpower actions in order to fulfill the requirements.
>
> It is recognized [that] the transfer of Pave Low assets will leave an obvious hole in ARRS capability. . . . For the long term, I've directed the staff to work in conjunction with MAC to prepare options for rebuilding an enhanced combat rescue capability. The basis may be to develop some of the Pave Low capability in the forthcoming H-60 or an alternative candidate.[55]

A month later, the new CINCMAC, General Huyser, updated the CSAF with the following explanation: "Even though I still contend transferring the ARRS assets to the 1st SOW was not to the best interest of the Air Force, for the long run, I'm not going to cry over spilled milk. I do suggest, however, if the Air Force wants a rescue capability for both peacetime and wartime we better get with the program of restoring some lost capability."[56]

Although ARRS crews were equally as dedicated to Honey Badger, the MAC/ARRS leadership was extremely concerned with the long-term diversion of ARRS assets from the traditional CSAR mission to the SOF-centric hostage-rescue effort. Besides

the nine Pave Low IIIs that transferred to TAC/1st SOW, ARRS committed an additional six HH-53B/Cs, eight HC-130s, and 329 personnel to Project Honey Badger on extended TDY status.[57] For several months, the ARRS crews trained intensively, side by side with their AFSOF cousins, in preparation for a possible second rescue mission.[58] Although ARRS crew proficiency and capabilities improved tremendously as a result of the intensive training, Desert One and Honey Badger had an uneven organizational effect on the two communities.

In an excerpt from the personal, eyes-only message that General Huyser sent to Generals Allen and Mathis, CSAF and VCSAF respectively, one can sense the MAC/ARRS frustration building over the handling of Honey Badger:

> As you well know, the recent Honey Badger tasking has caused a serious degradation of the USAF H-53 fleet. The Pave Low III transfer to TAC—coupled with the open-ended loan of additional non–Pave Low HH-53s and HC-130 tankers and associated maintenance personnel, special tools, and spares—has resulted in a severe loss of rescue capability within MAC. Two of our rescue squadrons are no longer capable of supporting RDJTF [rapid deployment joint task force], PACAF, and NATO contingency plans. The 1550 ATTW has been severely degraded as an Air Force flying training school and, as a result, has been forced to cancel three consecutive H-53 classes. This disruption of our USAF H-53 training program will have a long-lasting impact not only on ARRS but on all [MAJCOMs] which rely on the 1550 ATTW to train their H-53 crewmembers [read TAC].

> I recognize the national significance of Honey Badger and other high-priority missions and will continue to support them to the utmost of our ability. However the adverse impact of manning and equipping an ad hoc unit on short notice clearly illustrates the need for more efficient management of these scarce resources. I believe that our national interests can be best served with all USAF helicopters, including SOF being centrally controlled under a single manager. . . . Moreover, an amalgamation of SOF/ARRS resources would have negated the need for a special task force because an in-being, cohesive, well-trained unit would have already existed. . . . I strongly believe that if all helicopters and SOF C-130s were consolidated under MAC, a stronger, more viable force could be projected in response to international contingencies without the intercommand difficulties and personnel disruptions which have occurred in the recent past.[59]

General Huyser's comments reflect a new approach to the helicopter reorganization initiative that had been a source of tension between TAC and MAC, long before the transfer of Pave Low IIIs, in support of Project Honey Badger.[60] Prior to the first

Iran rescue attempt, both MAC's and ARRS's position on the single-manager consolidation of assets focused exclusively on the amalgamation of helicopter forces.[61] After Desert One and the HH-53H transfer to TAC, CINCMAC insisted on a more comprehensive merger.

For the first time, MAC advocated a consolidation that included *all* AFSOF assets. So by the time Project Honey Badger was suspended in January 1981 in the wake of the release of the American hostages, MAC had made it abundantly clear that "although TAC had won some of the helicopters, MAC/ARRS continued to concentrate on the acquisition of all of the USAF helicopters. Putting it another way, TAC had drawn a circle taking in the HH-53Hs, but MAC/ARRS was drawing a bigger circle to take in the 1st SOW."[62]

From the AFSOF perspective, the Holloway Commission highlighted the deficiency of joint SOF capabilities in a forum that even conventional leaders could not afford to ignore. For AFSOF crews, the Pave Low transfer and a new national-level interest in the special operations mission had a tremendous effect on their psyche. Colonel Beres affirms, "We had high-level interest and real Generals that cared. . . . The SECDEF himself [asked] Captains like me what I needed; we told him straight up what we needed to do the mission and he gave it to us. What could be cooler than that!"[63]

Paradoxically, although AFSOF had just suffered the loss of an airplane and five crew members in an operation widely considered a failure, many air commandos remember the Honey Badger experience as a period of high energy and excitement over the prospect of rebuilding a long-neglected special operations capability. Beres proposes that AFSOF crews remained energized because "though [some in] the DOD treated us like failures after Desert One, those that were 'read in' [had the clearance and the need to know about the mission] gave us some real respect."[64] In aggregate, AFSOF crew members remained optimistic, enthusiastic, and, organizationally, totally committed to preparing for a second chance to rescue the Americans held in Iran.

According to Beres, "We accepted . . . that [although] UW in the post Viet Nam era was out of fashion [it remained] our primary mission. The national will would not allow us to engage in

more Vietnams and we did not really have a lot of utility in WW II."[65] Marquis adds that "by 1980 little remained of the forces that fought in Vietnam."[66] Using the Desert One and Honey Badger experiences as the baseline for the new AFSOF, air commandos strove to establish its organizational relevance.

This renewed sense of self-importance was intrinsically linked to the joint-training regimen associated with the early 1980s SOF experiences. As Marquis points out, "The inability of Delta to quickly deploy in the late 1970s and early 1980s brought attention to the great deficiencies in SOF aviation. Eventually, this weakness became the focus of early efforts to reform and rebuild American special operations forces."[67] As a result, post–Desert One air commandos defined their relevance as part of a CTJTF; as such, they started to identify more with their joint counterterrorism colleagues than with their ARRS counterparts.[68] In hindsight, it appears that USAF leaders did not consider the polarizing effect of reassigning this ARRS high-value asset. The evidence presented so far suggests, however, that Air Force leadership most likely assumed that they could sort out the cultural fallout after the changes were implemented.

In due course, Project Honey Badger had several tactical, operational, strategic, and cultural effects on the AFSOF and ARRS organizational dynamics. Tactically, the preparations for a second rescue attempt created a close working relationship between AFSOF and ARRS crews and improved the capabilities of both communities. For example, Pave Low III helicopters were able to perfect their aerial-refueling procedures while working with rescue HC-130s. Similarly, HH-53B/C and HC-130 crews returned to their respective ARRS units after Honey Badger but continued to practice the procedures for using night vision goggles (NVG) in special operations and special skills that they had developed during their extended TDY with a rejuvenated AFSOF.[69]

Operationally, TAC wanted to retain control of AFSOF assets, while MAC wanted to be in command of both ARRS and AFSOF resources/missions. According to official records, TAC made the 1st SOW a direct-reporting unit to Headquarters TAC in September 1980.[70] Although AFSOF crews associated with Honey Badger "liked this new SOF mission," many of them "were still suffering from a lack of promotion and a general

higher headquarters indifference."[71] In 1981 TAC reorganized the 1st SOW under the Ninth Air Force. With promotions and recognition on the rise, lower operations tempo (after Honey Badger), and a seemingly sincere TAC interest in the SOF mission, many air commandos enjoyed working for Lt Gen Larry D. Welch, Ninth Air Force commander.[72] The evidence suggests that TAC's recently discovered concern for AFSOF was buttressed by high-level attention. For example, Pres. Ronald Reagan included "revitalizing SOF" in his election platform, and SecDef Weinberger included Reagan's pledge to strengthen SOF in his defense-guidance document.[73]

While TAC lobbied for the AFSOF mission, MAC actively lobbied for the operational control and amalgamation of AFSOF and ARRS assets. In addition to the letter to the CSAF noted earlier, CINCMAC, General Huyser, raised this matter directly to Secretary Weinberger, clearly outlining MAC's desires with regard to the AFSOF mission:

> I recommend the Air Force consolidate all helicopter and certain C-130 assets under MAC as a single manager. Currently, Air Force helicopter management is fragmented among five commands causing redundancy in capability and undue competition for scarce resources. By far, we are the most experienced and largest operator of those assets—clearly, we can save money. My proposal involves consolidation of helicopter and mission-related C-130s, plus various range/test support aircraft, including AFSC's [Air Force Systems Command] H-53s and C-130s. . . . In my estimation, we would increase flexibility through alignment of all forces under an established MAC/ARRS CONUS and overseas organizational structure which exists in all theaters. This consolidation would allow the Air Force to speak with one voice on current and future helicopter and certain C-130 requirements as well as force structure. In addition, it would enhance career progression, thereby contributing to aircrew retention. *I urge you to take the initiative in this area as it appears in the "too hard" category below your level. I will be in retired status by the time you get this report, so my only interest is proper management of assets.*[74] (emphasis added)

For a year after Huyser's report to Weinberger, Gen James Allen, the next CINCMAC, continued to support the consolidation of AFSOF and ARRS assets, while Gen Wilbur Creech, CINCTAC, continued to resist the merger.[75] In September 1982, however, Generals Allen and Creech abruptly agreed to the ARRS/AFSOF merger.[76] The reasons for this sudden change go to the heart of the argument that organizational culture plays a significant role in mergers.

This research substantiates that the genesis of Twenty-third Air Force was more significantly influenced by organizational tribal dynamics than the strength of the MAC/ARRS argument. Since the USAF service structure was *monarchical*, the chief of staff wielded a tremendous amount of power and, in this case, was the only person capable of breaking the deadlock between CINCMAC and CINCTAC.[77] Although a number of Air Force studies supported MAC's/ARRS's argument, organizational culture played a more significant role than the strength of their case.[78]

According to official records, the CSAF commissioned a number of substantive initiatives that sought to determine whether organizational changes were required in response to a changing security environment. For example, *Air Force 2000*, a study completed in 1981 and published in 1982, suggested that in order "to provide the organizational support necessary to enhance special operations, the Air Force should consider placing it under HQ USAF as a Special Operating Agency, or within a Major Command as a numbered air force. Such a move would provide the needed impetus to update the doctrine and to compete effectively in the Air Force budget process."[79] Another major study conducted between November 1981 and July 1982, the Air Force Inspection and Safety Center's Functional Management Inspection on USAF Special Operations Capability, contends that there were "role conflicts among the Army, Navy, and Air Force regarding special operations."[80] Accordingly, the team described the AFSOF capabilities as "insufficient to meet operational readiness requirements."[81]

In order to revitalize AFSOF, the report suggested that "all Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Service (ARRS) and special operations forces be combined under a single organization or numbered air force equivalent 'within a MAJCOM.'"[82] Ultimately, the revised (1982) defense-guidance document signaled a renewed executive-level emphasis on the strengthening of SOF capabilities. At first glance, it appears that General Gabriel's rationale for realigning the ARRS and AFSOF communities surfaced from the logical conclusion that MAC was the most appropriate organization for the revitalization of AFSOF. Some have argued, however, that General Gabriel's cultural biases, rather than logic, influenced his decision. After all, he was the first of the modern fighter CSAFs.[83]

Marquis proposes that part of Gabriel's reasoning for the merger "was a result of the U.S. Air Force [and CSAF's] view of the world: combat aircraft were either strategic bombers or tactical fighters; all other aircraft were in supporting roles."[84] She observes that the majority of AFSOF missions were in support of SOF from other services. In Vietnam, for instance, the primary mission of AFSOF Talons and helicopters was the transport of special forces, Rangers, and SEALs to and from their missions.[85] In addition to their interdiction role, gunships also supported ground customers through night, precision CAS. In one view, these were not missions that should be assigned to a command primarily concerned with "pilot-gods in single-seat fighters."[86] On the contrary, as Marquis reveals, "Air force leadership believed that because much of the AFSOF mission was airlift, though under difficult conditions, AFSOF fit under MAC."[87] Marquis's argument suggests that part of Gabriel's decision to merge ARRS and AFSOF was a consequence of cultural bias.

Although outside influences, such as defense guidance, intraservice struggle, and competition for resources cumulatively affected General Gabriel's decision to merge the rescue and special forces communities, cultural biases also helped shape the new organization. Moreover, even if the Air Force's monarchical character was able to overcome the TAC/MAC impasse, in order to keep the peace between the two commands, General Gabriel had to dispense "side payments to the subordinate subgroups."[88]

Although these "side payments" to Headquarters TAC were more symbolic than meaningful, General Gabriel agreed to accommodate the six conditions that General Creech, CINCTAC, attached to the transfer of forces agreement, including

1. The theater commanders in chief to retain operational command of Forces deployed in their theaters.

2. Rational beddown locations for special operations forces.

3. Rescue and special operations forces to retain their separate identities.

4. A recognition that the reorganization was not an intra–Air Force battle for real estate, but it was a resource consolidation for the good of the Air Force.

5. Fair treatment for residual TAC assets at Hurlburt Field (Red Horse unit, etc.).

6. A realization that the Joint Special Operations Command (JSOC) mission was only a part of the special operations mission.[89]

Furthermore, Gabriel declared that MAC would assume the additional manpower burden associated with the creation of a new 2nd AD headquarters. Headquarters TAC would lose only nine manpower slots and Headquarters Ninth Air Force would lose only two. The other 73 manpower slots required to create the Headquarters 2nd AD would come from the Headquarters 1st SOW. Finally, manning shortages in the intermediate headquarters significantly handicapped the 1st SOW's efforts to reorganize.[90] Ultimately, TAC divested the AFSOF mission with a bruised ego but with minimal effect on its operations and manning strength.

Although Headquarters MAC accepted the above arrangements, Headquarters ARRS and its commander, General Mall, wanted to make the 1st SOW the fourth wing within the ARRS structure.[91] The ARRS agenda was clear: it wanted to control all AFSOF forces. But to TAC's credit, it resisted ARRS efforts to subsume the AFSOF mission. After lengthy negotiations, General Mall and his staff accepted the TAC requirement to create "separate and coequal entities (with air division or corresponding status) under a numbered air force headquarters."[92] According to official records, "Some of the participants [in the negotiations] wondered whether this was a manageable organizational structure, but everyone was determined to make the plan work."[93] Again, based on the preceding evidence, it is clear that the impetus for this organizational merger was more heavily affected by outside influences and Air Force cultural dynamics—most notably national emphasis on SOF after the Desert One debacle and the Air Force monarchical leadership model—than by intraservice cooperation.

The Rise of Twenty-third Air Force

On 1 March 1983, the USAF activated Twenty-third Air Force at Scott AFB, Illinois. As part of the reorganization agreement with TAC, MAC established Twenty-third Air Force with separate subordinate commands for AFSOF and ARRS assets.[94] According to General Mall, the first Twenty-third Air Force com-

mander, the new organization's primary objective was to "enhance the special operations mission."[95] Mall affirms that the merger "capitalized on the synergism that exists between SOF and the combat rescue forces because their mission, training and equipment is very similar. . . . It makes sense to manage the training, tactics, maintenance, and supply from one headquarters."[96] Mall's vision of Twenty-third Air Force indicates that he wanted to train and equip the AFSOF/ARRS force "under a common, event centered standard . . . [in which] we provide the military with the capability to move our forces from one mission area to another to best accomplish both tasks."[97]

From the start, Twenty-third Air Force was a unique organization. Unlike the Twenty-first and Twenty-second Air Forces, also under MAC, Twenty-third Air Force had no geographic boundaries.[98] According to the reorganization plan, Headquarters ARRS would be the worldwide focal point for ARRS operations; similarly, 2nd AD would be the nucleus for all USAF special-operations efforts. As Haas reveals, Twenty-third Air Force's foci included "[all] unconventional warfare and psychological operations, as well as the ARRS missions of combat rescue, missile-site support, special-operations support, aerial sampling and weather reconnaissance. The Twenty-third Air Force is responsible for integrating dedicated special operations forces, ARRS forces, and other MAC forces as necessary to support national objectives."[99] Haas makes a strong case for the synergy between the AFSOF and ARRS missions:

> Mission planners can take advantage of the superb navigational abilities provided by the Pave Low HH-53H helicopters and the additional lift capacity of the ARRS HH-53B/C's by mixing the aircraft in formation. . . . Such complementary missions give a synergy to mission capabilities. The 2nd AD can be used for search and rescue (SAR) and those SAR techniques ARRS aircrews practice for combat can just as easily enhance special operations missions. The synergy does not stop with the SOF, but also applies to MAC and the 2nd AD. MC-130, MAC C-141, and C-130 special operations low-level crews have proven in many exercises that they can perform better as a team. By working together and learning from each other, the entire MAC force, active duty and Reserve, will enhance the accomplishment of special operations missions. . . . The consolidation of SOF and ARRS brings with it a host of challenges; however, the 23rd AF has the potential to be the most effective combat force within the Department of Defense.[100]

Although Mall's and Haas's ideas made perfect sense from a theoretical point of view, they ignored the influence of organizational culture on the reorganization in practice. Clearly, these explanations failed to account for the preexisting institutional biases and overt, as well as hidden, organizational agendas. Although Mall and others tried to communicate the potential synergies and benefits of this merger, they did not adequately identify potential conflict areas and cultural realities that might negatively affect the reorganization efforts.[101] In short, the MAC/ARRS leadership chose to highlight the similarities and to make light of the differences between the two communities, mistakenly assuming that they could "fix cultural problems after the fact."[102]

Institutional Priorities: AFSOF and ARRS Masks of War

As noted in chapter 2, "it is one step to attribute a personality to an institution; it is an even larger step to imbue that personality with motives."[103] In order to understand more clearly the effect of organizational culture on the rise of Twenty-third Air Force, the rest of this chapter analyzes the AFSOF and ARRS masks of war as well as institutional motives and biases that influenced leaders charged with the task of integrating these two communities. Additionally, the last section assesses the tendency to resist change at ARRS and the 2nd AD headquarters level in the early stages of the organizational merger.[104]

Since 1976 the ARRS position regarding an organizational merger of AFSOF and ARRS assets was that the latter should have assimilated the AFSOF assets under its existing infrastructure and command arrangements.[105] But by 1982, when MAC and TAC were putting the finishing touches on the reorganization schema, it appeared that ARRS was not going to absorb AFSOF but would have to compete with it for primacy inside Twenty-third Air Force. Whereas prior to the reorganization, ARRS could boast that it represented the "combat arm" of MAC, it could no longer do so after the merger.[106] In short, ARRS leadership started to realize, perhaps too late, that the reorganization meant that they were going to lose their privi-

leged status within the MAC hierarchy and, at the same time, add another layer of competition for limited resources.[107]

The evidence suggests that MAC leadership recognized the importance of maintaining a robust and healthy rescue capability. But in retrospect, it appears that the MAC/ARRS leaders underestimated the difficulty of competing with AFSOF in light of a national emphasis on the revitalization of SOF capabilities.[108] Although competent leaders were able to harmonize the complementary capabilities of AFSOF and ARRS during contingencies such as the Son Tay Raid and Project Honey Badger, the excessive and uninhibited influence of organizational culture on the ARRS leadership fueled the flames of discontent in peacetime. Further complicating things, ARRS's reaction to early Twenty-third Air Force initiatives was much more sanguine than the initial AFSOF response to the reorganization efforts.

AFSOF crews in the 2nd AD viewed the creation of Twenty-third Air Force as a "hostile takeover" with very few benefits and many drawbacks. As Marquis stresses, while AFSOF tried to revitalize its feeble capabilities, the creation of the 2nd AD presented a significant opportunity for AFSOF. She adds, "For the first time in the history of AFSOF . . . there was a single command for all air force special operations, the first move toward protecting this precarious value within the air force."[109] Another benefit from having an AFSOF headquarters was a belief that the air commandos "may get a special operator general as the head of the 2nd Air Division."[110] According to Colonel Beres, up until 1983, "most 1 SOW/CCs [commanders] had been non-SOF guys and Headquarters TAC only had one SO [special operations] O-6 position. Folks worked hard to get a Twenty-third Air Force or HQ MAC position to either make a difference and fix things *or* get promoted" (emphasis in original).[111] The reorganization undeniably presented some leadership and promotion opportunities not available under the previous TAC regime.

The biggest disadvantage of this arrangement was that the MAC/Twenty-third Air Force leadership chose to polarize ARRS/AFSOF activities rather than harmonize their organizational initiatives. This shortcoming, however, was a consequence of poor organizational planning complicated by an institutional rift along cultural fault lines. In effect, MAC leadership neglected to assess the cultural influence of this ar-

rangement on the two communities prior to the reorganization. Had they done so, MAC/Twenty-third Air Force leaders perhaps could have minimized any potential cultural friction points.

For example, as Colonel Thigpen indicates, "[The air commandos] say the consolidation under MAC was a hostile takeover by a much larger bureaucracy that had little concern regarding SOF revitalization. . . . [They] felt that the true object of the new arrangement was to enhance the rescue capabilities, and to retain only the subordinate mission of SOF. . . . [They also] resented being commanded by a staff with virtually no SOF background."[112] Thigpen's example suggests that the MAC/Twenty-third Air Force leadership felt that they could address cultural issues (such as Twenty-third Air Force's organizational structure) after the fact. As events showed, this was a poor assumption that contributed to friction between the two communities. The evidence presented in this paper suggests that a systemic failure to account for tribal dynamics prior to massive reorganization perpetuated strife between the communities.

Oddly enough, even when AFSOF was nearly obliterated under TAC, special operators resisted transfer to the seemingly more accommodating MAC. According to Col (later Maj Gen) Hugh L. Cox, former 1st SOW and 2nd AD commander, "SOF troops viewed TAC as a command of warriors, and the move to MAC was viewed by most SOF personnel as a definite step down and [as] an indication that the Air Force leadership considered them as trash haulers and combat supporters, not leading-edge, point-of-the-spear warriors."[113] Cox believed that "MAC intended to assimilate the AFSOF into its existing organization and mission."[114] Beres corroborates Cox's observation:

> We quickly realized that [the] 2nd AD was just created to placate the Holloway folks and SOF sponsors in Wash DC. Remember, [the] 2nd AD was created to focus on SOF so the large number of other 23rd AF missions would not impact SOF. . . . HQ MAC and 23rd AF did not understand the SO [special operations] or CSAR mission. In fact, I would say 23rd AF did not understand *any* of their missions, only how to manage a force structure through the AF DOD institutional process.[115] (emphasis in original)

Moreover, Beres explains, "We at first hoped that Twenty-third Air Force would be a big proponent of SOF *but* the first two commanders [General Mall and General Patterson] consis-

tently talked about how there 'was nothing special about special ops'" (emphasis in original).[116] Fundamentally, the organizational merger, from the AFSOF point of view, threatened the new air-commando culture that had attempted to reinvent itself after the Desert One and Honey Badger experiences.[117] Although in hindsight the organizational merger provided many advantages to AFSOF, air commandos at the time thought that there were more shortcomings than advantages to the reorganization. But, as Beres holds, much of the friction was mostly personality driven. For instance, Colonel Cox perpetuated organizational strife rather than alleviated some of the cultural pressures associated with the early stages of the Twenty-third Air Force merger.

Colonel Cox was what can best be described as a "born-again SOF" aviator.[118] Unlike Beres, who was weaned into AFSOF early in his career, Cox's formative experiences with AFSOF were as 1st SOW vice-commander, commander, and later, 2nd AD commander.[119] Although a late convert, Cox set out to defend AFSOF at every opportunity. But some of his arguments in defense of his adopted culture proved superficial; ultimately, many of Cox's initiatives lacked strategic forethought.

Cox started his career as an aeromedical evacuation pilot and spent most of his formative years flying with the 7th Airborne Command and Control Squadron.[120] A C-130 pilot with over 10,000 military and civilian flying hours, he nevertheless had no experience in AFSOF until he came to the 1st SOW.[121] With the creation of Twenty-third Air Force, Cox had the opportunity to evaluate AFSOF needs objectively and to turn adversity into an opportunity for his constituents by propelling the 2nd AD forward along with, not in spite of, the rest of Twenty-third Air Force. Instead, bound by a newfound love for the AFSOF "religion," Cox promoted the segregation of the AFSOF and ARRS mission rather than highlighting the potential benefits to both communities from an organizational merger.

In fairness to Colonel Cox, the born-again phenomenon was not restricted to AFSOF. General Saunders, for example, ARRS commander from 1974 to 1979, became a true believer of the rescue mission to the point that he did not want to merge the white-hat ARRS with the black-hat AFSOF mission areas regardless of the apparent benefits of the reorganization.[122] Cox

and Saunders are emblematic of leaders who became so enamored with their adopted religion that existing organizational ideals heavily—perhaps overly—influenced their decisions. In Cox's case, it appears that he heeded the advice of the most radical elements of the AFSOF community, thus marginalizing his effectiveness as a subordinate when dealing with taskings from higher headquarters and as commander when caring for the less radical majority of subordinates.

An illustration of how Cox allowed cultural influences to lessen his effectiveness as a leader involved his handling of headquarters manning allocations early in the Twenty-third Air Force merger. As noted previously, Headquarters USAF had not allocated any additional headquarters manning slots to accommodate the TAC/MAC arrangements. This meant that Twenty-third Air Force was forced to establish separate AFSOF and ARRS subordinate headquarters. As such, MAC/ARRS leadership was forced to "dual-hat" many of the Headquarters Twenty-third Air Force and Headquarters ARRS staff positions.[123] According to Little, "By May 1983 Colonel Hugh L. Cox, Commander of the 2nd Air Division, began to feel that special operations manning resources were being diverted to fill some shortfalls at higher headquarters due to the policy of no additional manning in consonance with the activation of additional headquarters."[124]

In this case, instead of focusing on significant organizational problems, Cox focused on minutiae. For example, with regard to manning, Cox was mostly concerned with the transfer of two billets for a logistics resources center: a safety officer and an intelligence officer from the 2nd AD to Headquarters Twenty-third Air Force. Instead, Cox should have recognized and reported "up the chain" the significant difference between the acceptable safety margins of an airlift-centric MAC/white-hat-focused ARRS and the more intrinsically hazardous AFSOF. Had Colonel Cox considered the influence of organizational culture, chances are that he would have supported the transfer of an AFSOF safety officer to the Twenty-third Air Force staff in order to make sure that General Mall understood the differences between the two missions.[125] Although one can understand the danger associated with the loss of manning positions, Colonel Cox's attitude did not help Twenty-third Air Force in the early stages of its organizational growth.

Much like Saunders and Cox, the fact that Mall allowed the ARRS and AFSOF cultures to blur his command vision hindered his ability to objectively steer Twenty-third Air Force through the tribulations of organizational change. This phenomenon supports Schein's theory that, in the midlife cultural stages of organizational growth, "culture becomes more of a cause than an effect." He elaborates that culture operates a critical "anxiety-reducing" mechanism that members latch onto even if it restricts "environmental opportunities and constraints."[126] The preceding example of safety concerns, however, is symbolic of the ad hoc organizational arrangements at the tactical level and the failure to account for the influence of organizational culture. Whereas Cox allowed organizational culture to restrict his effectiveness as 2nd AD commander, General Mall did not pay sufficient attention to the possible effect of tribal dynamics.

General Mall's decision to address the cultural aspects of restructuring Twenty-third Air Force after the merger was under way added to the uncertainty and confusion ordinarily associated with organizational change. Highlighting Mall's inattention to cultural issues, the first Twenty-third Air Force commander's conference did not take place until July 1983, five months after the reorganization took effect. According to the unit history, "This conference gave the ARRS and the 2nd Air Division commanders and the Twenty-Third staff an opportunity to learn [and] to know one another better and *to talk face to face with the people that had been only voices on the telephone*, in some cases" (emphasis added).[127] Using Schein's theory, until this conference the MAC/Twenty-third Air Force leadership had been "caught up in the political processes that prevent the cultural realities from being addressed until after the key decisions have been made."[128]

Another example of the failure of the leadership of MAC/Twenty-third Air Force to consider the "cultural realities" involved the 26 September 1983 decision to reorganize Twenty-third Air Force only seven months after the initial merger. By mid-August, Gen Thomas M. Ryan, Jr., CINCMAC, and General Mall realized that Headquarters USAF would not add any additional manpower spaces to the Twenty-third Air Force.[129] MAC staff presented four options for reorganizing Twenty-third

Air Force and three options for relocating its headquarters and that of ARRS in order to maximize the limited number of staff billets.[130] General Mall preferred to consolidate the two headquarters (option 3), and General Ryan agreed. But in order to preserve the "long history and traditions of the ARRS," General Ryan decided to "retain a reduced Headquarters ARRS and to retain the HQ 2nd Air Division without change."[131] Since the MAC/TAC merger agreement dictated that Twenty-third Air Force had to preserve the AFSOF separate identity, MAC/Twenty-third Air Force elected not to renege on the arrangement by tampering with Headquarters 2nd AD's organizational structure. As a result, on 29 September General Mall "convened an all-ranks briefing of the Twenty-Third and ARRS personnel at Scott AFB . . . to explain a series of actions which would take place effective 1 October 1983." In an organizational move as abrupt as the earlier transfer of the Pave Low IIIs from MAC to TAC in 1980, General Mall notified his troops that all Twenty-third Air Force wings, except the 1st SOW, were to report to Headquarters Twenty-third Air Force by 1 October.[132]

Although the 1 October realignment did not challenge the Headquarters 2nd AD arrangement, AFSOF leadership remained skeptical as several ARRS manning slots for colonels and one ARRS brigadier general position migrated from the ARRS to Headquarters Twenty-third Air Force.[133] Even though AFSOF leaders were correct in the sense that ARRS dominated Headquarters Twenty-third Air Force manning, they failed to appreciate the effect of the 1 October reorganization on ARRS.

As noted earlier, prior to the creation of Twenty-third Air Force, ARRS's goal was to assimilate most of AFSOF's assets within the existing ARRS organizational structure. After the AFSOF/ARRS merger, with former ARRS commander General Mall in charge of Twenty-third Air Force, rescue leadership felt that they would have the upper hand in ARRS/AFSOF matters.[134] According to official records, following the October 1983 reorganization, "the mission and staff of Headquarters ARRS were to be diminished. . . . ARRS would remain active, but the revised mission would be the coordination of rescue activity in the contiguous United States and the supervision of the United States responsibilities of the worldwide Search and Rescue Satellite (SARSAT) system."[135] Little reports that this was a very difficult time for the

ARRS leadership. Brig Gen Philip S. Prince, former ARRS commander, new Twenty-third Air Force vice-commander, and the "first career helicopter pilot to become a USAF general officer," was so disappointed in the MAC/Twenty-third Air Force series of organizational changes that he submitted a request for retirement shortly after the October realignment.[136]

General Mall admits organizational shortcomings in his 1985 letter to CINCMAC and acknowledges that

> the first year was particularly turbulent due to the original MAC staff organizational plan of two headquarters in one building, Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Service and 23d Air Force. This was unacceptable and soon corrected by CINCMAC. ARRS was retained as a subordinate organization, but without operational assets. Its primary mission is now management of the USAF Rescue Coordination Center. One problem remained in that to abolish the Rescue Command would require deactivation of the ARRS. The history and heritage of ARRS, including the famous and coveted "Rescue Patch," were at stake. These factors influenced the CINCMAC decision to retain the ARRS headquarters element. Thus, the present structure continues with a "Rescue Commander" with no operational assets. This organizational compromise should be revisited in the future along with a continuing review of the 2d Air Division.[137]

General Mall's letter hints at some of the difficulties associated with an organizational merger that neglected to address the ARRS community's cultural concerns and institutional agenda. Furthermore, evidence presented in this paper intimates that MAC's and ARRS's leadership, assuming that they could adjust for cultural inconveniences after the merger, disregarded the importance of organizational culture prior to the reorganization. Unfortunately, they did not take adequate steps to prevent cross-cultural—AFSOF and ARRS—friction points beforehand.

In this chapter we examined the setting of and impetus for the creation of the Twenty-third Air Force. We also evaluated the influence of cultural biases on its organizational growth and the ways these biases affected early integration efforts of the nascent Twenty-third Air Force. Finally, we considered the cultural reactions that resisted change at the intercommand (MAC/TAC) and intracommand (AFSOF/ARRS) levels. In the next chapter, we apprise the effect of tribal dynamics on three of the most significant organizational proposals in the six-year life span of Twenty-third Air Force.

Notes

1. Operation Rice Bowl was the code name for the planning phase of the failed attempt to rescue the American hostages held in Iran. Operation Eagle Claw was the operational phase of the mission. *Desert One* is an unofficial term often associated with the rescue attempt. Although, technically, Desert One was the code name for the first landing zone in Iran, in order to prevent confusion, this chapter uses it to refer to the entire rescue mission. Even if not totally accurate, it is sufficient for this chapter. A separate appendix examines the Desert One experience in greater detail. Also note that MAC and TAC were the parent commands for ARRS and AFSOF, respectively.

2. Putting this conflict in the context of the 1970s, SAC still ruled supreme as the dominant tribe within the Air Force, leaving MAC and TAC competing for scarce resources and power within the USAF pecking order. As discussed in chap. 2, the rise of the fighter generals did not fully take effect until the mid-1980s, but the 1970s are indicative of the rise of ambitious, combat-tested (in Vietnam) aviators who tried to establish TAC's dominance within the Air Force cultural pecking order.

3. History, ARRS, vol. 1, 1976, p. 34. For an explanation of the white-hat/black-hat syndrome, see the section on ARS/ARRS culture in chap 4.

4. Ibid. For chronology of the ARS/ARRS commanders, see chap. 4, table 2.

5. Ibid.

6. History, TAC, vol. 1, 1979, p. 573.

7. Ibid., p. 572.

8. History, ARRS, vol. 1, 1976, pp. 35–36.

9. Ibid., 1979, pp. 36–38. The term *range support* refers to helicopter support for TAC ranges used for bombing, strafing, electronic-warfare activities, etc.

10. Ibid., 1976, pp. 35–36. ARRS history provides enough evidence to convince the reader that TAC was creating a second-rate AFSOF capability from the aging MAC fleet, and that MAC was replacing the aircraft lost to TAC with obsolete, sometimes "mothballed" aircraft. For example, in Feb. 1976, all of the 20th SOS (TAC) authorized aircraft (three UH-1Ns and four CH-3s) came from MAC. These assets included some "late model," although still old, CH-3Es from the 41st ARRS and 71st ARRS in July and Feb. 1976, respectively (note that at least two of these were not air refuelable). MAC complained that it could not afford to give CH/HH-3 airframes away when it had previously identified a worldwide shortage of ARRS assets (ibid.).

11. Ibid., 1978, p. 23. In addition to the initiatives described above, ARRS also provided SAR and range support for TAC's Air Force Tactical Fighter Weapons Center, tactical air control systems, and drone recovery.

12. Beres to author, e-mail. Beres implies that after the end of the Vietnam War, Headquarters USAF had assigned the AFSOF mission to TAC, but due to budget cuts, AFSOF was considered more of a nuisance than a force enabler. The first glimpse of hope, according to Beres, was the Israeli commando raid on Entebbe. The Israeli exploits "made us get air refueling on the Talons and suddenly we could go anywhere, anytime." For more on the Entebbe operation, see Stevenson, *90 Minutes at Entebbe*.

13. Kyle and Eidson, *Guts to Try,* p. 27.

14. Ettenson to author, e-mail, 4 Mar. 2004.

15. History, ARRS, vol. 1, 1978, p. 23. The document referenced makes it quite clear that by 1978 TAC's 46 authorized helicopters, located at a total of 10 bases, were most often utilized in a role reminiscent of the ARRS local base support (discussed in detail in chap. 4). As noted earlier, TAC interest in the consolidation was primarily focused on range support for its fighters.

16. Ibid. Also found in History, Twenty-third Air Force, vol. 1, 1983, p. 1.

17. MAC DCS/Plans to USAF DCS/Ops Plans, letter, 22 June 1978; and TAC DCS/Ops and DCS/Plans to USAF/DCS/Plans and Ops, letter, 2 June 1978; both referenced in History, ARRS, vol. 1, 1978, p. 24. Also listed in vol. 2 as supt. docs. I-73 and I-74. MAC responded favorably to the idea of "a single managed, multi-missioned helicopter force concept" with ARRS as the single manager. Initially, it did not want to blend black-hat and white-hat assets. Also, according to Maj Gen Billy J. Ellis, DCS/Operations, Headquarters TAC, this consolidation was "not a viable solution." General Creech, CINCTAC, offered a much more emotional response to the single-manager concept, but the author was not able to declassify the appropriate document in time for the publication of this paper (ibid.).

18. History, TAC, vol. 1, 1979, appendix B ("TAC History"), "Aircraft Inventory." Demonstrating the lack of intellectual emphasis or mere acknowledgement of the AFSOF mission, this history does not mention AFSOF in the narrative. Rather, it only mentions AFSOF helicopter assets in appendix B. In Dec. 1979, the TAC active duty helicopter fleet was limited to eight CH-3s, *no CH-53s,* 16 UH-1Ns, and nine UH-1Ps (ibid.).

19. History, ARRS, vol. 1, 1979, pp. 101–102.

20. Ibid., 1980, p. 15. General Saunders had indicated that he supported the merger earlier in his tenure as ARRS commander. With less than a month away from his change of command, some have speculated that Saunders's change of heart was due to his desire to leave the ARRS community with an impression that he was one of their staunchest advocates.

21. Ibid.

22. This is the first of many examples, in this and subsequent chapters, which suggest that the commander should shape organizational culture rather than culture shaping the commander's vision or organizational direction.

23. Saunders, biography.

24. Schein, *Organizational Culture*, pp. 377–78. In this case, the founding period reflects the Vietnam experience—what some call "the golden age of CSAR."

25. History, ARRS, vol. 1, 1980, pp. 16–17.

26. Ibid. Upon a careful review of both TAC and MAC/ARRS historical documents, one concludes that ARRS seems to have the stronger case. With the preponderance of helicopter assets, it made sense to have MAC/ARRS manage all the assets. Regardless of which command had the better case, both agreed that a single USAF agency that managed all helicopters would eliminate the "problems caused by in-house competition for limited resources" (ibid.).

27. History, Twenty-third Air Force, vol. 1, 1983, p. 1. TAC would not accept the notion of MAC's controlling all the assets, and MAC did not want to merge the black-hat and white-hat communities. Additionally, MAC did not think that it made any sense for TAC to take over the single-manager duties when MAC controlled the majority of the airframes (ibid.).

28. Kyle and Eidson, *Guts to Try*, pp. 32, 93. Later, the Iranian students who stormed the American compound released a small number of hostages. See also Beckwith and Knox, *Delta Force*, p. 217; and Ryan, *Iranian Rescue Mission*, p. 155n1. Ryan demonstrates that of the remaining 53 hostages, one was released due to illness (Richard Queen), but the other 52 were not released until 444 days later. Col Charlie A. Beckwith, USAF, retired, the assault force commander, lists the number of hostages at 53, while Colonel Kyle lists only 50. For more information from the "hostage" perspective, see Wells, *444 Days*, pp. 31–96.

29. Marquis, *Unconventional Warfare*, p. 69. For insight on the ineptitude of US foreign policy towards Iran, see Sullivan, *Mission to Iran*, especially pp. 272–80. Sullivan was the US ambassador to Iran.

30. For a more detailed explanation of the Desert One mission, see appendix A.

31. Kyle and Eidson, *Guts to Try*, pp. 293, 336–38. During the exfiltration, one of the helicopters flew into one of the C-130s, killing eight JTF Airmen—in effect delivering the ultimate psychological blow to the JTF and nation. Kyle points out that in the rush to get away from the burning wreckage and abandon remaining helicopters, Marine pilots had left classified materials aboard their helicopters that contained detailed information about the rescue plan (pp. 294–300).

32. This statement is based on the author's personal experience (12 years in AFSOF), an informal poll of his peers, and a unanimous response from all those interviewed for this research project.

33. The officers interviewed requested that these comments not be specifically attributed to them. Their comments represent personal opinion and are based mostly on rumor rather than personal knowledge of the events. For more, see the appendix.

34. Nonetheless, right or wrong, justified or simply vicious rumor, the perception among many Twenty-third Air Force special operators was that the ARRS had refused the nation's calling. This research project has demonstrated that in any discussion of organizational culture, perceptions matter. Therefore, equally as important as setting the record straight on this issue, one must consider the perceptions and widely accepted stereotypes of the two communities. (See unit histories of ARRS and TAC in the bibliography.)

35. Comer, Peterson AFB, CO, telephonic interview with author, Maxwell AFB, AL, 9 Feb. 2004. Comer claims that MAC and ARRS were involved in the planning only as far as the rescue portion of the Desert One mission. According to Comer, General Huyser was briefed on the rescue attempt shortly before execution (most likely due to security concerns). Once briefed, Huyser "had three Paves boxed up on C-5s at Kirtland. . . . They took off a day before Desert One, heading toward Turkey [in order] to sit [CSAR] alert. . . . Some-

where between Kirtland and Turkey, [the C-5 crews] were told to turn back to Albuquerque."

36. Kingdon, *Agendas, Alternatives,* p. 94.

37. Ibid., pp. 94–95.

38. This situation resembled the AFSOF circumstances during the inter-war period between the Korean and Vietnam conflicts. For more on the sub-ject, see chap. 3 of this study.

39. Kingdon, *Agendas, Alternatives,* p. 114.

40. Beres to author, e-mail; see also Chinnery, *Any Time*, pp. 231–32.

41. Beres to author, e-mail. Beres's ideas are echoed in Marquis, *Unconventional Warfare*, p. 69; Kyle and Eidson, *Guts to Try*, p. 34; and the appendix of this paper.

42. Beres to author, e-mail.

43. US DOD, *Rescue Mission Report*, pp. vi, 61–62; Ryan, *Iranian Rescue Mission*, p. 123; and Marquis, *Unconventional Warfare*, pp. 72–73. Only weeks after the failed rescue attempt, the JCS chartered the Special Operations Review Group—also known as the Holloway Commission after its chairman, Adm James Holloway—to "independently appraise the rescue attempt [and] recommend improvements. . . . The group's focus was on the Department of Defense and military issues." US DOD, *Rescue Mission Report*, p. 61.

44. History, ARRS, vol. 1, 1976, p. 89. See also ibid., 1977, pp. 14–15; and Chinnery, *Any Time*, pp. 231–32. The HH-53H was programmed for beddown in RAF Woodbridge (67th ARRS). Whereas the JCS had allocated only eight RH-53Ds to Desert One, the planners of Project Honey Badger had 95 heli-copters at their disposal, including the first HH-53H Pave Low IIIs, UH-60 Blackhawks (the Army's first operational company of UH-60s), CH-47C Chinooks from the 101st Airborne Division, and OH-6 Loach helicopters that could carry some of the assaulters on specially modified outside platforms. History, Twenty-third Air Force, vol. 1, 1983, p. 1.

45. History, ARRS, vol. 1, 1980, p. 71. This history recounts that five air-frames plus the prototype "had been modified, had completed acceptance test-ing, and were assigned to the 1550th ATTW [Air Training and Test Wing]. Three others were undergoing further modification at the NARF [Naval Air Rework Facility, Pensacola Naval Air Station, FL]." According to MAC Programming Plan 78-18, qualification testing started in Apr. 1979, the prototype was sched-uled to return to Pensacola on Jan. 1980 for further modification, and the first two HH-53Hs were supposed to deploy to their permanent beddown location, RAF Woodbridge, United Kingdom, during Mar. 1980 (ibid.).

46. Ibid., 1976, p. 89; see also ibid., 1977, pp. 14–15; and Chinnery, *Any Time*, pp. 231–32. Please note that although conceived during the Vietnam War, the HH-53H Pave Low III helicopter was designed for the high-threat environments of central and northern Europe. The Pave Low III was sup-posed to utilize its night and adverse weather combat-rescue capability along with a one-of-a-kind sensor and countermeasures suite designed to mitigate the high threats associated with the European theater.

47. Message, 142310Z, Vice CSAF to CINCMAC et al., 14 May 1980. See also History, ARRS, vol. 1, 1980, pp. 77–78. According to official records,

"The order was linked to the pressing national need for the organization of new DOD SOF resources associated with missions of rapid deployment for crisis situations and responses to worldwide acts of terrorism [read Project Honey Badger]." Please note, however, that at this point (14 May) only 11 pilots and seven flight engineers were qualified in the Pave Low III. Four pilots and four engineers were in training and were supposed to graduate in June. Headquarters USAF estimated that MAC stood to lose approximately 30 officers and 176 enlisted personnel (ibid., p. 78).

48. History, ARRS, vol. 1, 1980, pp. 77–78; and Comer, Peterson AFB, CO, telephonic interview with author, Maxwell AFB, AL, 9 Feb. 2004. This history documents that on 23 May 1980, "General Mathis [VSAF] reassured General Huyser [CINCMAC] that all Pave Low III personnel at Hurlburt Field were currently in a TDY status. . . . By 23 July a total of 329 MAC/ARRS people had been placed on extended TDY" (p. 77). The number of personnel deployed reflected six additional non–Pave Low III HH-53B/C airframes that "were placed underneath operational control of TAC for extended TDY at Hurlburt Field." Ibid, p. 78. Comer reports that the "flash message" showed up at five a.m. "They were told to fly out all the aircraft to Hurlburt Field. . . . The Paves flew 1,100 miles and landed FMC [Fully Mission Capable]." Comer, interview.

49. Connelly to author, e-mail, 21 Mar. 2004.

50. Ibid.; and Comer, telephonic interview with author, 9 Feb. 2004. Connelly puts this argument in the context of the times by pointing out that, after the migration of ARRS crews to Hurlburt, CSAR crews outnumbered their AFSOF squadron mates by a wide margin. Connelly to author, e-mail, 21 Mar. 2004. For more on Connelly's ideas on the ARRS/AFSOF helicopter rivalry, see chaps. 3 and 4. Comer reiterated Connelly's story and added that when the original Pave Low crews moved to Hurlburt, their wives had to deal with the permanent change of station (PCS) after the fact. Comer, interview.

51. History, ARRS, vol. 1, 1980, p. 78. According to ARRS records, the original transfer reflected only the first eight Pave Low III airframes. The ninth HH-53 was transferred once it completed the required modifications at NARF. In return, although not a fair trade, TAC agreed to transfer four CH-3s to MAC (pp. 71, 78). With regard to the 20th SOS assertion, both Colonel Connelly and General Folkerts argue that, with the influx of HH-53H crews, the 20th SOS was "full of rescue folks." Connelly to author, e-mail, 21 Mar. 2004; and General Folkerts, interview with author, Fort Walton Beach, FL, 29 Jan. 2004. Folkerts adds that although the 20th was full of former ARRS crews, AFSOF "Huey drivers" commanded the squadron and were responsible for the transformation of ARRS crew members to AFSOF air commandos (Folkerts, interview).

52. Comer, telephonic interview with author, 9 Feb. 2004. Comer points out that although this "first batch" of ARRS crew members was accepted into the AFSOF community rather painlessly, the 20th SOS leadership made it very difficult for the second and third generation of former ARRS crew members to transition from HH-53Bs/Cs to Pave Low III. For example, Comer notes that on average it took "two years to turn a former H-53 instructor pilot [in]to a Pave Low co-pilot." The result was that for years, the 20th SOS had only

seven Pave Low III crews. According to Comer, "Someone retired and another got qualified." This would not change until General Patterson took over Twenty-third Air Force (addressed in the next chapter).

53. Folkerts, interview with author, 29 Jan. 2004. Folkerts was referring to the Honey Badger "shared experiences." General Folkerts suggested that "the 20th SOS had a license to steal [during Project Honey Badger]. . . . The crews had a 1-800 number to DC. . . . If we needed something we got it!" He provided an example of how the crews were able to get a washing machine overnight simply by making a phone call to Washington, DC.

54. All those interviewed suggest that the Holloway Commission highlighted the national mood towards the national counterterrorist mission.

55. Message, 121230Z JUN 80, AFSSO USAF Commander to SSO MAC Commander, 12 June 1980.

56. CINCMAC to CSAF, letter, 23 July 1980; see also Comer, telephonic interview with author, 9 Feb. 2004. Official records suggest that once the initial shock of the Pave Low transfer faded, Huyser was bombarded with ARRS messages eager to demonstrate the negative effect of this transfer on overall ARRS capability. When asked whether MAC considered rebuilding its Pave Low III capability beyond the nine airframes transferred to TAC, General Comer answered: "The Paves were expensive. . . . [The MAC attitude was] if we build any more Pave Lows they'll take them from us." As the next chapter demonstrates, MAC/ARRS did not give up on the Pave Low transfer so easily. Between 1983 and 1985, MAC/ARRS leaders would try to return these high-value assets back to the ARRS.

57. Little, *Aerospace Rescue*, p. 59. See also History, ARRS, vol. 1, 1980, p. 81. The number of personnel deployed is discussed in CINCMAC to CSAF, letter, 23 July 1980. Connelly attests that "during Honey Badger one of the O-6s at Hurby [Hurlburt] told us we were gonna be doing classified vouchers. . . . [We were going to] be flying around and we were gonna remove the . . . hoists. . . . It didn't exactly make sense tactically but it was consistent [with the] anti ARRS attitude that existed in the SOF community." Connelly to author, e-mail, 21 Mar. 2004.

58. Kelly, *From a Dark Sky*, pp. 258–62. Kelly gives an account of the unusual demands of helicopter low-level formation flying at night (aided by NVG). He also provides a unique insight into Project Credible Sport, a plan that called for a C-130 to land in the soccer stadium adjacent to the US Embassy in Tehran (pp. 258–62). In "AF Rescue and AFSOF" Tyner describes the modifications and training of the HC-130s (pp. 14–15). In order to fly low level at night, HC-130s were heavily modified with a new inertial navigation system (INS), radar warning receivers (RWR), and chaff and flare countermeasure dispensers. Moreover, as Tyner explains, "The HC-130 crews developed NVG low level navigation procedures later called Rescue Special Operations Low Level (RSOLL). . . . [After Honey Badger] the specially modified HC-130s returned to their units where they continued to practice the RSOLL mission with select crews. Special operations had no HC-130 tankers of their own so these RSOLL crews provided the only special operations refueling capability" (ibid.).

59. Message, 121645Z NOV 1980, personal, eyes only, CINCMAC to CSAF and VCSAF, 12 Nov. 1980.

60. Kelly, *From a Dark Sky*, p. 252. Kelly discloses that "the ignominious failure at Desert One got the attention of top Air Force officers. Within a short time, major efforts were underway to equip the Air Force to go back in again and succeed in the rescue of the hostages." Ibid. As far as the Pave Low III transfer, Headquarters USAF transferred the helicopters to TAC in order to give AFSOF the capability it lacked prior to the Desert One debacle. In the near term, this helicopter gave AFSOF the capability to penetrate Iranian airspace and act as a "pathfinder" for the CTJTF helicopter formation. Essentially, although Headquarters USAF intended this to be a permanent transfer, the initial transfer was expedited in order to accommodate Project Honey Badger (ibid.).

61. Previously discussed in this chapter, this issue goes back to the post–Vietnam War initiative of a single USAF helicopter manager.

62. Ryan, *Iranian Rescue Mission*, p. 105; Wells, *444 Days*, pp. 405–56; and History, ARRS, vol. 1, 1980, p. 20. Ryan divulges that "on 20 January 1981, only two minutes after President Ronald Reagan had taken the oath of office," Ayatollah Khomeini released the American hostages (p. 105).

63. Beres to author, e-mail.

64. Ibid.

65. Ibid.

66. Marquis, *Unconventional Warfare*, p. 266.

67. Ibid.

68. Ettenson to author, e-mail, 4 Mar. 2004; and Kingdon, *Agendas*, *Alternatives*, pp. 94–96. This is consistent with Kingdon's "focusing event" concept. Desert One and the subsequent preparations for a second hostage rescue attempt provided a powerful symbol of the type of mission that America's SOF would have to be prepared for in the future.

69. Tyner, "AF Rescue and AFSOF," p. 15.

70. History, TAC, vol. 1, 1980, p. 15. See also Marquis, *Unconventional Warfare*, p. 76.

71. Beres to author, e-mail; and Marquis, *Unconventional Warfare*, p. 75.

72. Marquis, *Unconventional Warfare*, p. 76. Information comes from a Marquis interview with Col Scott Stevens, Mar. 1993.

73. Marquis, *Unconventional Warfare*, pp. 77, 79.

74. CINCMAC to SECDEF, letter, 25 June 1981.

75. History, ARRS, vol. 1, 1981, p. 2; and ARRS Cmdr to CINCMAC, letter, 25 Aug. 1981. For TAC's position, see History, TAC, vol. 1, 1982, pp. 390–91. In 1981 MAC/ARRS submitted a draft revision of its mission statement that included special operations as a core task/mission of the ARRS. TAC vehemently opposed this mission transfer.

76. History, Twenty-third Air Force, vol. 1, 1983, p. 3. According to official records, "Sometime between 7 and 14 September General Wilbur Creech, Commander of TAC, and General James Allen, CINCMAC, personally discussed the proposed consolidation and agreed that it would take place within MAC. . . . On 20 September 1982 a small group of officers from TAC, headed

by Colonel Ronald Fogleman, visited MAC for the purpose of discussing the joint proposal with the MAC group, headed by Colonel Gary Lunt. The MAC and TAC officers found mutual agreement on nearly all of the pertinent issues" (ibid.). Please note that Colonel Fogleman was a career fighter pilot. Although no one doubts the abilities of someone who later would become the CSAF, it is intriguing that TAC entrusted the fate of AFSOF to a fighter pilot. The important observation, however, is not that Colonel (later General) Fogleman was assigned to these duties but that no AFSOF leader was given the task. This could have been due to a thorough understanding of the need to have someone impartial to the cultural dynamics represent TAC's position. Based on TAC's culturally insensitive handling of the transfer, however, this was more likely due to the fact that that there were not many AFSOF O-6s on the TAC staff.

77. Ehrhard, "Armed Services and Innovation," pp. 11–12. Ehrhard's ideas are explored in chap. 2 of this paper. He convincingly advocates that "a monarchic service can be identified by the concentration of power in the service chief due to his membership in the single dominant subgroup" (p. 11). At the same time, Ehrhard dismisses "the popular conception that all military organizations have rigid hierarchies in which the top general or admiral makes decisions like a Mafia don. Although services vary in the degree of power wielded by the service chief, none resemble autocracies in practice" (p. 12). Please note that this aspect of the USAF culture remains unchanged even today.

78. History, Twenty-third Air Force, vol. 1, 1983, pp. 1–3.

79. Ibid.

80. Ibid.

81. Ibid.

82. Ibid.

83. Worden, *Rise of the Fighter Generals*, p. x. See also Vandenberg, biography. As noted in chap. 2, n. 71, General Vandenberg, the second CSAF, was the first true fighter general since he spent the majority of his flying career as an attack/pursuit pilot. But in the context of this chapter, General Gabriel was the first fighter general after three decades of bomber barons.

84. Marquis, *Unconventional Warfare*, p. 77.

85. See chap. 3 of this paper and Marquis, *Unconventional Warfare*, p. 77.

86. Marquis, *Unconventional Warfare*, p. 77.

87. Ibid.

88. Ehrhard, "Armed Services and Innovation," p. 11.

89. History, Twenty-third Air Force, vol. 1, 1983, p. 3.

90. Cox, "1980s: Decade of Evolution," p. 24. Also found in Marquis, *Unconventional Warfare*, pp. 78–79; and Chinnery, *Any Time*, pp. 232–35. Additionally, Cox emphasizes that "only a handful of SOF experienced personnel were placed on the 23rd Air Force and Headquarters MAC staff!" Cox, p. 24.

91. History, Twenty-third Air Force, vol. 1, 1983, pp. 4–5. Information gleaned from General Mall's briefing to the MAC staff on 28 Sept. 1982.

92. Ibid., p. 4.

93. Ibid., p. 5.

94. Ibid., p. 9.

95. "Major General William J. Mall, Jr.," pp. 1–3.

96. Ibid.

97. Ibid., p. 3. According to Mall, this emphasis gave Twenty-third Air Force "more assets and greater flexibility" if a contingency arose. Interestingly enough, as later evidence demonstrates, Mall's commitment to the revitalization of SOF existed only in theory. In practice, he maintained that the HH-60 was Twenty-third Air Force's number-one equipment priority (ibid.).

98. Haas, "23rd Air Force," p. 8. Haas points out that Twenty-third Air Force was the third numbered air force in MAC and contends that Twenty-third Air Force was totally responsible for the entire spectrum of USAF special operations activities.

99. Ibid.

100. Ibid.

101. Schein, *Organizational Culture*, p. 385. Arguably, TAC conditions to the organizational merger, noted earlier, represented TAC's attempt to ensure survival of the AFSOF identity. But these six conditions hardly qualify as a thorough cultural analysis of the two organizations.

102. Ibid., p. 384.

103. Builder, *Masks of War*, p. 10. Chap. 2 of my study established a link between culture and leadership. Chaps. 3 and 4 established a cultural baseline for AFSOF and ARRS post-Vietnam institutional identities. This chapter examines the relationship between leadership, culture, and the Twenty-third Air Force organizational merger.

104. Ibid. In chap. 2, I introduced Builder's concept of the masks of war. Builder is able to see past the facade that services use "to screen some of their motives or self-interests: the masks of war" (ibid.).

105. See earlier discussions in this chapter concerning the single-manager for helicopter assets. With the exception of General Saunders's resistance to change, ARRS leadership had wholeheartedly supported the transfer of AFSOF helicopter assets to the ARRS.

106. Haas, "23rd Air Force," p. 9.

107. Marquis, *Unconventional Warfare*, p. 79; and History, ARRS, vol. 1, 1979, pp. 41, 44–45. (Reference Staff Summary Sheet, MAC DCS/Plans to MAC Command Section, 11 May 1979.)

108. History, ARRS, vol. 1, 1979, p. 41. For instance (as noted in chap. 4), in 1979 the H-X and the conversion of the HC-130H to the HC-130P/N programs were not funded in the FY 1981 budget. The H-X project, in particular, ended up as the number-two unfunded MAC program (ibid.).

109. Marquis, *Unconventional Warfare*, p. 78.

110. Beres to author, e-mail. Colonel Beres observes that if AFSOF could get someone promoted to general, then AFSOF would finally have more than two colonels (O-6s) in the Air Force.

111. Ibid. For more on AFSOF's lack of senior leadership opportunities and poor promotion rates, see Thigpen, "AFSOC*:* Air Force's Newest Command," pp. 37–41.

112. Thigpen, "AFSOC: Air Force's Newest Command," pp. 39–40.

113. Cox, "1980s: Decade of Evolution," pp. 11, 21–27.

114. Ibid., p. 27. As demonstrated earlier, only after TAC insisted on "separate and distinct" identities did MAC acquiesce to an organizational structure that included a discrete AFSOF headquarters (ibid.).

115. Beres to author, e-mail.

116. Ibid.

117. Ibid. Beres also maintains that, in the 1970s, AFSOF was "fishing for a mission."

118. Cox, biography. The term *born again* reflects the author's opinion and is intended to demonstrate that Colonel Cox was not a "special operator" early in his career but became a devout believer in the SOF ideals later in his professional life. As explained in the text, Colonel (later Major General) Cox had neither the background nor an appreciation of the cultural intricacies between AFSOF and ARRS; thus, he did not grasp the biases and cultural minefields that the merger had created.

119. Ibid. Cox retired as the director of operations, USSOCOM. In this capacity, he championed USSOCOM efforts to "purify" Twenty-third Air Force and AFSOC from any non-SOF "impurities" such as the ARRS forces. This concept is discussed in detail later in this chapter.

120. As noted earlier, like Cox, most of the past 1st SOW commanders had no assignments with SOF prior to assuming their position at the top of the AFSOF leadership pyramid. Similarly, all the ARRS commanders (excluding a few interim officers who had only a couple of months in command) had no experience in the rescue mission (see chap. 4, table 2).

121. Cox, biography. Note that Cox logged 1,000 combat hours during the Vietnam War in the EC-130 (command and control platform) and that he had no AFSOF experience prior to assuming the duties of vice-commander of 1st SOW in 1981.

122. History, ARRS, vol. 1, 1980, p. 15; and Saunders, biography. Earlier in the chapter, I mentioned that General Saunders had 11,000 (primarily airlift) flying hours but no connection to the rescue community prior to his assignment as ARRS commander. One can then assume that many of his ideas were heavily influenced by the strong post–Vietnam War ARRS institutional identity and by the ARRS echelon affected by its combat exposure to SEA operations. Similarly, Cox's ideas were most likely heavily influenced by some of the most vocal AFSOF proponents.

123. History, Twenty-third Air Force, vol. 1, 1983, p. 18. According to official records, of the 123 manpower slots authorized for Twenty-third Air Force, seven were unfunded. Of 123 authorized for ARRS, 17 remained unfunded. The 2nd AD "contained 70 authorized spaces" (p. 17). 1st SOW was authorized 602 spaces, but 119 remained unfunded. As a result, "the Twenty-Third Air Force and ARRS had been forced to share logistics and safety staffs, and there were not enough manpower spaces for separate secretaries and other administrative personnel to fill all needs" (p. 24).

124. Ibid., pp. 18–19.

125. Beres to author, e-mail. Beres remarks that the AFSOF and ARRS missions were complementary but different. He adds that in the 1980s, "the two

missions drove different tactics but MAC and 23rd AF wanted standardization for safety factors. . . . We were certain MAC's risk intolerance was going to prevent mission success *and* was going to *kill* folks. During this time we had to cease some tactics, stop developing some capabilities, and expand our safety margins to meet MAC standards" (emphasis in original). Beres further reports that MAC did not understand the importance of short-field landings, NVG proficiency, and "blind" drop criteria.

126. Schein, *Organizational Culture*, p. 378. In short, this can best be described as a cultural midlife crisis.

127. History, Twenty-third Air Force, vol. 1, 1983, p. 20.

128. Schein, *Organizational Culture*, p. 385.

129. History, Twenty-third Air Force, vol. 1, 1983, p. 21.

130. Ibid., pp. 22–23. These options were (1) eliminate the Headquarters ARRS and 2nd AD and assign all wings to Twenty-third Air Force; (2) limit the Headquarters ARRS and 2nd AD staffs to the size of SAC-type divisions; (3) amalgamate Headquarters Twenty-third Air Force and Headquarters ARRS, while leaving the 2nd AD intact; (4) leave all headquarters intact but "fine tune" the staff duty descriptions (make the staff assigned match the staff-funded numbers); (5) move Headquarters Twenty-third Air Force; (6) move Headquarters ARRS; and (7) relocate both Headquarters ARRS and Headquarters Twenty-third Air Force (pp. 22–23).

131. Ibid., p. 23. See also Staff Summary Sheet, MAC DCS/Plans to Cmd Sec, "Briefing After Action Report–Twenty-Third Air Force Organization," 8 Sept. 1983; and Staff Summary Sheet, MAC DCS/Plans to Cmd Sct, "23 AF Reorganization," 19 Sept. 1983. Supporting documentation is found in History, Twenty-third Air Force, vol. 2, 1983, supt. doc. I-51. According to the 1983 Twenty-third Air Force history, "There weren't enough manpower spaces or enough room in Building P-4 for two large headquarters" (p. 23).

132. Ibid., vol. 1, p. 24.

133. Ibid.; and Beres to author, e-mail.

134. History, Twenty-third Air Force, vol. 1, 1983, pp. 24–25. For example, General Prince, former ARRS commander, became the Twenty-third Air Force commander on 3 Oct. 1983. In a day, the rescue stature associated with a two-star command billet was instantly eroded with Col Owen Heeter assuming command of the ARRS (ibid.).

135. Ibid., p. 25.

136. Ibid., pp. 24–25.

137. 23rd AF/CC to CINCMAC, letter, 13 Sept. 1985.

Chapter 6

Organizational Change

The Fall of the Twenty-third Air Force

The transfer of Pave Low helicopters to the Army would be like giving the Space Shuttle to Chad.

    —"Pipeline Willie" (code name for AFSOF contributor)

When you lobby for something, what you have to do is put together your coalition, you have to gear up, you have to get your political forces in line, and then you sit there and wait for the fortuitous event. . . . People who are trying to advocate change are like surfers waiting for the big wave. You get out there, you have to be ready to go, you have to be ready to paddle. If you're not ready to paddle when the big wave comes along, you're not going to ride it in.

    —Anonymous analyst

This chapter analyzes the reactions of AFSOF and ARRS to three initiatives that proved critical in the evolution of the nascent organization and contributed to the fall of the Twenty-third Air Force. Like the previous chapter, it filters these responses through the lens of organizational culture. The first half explores the effect of organizational culture on initiative 16 (the joint proposal on the future of CSAR) and initiative 17 (the Army and Air Force's plan to transfer the AFSOF rotary-wing mission to the Army). The second half examines the CSAR and AFSOF institutional agendas associated with the Forward Look concept. This section also explores the influence of the newly created USSOCOM on the Twenty-third Air Force's attempts to integrate the AFSOF and CSAR communities. Ultimately, this chapter evaluates the effect of organizational culture.

The Saga of Initiatives 16 and 17

As noted in chapter 2, after the Vietnam War, the Army and Air Force became increasingly concerned with the possibility of

a Warsaw Pact invasion of Western Europe.[1] The two services began their close cooperation out of necessity brought about by the post-Vietnam defense budget cuts and the Army's recognition that it could not counter Soviet superiority in central Europe without Air Force assistance.[2] With this common purpose, Army and Air Force post-Vietnam theater-war strategies culminated in the development of AirLand Battle doctrine.[3] Richard Davis argues that this interservice dialogue "not only stimulated Air Force–Army cross fertilization of ideas, it [also] provided a high level forum for open and frank discussion."[4] Contributing to this close cooperation between the services was the friendship between General Gabriel (CSAF) and Gen John A. Wickham, Jr., chief of staff, United States Army (CSA), as well as the relationship between Lt Gen John T. Chain, Jr. (USAF), and Lt Gen Fred K. Mahaffey, United States Army (USA).[5]

On 22 May 1984 Generals Gabriel and Wickham signed a memorandum of agreement (MOA) intended to transform the Army and Air Force service cultures.[6] According to Davis, the 1984 MOA between the Army and the Air Force, most commonly referred to as the 31 initiatives, represented the culmination of "a decade of increasing interest in coordinating battlefield actions."[7] Davis remarks that "[the 31 initiatives] inaugurated a period of joint consideration of, and cooperation on, war fighting issues affecting both services."[8] Of special interest to this research project, initiatives 16 and 17 sought to define the roles and missions of joint CSAR and SOF aviation, respectively.[9]

According to a message from General Mahaffey and General Chain to subordinate headquarters, initiative 16 prescribed that the Air Staff would determine its CSAR objectives "in relation to depths on the battlefield defined by [USAF] capabilities. . . . [MAC would] develop tactics, techniques, and procedures for SAR within AF zones . . . [and the Army's Training and Doctrine Command would] develop tactics, techniques, and procedures for Special Operations Forces (SOF) to conduct SAR outside the AF SAR zones."[10] Specific to Twenty-third Air Force, initiative 16 proposed that the ARRS would be responsible for CSAR in specific battlefield areas, with AFSOF acting as "back-up."[11]

Although initiative 16 hoped to avoid duplication of effort in the DOD's CSAR efforts, Davis convincingly argues that "the morale and customized training advantages of each service taking care of

its own outweighed the advantages of a rationalized single service C3 [command, control, and communications] for SAR."[12] Therefore, although the services could agree to take a joint approach to CSAR, neither the Army nor the Air Force would consent to place the CSAR responsibility squarely on the shoulders of a single service. In a compromise that amounted to a reaffirmation of the status quo, the Army and Air Force elected to coordinate, rather than combine, each service's rescue responsibilities.[13]

According to Rep. Earl Hutto (D-FL), initiative 16 was a plan marred with inefficiency and bound to create difficulties in war. Without a joint approach to CSAR, Hutto conveyed that initiative 16 exacerbated the likelihood of confusion during recovery attempts of "downed men or POWs [prisoners of war] from different services."[14] Deborah Meyer suggests that Hutto was not pleased with the decision by the Air Force's and Army's chiefs of staff to maintain "separate directions with CSAR and SOF strategy."[15] She indicates that Hutto's displeasure resulted from the issue of true versus perceived capability. Reportedly, Hutto was convinced that although the Air Force had organic assets to support the CSAR rotary-wing mission, "the Army . . . [had] no dedicated CSAR capability whatsoever."[16]

As head of the House Special Operations Panel, a subelement of the Armed Services Readiness Subcommittee, Hutto wanted to standardize all service CSAR techniques and procedures. Additionally, he wanted to keep SOF and CSAR "under the same umbrella, just as is now done in the Air Force."[17] Although Hutto's panel was successful in convincing the Navy to follow the Air Force lead of combining its special forces and search-and-recovery assets under one organizational structure, it was not able to convince the Defense Department to create a joint CSAR capability.[18] Ultimately, service priorities within the construct of the AirLand Battle doctrine precluded significant reform in this area. Nonetheless, debates over initiative 16 were benign compared to the partisan policies and institutional agendas associated with initiative 17.

Again, initiative 17 referred to the Air Force and Army headquarters' plan to transfer responsibility for rotary-wing support from AFSOF to the Army.[19] At first glance, initiative 17 appeared to be a sensible move for reducing the seeming duplication of Army and AFSOF rotary-wing aviation. According

to a Joint Assessment and Initiatives Office briefing to General Gabriel, "the services have developed a long-term plan to complete the transfer from the Air Force to the Army of the responsibility for rotary wing support for SOF. This plan consolidates SOF helicopters in the Army, where these assets can best conduct and sustain this aspect of special operations. The Air Force is increasingly concentrating its efforts on support of SOF fixed wing requirements as its rotary wing capabilities are replaced by Army aviation forces."[20] Marquis makes a persuasive case, however, that despite its apparent value, initiative 17 was not as benign as it appeared. According to Noel Koch, principal deputy assistant secretary of defense for international security affairs and supporter of SOF revitalization efforts, "The memorandum of understanding basically says [that] the Army is going to take over the mission. . . . [Although not apparent at the time,] if the Air Force divested itself of the [SOF rotary-wing] mission, the Army had no ability to pick up the mission."[21]

Barry Posen conveys that "attempts by rivals to take over an organization's primary task . . . sometimes elicit violent reactions from threaten[ed] organizations."[22] This was precisely what happened after the AFSOF community and its supporters learned of the plans of Headquarters USAF and USA to transfer this mission area in 1984, when initiative 17 was officially unveiled. In effect, this proposal illustrates the effect of institutional biases on proposed organizational change. This initiative hints of the systemic neglect by both services' headquarters to consider the cultural realities associated with significant reorganization efforts—and the elimination of a mission area with a long and distinguished history—until after the key decisions had been made.

According to Marquis, initiative 17 supporters wondered, "Why the fuss about the nine helicopters?"[23] Although the Pave Low was the most capable helicopter in the DOD inventory, Marquis correctly observes that initiative 17 involved much more than just the Pave Low transfer.[24] In 1983, Congress suggested that the Air Force purchase additional Pave Low III helicopters and Combat Talon aircraft in an attempt to "resolve the narrow problem of SOF aviation . . . [and] raise the priority of the SOF in the resource decisions of the services and the

Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD)."[25] At worst, many air-commando supporters felt that initiative 17 was evidence of Army and Air Force "malicious intentions" toward special forces.[26] At best, it signaled the services' "inability and unwillingness" to revitalize the SOF's capabilities, as mandated by congressional and OSD guidance.[27]

Regardless of the intent, in reality, however, Army special operations forces (ARSOF) did not have the necessary resources to assume sole responsibility for the SOF rotary-wing mission.[28] Marquis conveys that "the army did not realize the expenses associated with this proposal and lengthy delay in building the long-range rotary-wing aviation capability." He remarks that "pilots, crews, and support personnel would have to be trained and doctrine developed for the use of special operations helicopters within the Army. . . . The Army helicopter pilots and crews were talented and well-trained but had neither the training nor the mindset for long-range infiltration and exfiltration special operations missions."[29] At the same time, the Air Force did not allocate adequate resources toward the revitalization of the AFSOF. For example, when Congress asked the Air Force to reduce its FY 1985 budget by 5 percent, the USAF offered up a 40 percent cut of its AFSOF budget.[30] In short, by 1984 it had become clear to the OSD and Congress that this was a case of the Air Force refusing to "meet congressional requirements and . . . [to use] its funds to pay for special operations helicopters . . . [and of the] Army pursuing a new mission and not realizing its implications."[31]

In response to what SOF supporters perceived as "an atrociously dumb idea," a loosely aligned group of SOF reform proponents, known as the "SOF Liberation Front," mobilized opposition in order to counter what they considered an ill-conceived proposal.[32] Some of the more prominent figures in this group included those who led the debate against initiative 17 from within the OSD (Koch and his assistant, Lynn Rylander) and those who attacked initiative 17 from Capitol Hill (Hutto, Dan Daniel (D-VA), and Daniel's staff member, Richard "Ted" Lunger).[33] Along with air commandos such as Colonel Weikel, Will Elledge, and others, the OSD and Capitol Hill SOF Liberation Front waged battle for over two years.[34]

According to the initial joint proposal, the Air Force "agreed to transfer [all] responsibility for rotary wing support to the Army."[35] By September 1984, however, Generals Gabriel and Wickham had made it clear that they intended to transfer the rotary-wing mission as well as the AFSOF HH-53H helicopters.[36] According to MAC staff documents, General Gabriel wanted to complete the transfer of the rotary-wing mission to the Army by July 1986.[37] In a message to Air Force MAJCOMs, Headquarters USAF issued the following directive:

> The Army and Air Force are continuing to complete plans to implement the intent of Initiative 17 of reference MOA; however, concerns regarding our jointly preferred option of transferring Pave Low assets to the Army have necessitated deferral of that portion of our efforts. Accordingly, addressees should take appropriate action to rescind Army/AF personnel, programming, and logistical actions undertaken to initiate Army Pave Low training in proposed Pave Low transfer. MAC will ensure that the 20th SOS is manned to meet operational requirements. Additional details concerning Initiative 17 will be forwarded as they are developed.[38]

Perceiving this as a mistake, advocates for the SOF—such as Koch, Rylander, Lunger, and Representatives Daniel and Hutto— chose to involve themselves "in the smallest details of Defense Department special-operations-related policy, organization, and resources allocation."[39] Based on information provided by Hutto and others, in October of 1984 Daniel sent a scathing letter to the SecDef blasting initiative 17 on a number of points. In his letter Daniel characterized the Air Force and Army's proposal to transfer the AFSOF rotary-wing mission to the Army as a "hasty and illogical patchwork of proposed fixes, in an attempt to retroactively justify initiative number 17, [that] is beginning to resemble a crazy quilt."[40] Furthermore, Daniel listed several shortcomings of the planned transfer:

1. The Army has a fixation on aviation support for a single-purpose, special-purpose, peace-time portion of the SOF mission (i.e., lift support for hostage-rescue type SOF missions only).

2. This fixation sacrifices the sustained day-in, day-out combat support of SOF that is an important requirement in general war plans.

3. Another "disruptive" roles and mission battle may result [in further conflict] when (and if) the JFX tilt-rotor comes into the inventory, because the Army and Air Force have yet to decide whether it's a fixed or rotary wing aircraft [the Air Force contended that the V-22 was a fixed-wing platform while the Army designated it a rotary-wing asset].

4. It will cost the Army somewhere between $460-million and $1-billion to replicate existing and near-term Air Force SOF capabilities, not $200-million, as the Army Chief of Staff General John A. Wickham had been told when the transfer was first proposed last spring. Gen. Secord [an ex-AFSOF operator] testified that it will cost "well over $1-billion" for the Army to match the Air Force's current long-range capability—which, he added, is "ridiculously inadequate."

5. A recent internal Air Force memo to the Army [a copy of which was attached to Daniel's letter] suggests . . . that the "tenure of the Chiefs, rather than the logical validity of initiative 17, is driving the haste in this decision."[41]

At first, it appeared that congressional interference was not going to alter the initiative 17 momentum within the DOD, but in the end, Daniel's stature as the chairman of the House Armed Services Readiness Subcommittee proved more influential than service agendas.[42] On 15 October 1984, William H. Taft IV, deputy secretary of defense, approved the Air Force's/Army's plan to begin Pave Low training of Army crews at Hurlburt Field. In light of Representative Daniel's call for congressional hearings on the matter, Taft sent the following reply to Daniel: "I have suggested to General[s] Wickham and Gabriel that they meet with you personally to explain their rationale and discuss your concerns. We will of course reconsider the transfer proposal if further deliberations produce a convincing set of arguments for doing so. As you know, the Secretary of Defense has assigned the highest priority to the restoration of our Special Operations Forces. Your support and assistance in this vital endeavor is greatly appreciated."[43] At the bottom of this letter, Secretary Taft concluded with this handwritten postscript: "Mr. Chairman: If you are not satisfied after meeting with Generals Wickham and Gabriel, please let me know. I think they have made a good case. If you disagree after having heard them, however, we will not pursue this over your objection—Will Taft."[44]

Eventually the 3 December 1984 meeting between Congressmen Daniel and Hutto and Generals Wickham and Gabriel signaled the beginning of the end for initiative 17, at least for the time being.[45] Not satisfied with Wickham's and Gabriel's arguments, Daniel and Hutto continued to oppose the plan to transfer the HH-53s to the Army. True to his word, Taft forced the CSA and CSAF to suspend initiative 17 in mid-December. MAC indefinitely postponed all MAC-DA (Department of the Army) Proposition 84-23 actions on 3 January 1985.[46] The CSAF and

CSA met with Mr. Taft on 16 May 1985 and agreed that the Air Force would continue to perform the SOF long-range rotary-wing mission and that the Army would pursue the SOF short-range rotary-wing mission.[47]

In September 1985 the Defense Resource Board proposed that "SOF long-range support by the Army . . . [and] MH-60 development and acquisition should continue, but the funding of the MH-47 program would stretch out into the 1990s."[48] This near-term compromise would have significant long-range implications. It meant that the DOD would channel additional funding to AFSOF in order to modify additional HH-53s to the Pave Low configuration.[49] But under this agreement, the Army would continue to develop its long-range rotary-wing capabilities, thus suggesting that the initiative 17 concept might surface again in the future, presumably when ARSOF aviation developed the resources necessary to assume the long-range infiltration mission.[50]

After two years of deliberations, Congressmen Daniel and Hutto reached their limit. Based on their perception of an Air Force lack of commitment toward SOF revitalization efforts, Daniel and Hutto put the "fighter mafia . . . on notice."[51] In effect, they signaled to the Air Force their intention to increase the AFSOF share of the USAF budget, whether the CSAF wanted to or not. In a letter to General Gabriel, Hutto warned, "The Air Force's inability to support an extremely small part of its overall tactical warfare responsibility calls into question the validity of a requirement to support authorization of 44 tactical fighter wings."[52] When Hutto threatened what the fighter community (the dominant tribe in the Air Force) valued the most, Gabriel and the rest of the fighter generals finally got the message.[53]

While the service chiefs debated initiative 17 with Congress, MAC and the Twenty-third Air Force also tried to influence the process. According to Twenty-third Air Force historian Little, "This impasse left the CINCMAC, General Thomas M. Ryan, Jr., and the Twenty-Third Air Force Commander, Maj Gen William J. Mall (and later General Duane Cassidy and Major General Robert Patterson), somewhere in no man's land, supporting the Chief of Staff but trying not to antagonize Congress."[54] Concurrently, internal to the Twenty-third Air Force, General Mall had

to contend with ARRS/AFSOF institutional agendas that were divided along cultural fault lines.

Additionally, it appears that the Twenty-third Air Force leadership had formulated its own interpretation of an initiative 17. The evidence suggests that General Mall's version of initiative 17 favored the ARRS. In an apparent reversal of the post–Desert One reorganization that delivered the airframes to AFSOF in the first place, Mall intended to transfer the HH-53Hs from AFSOF to the ARRS.[55] General Mall suggests that there was "no consideration being given to the transfer of assets. . . . Everything that we now have devoted to rotary-wing SOF will stay with the Air Force."[56] In a MAC staff package coordinated via General Mall and approved by General Ryan, CINCMAC, the MAC/Twenty-third Air Force position was clear: "[MAC desired] the phasein [*sic*] of Pave Lows, UH-1Ns, and CH-3s [from AFSOF] to combat rescue."[57] On the one hand, Headquarters Air Force was promoting the transfer of the AFSOF rotary-wing mission and corresponding airframes to the Army. On the other hand, MAC/Twenty-third Air Force wanted to transfer the mission to the Army and the Pave Low IIIs (and corresponding capability) back to the rescue community.

Regardless of the differences between the agenda of Headquarters USAF and that of Headquarters MAC/Twenty-third Air Force, OSD and congressional reaction to initiative 17 was swift and compelling. In a telling statement of civilian frustration with the "slow wheels" of military bureaucracy, Koch indicates, "I have discovered in critical areas of the Pentagon, on the subject of special operations force revitalization, that when they [Pentagon officials] say no, they mean no; when they say maybe, they mean no; and when they say yes, they mean no; and if they say anything but no, they wouldn't be here."[58] In large part, Koch's frustration centered on the DOD's slow reaction to the Desert One–like failures associated with the American invasion of the small island of Grenada.[59]

In October 1983, weeks after the Twenty-third Air Force reorganization, the 2nd Air Division played a key role in Operation Urgent Fury, the invasion of Grenada.[60] According to Colonel Thigpen, "Many of the same problems (command and control, joint operations, participation by all services in the operation, etc.) that had been identified during Desert One surfaced

again."[61] Thigpen indicates that "after three years, it appeared that the US had made little progress."[62] Congressional inquiries would later determine that "SOF airlift did not have the legs, the firepower, or the night-time operating capability to support American special operations in Grenada. . . . Communications failures throughout the American force only amplified the command and control chaos that resulted from a lack of joint planning and training including special operations and conventional forces."[63] Marquis proposes that Operation Urgent Fury "demonstrated that the declarations of support for SOF revitalization by Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger and the military services had not been backed up by effective reform."[64]

Specific to the Twenty-third Air Force, congressional frustration centered on the issue of "rubber on the ramp."[65] Since congressional contact with the DOD is mostly in the form of appropriations initiatives, congressional oversight of the AFSOF revitalization efforts focused on the numbers of AFSOF aircraft. In light of initiative 17, it was clear that the Air Force's priority was to divest some of its unique AFSOF capabilities rather than invest in the renaissance of this habitually neglected mission area. In 1984, for example, there were fewer SOF-specific airframes in the USAF inventory than in summer of 1980; if implemented, initiative 17 meant to transfer the seven remaining Pave Lows to ARSOF.[66] Complicating matters, General Mall attached his desire to modernize the AFSOF fleet of aircraft to "the real need for combat rescue forces and Pave-Low helicopters in any future operation of this kind."[67] Clearly, the Air Force hierarchy, down to the Twenty-third Air Force echelon, did not display a sense of urgency in aggressively pursuing initiatives that sought to correct AFSOF discrepancies identified during Desert One and Urgent Fury.[68]

In the end, although Congressmen Daniel and Hutto had by far the most significant influence on the Defense Department's decision to abandon initiative 17, many air commandos provided the documentation and the key data that influenced congressional intervention.[69] These covert actions may never be officially attributed to certain individuals, but these officers were nonetheless influential, and their actions were representative of the AFSOF community's visceral reaction to what they perceived as a threat to their institutional relevance.[70]

The preceding analysis and observations illuminate the influence of organizational culture both in the services' efforts to realize initiative 17 as well as in the efforts of the SOF community to oppose it. The reactions to initiatives 16 and 17 offer examples of how small subcultures can resist proposals that originate and have the support of the most senior-service leaders.[71] The Forward Look concept, although not nearly as controversial as the 31 initiatives, provides another case for evaluating organizational conflict. Initiatives 16 and 17 highlighted intraservice and interagency cultural strife over policy. The remainder of this chapter will focus on General Patterson's Forward Look and his efforts to transform the Twenty-third Air Force from a mission- and platform-based command to a capabilities-based force.

Forward Look and the Fall of the Twenty-third Air Force

On 20 September 1985 General Patterson assumed command of the Twenty-third Air Force. No stranger to the AFSOF and ARRS missions, Patterson started his career as a rescue pilot with the 31st Air Rescue Squadron at Clark Air Base, the Philippines, and a decade later flew gunships with the 16th SOS in SEA.[72] Although his career took him in and out of AFSOF a number of times, perhaps his most influential duty, prior to assuming command of the Twenty-third Air Force, was as the senior Air Force officer during Operation Urgent Fury.[73] Clearly, General Patterson was uniquely qualified to command the Twenty-third Air Force. On 24 October 1985, only a month after his change of command, Patterson outlined his Forward Look concept to the MAC staff.[74]

In his end-of-tour report, General Patterson states that his primary objective was to "correct deficiencies in Air Force Special Operations, and simultaneously strengthen all of [the] 23 AF."[75] He conveys that "the first step in this process was to correct a terrible organizational structure; this proposal was called *Forward Look* (emphasis added)."[76] Patterson was forced to act promptly due to increasing congressional concerns over the lack of progress in the revitalization of the AFSOF and Head-

quarters USAF's frugal fiscal policy towards Twenty-third Air Force's priority programs. In October of 1985, the House Appropriations Committee declared that the "Air Force [Special Operations] Program to date is unacceptable and . . . as a matter of congressional policy, the Air Force [must] comply with the deadline to implement fully the SOF revitalization not later than the end of FY 1990 as directed by the highest levels in the Department of Defense and the White House."[77]

In order to change congressional and Defense Department perceptions of a lack of Air Force commitment to the revival of its special forces, Patterson had two primary goals for his Forward Look plan.[78] He wanted to improve Twenty-third Air Force's effectiveness and, at the same time, demonstrate "visible emphasis of [Air Force] commitment" to the SOF's revitalization efforts.[79] Forward Look streamlined the Twenty-third Air Force's infrastructure so that it optimized the complementary features of the AFSOF and CSAR communities.[80]

The central theme of the Forward Look concept was the focus on "airpower *capability*, rather than *mission*" (emphasis in original).[81] Contrary to USAF conventional thinking that wanted to keep the mission areas separate and early ARRS thinking that wanted to assimilate AFSOF within its existing organizational structure, General Patterson suggests that CSAR and AFSOF were complementary elements within the Air Force's specialized air warfare (SAW) capabilities. According to General Patterson, SAW was "an umbrella term for special operations, combat rescue, counter-terror, and certain reconnaissance missions."[82]

Patterson envisioned these mission areas and cultures evolving into a capabilities-based SAW force. Cognizant of AFSOF/CSAR capabilities and limitations, he sought to reorganize the Twenty-third Air Force in a way that maximized its combat effectiveness. As part of his plan for the organizational and cultural transformation of the Twenty-third Air Force structure, Patterson proposed "the establishment of four multi-mission wings: one in the West Pacific area; two in the contiguous United States; and one in the European area."[83] In Patterson's words, "We designed, planned, and sold this concept to improve both Air Force special operations and rescue capabilities." In fact, the use of the SAW "umbrella term" suggests that Patterson's plan addressed the cultural sensitivities within the

AFSOF and rescue communities; the term *SAW* did not hint of a priority of one mission over the other, but focused on integrating complementary capabilities.

Unfortunately, the MAC bureaucracy, those responsible for the initial staffing process up the MAC chain of command, exacerbated certain cultural biases that would later cause an irreparable rift between the AFSOF and CSAR communities. The initial Forward Look briefing to Lt Gen Spence M. Armstrong suggested that the SAW wing structure would include AFSOF and CR units, with one commander responsible for providing SOF and CR forces to the theater CINCs.[84] Based on General Armstrong's guidance, however, the Forward Look briefing team that delivered the concept-of-operations briefing to General Cassidy, CINCMAC, substituted the term *special operations wings* in lieu of the original SAW wing concept.[85]

At best, this key alteration suggested, at least to the CR community, that the AFSOF mission was more important than the rescue mission. At worst, it signaled the beginning of the end for the combat-rescue mission altogether. After all, earlier reorganization efforts had relegated the Headquarters ARRS's mission to a minor administrative function, and now it appeared that General Patterson wanted to organize CR's assets under the operational control of special operations wings. While Patterson's initial plan was culturally astute and designed to harmonize the AFSOF and CR capabilities, the revised Forward Look plan inflamed cultural insecurities within the rescue community.[86]

Although General Patterson was sensitive to rescue concerns associated with Forward Look, he had to contend with certain harsh realities.[87] Special operations "was a growth industry," while "rescue was on the decline and though the equipment was disappearing, the mission was still there."[88] Initiative 17 had highlighted AFSOF deficiencies, and, as noted earlier, the Air Force had to show its congressional critics that it was committed to the SOF mission. At the same time, because of budgetary constraints, the Air Force elected not to fund the HH-60 program.[89] Verne Orr, secretary of the Air Force, explained the downfall of the HH-60:

> We've been more worried about the SOF [rotary-wing] program which, as you know, General Gabriel and General Wickham thought should be transferred to the Army. We still maintain our SAR capability. We don't

intend to give it to the Army. I think there's a strong feeling in the Air Force that we ought to take care of our own . . . [but] we may have to do it with fewer full-up helicopters than we wanted. We may have to buy, not the kind of improved avionics, improved engine, and refuelable types; we may have to go with the more bare Nighthawk, which costs half as much, and far fewer of them. I went to the Chief the first year and we decided we wanted 243 helicopters at $20-million a piece [*sic*]. The Hill said, "Forget it." So we came back the next year and said we wanted 155 helicopters, of which a portion would be full-up and a portion would be vanilla. And the Hill said, "Forget it." So we went back the third year with 90 at $10-million. We'd cut the thing down from a $5-billion program to $1-billion. So it had been reduced in its scope, and finally we just came to the point where we offered it as a possibility for elimination.[90]

Although General Ryan and later General Cassidy (Ryan's successor) were avid supporters of the CSAR mission, they were either unable to influence Headquarters USAF's program objective memorandum (POM) requirements in a way that positively affected the CSAR mission area, or did not make CSAR a sufficiently high priority.[91] Cognizant of these realities, Patterson hoped to couple the declining CSAR function to the budding AFSOF mission area in order to salvage both. In other words, faced with a congressional mandate to strengthen AFSOF and an Air Force decision to "gap the [CSAR] capability," Patterson felt that the best way to keep the AFSOF and CSAR communities healthy was by binding their priorities along the "political stream" of SOF revitalization.[92]

In this context, Patterson wanted to bind the Twenty-third Air Force agenda to an issue with national attention—the congressionally mandated strengthening of SOF capabilities. In this way, the Twenty-third Air Force could gain an advantage when competing with conventional Air Force priority projects, such as the introduction of the next generation of fighters.[93] Patterson explained in retrospect, "My vision was to have a Wing at Hurlburt (SOF), one at McClellan AFB (CSAR) and composite Wings in Europe and the Pacific. Kirtland would be the training Wing for both SOF and CSAR, except [for] gunships."[94]

Regrettably, the CSAR community regarded Patterson's efforts as a threat to its institutional agenda and considered the Forward Look concept a mechanism of transforming the Twenty-third Air Force into an "A-Team" (AFSOF) and the "Farm Team" (CSAR).[95] In hindsight, although Patterson was able to

convince the leadership of both MAC and Air Force headquarters of the benefits of Forward Look, he was not capable of assuring the CSAR community of the plan's advantages. The CSAR community's concerns with the Forward Look concept, coupled with the slow rate of change and innovation associated with large bureaucracies like the US military, prevented General Patterson's attempt to quickly transform Twenty-third Air Force's structure.[96]

By 1987 the implementation of the Forward Look concept and the opportunity to transform the Twenty-third Air Force from a mission-oriented to a capabilities-based force faded out of reach.[97] Like any other innovator, Patterson had only a limited window of opportunity to affect the Twenty-third Air Force structure. Although Air Force bureaucratic practices proved to be a stumbling block to Forward Look, what ultimately derailed this initiative had very little to do with the Air Force. In the midst of Twenty-third Air Force's internal reorganization, Patterson had to contend with a massive DOD-wide transformation effort, including the creation of US Special Operations Command. Although Patterson was able to convince the Air Force hierarchy of the institutional benefits of his concept, he was unable to persuade USSOCOM.[98]

Serving Two Bosses
Inter- and Intraservice Institutional Agendas

On 14 November 1986, Congress passed the Nunn and Cohen Amendment to the 1987 National Defense Authorization Act (often associated with the "Goldwater-Nichols" Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986) into law.[99] This legislation had three main elements. First, it established the USSOCOM and the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Special Operations and Low Intensity Conflict (ASD/SOLIC).[100] Second, it formalized responsibilities and SOF core mission areas, including "direct action, strategic reconnaissance, unconventional warfare, foreign internal defense, civil affairs, psychological operations, counterterrorism, humanitarian assistance, theater search and rescue, [and] such other activities as may be specified by the President or the Secretary of Defense."[101]

Finally, the Nunn-Cohen amendment created a major force program (MFP-11) that provided SOF direct fiscal guidance from the SecDef, allowing USSOCOM to make resource decisions "within total obligation authority."[102]

At the same time as the USSOCOM started to take shape, General Patterson transferred Headquarters Twenty-third Air Force from Scott AFB, Illinois, to Hurlburt Field, Florida. Patterson offered this explanation for the move:

> As soon as I took command on the same podium and the same day that Duane Cassidy assumed command of MAC, I began pushing for the move of 23AF to Hurlburt. It was obvious to me that AFSOF would never be an integral part of MAC, Congress would never believe that the AF was serious about fixing SOF, and I could never get a handle on changing attitudes until I had a daily presence in the area. . . . As a side note, when I received the first example of the 23AF command briefing at Scott, I heard the word "elite" eighteen times. At that session, I changed "elite" to "Quiet Professionals." It has stuck pretty well.[103]

As General Patterson later described, this was a sensitive command arrangement: "General Jim Lindsay [USSOCOM commander] was a great leader and boss. Duane Cassidy was a great leader and boss. However, my command briefing [Twenty-third Air Force later designated AFSOC] opened with a big red fire hydrant and two bull dogs. One in a camouflage uniform and the other in a blue AF uniform."[104] According to General Patterson, the biggest problem in dealing with two bosses was that the USSOCOM and MAC commanders had different priorities and institutional agendas. Patterson elaborates that "General Lindsay's focus was on fixing Army SOF, getting the Navy on board, and deciding if Civil Affairs and PSYOP [psychological operations] were his mission. Duane Cassidy was focused on making the C-17 weapon system [operational] and [figuring out] what being CINCTRANS [CINC Transportation] really meant."[105]

Eventually, the dual command arrangement of the Twenty-third Air Force proved to be inconsistent with the congressional intent of the Nunn-Cohen and subsequent legislation.[106] In response, Generals Patterson and Lindsay informally designated the Twenty-third Air Force as the AFSOC on 1 August 1987. On 16 April 1987, the USAF formalized its commitment to the joint command by designating the Twenty-third Air Force as the air component to USSOCOM.[107]

Many in the rescue community saw the move to Hurlburt and the creation of AFSOC as indicators of Patterson's exclusive commitment to AFSOF and indifference toward the rescue mission. Patterson refutes the allegations and provides this explanation:

> The needs of CSAR were far from the MAC/XP attention. I was a lone voice on CSAR and PJ requirements. When I took [command of the] 23rd, MAC/XP had previously done a manpower study and I faced about a 20% reduction at the same time we were adding missions, aircraft, and telling Congress we were serious about fixing SOF. For example, we earned PJ slots based on tail numbers. For every Huey that went to the bone yard, I lost two PJs. This eventually led to forming Special Tactics squadrons and a group to fix both career fields—PJs and CCT [combat control team]. The MAC staff never had a PJ on it until I sent a CMS [chief master sergeant] over there.[108]

Regardless of General Patterson's intentions, the CSAR community's reaction was precisely in line with Posen's argument that threats to organizational relevance often educe "violent reactions."[109] As such, rescue began to actively lobby for CINCMAC's support for a separate air rescue service. The CSAR subelement of the Twenty-third Air Force had convinced CINCMAC to at least entertain the notion of a separate air rescue service. It appears that the CSAR community had never come to grips with the relegation of Headquarters ARRS to a minor, if not inconsequential, role in 1983.

At the same time, General Patterson had to contend with USSOCOM's aversion to the CSAR mission, even though, by law, theater search and rescue was part of the original USSOCOM charter.[110] While Headquarters USAF and MAC had a hard time relating to the AFSOF community, USSOCOM did not want anything to do with the CSAR mission and wished to divest itself of any CSAR tasking for "its" SOF forces.[111] The CINC made his position clear in a November 1988 statement:

1. Combat Search and Rescue (CSAR) is not a mission for which Special Operations Forces (SOF) are trained, organized, and equipped. SOF force structure and resourcing are based on special operations requirements. Significant resource shortfalls, particularly in air assets, currently exist, and any use of SOF for CSAR in general war in support of other than their own SAR/CSAR requirements would be at the further expense of special operations requirements.

2. Theater SAR/CSAR requirements dictate the establishment of a standing rescue force, separate from SOF.

3. On the other hand, the recovery of personnel from hostile, denied or politically sensitive territory is a special operation, specifically a subset of the special strike mission.

4. Examples of appropriate taskings include the raiding of a POW camp [i.e., Son Tay] or the recovery of personnel collected by a SOF operated escape and evasion network.

5. Accordingly, it is the view of this headquarters that . . . it is inappropriate to assign overall theater CSAR responsibilities to the theater SOC, assign SOF units the dual mission of both SO and CSAR, or to place SOF air assets on standing alert to meet short notice SAR/CSAR requirements.[112]

Although USSOCOM did not appreciate its congressionally mandated CSAR mission, Headquarters USAF became concerned about the declining capability of the CSAR force. Since it abandoned initiative 17 and the plan for transferring the AFSOF rotary-wing capability to ARSOF, in 1985 the USAF was converting its fleet of HH-53Bs/Cs to Pave Low IIIs to demonstrate its commitment to the SOF revitalization efforts.[113] Unfortunately, the USAF was not replacing the lost CR capability.

Even if some have made the assertion that the increase in AFSOF capabilities was at the expense of the rescue community's capabilities, the evidence presented in this chapter suggests that this assertion is only partially true. At the strategic level, the Air Force Council's (AFC) choice not to fund the HH-60 purchase in 1985 insinuated that Headquarters USAF did not allocate adequate funds to support even the dwindling CSAR capability regardless of its AFSOF commitment.[114] By 1989, however, Air Force leaders had begun to realize that although AFSOF could fill the gap in wartime capability, the decline in rescue capabilities was affecting the Twenty-third Air Force's ability to provide adequate "base support" to fighter units. In a trend reminiscent of the ARS prior to the Vietnam era, the USAF wanted to retain the capability to recover its peacetime crews but did not want to spend the necessary funds to maintain a combat-capable force.[115]

Similarly, the MAC leadership supported the CSAR mission in principle but did not make CSAR a sufficiently high priority in terms of POM requirements. In essence, CSAR programs did not fare well when competing against C-17 funding and other "Big MAC" initiatives.[116] Only at the tactical level could one claim that the revitalization of the AFSOF had adversely affected the

CSAR community. For example, although the assertion that Headquarters USAF transferred HH-53 helicopters from CSAR to AFSOF squadrons is valid, these helicopters were almost 20 years old and were supposed to be replaced by the HH-60. Granted, had the helicopters not been transferred to AFSOF, CSAR would have retained a more substantial pool of resources.

But resources do not directly translate into robust capabilities. Based on historical trends, the HH-53s underwent the service life extension program (SLEP) and upgraded to Pave Low III status only because Congress insisted on these capabilities, not because the USAF saw a particular need for them. Admittedly, one could make the argument that in "tail numbers" alone, the rise of AFSOF affected the CSAR community adversely. But in terms of capabilities to respond to AFSOF and CSAR-related contingencies, congressional insistence on SOF revitalization helped the Twenty-third Air Force to modernize and improve its cumulative capabilities.

The Twenty-third Air Force historian remarks that Lt Gen Merrill McPeak, commander of PACAF, "led an effort to provide better air rescue capabilities for fighter pilots, particularly in the PACAF area."[117] He adds that General Cassidy, in response to General McPeak's efforts, "had his staff work up a briefing prior to [the] Corona meeting in February 1989."[118] In a 20 January briefing to CINCMAC, the MAC staff presented a number of options, including a revised version of General Patterson's Forward Look concept. Patterson's proposal, however, was one of the options not selected; instead, CINCMAC favored the separation of the CSAR and AFSOF subelements.[119] In effect, CINCMAC decided to withdraw his earlier support for the Forward Look idea, and more importantly, to take apart the Twenty-third Air Force.[120]

At the February 1989 Corona, Generals Welch, Cassidy, McPeak, and Russ (CSAF, CINCMAC, PACAF/CC, and TAC/CC, respectively) agreed upon the reorganization of the CSAR forces out of the Twenty-third Air Force and the reactivation of the ARS.[121] Additionally, based on Cassidy's guidance, all rescue squadrons were reassigned under the 41st ARW, effective 1 April 1989, with the 41st ARW reporting to Headquarters ARS. Officially, MAC reactivated the ARS on 1 August 1989.[122]

The activation of the ARS, under Headquarters MAC's operational control, forced the AFSOF and rescue communities down

divergent paths until the 1 October 2003 CSAR/AFSOF merger under AFSOC. Although this study has not explored all of the intricacies associated with the AFSOF/ARS split or its aftermath, the evidence presented in this chapter suggests that organizational culture contributed to the separation of the two mission areas and the apparent failure of the Forward Look concept.

On 7 September 1989, a month after the reactivation of the ARS, General Patterson relinquished command of the Twenty-third Air Force/AFSOC to Maj Gen Thomas E. Eggers.[123] Patterson had successfully accomplished the original goal behind the creation of the Twenty-third Air Force, as outlined by General Mall in 1983. The Twenty-third Air Force/AFSOC had successfully strengthened the USAF's SOF capabilities. With the benefit of hindsight, some have argued that had the USAF/MAC leadership adopted the Forward Look concept, the Twenty-third Air Force also could have salvaged the USAF's declining CSAR capabilities.

In the end, the Forward Look concept did not fail entirely. As Patterson noted in his end-of-tour report, "[Forward Look] was substantially completed with the activation of the 353rd Special Operations Wing (SOW) at Clark AB, Philippines in April 1989 and the relocation of [the] 39 SOW to Rhein-Main AB, Germany in May 1989."[124] But the concept did not achieve its original intent of transforming the AFSOF and CSAR cultures from mission-oriented communities to a capabilities-based force. Partly to blame for this failure were inter- and intraservice influences such as USSOCOM's aversion toward the rescue mission, Headquarters USAF's general indifference toward the AFSOF and CSAR communities, and General McPeak's distaste for the Forward Look concept altogether.[125]

Conclusion

Initiative 16 demonstrated that cultural priorities, as reflected in the commitment to a robust CSAR force, vary between services. As discussed in chapter 4, the Korean and Vietnam wars provided valuable lessons regarding the need for a sound CSAR capability within the DOD. But those lessons learned became victims of organizational priorities after the conflicts ended. In theory, all of the services place great emphasis on the recov-

ery of American soldiers, sailors, Airmen, and marines stranded behind enemy lines. In practice, however, far worse than the failure to determine joint CSAR procedures was the Army's and Air Force's lack of commitment to maintaining a healthy CSAR capability. As noted earlier, however, the initiative 16 debates proved to be benign in comparison to those over initiative 17.

Initiative 17 proved to be both shortsighted and unrealistic. The evidence presented in this chapter indicates that the architects of this initiative failed to account for the influence of organizational culture and institutional agendas. In essence, initiative 17 proponents underestimated the SOF Liberation Front's ability to counter the Army and Air Force headquarters' agenda.

Ultimately, initiative 17 failed mostly due to pressure from influential members of Congress and high-level DOD civilians. In terms of organizational culture, the SOF Liberation Front proved more culturally astute than Generals Wickham and Gabriel. For example, Representatives Daniel and Hutto recognized the influence of organizational culture in policy development and threatened the very centers of gravity of the Air Force's dominant tribe in order to convince the CSAF to place more emphasis on the revitalization of AFSOF. Daniel and Hutto used the "power of the purse" to ensure AFSOF's organizational growth by threatening to withhold funds from programs high on the USAF's list of institutional priorities. Although initiative 17 did not materialize in the 1980s, it remains an example of the influence of institutional agendas on innovation efforts within and between services, as well as among outside agencies.

Unlike initiatives 16 and 17, General Patterson's Forward Look concept focused on capabilities rather than mission-area or platform-specific proposals. Although his ideas were grounded on a sound understanding of political sensitivities and inter-/intraservice cultural dynamics, Forward Look proved to be a concept well ahead of its time. First, as the supporting element of the Army's AirLand Battle doctrine, the Air Force in the 1980s was a mission-oriented rather than a capabilities-based force.[126] Although reasonable in theory, Patterson's scheme ran headlong into the culturally accepted norms established in conventional Air Force thinking.

The second obstacle to the Forward Look concept was the "lack of agreement on major issues between the Air Force [spe-

cifically MAC] and the United States Special Operations Command."[127] As a result, General Patterson had to serve two bosses, CINCMAC and CINCSOC. MAC and USSOCOM wanted the Twenty-third Air Force organizational structure to support their operational needs in terms of mission-area support. Although the creation of USSOCOM provided a great boost to the AFSOF community's struggle toward organizational relevance, at least in its primitive stages, USSOCOM initiatives clashed with traditional service prerogatives.[128] Additionally, in its haste to streamline its components by divesting non-SOF related mission areas, such as the Twenty-third Air Force's CSAR element, USSOCOM inadvertently deprived itself of a range of capabilities that could have proved useful in contingency operations. The command's fervor and alacrity in the sanitization of what it perceived as superfluous missions further deepened the cultural rifts between the AFSOF and CSAR communities.

The AFSOF perceived USSOCOM's efforts to divest itself of the Twenty-third Air Force's/AFSOC's non-SOF elements as a sign of commitment toward the special forces mission. Considering Headquarters USAF's actions in the initiative 17 fiasco, AFSOF crews began to see themselves as "special operators" first and "Airmen" second. To the contrary, CSAR forces viewed USSOCOM actions and perceived Twenty-third Air Force/AFSOC inactions as signals of an active campaign to further erode its combat capabilities. In hindsight, then, the USSOCOM position toward the CSAR mission damaged General Patterson's Forward Look initiative.

Collectively, initiative 16, initiative 17, and Forward Look provide ample evidence of the utility of the hypothesis that organizational culture matters. Based on the evidence presented to this point, it should be clear by now that cultural dynamics and institutional agendas can resist change if left unchecked. Additionally, the Twenty-third Air Force experience reveals certain truths about organizational mergers. For instance, leaders must understand the cultures of the subelements so that they can sense "potential incompatibilities" between cultural entities.[129] In short, conducting cultural analysis before organizational mergers is as important as analyzing the potential benefits of the new organization. Concurrently, leaders should tend to potential interagency or inter- and intraservice friction due

to competing agendas. Finally, leaders must communicate their vision, potential synergies, conflict areas, and other cultural realities to those involved in the decision process.[130] Based on the Twenty-third Air Force's experience, the next chapter offers alternatives for contemporary integration initiatives.

Notes

1. Herbert, *Deciding What Has to Be Done*, pp. 30, 33; and Winton, "Ambivalent Partnership," p. 406. Gen William E. DePuy, commander of TRADOC, applied the lessons learned during the 1973 Arab-Israeli War to "the fashioning of an American Army tactically capable of repelling a Warsaw Pact invasion in Europe" (Winton, p. 406). Winton also holds that during the 1973 Arab-Israeli War, the Israelis and Egyptians lost more tanks and artillery pieces than the United States had in its entire inventory (p. 405).

2. Davis, *31 Initiatives*, p. 24.

3. Ibid., pp. 24–33. In this section, Davis provides a background of Army and Air Force steps toward post–Vietnam War battlefield integration and efforts to enhance joint capabilities. According to Davis, the term *AirLand Battle* "was meant to convey the interaction between all aspects of air and ground power in a firepower and maneuver context" (p. 32).

4. Ibid.

5. Ibid., pp. 35–36. Wickham and Gabriel were 1950 West Point graduates and personal friends. In addition to the special bond between Wickham and Gabriel, two equally prominent figures in this venture, Generals Chain (USAF) and Mahaffey (USA) had been seminar-mates at the National War College and played together on the same softball team. General Chain became the deputy chief of staff for plans and operations in June 1982. General Mahaffey was the Army's deputy chief of staff for plans and operations. On 11 July 1983 Wickham and Gabriel signed another memorandum of understanding (MOU) specifying that they would "submit a single joint package for AirLand programs needed for the attack of follow-on forces" (ibid., p. 36).

6. Ibid., pp. 1, 45. According to Davis, the 31 initiatives had their roots in a 22 May 1983 MOU between Gen E. C. Meyer, CSA, and General Gabriel, CSAF. After congressional and DOD pressure to avoid wasteful duplication, Meyer and Gabriel signed the MOU on "Joint USA/USAF Efforts for Enhancement of Joint Employment of AirLand Battle Doctrine." In support of the MOU, the services created a Joint Force Development Group charged with the task of developing "a long-term, dynamic process whose objective will continue to be the fielding of the most affordable and effective airland combat forces" (p. 1).

7. Ibid., p. 1. Davis argues that "the expense of new weapons provided additional incentive for the services to avoid duplication, as did congressional and OSD [Office of the Secretary of Defense] pressure for improved efficiency" (ibid.).

8. Ibid.

9. Ibid., p. 2. Davis suggests that the 31 initiatives fell into three catego-ries: those that "eliminated duplication of effort or combined complementary programs; initiatives that defined roles and missions; and initiatives that called for joint action and cooperation on specific aspects of combat, doc-trine, and funding" (ibid.).

10. Message, 111916Z JUN 84, HQ USAF/XOOIR-JFDG to MAC/CC, 11 June 1984.

11. Davis, *31 Initiatives*, p. 56.

12. Ibid., pp. 55–56.

13. Ibid.

14. Meyer, "House Panel Urges DOD," p. 30. Hutto argued that the ser-vices would be better off if they coordinated joint CSAR procedures, rather than maintaining separate CSAR capabilities within each service (ibid.).

15. Ibid.

16. Ibid. Based on congressional testimony by senior Army leaders and Maj Gen Richard V. Secord, USAF, retired. The highest-ranking Air Force of-ficer with an extensive AFSOF background, General Secord spent nearly his entire career in AFSOF. For more on his career, see biography, Secord.

17. Meyer, "House Panel Urges DOD," p. 30.

18. Ibid.

19. Davis, *31 Initiatives*, p. 57.

20. Joint Assessment and Initiatives Office to CSAF, memorandum, 29 Aug. 1985.

21. Koch, interview by Marquis, in *Unconventional Warfare*, p. 88.

22. Posen, *Sources of Military Doctrine,* p. 46.

23. Marquis, *Unconventional Warfare*, p. 88. Most AFSOF operators and supporters saw initiative 17 as a move to transfer the Pave Lows from AFSOF to the Army. It is worth mentioning, however, that the initiative 17 verbiage only mentions the "rotary-wing mission" and not the assets (ibid.). This point of contention is addressed more completely later in this chapter. Additionally, according to official records, there were only seven Pave Lows in the AFSOF inventory in the 1984–85 time frame (due to attrition/accidents) (ibid.).

24. Ibid., p. 88; and Davis, *31 Initiatives*, pp. 56–57.

25. Marquis, *Unconventional Warfare*, p. 87.

26. Ibid., p. 88.

27. Ibid.

28. Ibid. Qualifying this statement, Marquis et al., indicate that Army heli-copters were not air refuelable in the early and mid-1980s and did not have the avionics necessary to fly low-level at night and in all-weather conditions (ibid.).

29. Ibid., pp. 88–89.

30. Meyer, "House Panel Urges DOD," p. 30. Lt Gen David L. Nichols, USAF's deputy chief of plans and operations, in a letter to his Army counter-part, Lt Gen Mahaffey, argued that "[the Army] should not be tied to meeting an AFSOF Master Plan that would not have been programmatically realized." Nichols added that [the congressional] working group appears to be making the transfer too hard" (ibid.).

31. Marquis, *Unconventional Warfare*, pp. 88–89, 113. According to Marquis, "The army did not realize the expenses associated with this proposal and lengthy delay in building the long-range rotary-wing aviation capability." She stresses that "pilots, crews, and support personnel would have to be trained and doctrine developed for the use of special operations helicopters within the Army. . . . The Army helicopter pilots and crews were talented and well-trained but had neither the training nor the mindset for long-range infiltration and exfiltration special operations missions" (ibid.).

32. Ibid., pp. 87–88; and Weikel to author, e-mail, 31 Mar. 2004.

33. Marquis, *Unconventional Warfare*, pp. 80–81, 86, 88–89; and Weikel to author, e-mail, 31 Mar. 2004. As noted earlier, Koch was the principal deputy assistant secretary of defense for international security affairs. He had served as a covert operator in Vietnam, served as special assistant to Presidents Nixon and Ford, worked on the Dole and later Reagan campaign staffs, and was offered the position in the OSD as a reward for his support. Lynn Rylander was an analyst in the Office of International Security Affairs and served as Koch's assistant for special operations issues. Koch and Rylander put together the Special Operations Policy Advisory Group, a committee made up of retired flag and general officers with extensive background in SOF. Representative Daniel was a senior member of the House Armed Services Committee, chairman of the Readiness Subcommittee, and a "fervent supporter" of the SOF revitalization (Marquis, pp. 80–81). Ted Lunger was a member of Daniel's staff. Weikel explains that "[Lunger] was a two-tour SF A-team leader/officer, went to MACSOG and the CIA where he headed up Operation Phoenix. . . . From there he went back to "The Farm" as trainer, then to Beirut as Chief of Counterterrorist Ops. . . . Brilliant, fearless, and audacious, he made all the good things happen—our Nation will be forever indebted to him as his fingerprints (from both hands) are all over our SOF and CSAR force structure[s] that underpin our prospects in the GWOT [Global War on Terrorism]" (p. 86). According to Marquis, Daniel and Lunger became the "relentless force behind the congressional concern for SOF through the mid-1980s" (pp. 88–89).

34. Most of those interviewed for this research project have indicated that the most influential figure within the AFSOF community was Col Gary Weikel.

35. Davis, *31 Initiatives*, p. 57.

36. History, Twenty-third Air Force, vol. 1, 1985, p. 30.

37. Ibid., pp. 29, 31; and MAC Plans, "SOF Rotary-Wing Responsibility Transfer," point paper, 2 Nov. 1984.

38. History, Twenty-third Air Force, vol. 9, 1 Jan. 1984–31 Dec. 1985, supt. doc. IX-209.

39. Marquis, *Unconventional Warfare*, p. 107.

40. Meyer, "House Panel Urges DOD," p. 28. According to congressional sources, Meyer reveals that "pressure from top brass in both services to complete the transfer has been so intense . . . that if Daniel's letter had not been sent on October 4th to Weinberger, the transfer of Pave Low and other helicopters from the Air Force to the Army would have been a 'fait accompli' soon

after USAF brass returned from its top-level Corona meeting in Colorado on October 5th and 6th" (ibid.).

41. Rep. Dan Daniel (D-VA) to SecDef Weinberger and Deputy SecDef William H. Taft IV, letter, 4 Oct. 1984. Although Meyer's article implies that this letter was addressed strictly to Secretary Weinberger, according to Twenty-third Air Force history, Representative Daniel's letter was addressed to Deputy SecDef Taft rather than the Honorable Caspar Weinberger. In the end, it appears, however, that the letter was most likely addressed to both and answered by Mr. Taft on 17 Oct. 1984.

42. Kingdon, *Agendas, Alternatives*, pp. 36–38. According to Kingdon, Congress is instrumental in setting agendas because "a) it has legal authority (legislative body has the authority to revise current statute and to fund or cut appropriations); b) it has [the] capacity to produce formidable publicity (legislators hold hearings, introduce bills, and make speeches, most of which receive coverage in the news); c) third resource is blended information (does not need to be completely accurate—a blend of substantive and the political, the academic and the pressure group information); [and] d) final resource is longevity (legislators outlast the administration)" (pp. 37–38). In short, Daniel had what the effects-based-operations generation refers to today as "escalation dominance" (author's comment).

43. History, Twenty-third Air Force, vol. 9, 1 Jan. 1984–31 Dec. 1985, supt. doc. II-25.

44. Ibid., vol. 1, 1 Jan. 1984–31 Dec. 1985, p. 32.

45. This chapter addresses initiative 17 in the context of the recent AFSOF/CSAR integration and USSOCOM efforts to retire the MH-53J; in effect, these actions transferred the AFSOF rotary-wing mission to ARSOF à la initiative 17.

46. Message, 031725Z JAN 85, HQ MAC, Scott AFB, IL, and DA, Washington, DC, to HQ USAF, Washington, DC, 3 Jan. 1985; and message, 201705Z DEC 84, HQ USAF/XO to HQ MAC, 20 Dec. 1984. According to message 031725Z, MAC-DA Prop 84-23 was suspended indefinitely, stating that "all related programming actions supporting [this objective] will be cancelled. These include, but are not limited to AF personnel assignment actions, initial Army aircrew and maintenance training classes, and the transfer of the integrated logistics support system" (ibid.).

47. History, Twenty-third Air Force, vol. 1, 1 Jan. 1984–31 Dec. 1985, pp. 41–42; and Meyer, "House Panel Urges DOD," p. 30. A congressional source quoted in Meyer emphasizes, "For direct action missions where you kick a guy's door down, throw in a grenade, and run like hell, that's Army SOF aviation. But if you're going to go in deep for classical unconventional warfare and you don't want Ivan to know you're there or what you're doing . . . that's got to be the Air Force" (p. 30).

48. History, Twenty-third Air Force, vol. 1, 1 Jan. 1984–31 Dec. 1985, p. 42.

49. Ibid.

50. In light of the Army's institutional priorities (numbers of troops rather than sophisticated and very expensive aircraft), it should be no surprise that it has taken over two decades for ARSOF aviation to reach this point. Today,

the Army's 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment (SOAR) has the capability to perform the long-range infiltration mission. This issue will be discussed further in the next chapter.

51. Meyer, "Taft Overrules Chiefs," p. 17.

52. Ibid.

53. Hutto threatened to use Congress's constitutional prerogative—the "power of the purse." For more information on fiscal threats to affect policy streams, see Kingdon, *Agendas, Alternatives*, pp. 36–38.

54. Little, memorandum for record, 8 Nov. 1985, History, Twenty-third Air Force, vol. 1, 1 Jan. 1984–31 Dec. 1985, pp. 30–31.

55. "Major General William J. Mall, Jr.," pp. 1–3; and ARRS Cmdr [Mall] to CINCMAC, letter, 25 Aug. 1981. Although General Mall had initially stated that the Twenty-third Air Force was created "primarily to enhance the SOF mission," at the end of his tenure he reiterated that the Twenty-third Air Force's number-one equipment-acquisition priority was the HH-60 (ibid.). Mall proposes that the HH-60 was "the future of combat rescue and the USAF helo force (690 pilots)" (ibid.). Other evidence of Mall's unbalanced support for the ARRS was his attempts to influence the initiative 17 debates; he had actively pursued the return of the Pave Low III to the ARRS (ibid.).

56. "Special Ops Transfer," p. 74.

57. Zahrt, Staff Summary Sheet, 29 June 1984.

58. Marquis, *Unconventional Warfare*, p. 107. Marquis is quoting a Koch speech, Mar. 1984. See also Koch, "Terrorism! Undeclared War," pp. 7–13.

59. Marquis, *Unconventional Warfare*, pp. 91–106; and Chinnery, *Any Time*, pp. 237–42.

60. Thigpen, "AFSOC: Air Force's Newest Command," pp. 40–42.

61. Ibid., p. 41.

62. Ibid.

63. Marquis, *Unconventional Warfare*, pp. 105–6.

64. Ibid., p. 107.

65. Thigpen, "AFSOC: Air Force's Newest Command," p. 41.

66. Ibid., pp. 41–42. Thigpen attributes the lesser numbers to attrition. Between 1981 and 1984, AFSOF had lost one MC-130E and two Pave Low III helicopters in accident-related crashes (ibid.).

67. MAC News Service, "General Mall," pp. 11–13.

68. "Major General William J. Mall, Jr.," pp. 1–3. Mall's comments further complicated matters between AFSOF and the ARRS. To AFSOF crews, Mall's interview in *Airlift* magazine provided the necessary evidence to support their conspiracy theory that the Twenty-third Air Force was actively pursuing the return of the Pave Low III to the ARRS (ibid.).

69. Daniel, "US Special Operations," pp. 70–74; and Thigpen, "AFSOC: Air Force's Newest Command," pp. 42–43. It should be noted that Daniel went as far as advocating the creation of a sixth service dedicated to special operations and low-intensity conflict. Daniel believed that although special forces were organizationally part of the Army, Navy, and Air Force, they were never institutionally accepted by their parent services (p. 73). Thigpen comments that since "SOF did not fit into the conventional military [Daniel] concluded

that the current system didn't work because the individual Services held SOF to be peripheral to the interests, missions, goals, and traditions that the Services viewed essential" (p. 42). According to Daniel, anything less than a sixth service would effectively perpetuate SOF weakness and inability to produce decisive results because the SOF institutional health depended on their parent services; in effect, the Army, Navy, and Air Force determined the health of SOF by controlling the dollars committed to their respective SOF components (p. 73).

70. Allison and Zelikow, *Essence of Decision*, pp. 5–6, 23–26, 143–47, 255–58. Allison and Zelikow would argue that the decisions that influenced initiative 17 were either reasonable actions based on rational choice (model one), "outputs of large organizations functioning according to standard patterns of behavior" (model two), or a product of the governmental politics that involved many actors (model three) (ibid.). The initiative 17 example clearly demonstrates that all of Allison's models had a significant influence on the proposal's evolution.

71. Meyer, "House Panel Urges DOD," p. 30. Based on a high-level congressional source, Meyer reveals that "if Daniel's letter had not been sent on October 4th to Weinberger, the transfer of Pave Low . . . from the Air Force to the Army would have been a fait accompli soon after USAF brass returned from its top-level Corona meeting in Colorado [in October]" (ibid.).

72. Biography, Patterson.

73. Patterson, e-mail to author. Patterson reports that "as the senior Air Force officer on Grenada during Urgent Fury, I saw little improvement in their recognizing the realities of logistics support and cooperation with 'mother' MAC" (ibid.).

74. 23rd AF/CC to CINCMAC/CS, letter, 24 Oct. 1985; and Patterson, point paper, 23 AF Forward Look Concept Plan, 24 Oct. 1985.

75. 23rd AF/CC to CINCSOC, letter, 6 Sept. 1989.

76. Ibid.

77. US Congress, "Report of the Committee on Appropriations, House of Representatives," Oct. 1985, quoted in Gantley, "House Appropriations Panel Raps," Dec. 1985, p. 18; also quoted in History, Twenty-third Air Force, vol. 1, 1 Jan. 1984–31 Dec. 1985, p. 47.

78. As noted earlier, the primary goal of the Twenty-third Air Force was to strengthen the AFSOF capabilities.

79. Patterson, point paper, 24 Oct. 1985; and Little, memorandum for record, 8 Nov. 1985. According to official records, Twenty-third Air Force needed to act promptly because of congressional pressure to "do something" to improve AFSOF capabilities and the need to include the revised Twenty-third Air Force initiatives into the MAC POM process by 3 Jan. 1986 (date established by MAC staff). Patterson, point paper.

80. Patterson, point paper, 24 Oct. 1985. This reflects a June–Oct. 1985 internal review of the Twenty-third Air Force.

81. Ibid. In hindsight, Patterson's Forward Look concept was ahead of its time. While much of the Air Force doctrine took its cues from the Army's AirLand Battle doctrine, Patterson's ideas appear unique in the sense that

he wanted to take his organization well beyond accepted norms. As the rest of the chapter will demonstrate, there were benefits and disadvantages to this approach.

82. Ibid.; and Maj Gen Robert B. Patterson, USAF, retired, interview with author, Fort Walton Beach, FL, 29 Jan. 2004. The concept was confirmed during the interview with the author.

83. 23rd AF/CC to CINCMAC/CS, letter, 24 Oct. 1985.

84. Little, memorandum for record, 8 Nov. 1985; and Patterson, interview with author, 29 Jan. 2004. Please note that *CR* and *CSAR* are terms used interchangeably throughout the rest of the chapter. Although technically not entirely correct, the terms are sufficiently similar for the purposes of this paper. For an in-depth description of these terms, see JP 3-50.2, *Doctrine for Joint Combat Search and Rescue*, 26 Jan. 1996, glossary, p. GL-4; and AFDD 2-1.6, *Combat Search and Rescue*, 15 July 2000, p. 1.

85. ASD/SOLIC, *Air Force SOF Aircrew Training Study*, 30 Nov. 1988, in History, Twenty-third Air Force, 1989, vol. 5, supt. doc. III-150. Also referenced in Patterson to author, e-mail. The aircrew study advocates the use of Kirtland AFB as a multisystem SOF training base. Although Patterson's SAW concept did not gain support with regard to the four multimission wings, it gained wide support with regard to the transformation of the 1550th CCTW at Kirtland AFB to the Special Air Warfare Center; the SAWC called for a capabilities-based wing structure that supported all AFSOF/CSAR airframes, with the exception of the AC-130s (supt. doc. II-150). Also substantiated by Patterson to author, e-mail.

86. Thigpen, "AFSOC: Air Force's Newest Command," p. 71. Forward Look appeared to be a fait accompli when the AFC approved the concept on 28 May 1986.

87. Patterson, interview with author, 29 Jan. 2004.

88. 23rd AF/CC to CINCMAC/CS, letter, 24 Oct. 1985; reiterated in Patterson, interview with author, 29 Jan. 2004.

89. Briefing, MAC/XPQA to Air Force Council, n.d. Also reiterated in Maj Gen (sel) Donald C. Wurster, interview with author, Maxwell AFB, AL, 26 Jan. 2004. In the interview, General Wurster describes his briefing to the AFC. Of particular interest to the above discussion, General Wurster mentions that when the subject of the combat-rescue resources came up, he revealed that the funded CSAR resources could not support all of the worldwide rescue commitments. In response, Gen John L. Piotrowski, VCSAF, suggested, "We're just going to have to gap the [CSAR] capability."

90. Meyer and Schemmer, "Exclusive *AFJ* Interview," pp. 36–37; and Wurster, interview with author, 26 Jan. 2004. Orr makes it apparent throughout the *AFJ* interview that Congress refused to fund the HH-60 program. In reality, the HH-60 program had to compete within the Air Force POM process and, therefore, Wurster observes, the decision to "eliminate" the HH-60 program fell squarely on the shoulders of Headquarters USAF.

91. Message, 151820Z AUG 85, General Ryan to General Gabriel, 15 Aug. 1985. Ryan submits, "In light of the recent AF decision to cancel the Night Hawk, we need to take a hard look at CR. We have options to retain some

measure of CR capability, but we must acknowledge up front that we will fall far short of the Theater CINC's CR requirements. . . . The recent joint Congressional Authorization to build 10 Pave Low III–enhanced aircraft clearly supports Will Taft's proposal to improve our long-range, adverse-weather, vertical-lift capability in the near term. . . . These aircraft [a total of 28 enhanced and 11 slick H-53s), combined with the CV-22, will dramatically increase our long-range SOF vertical-lift capability, reducing our current shortfall in long-range exfiltration operations as well as augmenting our core CR force."

92. Kingdon, *Agendas, Alternatives*, pp. 162–63. Kingdon notes that a *policy stream* describes what is considered as sound advice. His *problem stream* describes what has been identified as a significant social problem. His *political stream* describes the mechanism of promoting high-interest agenda items. The latter is affected by national mood, ideological distributions in Congress, changes of administration, interest-group pressure campaigns, etc. Kingdon uses the "stream" analogy to describe the agenda-setting process (ibid.).

93. Patterson, interview with author, 29 Jan. 2004. See also earlier sections of this chapter that discuss TAC and Headquarters USAF priorities within the AirLand Battle construct.

94. Patterson, e-mail to author.

95. Dietz, e-mail to author, 6 May 2004.

96. Barger and Schemmer, "Exclusive *AFJ* Interview," p. 54. Wickham contends that "it takes a long time to move a bureaucracy" (ibid.).

97. Gen John P. Jumper, CSAF (at the time of this writing), has worked hard to transform the Air Force from a platformcentric force to a capabilities-based service. This notion is discussed in chap. 7.

98. Thigpen, "AFSOC: Air Force's Newest Command," p. 71. Forward Look appeared to be a fait accompli when the AFC approved the concept on 28 May 1986.

99. National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) for Fiscal Year 1987, Conference Report 99-1001 to Accompany S. 2638, 99th Cong., 2d sess.; and Public Law 99-661, I0 4. S.C. par. B, sec. 1311, subpar. A, 14 Nov. 1986.

100. NDAA for FY 1987, Conference Report 99-1001 to Accompany S. 2638, 99th Cong., 2nd sess. The Nunn-Cohen amendment authorized a four-star general/admiral position for the USSOCOM commander and dictated the ASD's/SOLIC's duties and responsibilities as the DOD's principal deputy for special operations (p. 146).

101. Ibid.

102. Cassidy, *Transportation Balance*, pp. 15–16; and NDAA for FY 1987. Cassidy clarifies the MFP concept as follows: major force programs are broad categories of DOD program requests for congressional consideration. MFP-11 is a SOF-specific program (incidentally, MFP-4 is restricted to airlift and sealift forces—the connection between the two programs is discussed in chap. 7 of this paper). In this context, USSOCOM gained budgetary authority over MFP-11. Although an in-depth analysis of this legislation is not possible due to the constraints of this research project, it is important to point out that MFP-11 provided an appropriations trail independent, by law, from the other military services and defense agencies. In addition to the Nunn-Cohen amend-

ment, there was supplemental legislation passed in 1987 and 1988 that, with specificity that is quite unusual for Congress, provided direction for the promotions of SOF officers, and for the grades of the SOF commanders under the geographical unified (combatant) commanders (ibid., pp. 10–11).

103. History, Twenty-third Air Force, vol. 1, 1988, p. ix. General Patterson comments, "I don't know whether we had more problems placing two wings overseas, or moving the headquarters from one state to another" (ibid.). Supported by Patterson, e-mail to author.

104. Patterson, e-mail to author.

105. Ibid.

106. Wasinger, staff judge advocate, memorandum, 6 Mar. 1987, cited in Marquis, *Unconventional Warfare*, p. 164.

107. US Readiness Command, *Report on Mission and Deactivation*, p. 58; CINCSOC to CSAF, letter, 16 Mar. 1990; and CSAF to CINCSOC, letter, 23 Apr. 1990. Headquarters USAF did not make AFSOC a "major command" until 22 May 1990, nine months after General Patterson relinquished command to General Eggers (US Readiness Command report, p. 58).

108. Patterson, interview with author, 29 Jan. 2004; Patterson, e-mail to author; 23rd AF/CC to CINCSOC, 6 Sept. 1989; and Comer, telephonic interview with author, 9 Feb. 2004. General Comer corroborates Patterson's pararescue example.

109. Posen, *Sources of Military Doctrine*, p. 46.

110. See earlier discussion on the Nunn-Cohen amendment and the legislation authorizing specific USSOCOM activities.

111. History, Twenty-third Air Force, 1988, p. xix. According to the unit history, "[The] United States Special Operations Command made it clear that Twenty-Third Air Force should gradually divest itself from missions other than special operations (air rescue, aeromedical evacuation, weather reconnaissance, etc.)." Ibid.

112. *USCINCSOC Position Statement on Combat Search and Rescue (CSAR)*, 3 Nov. 1988, in History, Twenty-third Air Force, vol. 6, 1989, supt. doc. I-12. See also message, 291920Z DEC 89, USCINCSOC to HQ USAF et al., 29 Dec. 1989. The USCINCSOC revised position statement added, "It is not considered doctrinally sound to assign theater CSAR responsibilities to the Theater SOC, assign SOF units the dual mission of both SO and CSAR, or to place SOF air assets on standing alert to meet short notice CSAR/SAR requirements" (supt. doc. I-12).

113. History, Twenty-third Air Force, vol. 1, 1985, pp. 79–80, 89–90. The unit history notes that HH-53 airframes, in addition to conversions to the Pave Low modification, received the very expensive Service Life Extension Program. The SLEP was to extend the service life of the 20-year-old airframes "through the year 2001 A.D" (pp. 79–80). Additionally, to replace the lost HH-53s and the impending retirement of the H-3, Twenty-third Air Force had bet the ARRS/CSAR future on the HH-60 program. Once the HH-60 funding was eliminated, the hope of a "smooth" transition from the HH-53s to the HH-60s dwindled away (pp. 89–90).

114. Ibid., p. 29. The 1985 Twenty-third Air Force history also indicates that "sporadic efforts during 1985, 1986, and 1987 produced some interest in 'save rescue' efforts, but all of these efforts were somewhat meager and there was more verbal support than monetary support for new rescue initiatives. During 1987 [alone], the 40th, 48th, 41st Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Squadrons . . . were inactivated, due largely to austerity measures in the Air Force for FY 1987" (ibid.).

115. For more on the benign neglect of the ARS, see chap. 4. Evidence of post-Vietnam benign neglect was the postponement of the HH-60 project early in the 1980s, the lack of funds for the conversion of HC-130s to HC-130P/N, and ultimately the 1985 removal of the HH-60 project from the USAF budget. All of these blows to ARRS/CSAR were discussed in chap. 5 and earlier in this chapter.

116. Patterson, interview with author, 29 Jan. 2004; Patterson, e-mail to author; and Zarht, e-mail to author. Captain (now Colonel) Zahrt worked at MAC/XP.

117. Notes, Little, 23rd AF/HO, subject: Reconstitution of Rescue Service, 6 Mar. 1986, p. 1, in History, Twenty-third Air Force, 1989, vol. 6, supt. doc. I-14; and ibid., vol. 1, 1988, p. 29. General McPeak began lobbying for a separate rescue organization a year earlier as the deputy chief of staff for programs and resources. General McPeak "put this program [Forward Look] on hold" in Jan. 1987. In Feb. 1987, McPeak "proposed an additional 59 H-60s, in the Pave Hawk modification (HH-60Gs) to be programmed in FY 1989 and beyond for rescue duties" (ibid., vol. 1, 1988, p. 29).

118. History, Twenty-third Air Force, vol. 1, 1988, pp. 30–31. Note that "Corona" refers to a meeting of the most senior Air Force general officers.

119. Briefing, MAC/DOOS to CINCMAC, subject: Separate Air Rescue Service, 20 Jan. 1989.

120. History, Twenty-third Air Force, vol. 1, 1988, p. 30. Little suggests that General McPeak was the leading proponent for the new Air Rescue Service.

121. Little, notes, 6 Mar. 1989, p. 1; and briefing, MAC/DOOS (Maj Jim Sills) to CINCMAC, 20 Jan. 1989. CINCMAC supported this notion over other options Major Sills briefed (History, Twenty-third Air Force, 1989, vol. 6, supt. doc. I-13). See also Little, 23rd AF/HO, memorandum for record, 1 Mar. 1989; Message, 211549Z MAR 89, CINCMAC to CSAF, OSAF et al., 21 Mar. 1989; and Special Order GA-56, Secretary of the Air Force to CINCMAC et al., 15 May 1989, in History, Twenty-third Air Force, 1989, vol. 6, supt. docs. I-15 and I-22. As a result, CINCMAC directed the Twenty-third Air Force to redesignate all air rescue and recovery squadrons (ARRS) to air rescue squadrons (ARS) on 25 Feb.; consequently, the 41st ARRW became the 41st ARW (Special Order GA-56).

122. Message, 211549Z MAR 89, CINCMAC to CSAF, OSAF et al., 21 Mar. 1989. Although General Cassidy wanted the redesignation of the units mentioned above (n. 121) by 1 Apr. 1989, Special Order GA-56 made the redesignation effective 1 June 1989 (Special Order GA-56, cited in n. 121).

123. Patterson, biography; and Eggers, biography.

124. 23rd AF/CC to CINCMAC, letter, 13 Sept. 1985.

125. Patterson to author, e-mail.

126. AFDD 1, *Air Force Basic Doctrine*, 17 Nov. 2003, p. 1; and AFMAN 1-1, *Basic Aerospace Doctrine*, Mar. 1992, p. 7. Although a detailed discussion on doctrine is beyond the scope of this paper, it is important to point out that according to AFDD 1, "Air and space doctrine is a statement of officially sanctioned beliefs . . . [and] . . . war-fighting principles that describes and guides the proper use of air and space forces in military operations" (p. ix). In essence, as AFDD 1 points out, USAF doctrine represents the Air Force's "common frame of reference" and helps shape the way Airmen organize, train, and fight (p. 3). Roughly speaking then, doctrine is the Air Force's cultural manifesto. For example, the 1992 AFMAN 1-1 divides platforms according to their roles and missions, not according to capabilities. The notion of multimission/diverse-capability aircraft was a doctrinal development that occurred after the 1992 AFMAN 1-1 (p. 7).

127. 23rd AF/CC to CINCMAC, letter, 13 Sept. 1985.

128. Ibid.

129. Schein, *Organizational Culture*, p. 384.

130. Ibid., p. 385.

Chapter 7

From the Past, the Future

To prepare for the future, special operations forces need to adapt to the changing nature of warfare by challenging conventional thinking and examining new options and operational concepts for the conduct of special operations in traditional and nontraditional environments. They need to consider possible changes in doctrine, roles, missions, and force structure and to examine new options and operational concepts.

> —Gen Hugh Shelton
> Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff (1997–2001)

Thus the confusion and dilemma is that CSAR is doctrinally each Service's responsibility, but no one's primary mission. No one's except the JFC. While it is the role of the Services to provide the military capabilities essential to fighting and winning wars, the CINCs actually plan and conduct the military operations. The CINCs, not the Services, require a force with the primary mission of CSAR so as not to divert "other forces."

> —CSAR Requirements and Capabilities Study
> Veda Incorporated

It should now be obvious that culture played a significant role in the organizational growth of the Twenty-third Air Force. Organizational culture establishes the paradigm of basic assumptions that defines the institutional identities of the Air Force's special operations forces and the Air Rescue and Recovery Service (previously Air Rescue Service). Viewed another way, the special operations and rescue communities have developed certain patterns that shape what they consider as "right and proper, how the world works, and how things are done."[1] Through the lens of organizational culture, this paper has exposed the reader to the turbulent relationship between the dominant Air Force "tribes" and the secondary subcultures of SF and CSAR. Additionally, it has described the way in which institutional motives and agendas relate to organizational personalities and has dem-

onstrated how inter- and intraservice stimuli influenced the Twenty-third Air Force's organizational development.

Richard Neustadt and Ernest May suggest that the "use of history can stimulate imagination: seeing the past can help one envision alternative futures." They agree that historical analysis can also help "by way of tests for presumptions."[2] If Neustadt and May are correct, a better understanding of the organizational histories of the Air Force's special and rescue forces may provide contemporary air leaders the necessary points of reference from which to draw parallels to a similar issue—the 2003 merger of SOF and combat search and CSAR under the Air Force SOC. By exploring past AFSOF and CSAR experiences, this paper offers AFSOC's senior leadership possible alternatives for the cooperative future of the two communities. Based on the evidence presented, it warns of certain hazards; offers a course adjustment to current AFSOF/CSAR integration efforts; and presents several recommendations aimed at reducing interservice, intraservice, and intracommand friction that may undermine the new merger from the outside or from within.

In terms of potential hazards, AFSOC's leaders must be careful not to overestimate the complementary capabilities of the two communities or to underestimate the influence of institutional biases and cultural sensitivities associated with organizational mergers.[3] In light of the AFSOF/CSAR merger in 2003 under the stewardship of the AFSOC, this paper suggests that its leaders should not assume that they would be able to "fix cultural problems after the fact."[4] Although most of those interviewed have little doubt that AFSOC will enhance the Air Force's CSAR capabilities, this study provides many examples of how institutional agendas may, at best, blur the AFSOC commander's vision and, at worst, subvert it.

Based on this research, it is clear that the key to overcoming cultural resistance is a sound organizational merger strategy. According to the AFSOC commander, General Hester, "Culture should not hinder [a commander's] vision but it can slow down change. Leaders must pay attention to culture so they can guide it."[5] In order for leaders to guide culture, however, their vision must be translated into a coherent strategy that exploits cultural strengths and attempts to anticipate cultural resistance. Drawing from the Twenty-third Air Force's experience,

the AFSOC's leaders should perhaps reconsider General Patterson's Forward Look concept as a template for integrating diverse organizational identities into a new culture that is greater than the sum of its parts.

Although many of General Patterson's ideas did not come to fruition in the 1980s, it appears that the Forward Look plan was well ahead of its time. Times have changed, and Forward Look now appears in step with General Jumper's efforts to transform the Air Force from a platform-/mission-oriented force to a capabilities-based force. In 2003 General Jumper urged, "We must get out of the mode of thinking only in terms of platform rather than in terms of capabilities. The time will come when we no longer have platforms dedicated to a single role or mission. Platforms must be capable of delivering multiple capabilities. We must also transform how we do business."[6]

In line with General Patterson's Forward Look concept and General Jumper's Sight Picture, AFSOC should treat AFSOF and CSAR not as separate mission areas but as complementary special-air-warfare capabilities. Limited resources and a need to demonstrate commitment to the AFSOF's revitalization efforts drove General Patterson to explore a paradigm-breaking idea. Rooted in the Twenty-third Air Force's experiences, AFSOC's integration and CSAR's revitalization plans must go beyond existing paradigms; at the same time, AFSOC must remain mindful of inter- and intraservice cultural dynamics and institutional agendas.

Interservice enmity is most often founded on competing organizational priorities and institutional agendas. Since the creation of USSOCOM, AFSOC commanders have had to answer to two superiors—the chief of staff of the Air Force and the commander of USSOCOM. This arrangement is not likely to change in the foreseeable future. Therefore, AFSOC commanders must remain attentive to interservice cultural dynamics and potentially divergent institutional agendas. For example, Headquarters AFSOC must stay cognizant of certain Air Force–levied constraints that exhibit its anxieties with this arrangement. According to the program action directive (PAD), AFSOC must preserve separate fiscal and operational control channels for the AFSOF and CSAR communities.[7] These policies, however, should not stop Headquarters AFSOC from treating AFSOF and

CSAR assets as complementary elements of the Air Force's special air warfare capabilities. Simply put, these limitations should not keep AFSOC from pursuing the Forward Look concept.

Some may argue that if the Forward Look concept is the right mechanism for transforming AFSOC, and perhaps USSOCOM, to a capabilities-based force, why did the Air Force and USSOCOM not adopt this approach earlier? Kingdon would submit that only a "focusing event" could call attention to a preexisting problem.[8] In this case, a series of events produced the impetus for change. First, General Jumper—at the time the commander of United States Air Forces in Europe (USAFE) and later chief of staff of the Air Force—"acutely felt the lack of a permanent presence of CSAR forces in Europe during Operation Allied Force" in 1999.[9] Later, in light of the deployment and employment of special operations and rescue forces in support of Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom, he recognized the opportunity to reorganize them.[10]

More than two years after the start of the GWOT, however, Headquarters AFSOC has yet to adjust existing paradigms to alleviate the pressure on special forces and rescue resources spread thin by multiple taskings. Operation Allied Force and the early campaigns of the GWOT highlight the outdated paradigms that serve as the guiding principles of the AFSOF and CSAR communities.

For the past 20 years, USSOCOM in general and AFSOF in particular have organized, trained, and equipped the force in order to accommodate the Desert One model.[11] As America continues to engage in the GWOT, the SOF community will have to reconsider the single-mission focus of Desert One and transition to a campaign-oriented strategy. The Desert One paradigm cannot accommodate the current security environment because it depends on habitual relationships among "fenced in" assets that surge on occasion but are not continuously deployed. By transforming the AFSOF's/CSAR's resources into a capabilities-based force, AFSOC will be able to adjust to a GWOT-centric strategy.

Similarly, the GWOT has forced the rescue community to adjust its nearly exclusive emphasis on aircrew recovery and widen its focus to offer possible backup support to the special forces community. Historically, the Air Force's CSAR force structure and training have focused on recovery of aircrews. Some rescue

leaders have opposed the idea of its assets meddling in black-hat mission areas. The truth is that these assets may be conveniently aligned to support and/or complement special-forces units in the war on terrorism.[12] Ultimately, AFSOC should strive to create "buckets" of SAW capabilities.[13] By forming the necessary habitual relationships that foster trust between the Air Force and USSOCOM, these buckets of capabilities will form the core of the new Air Force special-warfare arsenal.[14]

Concurrent with the efforts to address the Air Force's insecurities with the Forward Look reorganization, AFSOC must collaborate with USSOCOM to convince "the other boss" that this initiative is in USSOCOM's best interest.[15] Although USSOCOM still retains the congressionally mandated requirement to provide CSAR support for both the theater and SOC, USSOCOM does not favor the CSAR mission.[16] USSOCOM's interpretation of this mandate continues to be that "Combat Search and Rescue . . . is not a mission for which Special Operations Forces . . . are trained, organized, and equipped."[17]

With the exception of the notion that SOF would recover any stranded USSOCOM personnel ("self-CSAR"), USSOCOM appears to hold an institutional bias toward CSAR. If Forward Look is to succeed, however, AFSOC must work toward removing USSOCOM's bias. In short, AFSOC cannot fully integrate the AFSOF and CSAR communities while USSOCOM remains ambivalent about its commitment to congressionally mandated CSAR obligations. Additionally, AFSOC cannot transform to a capabilities-based force while a higher headquarters (USSOCOM) remains focused on a platform-based construct.

An Army SOF inclination toward USSOCOM reorganization that resembles initiative 17 would further compound USSOCOM's resistance to Forward Look efforts. If the current trend continues, the AFSOC will retire the MH-53 helicopter in the next decade, leaving the Army in charge of USSOCOM's rotary-wing capability.[18] Briefly, this would make USSOCOM even more averse to the CSAR mission because the Army does not consider CSAR an institutional priority, as evidenced by a lack of organizational focus on the recovery of downed Army aviators.[19]

Ultimately, AFSOC can minimize the USSOCOM's aversion toward the CSAR mission by fostering a closer relationship between "non-SOF" CSAR assets and the rest of USSOCOM.

AFSOC can improve the relationship between Headquarters USAF and Headquarters USSOCOM through a formal MOA. Internal to USSOCOM, AFSOC can cement the bond between the two communities through joint readiness exercises in which AFSOC's CSAR assets support SOF aviation requirements. As AFSOC eventually develops a more robust CSAR capability, with support from USSOCOM, it should be able to provide part of the CSAR support role for both the theater and SOC that USSOCOM currently avoids.[20] Undoubtedly, some USSOCOM skeptics will argue that ARSOF rotary-wing assets will be able to perform the CSAR role. However, absent a new joint approach to CSAR that includes AFSOC's CSAR assets, this will remain an ad hoc arrangement. In short, Forward Look may provide the necessary CSAR capabilities for the USAF as well as USSOCOM, if only given a chance.

The Twenty-third Air Force experience demonstrates that trust between commanders alleviates some of the apprehension and anxiety associated with change at the interservice level. The relationship between Generals Wickham and Gabriel, Chain and Mahaffey, Welch and Lindsay, and others reduced interservice friction during periods of organizational uncertainty. Similarly, fostering trust between the CSAF, USSOCOM commander, and all of the USSOCOM component commanders can help alleviate interservice cultural antagonism; as Col Mike Findlay argues, "Personal relationships count—develop and maintain trust and confidence."[21]

In the end, the revitalization of the Forward Look concept is a product of necessity rather than desire. While some within the USAF and USSOCOM communities still may want to keep the GWOT commitments strictly mission-oriented, AFSOC, based on the growing demand for AFSOF and CSAR forces around the world, will eventually run out of assets.[22] Whether it presents forces through USSOCOM or Joint Forces Command (JFCOM), AFSOC should allocate special forces and rescue assets based on theater-capability requirements rather than platform-focused requests.

The SAW approach to the AFSOC merger calls for a concerted effort to pursue analogous capabilities between the two communities.[23] In essence, combatant commanders should not be able to distinguish between the capabilities of the two communities in a few years. With time, the AFSOF and CSAR subelements

should start considering themselves indistinguishable parts of the Air Force's SAW community. The commonality of purpose—SAW capabilities—and a divestment of the current platform-centric focus can be achieved only via common platform-procurement efforts.[24] Although this notion may provoke some interservice cultural debate, it will more likely encounter heavy intraservice resistance due to the "tribal" dynamics within the Air Force.

In order for the AFSOC to suppress intraservice resistance to the new Forward Look concept, it will have to convince the CSAF and Air Combat Command (ACC) that this approach will be to their benefit.[25] As General Hester explicitly stated, the primary reason behind the merger of special forces and rescue was to "enhance CSAR capabilities."[26] As in the early 1980s, the Air Force's dominant tribe—the fighter community—is primarily concerned with conventional-warfare initiatives. The Air Force's current procurement priorities appear to reflect this reality.

According to General Jumper, the F-22, the Joint Strike Fighter (JSF), and the unmanned combat air vehicle (UCAV) represent "our vision of an all stealth force."[27] Most Airmen recognize that the testing, production, and fielding of the next generation of weapon systems are vital to America's ability to achieve full-spectrum dominance. At the same time, however, AFSOC must understand that attempts to enhance CSAR procurement efforts will have to compete with the F-22, JSF, and UCAV programs.[28] It will be hard for the AFSOC to argue for robust CSAR capabilities in light of the conventional Air Force's "all stealth force."[29] In other words, much like the HH-60 procurement efforts of the 1980s, CSAR procurement efforts in the twenty-first century are bound to face stiff competition. By adopting the capabilities-based approach of the Forward Look paradigm, AFSOC will be able to bind CSAR requirements with a contemporary high-interest issue.

To ensure that the revitalization of CSAR gains Headquarters USAF support, AFSOC must define CSAR requirements in traditional (aircrew recovery) as well as nontraditional (special forces–related) terms. To satisfy ACC's concerns, AFSOC must maintain a robust aircrew-recovery capability able to support requirements of the joint force air component commander.[30] Nevertheless, Headquarters AFSOC does not have to accom-

plish this by segregating the AFSOF and CSAR mission areas. In fact, the Twenty-third Air Force's experience suggests that rather than attempting to improve the Air Force's rescue capabilities in isolation, AFSOC should bind aircrew-recovery initiatives with its AFSOF proposals. This approach is based on the assumption that, as in the Twenty-third Air Force's experience, the special operations realm remains "a growth industry," while "rescue [is] on the decline and though the equipment [is] disappearing, the mission [is] still there."[31]

Simply put, if AFSOC wants to strengthen CSAR, it must bind the rescue cause to the most pressing contemporary "growth industry"—the GWOT. Just as General Patterson tried to salvage CSAR and AFSOF capabilities by binding their priorities along the "political stream" of SOF revitalization, an issue with national attention, the AFSOC must advance its force-revitalization agenda within the context of the GWOT.[32] In this way, CSAR's and SOF's initiatives could gain an advantage when competing with the Air Force's conventional priority projects, and hopefully obtain congressional and Defense Department support that earmarks funds for their initiatives.[33]

Undoubtedly some will view the 2004 version of Forward Look as overly ambitious. They will claim, just as some of the Twenty-third Air Force's critics did, that the two communities could accommodate their mission-area requirements without fusing the AFSOF and CSAR subcultures into a SAW capabilities-based force. Others may try to perpetuate the ideological rift between the two communities by inflaming USAF and USSOCOM insecurities about the AFSOC merger. In order to achieve the necessary reforms, Headquarters AFSOC must remain vigilant in countering these attempts.

Even if AFSOC remains mindful of the many ways that inter- / intraservice and institutional culture, biases, and agendas can hinder organizational progress, it must also work diligently to prevent intracommand strife. Although this chapter has outlined the theory behind the Forward Look initiative and the areas of potential cultural friction in the transformation process, AFSOC must create an implementation instrument. In short, someone must direct and monitor the implementation of the plan.

The evidence of this paper suggests that cultural dynamics can have an adverse effect on organizational growth. Therefore,

the AFSOC commander must remain mindful of the influence of organizational culture. Since 1 October 2003, the first day of the merger, Headquarters AFSOC dissolved the "CSAR integration" office.[34] If AFSOC adopts the Forward Look concept, it should establish a SAW transformation office, which would be able to guide the process of transforming the command from a mission-/platform-oriented organization to a capabilities-based force. The new office would also work to anticipate potential friction points and contentious cultural issues before they become a problem, as well as keep the AFSOC commander informed on the progress of the initiative.

This paper has provided ample evidence that cultural dynamics and institutional agendas that ran counter to the commander's vision ultimately contributed to the fall of the Twenty-third Air Force and to the segregation of the AFSOF and CSAR communities. Although the Twenty-third Air Force succeeded in fulfilling its primary objective of strengthening special forces, its organizational conflicts of interest stunted its development and limited its potential. If AFSOC wants to succeed in its recent merger and achieve its goal of revitalizing the CSAR community, its leaders must pay particular attention to organizational culture and transform AFSOC from a mission-area/platform-oriented force to one based on capabilities.

Notes

1. Schein, *Organizational Culture*, pp. 376–77.

2. Neustadt and May, *Thinking in Time*, pp. xv, 238.

3. For example, Twenty-third Air Force leaders were quick to point out the complementary nature of the AFSOF and CSAR communities, demonstrated during collaborative efforts such as the raid on the Son Tay prison, the *Mayaguez* incident, and Project Honey Badger. Although tempting, AFSOC leaders should not make the same mistake by hyping up the complementary nature of AFSOF and CSAR during Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom without at the same time considering some of the "not-so-complementary" aspects of the merger, such as the AFSOF/CSAR institutional agendas.

4. See chap. 6 of this study; and Schein, *Organizational Culture*, p. 384.

5. Paul V. Hester, interview with author, Fort Walton Beach, FL, 29 Jan. 2004.

6. Jumper, "Technology-to-Warfighting."

7. Cassidy, *Transportation Balance*, pp. 15–16; Headquarters USAF, Program Action Directive (PAD) 2-09, *Implementation of the Secretary of the Air Force*, pp. i–ii. Cassidy describes the major force programs as broad catego-

ries of DOD program requests for congressional consideration. MFP-11 is a SOF-specific program, while MFP-4 is restricted to airlift and sealift forces (p. 21). As noted in earlier chapters, USSOCOM has budgetary authority over MFP-11. PAD 2-09 established the parameters of the merger of AFSOF and select CSAR assets. According to PAD 2-09, "MFP-11 and MFP-4 funds will not crosswalk" (p. 2). It also stipulates that AFSOC will present CSAR forces through the ACC to the Joint Forces Command (JFCOM) and then to the prospective combatant commander. Similarly, AFSOC presents AFSOF assets to combatant commanders through USSOCOM. While USSOCOM retains operational control of the AFSOF assets, JFCOM holds onto operational control of the CSAR assets (pp. i, 1, 3).

8. Kingdon, *Agendas, Alternatives*, p. 94.

9. Hebert, "CSAR under New Management," p. 85.

10. Ibid.

11. For more on the Desert One model, see chap. 5 and the appendix of this study. In broad terms, this model refers to a scenario that involves the employment of a CTJTF in a short-duration, single-mission (most often multiple objectives) reactive operation.

12. Wurster, interview with author, Maxwell AFB, AL, 26 Jan. 2004. In the interview, General Wurster provided an overview of how, as the Joint Special Operations Task Force (JSOTF) commander for Operation Enduring Freedom–Philippines, he used HH-60G rescue helicopters in support of JSOTF operations. General Wurster explicitly stated that these assets proved extremely valuable and that he used them only within existing CSAR doctrinal parameters.

13. Roach and Jumper, *Prepared Comments to House*. Today the term *buckets of capabilities* is most commonly used in reference to the air and space expeditionary force (AEF) concept. Secretary Roach and General Jumper argued that "AEFs are not individual organizations, autonomous fighting forces, or units. Instead, our 10 AEFs represent buckets of capabilities the Air Force can draw upon to satisfy the requirements of theater commanders—flexible, responsive, adaptable" (ibid.).

14. Eventually the USAF may create the Air Force Special Air Warfare Command. This organization may more closely resemble the Naval Special Warfare Command (NSWCOM) (which represents the naval component of USSOCOM) than the US Army Special Operations Command (which represents the Army component of USSOCOM). Due to constraints on length, this paper does not describe the different USSOCOM components in detail. Therefore, this assertion is not based on thorough research but on the author's 12-year association with AFSOC and USSOCOM. For more on NSW, see the NSWCOM, https://www.navsoc.navy.mil/navsoc_missions.asp (accessed 18 May 2004); for more on USASOC, see US Special Operations Command, http://www.soc.mil/hqs/hqs_home.htm (accessed 18 May 2004).

15. Initiatives specifically designed to gain HQ USAF support are discussed further in the intraservice section of this chapter.

16. JP 3-05, *Doctrine for Joint Special Operations*, p. II-1. Under the heading "Designated Special Operations Forces," JP 3-05 explicitly differentiates

between AFSOF and USAF CSAR units. Besides AFSOF flying units, JP 3-05 includes special tactics, combat weather, and foreign internal defense (FID) squadrons in the list of forces designated as SOF. In essence, JP 3-05 hints at USSOCOM's institutional bias toward the CSAR.

17. Message, 291920Z DEC 89, USCINCSOC to HQ USAF et al., 29 Dec. 1989; and United States Special Operations Command, *Posture Statement 2003–2004*, pp. 9–10, 36–37. In a more contemporary example, the USSOCOM *Posture Statement 2003–2004* omits mentioning CSAR as one of the command's Title 10 responsibilities and does not list CSAR as one of the nine SOF core tasks.

18. Magness to author, e-mail. Major Magness works at AFSOC/XPRX (requirements). Although he provided information that suggests that the MH-53 will remain in the AFSOC inventory until 2012, Magness also added that this figure represents the AFSOC proposal. Additionally, he stresses, "We at the program office can't emphasize this enough [that] the CV-22 is not a 'one for one' direct replacement of the -53, it is a transformational capability that [addresses AFSOC's] . . . vertical and fixed wing needs."

19. Briefing, Army Warfighting Center, subject: Army Aviation CSAR Training, 22–24 Jan. 2001, slides 2, 7. In this briefing, the center explicitly states that the Task Force Hawk operations in Albania (1999) "revealed the Army's inability to plan and execute CSAR and Personnel Recovery operations." Additionally, the briefing explicitly states that the Army does not train, organize, or equip its forces specifically for CSAR (ibid.).

20. The goal should not be for the USAF to assume this role unilaterally. All of USSOCOM's components need to collaborate with the Joint Personnel Recovery Agency (an element of the Joint Forces Command) in order to create a joint CSAR capability that supports national CSAR requirements.

21. Findlay, "Joint Special Operations Insight."

22. Erwin, "Elite Warriors"; and Tiron, "Demand for Special Ops." According to Gen Peter J. Schoomaker, then USSOCOM commander, SOF had experienced a 300 percent increase in deployments and "operational tempo" (Erwin). Erwin adds that "much like the major military services, SOCOM officials fear that higher rates of deployments against a backdrop of declining budgets are hampering force readiness and morale." Tiron reports that "senior officials at the U.S. Special Operations Command are grappling with a looming force structure crisis. At their current level, special operations forces can meet today's demands, but it will be difficult for SOCOM to sustain the pace, given the rapid growth in their worldwide commitments."

23. Norton A. Schwartz, interview with author, Washington, DC, 5 Nov. 2003. General Schwartz argued that combatant commanders would ask for the most capable platforms and noted that "you must make them [AFSOF and CSAR] functionally equivalent. [They] must have a wider use of play in both missions."

24. Understanding that it would be impossible to change the "platform-centric" mind-set overnight, one sees that one of the elements of this alternative is to pursue common platform-procurement efforts that allow the AFSOF and CSAR communities to modify their individual airframe to meet specific

capability-based needs. In the end, the AFSOF and CSAR capabilities must be on a converging path; otherwise, combatant commanders will continue to insist on specific platforms to meet specific mission requirements, regardless of which community operates them.

25. Hebert, "CSAR under New Management," p. 86. In an interview with Hebert, Gen Hal M. Hornburg, ACC commander, acknowledged that ACC had done a "less than adequate job of budgeting for CSAR" (ibid.). General Hornburg's comments, although courageous in admitting a systemic problem, reflect a historical paradox fully detailed in chap. 4 of this study. In broad terms, although the Air Force leadership has unfailingly recognized the relevance of the CSAR mission, it has been inconsistent in its fiscal support of the rescue community.

26. Hester, "AFSOC Welcomes CSAR Units," p. 2.

27. US Senate, *Nominee for the Position*, p. 20. General Jumper calls the F-22, JSF, UCAV, and B-2 the "kick-down-the-door force." Jumper, "Global Strike Task Force," p. 29.

28. For more on these programs, see Aronstein, Hirschberg, and Piccirillo, *Advanced Tactical Fighter to F-22*; Jenkins, *Lockheed Special Projects*; Rich and Janus, *Skunk Works*; and Kandebo, "Boeing Premiers UCAV Demonstrator," pp. 30–33.

29. Tilford, *Search and Rescue*, p. 42. Tilford refers to the years between the Korean and Vietnam wars as "the dark age of CSAR" because of the great decline in capability (ibid.). As noted in chap. 4 of this study, although the ARS had demonstrated its relevance in recovering Americans in limited war, military leaders considered the Korean War an anomaly. Even if Air Force leaders appreciated the benefits of the ARS in the Korean War, its importance depreciated in the context of the Air Force's focus on massive nuclear retaliation.

30. PAD 2-09, *Implementation of the Secretary of the Air Force*, pp. I, J-1.

31. Patterson, "End of Tour Report," p. 1; reiterated in Maj Gen Robert B. Patterson, USAF, retired, interview with author, Fort Walton Beach, FL, 29 Jan. 2004.

32. Kingdon, *Agendas*, *Alternatives*, pp. 162–63. Kingdon uses the stream analogy to describe the agenda-setting process. According to his analogy, *policy stream* is the process of producing alternatives and selecting proposals for organizational behavior based on specified criteria (pp. 200–201). The *problem stream* alludes to the mechanism of identifying significant social problems, while *political stream* encompasses the promotion of high-interest agenda items (pp. 145, 163). Factors such as shifts in national opinion, administration changes, interest group campaigns, and congressional makeup may affect the political stream (p. 87).

33. Tiron, "Demand for Special Ops"; and USSOCOM, briefing, subject: Fiscal Year (FY) 2005 Budget Estimates, Feb. 2004, slides 53–54. Tiron's article and the USSOCOM briefing document a significant increase in AFSOF's capabilities due to an injection of additional GWOT-specific funds in the USSOCOM budget. AFSOC was able to procure four new AC-130Us and 10 MC-130Hs.

34. Shafer to author, e-mail.

Appendix

Desert One Analysis

As noted in chapter 5, the Desert One disaster was the impetus for the revitalization of America's special operations forces. Whereas that chapter presents a brief account of the events leading to the creation of the Twenty-third Air Force, this appendix explores some of the finer operational and tactical elements of the failed mission. Although it is tempting to analyze the Desert One mission from start to finish, limitations of space preclude me from doing so. As such, I will restrict my analysis of the failed mission attempt strictly to the effects of organizational culture and institutional agendas on this operation. Specifically, I will examine the rationale behind the decision to use Navy/Marine pilots to fly the RH-53D helicopters in lieu of Air Force special operations forces (AFSOF) and combat search and rescue (CSAR) crews.

Soon after the Iranians seized the American Embassy in Tehran, Gen Edward Meyer, chief of staff, United States Army, nominated Maj Gen James B. Vaught, United States Army (USA), as the joint task force (JTF) commander responsible for the team selection, planning, and execution of a complicated hostage rescue.[1] On 12 November 1979 General Vaught was officially designated the JTF commander, and, within a day, he called for a small team of planners to meet in Washington to consider alternatives.[2] Col Charlie Beckwith, the assault-force commander, asserts that these "brainstorming session[s]" took a turn for the better when Col James Kyle, the deputy commander for the rescue mission and de facto air component commander, received the difficult task of developing a plan that required the clandestine infiltration of an American assault force and the safe exfiltration of the hostages and the rescue team.[3]

As mentioned above, Colonel Kyle, the initial air component commander, had to contend with significant planning problems; this appendix addresses, arguably, two of the most significant quandaries. First, Iran's geography presented a challenging anti-access problem. Kyle argues that "when you think back over the years we have spent billions on foreign aid to these countries

surrounding Iran and yet *not one* of them has offered to help us get our hostages back. America is sorely 'lacking for friends'" (emphasis in original).[4] The second problem involved the ad hoc JTF command structure and the convoluted planning process that hindered a systematic approach to planning. For example, Kyle concedes that some within the Joint Staff had already made the key decision on which helicopters to use.[5] Working within the JCS constraints/restraints, Kyle and his team developed a plan that involved a long-range infiltration of the assault force using a combination of rotary- and fixed-wing airframes over a two-day period.[6]

Beyond the equipment preferences, the JTF staff had to consider the right blend of aviators to fly this extraordinarily challenging mission. The JTF planners, struggling to simplify an increasingly complicated plan, selected Navy RH-53D pilots to fly the mission. The planners hoped that the Navy crews could train up to the unique skill sets required to fly special night vision goggle (NVG) low-level missions faster than crews capable of flying at low levels during the night could train up to fly RH-53D aircraft. In hindsight this assumption proved faulty. Partially to blame for this error in planning assumption was the flawed chain of command between Vaught and the helicopter portion of the operation.

As part of the planning considerations, the JTF staff had to determine which air platforms met the load and range requirements. The fixed-wing options were few; MC/EC-130s would refuel the helicopter force at a forward landing zone, code-named Desert One, on the first night, and a mix of MC-130s and C-141s would exfiltrate the assault force, helicopter crews, and hostages on the second night.[7] Because of his prior AFSOF C-130 experience, Kyle took charge of the fixed-wing portion of the operation. Historian Paul Ryan annotates that "early in the planning phase, Col Charles H. Pitman, United States Marine Corps (USMC), an assistant to General [David C.] Jones, [became] involved in the planning and execution of the helicopter phase."[8] Although Pitman was not officially designated "deputy commander for helicopter forces" until just prior to the execution phase, he had a tremendous influence on the helicopter portion of Desert One from start to finish.[9] As it would turn out, the rotary-wing portion proved to be the most complicated aspect of the air plan.

Colonel Beckwith contends that "there were several options: CH-47 Chinooks [Army] or CH-46 Sea Knights [Navy], HH-53s [Air Force] or RH-53s [Navy/Marine Corps]. It became apparent, when all the specifications were laid out, that the 53 series met most of the requirements."[10] Although the original JCS planners had decided on the RH-53Ds before Kyle became involved with the plan, he argues that the RH-53D had major advantages over the HH-53.

> Days were spent interviewing every rotary-wing expert in the Pentagon, and after scrutinizing every type of helicopter in the inventory, we came up with the Navy's RH-53D Sea Stallion. . . . [It] could carry removable internal auxiliary fuel tanks in addition to its external tanks. . . . It had foldable rotor blades and tail boom so it could be stored below deck on a carrier [security was a major concern in this operation]. And it had a cargo compartment big enough to carry twenty fully equipped Delta Force commandos, as well as extra fuel. . . . At the time, the maximum gross weight at which an Air Force HH-53 Pave Low helicopter could operate was 42,000 points, 6,000 less than the RH-53D. With the fuel load required for this mission, the Pave Low could not carry passengers or cargo.[11]

In essence, Kyle implies that the JTF planners had considered using the Air Rescue and Recovery Service's (ARRS) HH-53Hs but decided against them because the Pave Lows could not meet performance requirements.[12]

Ryan suggests that Maj Gen Philip G. Gast, who "was brought into [the] operation because of his special knowledge of Tehran . . . also supervised the training program for the helicopter crews, a responsibility he presumably shared with Marine Colonel Charles Pitman."[13] But neither Gast, a USAF fighter pilot, nor Pitman, a conventionally minded USMC pilot, had any experience with SOF operations. More importantly, Navy pilots were not accustomed to flying overland at low levels during the night, much less with NVGs. Beckwith observes that "the normal Navy crews who trained on the 53s had no experience in the type of mission we envisioned. In fact, there were no pilots in any of the services who had been trained to fly in the conditions this mission required."[14] Beckwith may be correct in that the mission was more complex than what any "53 series" crews may have practiced in the past, but, unlike Navy pilots, the CH-53 and HH-53H crews of AFSOF and ARRS at least had experience flying with night-vision devices.

General Vaught and Colonel Beckwith recognized the pilots' deficiencies the first time that they flew with the Navy crews. According to Beckwith, these pilots "*were not* what [we] were looking for" (emphasis added).[15] They simply did not have the skills required for the mission. Beckwith argues, "We were looking for aces, daredevils, barnstormers, guys who flew by the seats of their pants, hot rodders, pilots who could pick it up, turn it around on a dime and put it back down with a flair. These Navy pilots didn't believe in taking the risks we knew were required of the pilots flying into an enemy-held city."[16] Within a short while the JTF leadership removed all but one Navy pilot from the operation.

Once the Navy pilots were no longer a part of the operation, General Vaught asked General Jones, an Air Force bomber pilot and chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS), for help. By Beckwith's account, General Jones, influenced by his J-3, Lt Gen Phillip Shutler, USMC, designated a group of Marine Corps helicopter pilots as replacements for the original Navy crews. According to Beckwith, "Many of us in Delta questioned the wisdom behind this decision. . . . There was some suspicion at the time that there were those in the JCS who wanted to make sure *each of the services had a piece of the action . . .* [but soon] it was obvious the Marine pilots had a lot of work to do. . . . The task they had been given was unusually hard. It was one that called for an altered mind-set" (emphasis in original).[17] Ryan, on the other hand, suggested that after the first night's rehearsal debacle, "Vaught ordered a widespread search for twenty of the best pilots in the armed forces."[18]

According to Adm James L. Holloway, chairman of the commission set up to review the failed rescue mission, "More than two hundred aviators were screened. . . . The majority of those finally selected were Marine officers, with two Navy aviators and one Air Force officer."[19] Ryan further argued that Colonel Pitman "arranged for more seasoned pilots, evaluated progress in training, and was responsible for the transfer of personnel to the [training site]."[20]

Chapters 2 and 3 demonstrated the USAF's benign neglect of the AFSOF and rescue mission areas. The failure of Desert One confirmed the Air Staff's lack of foresight in considering alternatives. For example, when the JTF commander traded his

Navy crews for Marine Corps aviators (December 1979), even a cursory review of ARRS and AFSOF capabilities would have indicated to Air Staff planners involved with Desert One preparation that the ARRS had the most capable SOF capability in the USAF. It appears, however, that parochial approaches to intraservice mission areas and the implicit desire to have every service represented in this hugely important national mission affected the decision to have Marine Corps instead of USAF crews on the helicopter portion of the rescue attempt.

Ultimately, the Iran hostage-rescue mission was a catalyst for the reprioritization of US special operations forces within the Department of Defense (DOD). That having been said, the information presented so far describes the penalty for the near-eradication of the SOF community in the 1970s. Kyle identified four major reasons for the mission's failure:

— Alternate helicopter pilots (USAF Special Operations or Rescue Service H-53 pilots) should have been selected to team with [the] Marines.

— Helicopter aborts—pilots lacked certain knowledge vital to reaching an informed decision whether to abort or proceed.

— Enemy radar threat—helicopter pilots based low-level tactics on erroneous intelligence report[ing].

— Helicopter communications—pilots lacked secure modes of communication to receive vital mission information.[21]

Kyle places much of the blame for the failure of the Iran rescue mission on "a few conservative-minded conventional-force thinkers [who] led the helicopter component of the JTF."[22] Although Kyle does not name individuals in his account, Paul Ryan identifies two key figures in the JTF staff who were responsible for the conventional/conservative approach to the helicopter portion of the operation: General Gast, USAF, and Colonel Pitman, USMC. In addition to these individuals, it appears that USAF conventional leadership was partially responsible for the Desert One failure.

The evidence suggests that instead of entertaining the notion of utilizing ARRS resources, the JTF and Air Staff planners, at least initially, contacted AFSOF only. Once AFSOF declared that it did not have the capability to support the assault-force requirements, the JTF planners looked to other services for volunteers, implying that if AFSOF did not possess the "special"

capabilities called for in this mission, no other USAF unit could fulfill the requirements either. This was a case of the white-hat/black-hat ARRS syndrome in reverse. The black-hat AFSOF community could not accept that a white-hat ARRS entity was a more capable special operations force than the units chartered with the AFSOF mission.[23]

The research uncovered several key pieces of evidence that support the above assertion. First, Lt Col Richard D. Newton, USAF, retired, an instructor at the Joint Special Operations University and graduate of the Army's School of Advanced Military Studies, describes his encounter with Marine colonel (later lieutenant general) Pitman while attending a luncheon at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas:

> I very pointedly asked Gen Pitman why they hadn't used the ARRS Paves and avoided the refueling in the desert . . . [and] I quote, "When we called the Air Force Special Operations folks, they answered that the Air Force could not do the mission. All they had were some Huey gunships and some old CH-3Es. At that point, we . . . [hung] up the phone and looked to the Marines." In answering my follow-up question, he said they did not call ARRS after that because they went to AFSOF as the experts for special ops. Once the (corporate) USAF said they couldn't do the mission, the planners looked elsewhere.[24]

In other words, Pitman's comments suggest that the black-hat AFSOF community did not have the "hardware" required to fly the mission. But Pitman also implies that the "corporate" USAF failed to present any other alternatives to the JTF planners either. In theory, the USAF failed to advocate for its collective helicopter force, even though both ARRS and AFSOF crews were more qualified to fly the profile prescribed in the Desert One scenario.

At first glance some may dismiss this as purely circumstantial evidence, but before doing so I must remind the reader that this research paper is about organizational culture. When one discusses culture, perceptions matter. Right or wrong, justified or simply vicious rumor, the perception among many AFSOF flyers was that the ARRS had refused the nation's calling. At the same time, some within the ARRS community considered such allegations pure nonsense. The key point here is that the friction between the two communities—ARRS and AFSOF—is based more on myths, legends, and perceptions than on established fact.

In factual terms, the Holloway Commission concluded that "USAF pilots, more experienced in the mission profile envisioned for the rescue operation, would have progressed more rapidly than Marine Corps or Navy pilots."[25] Ryan argues that AFSOF projects like "Jungle Jim" had "demonstrated that a pilot could transition with relative ease to an aircraft of similar design and performance . . . [but] would find it much harder to learn the novel, even unique, skills required for covert missions."[26] Ryan makes a compelling case that pilots can learn to fly a different helicopter type more easily than they can develop a new mind-set associated with the conduct of special operations.[27] Even though the ARRS, at the time, had a pool of 114 qualified -53 series pilots, instructors, and evaluators, the Air Force did not adequately advocate the possibility of ARRS white-hat aviators participating in a black-hat mission.[28]

Another piece of the puzzle surfaced in a message from Lt Gen Charles A. Gabriel, deputy chief of staff for operations, plans, and readiness at Headquarters USAF, to Military Airlift Command (MAC) and Tactical Air Command (TAC). On 27 March 1980, a month before the rescue attempt, General Gabriel solicited information from affected major commands (MAJCOM) about their views on the possibility of an Air Force special operations force:[29]

> Recent experience has shown that any proposed US military response to various current International crises would include some mix of service special operations forces, usually acting jointly with our sister services. As a result, OJCS [Office of the Joint Chiefs of Staff] has asked us to institutionalize the lessons we have learned during our recent joint planning and training.
>
> 1. In an effort to respond to time-sensitive taskings, we have relied on ad hoc coordination between the services and other government agencies in the areas of concept development, equipment interface, C2 and communications. It appears that if the . . . AFSOF is to work effectively with either conventional or other services' SOF forces, we should have an organizational framework to implement detailed interservice planning, coordination and mission execution.
>
> 2. The AFSOF structure is widely dispersed in [continental US, Pacific Air Forces, and United States Air Forces in Europe] and includes five active squadrons, ARF squadrons, and USAF Special Operations School, plus augmentation support from MAC and SAC [Strategic Air Command]. In order to provide an improved framework an AFSOF headquarters or center might be established directly under TAC. An appropriate charter would be for develop-

ment of tactics, doctrine, requirements and innovative operational concepts for the worldwide SOF in support of Joint unconventional warfare, counterterrorism, SOF elements of the RDF [rapid deployment force] and special activities. It might also prove the nucleus for a rapid response crisis planning cell. Further, the organization could be established at Air Division equivalent level capable of:

    a. Appropriate interface (General Officer commanding) with the MAJCOMS, other services and unified commands.

    b. Functioning as a counterpart to USA's JFK Center at Fort Bragg.

    c. Dedicated staff and support operations separate from Wing management functions.

    d. Providing experience necessary to insure the most effective field operations for a multi-mission and highly trained composite force.

3. Request TAC study feasibility of establishing a [Headquarters] AFSOF using 1st SOW [Special Operations Wing] resources to the maximum extent possible. The possibility of MAC and SAC (Tinker) manpower sources for appropriate liaison positions, as well as Army/Navy Liaison, within the organization may warrant addressal [sic].

4. As you are aware, manpower ceilings for FY 81 have been presented to Congress—the FY 81 President's budget. Any requirements for a reorganization must come from within existing resources. Therefore, any additive manpower and facility requirements should be kept to the minimum. Request inputs be forwarded to AF/XOO/ XOX by 15 Apr 81 so we can address them in our FY 82–86 [program objective memorandum] deliberations.[30]

This message was addressed to the TAC vice-commander, General Gast. As mentioned earlier, he was intimately familiar with the planning and execution of Desert One and, consequently, should have known that despite TAC's deficiency in AFSOF platforms, MAC had a pool of experienced aviators trained in low-level and special operations (SO) missions.[31] Considering the evidence, it appears that General Gast and others were prepared to cede a mission of this magnitude to another service rather than acknowledge the fact that the white-hat MAC/ARRS was better equipped to handle the SO mission than TAC/1st SOW.

Nonetheless, after the failed rescue attempt, in an effort to avoid a formal congressional inquiry, the Carter administration established a military-review group appointed by the chairman of the JCS, General Jones, to "delve only into the military

causes of the failure—what went wrong and why—and to identify the military lessons learned and how the services could apply them in the future."[32] In the end, Admiral Holloway, who headed the review group, concluded, "I think [the mission] had a 60 to 70% chance of success and ran into some terribly bad luck."[33] Although a thorough review of the Holloway Commission's findings is beyond the scope of this paper, it is widely accepted that the military planners incorporated the commission's conclusions and recommended changes in the planning and rehearsal phases of Project Honey Badger, the preparations for a second hostage-rescue attempt.[34]

Based on TAC's/MAC's disagreements over the helicopter single-manager concept (examined in chapter 5), Desert One experiences, and information contained in General Gabriel's message, the need for a single manager for helicopter operations and a more robust AFSOF capability were not just TAC/MAC considerations but national priorities. Desert One was the focusing event that provided the impetus for change in behavior and forced all of the services to address the benign neglect of SOF and the resultant lack of a national counterterrorism capability. For example, the USAF had focused heavily on revitalizing its aging fleet of fighter aircraft in the late 1970s and considered AFSOF a diversion of valuable resources.[35]

Additionally, Desert One and Project Honey Badger established the paradigm for black SOF's structure, training, and operational focus.[36] As Amy Zegart suggests, national security organizations are deeply affected by the circumstances and factors associated with their creation.[37] Similarly, the revitalization of the SOF community throughout the 1980s and 1990s has been closely related with the Desert One model.[38] In essence, the black SOF subelement of the United States Special Operations Command not only has created the force structure but also has trained and "stood alert" in order to respond to a Desert One–level contingency for the past two decades.

Notes

1. Ryan, *Iranian Rescue Mission*, p. 17.

2. Ibid., p. 18. Ryan points out that a week earlier the JCS had "set up a small, ad hoc group to develop ideas and organize a team to snatch the hostages in a lightning-quick raid. . . . When General Vaught's staff was named, this ad hoc group ceased functioning" (ibid.).

3. Beckwith, *Delta Force*, p. 203. Note that Colonel Kyle was not the senior Air Force officer involved in this operation. General Gast, chief of the Military Assistance Advisory Group, Iran, was the ranking USAF officer. But he was a fighter pilot, and the mission called for an air component commander with a SOF background. Thus, Kyle was put in charge of the air component and was the designated deputy commander for the JTF. Please note that on 1 Mar. 1980 Gast was promoted to lieutenant general and became the vice-commander of TAC. For more information, see Gast, biography.

4. Kyle, *Guts to Try*, p. 47.

5. Kyle to author, e-mail.

6. Beckwith, *Delta Force*, pp. 214–16. Beckwith lists the various options discussed during a commanders' meeting on 2 Dec. 1979. Generals Vaught and Gast, as well as Colonels Beckwith and Kyle, agreed that "the helicopters' strengths outweighed their weaknesses and on this testimony the choppers began to win the day." The fixed-wing portion of the air package would support the helicopter infiltration force and ultimately exfiltrate the hostages and assault force (ibid.).

7. Kyle, *Guts to Try*, pp. 202–9.

8. Ryan, *Iranian Rescue Mission*, p. 23.

9. Ibid., pp. 23–25; and US DOD, *Rescue Mission Report*, p. 51, cited in Ryan, *Iranian Rescue Mission*, p.158n11.

10. Beckwith, *Delta Force*, p. 216.

11. Kyle, *Guts to Try*, p. 56. The RH-53D was a special minesweeping variant of the more common CH-53 Sea Stallion.

12. Kyle's notion is challenged in this appendix. This section only seeks to draw a rough chronology of the events that facilitated support for the creation of the Twenty-third Air Force.

13. Ryan, *Iranian Rescue Mission*, p. 24.

14. Beckwith, *Delta Force*, p. 218.

15. Ibid., p. 224.

16. Ibid. Beckwith had the Delta psychologist, Doc Bender, look "these chaps over." His response was telling. "You know, we got some guys here who are really shaky. They're beginning to understand what kind of mission you want them to fly. Sure, one or two might make it, but for the rest." Doc Bender, in the end, was right (ibid.).

17. Ibid., pp. 225, 228.

18. Ryan, *Iranian Rescue Mission*, p. 41.

19. Ibid. Ryan attributes his comments to Admiral Holloway.

20. Ibid., p. 25.

21. Kyle, *Guts to Try*, p. 365. Please note that Kyle highlights this list of four reasons as "the major reasons that the mission failed" because he feels that the Holloway Commission failed to recognize them as major contributing factors to the failure of Desert One (ibid.).

22. Ibid., p. 36. Kyle argues that the combination of conventional and conservative mind-sets "made for a poor combination" (ibid.).

23. General Comer, Peterson AFB, CO, telephonic interview with author, Maxwell AFB, AL, 9 Feb. 2004. General Comer's assertion excludes the ARRS's involvement in the CSAR portion of Desert One because ARRS resources were not considered for the assault and hostage-rescue portions; for more see chap. 5.

24. Newton to author, e-mail, 29 Mar. 2004. Please note that several 1980s-era AFSOF veterans confirmed that Colonel Pitman's comments are, at least partially, in error. In 1979 and 1980, the 20th Special Operations Squadron did not have any Huey gunships. Nonetheless, although not totally accurate, his comments are not totally inaccurate.

25. Ryan, *Iranian Rescue Mission*, p. 42; and US DOD, *Rescue Mission Report*, pp. 35–36.

26. Ryan, *Iranian Rescue Mission*, pp. 42–43.

27. Ibid., p. 43.

28. Ibid., pp. 43, 128. Ryan also suggests that of the 114 qualified H-53 pilots, 96 were "competent in long-range flight. Moreover, the air force roster carried the names of 86 former H-53 pilots, most of whom had had experience in special operations or combat rescue, probably in Vietnam, among other places. Most of these pilots would have been psychologically prepared for the pressures of secret missions; they would have probably progressed faster in training." Ryan later quotes Colonel Beckwith as saying that "there were people around who were further advanced than these individuals [USMC pilots] were." Ryan argues convincingly that Beckwith has AFSOF pilots in mind (ibid.).

29. History, Twenty-third Air Force, vol. 1, 1 Jan.–31 Dec. 1983, p. 1.

30. Message, 271800Z MAR 1980, AFSSO DCS/Operations, Plans and Readiness, to vice-commander et al., AFSSO TAC.

31. At least three of these veterans are used as sources in this paper: Colonels Connelly and Weikel and Major General Comer, all USAF, retired.

32. Ryan, *Iranian Rescue Mission*, pp. 107–8.

33. Ibid., p. 111.

34. Chinnery, *Any Time, Any Place*, pp. 231–32. Whereas the JCS had allocated only eight RH-53Ds to Operation Rice Bowl, the planners of Project Honey Badger had 95 helicopters at their disposal, including the first HH-53H Pave Low IIIs, UH-60 Blackhawks (the Army's first operational company of UH-60s), CH-47C Chinooks from the 101st Airborne Division, and OH-6 Loach helicopters that could carry some of the assaulters on specially modified outside platforms.

35. For more on this issue, see chaps. 3 and 5 of this paper.

36. Author's personal experience. As discussed in chap. 5, the US Special Operations Command culture is divided into three subelements (white

SOF, black SOF, and other). Black SOF deals almost exclusively with the counterterrorism mission. AFSOF's support for black SOF has almost exclusively been along the Desert One model.

37. Zegart, *Flawed by Design*, pp. 1–11.

38. Author's personal experience. This model refers to a mix of fixed- and rotary-winged airframes delivering the assault force to remote landing sites, then (via rotary-wing support) assault on the objective, followed by a transload of hostages or cargo at a remote location near the objective, and finally a mass extraction of the entire force by fixed-wing assets. I would like to thank Colonel Weikel for sharing his thoughts on the subject with me. For more on Colonel Weikel's ideas and a comparison between the Desert One and Son Tay models, see Kelly, *From a Dark Sky*, pp. 251–52.

Abbreviations

AAA	antiaircraft artillery
AAC	Army Air Corps
AAF	Army Air Forces
AB	air base
ACC	Air Combat Command
ACG	Air Commando Group
ACS	Air Commando Squadron
ACSC	Air Command and Staff College
ACW	Air Commando Wing
AD	air division
AEF	air and space expeditionary force
AFC	Air Force Council
AFDD	Air Force Doctrine Document
AFHRA	Air Force Historical Research Agency
AFMAN	Air Force manual
AFR	Air Force Reserve
AFSOC	Air Force Special Operations Command
AFSOF	Air Force special operations forces
AISS	Air Intelligence Support Squadron
AMC	Airborne Mission Command
ANG	Air National Guard
ARCG	Air Resupply and Communications Group
ARCS	Air Resupply and Communications Service
ARCW	Air Resupply and Communications Wing
ARRS	Air Rescue and Recovery Service
ARRSR	Air Rescue and Recovery Service Regulation
ARS	Air Rescue Service; Air Rescue Squadron
ARSOF	Army special operations forces
ASG	Air Studies Group
ATTW	Air Training and Test Wing
CAS	close air support
CBI	China-Burma-India
CCRAK	Covert, Clandestine, and Related Activities–Korea
CCTG	Combat Crew Training Group
CCTS	Combat Crew Training Squadron
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CINCMAC	commander in chief, Military Airlift Command
COIN	counterinsurgency

COMUSMACV	commander, United States Military Assistance Command Vietnam
CONUS	continental United States
CR	combat rescue
CSA	chief of staff, United States Army
CSAF	chief of staff, United States Air Force
CSAR	combat search and rescue
CT	counterterrorist
CTJTF	counterterrorist joint task force
DA	Department of the Army
DOD	Department of Defense
FEAF	Far East Air Forces
FEC/LG	Far East Command Liaison Group
FM	field manual
FY	fiscal year
GWOT	global war on terrorism
HLH	heavy-lift helicopter
HQ	headquarters
HS	helicopter squadron
IOC	initial operational capability
JACK	Joint Activities Commission—Korea
JCS	Joint Chiefs of Staff
JFC	joint force commander
JFCOM	Joint Forces Command
JP	joint publication
JSF	Joint Strike Fighter
JSOTF	Joint Special Operations Task Force
JTF	joint task force
LLH	light-lift helicopter
LRC	Logistics Resources Center
MAC	Military Airlift Command
MACSOG	Military Assistance Command Studies and Observation Group
MAJCOM	major command
MATS	Military Airlift Transport Service
MFP	major force program
MOA	memorandum of agreement
MOU	memorandum of understanding
MPC	Military Personnel Center
NDAA	National Defense Authorization Act

NSWCOM	Naval Special Warfare Command
NVG	night vision goggle
OPLAN	operation plan
OSD	Office of the Secretary of Defense
OSS	Office of Strategic Services
PACAF	Pacific Air Forces
PAD	program action directive
PJ	pararescue jumper
POM	program objective memorandum
POW	prisoner of war
PR	personnel recovery
RAF	Royal Air Force
ROC	required operational capability
SAASS	School of Advanced Air and Space Studies
SAC	Strategic Air Command
SAOR	Southeast Asia Operational Requirement
SARTF	Search and Rescue Task Force
SAW	special air warfare
SAWC	Special Air Warfare Center
SEA	Southeast Asia
SecDef	secretary of defense
SF	special forces
SLEP	service life extension program
SO	special operations
SOC	Special Operations Command
SOE	special operations executive
SOG	Studies and Observations Group
SOS	special operations squadron
SOW	special operations wing
TAC	Tactical Air Command
TCW	tactical composite wing
TDY	temporary duty
TRADOC	Training and Doctrine Command
UCAV	unmanned combat air vehicle
USA	United States Army
USAF	United States Air Force
USASOC	US Army Special Operations Command
USSOCOM	United States Special Operations Command
UW	unconventional warfare
VCSAF	vice-chief of staff of the Air Force

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