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CORRECTING MYTHS ABOUT THE PERSIAN GULF WAR: THE LAST STAND OF THE TAWAKALNA

Stephen A. Bourque

Several myths about the Persian Gulf War still linger years after its conclusion. One is that the ground war was a relatively simple, high-tech campaign; another is that the air campaign essentially destroyed the Iraqi Army; and the third and most important is that the Iraqi Army did not fight, but simply surrendered at the approach of the Allied Coalition's forces. This paper argues that the Iraqi Army, and especially the Republican Guard, fought bravely but ineptly against the overwhelming combat power of a better trained and equipped US Army.

This article attempts to dispel a number of myths about the way the Iraqi Republican Guard fought during the Gulf War of 1991. The Republican Guard has been President Saddam Husayn's premier striking force and one of the pillars upon which the continuation of his regime has depended. It was formed in the 1970s as a small force to defend the capital and the president. At that time, only men from Saddam Husayn's hometown of Takrit were eligible for membership. During the 1980–88 Iran-Iraq War, the regime opened the Guard to college students from throughout Iraq. Most of these recruits, who had enjoyed college deferments, had never been part of the grueling defensive warfare on the Iranian front. Trained only in offensive warfare, their high motivation was

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obvious in the decisive victory over Iran on the Faw Peninsula. During the war the Iraqi High Command retrained, re-equipped and enlarged the Republican Guard so that by 1990 it had grown to three armored-mechanized divisions and five infantry divisions. The three armored mechanized divisions included the Tawakalna Division, which fought against the entire US 7th Corps as described in this article; the Medina Armored Division, which battled the 1st US Armored Division on the afternoon of 27 February 1991 west of the Al-Ruqta oil field; and the Hammurabi Armored Division, which fought against the 24th US Mechanized Division at Al-Tawr al-Hammar, on 2 March 1991, after the cease-fire.

BACKGROUND TO THE US-REPUBLICAN GUARD BATTLE

Allied Coalition air forces began the war against Iraq on 17 January 1991. Using every variety of aircraft, from the French Mirage to the US B52, they subjected Iraqi military and civilian targets to one of the most intense air operations since World War II. By 24 February, in spite of the damage that air power had inflicted on the Iraqi Army, Saddam Husayn had not ordered his army out of Kuwait. Air operations then took on a new character. In addition to continuing their raids deep into Iraq, Coalition pilots began to provide close air support to the Coalition's attacking ground troops. Using primarily A-10 Thunderbolt aircraft, these pilots joined with US Army attack helicopters and long-range field artillery in attacking Iraqi Army units beyond the range of front-line ground troops.¹

After six weeks of air bombardment, the ground war between the Iraqi and the Coalition forces began on 24 February 1991 with an attack by the Coalition forces across the Saudi Arabian border into Kuwait and Iraq. By 26 February, the front extended over 350 miles from the Euphrates River in the north, south to the Iraq-Saudi Arabian border and east to Kuwait City. During the ground offensive against Iraq, the Coalition was divided into two army-sized commands. In the east, in a sector that extended from the western Kuwait border to Kuwait City, was the Joint Forces Command (JFC) under HRH General Khalid bin-Sultan. This command consisted of three corps-sized commands: Joint Forces Command-North, US Marine Corps-Central Command, and Joint Forces Command-East. In addition, the JFC contained soldiers from Egypt, Syria, Saudi Arabia, and other Muslim forces from around the world. The army command in the western portion of the sector was the US 3rd Army under Lieutenant General John J. Yeosock. It consisted of two corps, the 7th and the 18th. The 7th Corps under Lieutenant General Frederick M. Franks, Jr. was composed of the 1st British Armored Division, the 1st US Armored Division, the 3rd Armored Division, the 1st Infantry Division, and the 2nd Armored Cavalry Regiment. During this phase of the ground offensive, the 1st Cavalry Division was the theater reserve force, working directly for General H. Norman Schwarzkopf, Central Command.

1. Williamson Murry, *Air War in the Persian Gulf* (Baltimore, MD: The Nautical & Aviation Publishing Company of America, 1995), pp. 281–303.

By the afternoon of 26 February, the Coalition forces had advanced across southern Kuwait and had stopped on the outskirts of Kuwait City. Meanwhile, farther west in the desert between Al-Salman and Al-Nasiriyya, the unopposed US 18th Corps was heading for the Euphrates Valley. In the center of the Coalition's sector, Franks' 7th US Corps had penetrated the weakly held defenses of the Iraqi 7th Corps and had turned from north to east in anticipation of a climatic battle with Iraq's Republican Guard Forces Command (RGFC).²

On the US 7th Corps' right flank, the British 1st Armored Division continued to maul the Iraqi 7th Corps.³ In the center, the 2nd US Armored Cavalry Regiment led the 3rd US Armored Division and 1st Infantry Division towards the Iraqi Republican Guard soldiers. On the 7th Corps' left flank, the 1st Armored Division captured the large Iraqi supply installation at Al-Busayya (that stored food, water, medicine, fuel, repair parts, clothing, etc.) and then turned east, almost on line with the 3rd US Armored Division.

The Tawakalna Mechanized Division of the RGFC was positioned about 25 miles west of the Kuwait border, located exactly in the center of the US 7th Corps' sector. The Tawakalna was probably the best division in the Iraqi Army. It had fought with distinction during the war with Iran and was one of the lead divisions in Saddam Husayn's invasion of Kuwait in August 1990.⁴ Its two mechanized brigades and one armored brigade were equipped with the most advanced equipment available in the Iraqi Army, including 220 T-72 tanks and 278 infantry fighting vehicles. On 25 February it had moved into a blocking position west of the Iraq Petroleum Saudi Arabia (IPSA) pipeline about 80 miles from Kuwait City. In spite of the air campaign, most of this division was in position and ready to fight when the US 7th Corps arrived on 26 February 1991.⁵

Neither the Iraqi nor the United States government has released the name of the Tawakalna division commander.⁶ Most likely he died commanding his forces in the futile effort to stop an overwhelming assault on his positions. Using US spot reports, situation reports, and analysis of destroyed Iraqi equipment, this article will attempt to examine the various phases of that battle, which consisted of several distinct, but integrated actions. Those included attacks on the security zone, the central zone, each of the Tawakalna's flanks, and against its rear area. The surprising shock of this massive attack from several

2. US Department of the Army, VII Corps Main Command Post (Plans), "OPLAN 1990-2, Operation Desert Saber," 13 January 1991.

3. US Department of the Army, VII Corps G2, "The 100 Hour War: The Failed Iraqi Plan," (version declassified 20 May 1994), pp. 106-108, 115-117. This is a limited history of the ground war rapidly compiled shortly after the end of the conflict. It is based on interrogations of Iraqi prisoners of war, captured documents and equipment, American logs and journals, and various intelligence collection information. Since much of this report is based on information obtained from non-Republican Guard soldiers, most insights about Iraqi performance center on the Iraqi regular Army.

4. Robert H. Scales, *Certain Victory* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office [GPO], 1993; reprint, Fort Leavenworth, KS: US Army Command and General Staff College Press, 1994), pp. 44-45.

5. US Department of the Army, VII Corps G2, "The 100 Hour War," pp. 117-121; and Thomas A. Keane and Eliot A. Cohen, *Gulf War Air Power Survey Summary Report* (Washington, DC: GPO, 1993), pp. 91, 106. Spot reports and after-the-war visits testify to the presence of more than 80 percent of the Tawakalna Division's equipment.

6. Searches of material in the VII Corps After-Action Report and Freedom of Information Act requests to the Central Intelligence Agency, Defense Intelligence Agency and 3rd United States Army all failed to produce this officer's name.

TABLE 1
Combat Power: US 7th Corps

	PERS	TANKS	APCS/IFVS	MORT	ARTY	MRL	MSL	ATK hel
VII (US) Corps	142661	1487	1384	300	568	132	8	242
1st Armored Division	17448	348	310	66	72	12		42
3rd Armored Division	17658	316	285	66	72	9	0	42
1st Infantry Division (M)	17496	334	224	66	72	9	0	24
2nd Armored Cavalry	5242	119	124	18	24	0	0	26
1st Cavalry Division	13550	214	187	42	48	9	0	48
1st (UK) Armoured	23000	156	254	42	60	12	0	18
VII Corps Artillery	3000				220	81	8	
11th Aviation Brigade	1000							36

Source: US Department of the Army, 3rd Army (ARCENT) "Morning Briefing Charts," 25 February 1991; and US Department of the Army, HQ VII Corps, "Versatile, Expansive, Deployable, Lethal," Briefing Charts [n.p., n.d.].

TABLE 2
Combat Power: Tawakalna Mechanized Division and 12th Armored Division

	PERS	TANKS	APCS/IFVS	MORT	ARTY	MRL	MSL	ATK hel
12 Armored Division	10000	245	356	30	108	0	0	0
37 Armored Brigade	2500	105	92	6				
46 Mechanized Brigade	3000	35	172	18				
50 Armored Brigade	2500	105	92	6				
Division Artillery	1800				108			
Tawakalna Mech Division	14000	220	284	42	126	18		
9 Armored Brigade	2700	132	39	6				
18 Mechanized Brigade	3000	44	117	18				
29 Mechanized Brigade	3000	44	117	18				
Division Artillery	2400				126	18		

Source: US Department of the Army, VII Corps G2, "The 100 Hour War: The Failed Iraqi Plan," (Version declassified 20 May 1994), Appendix L; and S2, 177th Armored Brigade, *The Iraqi Army: Organization and Structure* (Fort Irwin, National Training Center; Jan 1991), pp 11–31. All personnel figures are estimates only.

directions simultaneously ensured that the Tawakalna division had little opportunity to do anything but surrender or fight and die in place. They chose the latter course.

THE SECURITY ZONE BATTLE

The Tawakalna commander's first contact with the attacking force took place in his security zone, in front of his operations zone. The Iraqi defense sector was organized into three zones. The main defensive positions were located in the operations zone. Between the operations zone and the enemy was the security zone. This zone, which was about ten kilometers wide, was designed to provide early warning and to break-up and slow down enemy attacking formations. Behind the operations zone was a rear area, where the division's logistics elements operated. It was in this sector that the Republican Guard Commander had tried to deploy at least two brigades from the 12th Iraqi Armored Division on the night of 24 February 1991, to act as a covering force. However, neither of these two brigades got into position because they were mauled by the US 2nd Armored Cavalry Regiment and the 3rd Armored Division.⁷

Prior to the ground attack, the Iraqi intelligence system had correctly located the French 6th Light Division in the Western portion of the Coalition sector. Initial reports, which the Tawakalna commander received from various sources, indicated that the approaching force was from the French division.⁸ Since that report was received, however, the French division had moved another 75 kilometers west and was now securing the Coalition's left flank. To find out what was going on in that sector, the Tawakalna commander sent his reconnaissance battalion towards the approaching enemy.⁹ By the early morning of 26 February, the Tawakalna commander had received enough information, from his reconnaissance unit and from the Iraqi 12th Armored Division, to know that he was facing a large American force and not the much smaller French force. That night he moved a reinforced battalion into his security zone. Organized into company and platoon strong-points, these units were to break up the US attack, cause it to slow down, and inform the division commander on the nature of the enemy advance.¹⁰ These forces, however, were unable to stop the US attack. Throughout the day the 3rd Armored Division

7. See Table 1. US Department of the Army, Headquarters, 2nd Armored Cavalry Regiment, "2ACR Operations Summary 23 Feb-1 Mar 91," n.p., n.d.; and US Department of the Army, 3rd Armored Division Staff, "Chronology of 3rd Armored Division Operation Desert Spear," n.p., n.d. Both of these documents were compiled by the regimental and division staffs from brigade and division operations and intelligence duty logs. Also, US Department of the Army, VII Corps G2, "100 Hour War," pp. 98-99. Divisional duty logs also reflect many individual engagements with Iraqi units attempting to reach or prepare their security positions.

8. Scales, *Certain Victory*, p. 233.

9. US Department of the Army, Headquarters, 2d Armored Cavalry Regiment, "2ACR Operations Summary." A reconnaissance battalion consists of two companies of 18 reconnaissance vehicles, of various types each. In addition, there was a maintenance and service-support company. Total battalion strength was approximately 250 soldiers.

10. US Army, Battle Command Training Program, *Iraq: How They Fight*, 3rd ed. (Fort Leavenworth, KS: Battle Command Training Program, 1993), pp. 30-31; and S2, 177th Armored Brigade, *The Iraqi Army: Organization and Structure* (Fort Irwin, National Training Center: 1991), p. 96.

and the 2nd Armored Cavalry Regiment continued to destroy these forward outposts.¹¹ On the US side, the 3rd Armored Division had 316 tanks, 285 infantry fighting vehicles (Bradleys) and over 17,000 soldiers. The 2nd Armored Cavalry Regiment had approximately 124 infantry fighting vehicles and probably 119 tanks and over 5,000 soldiers. The Tawakalna and 12th Armored Divisions fought this powerful force with approximately 20 tanks and 40 infantry fighting vehicles. The total number of Iraqi soldiers involved in the engagement would have been around 2,000.

Behind his security zone, the Tawakalna commander deployed his three heavy brigades (the 18th, 29th and 9th) forward of the IPSA pipeline road that served as one of the main supply routes in the Kuwait theater of operations. On the left flank he positioned the 18th Mechanized Brigade. South of the 18th Mechanized Brigade, and in front of a major supply depot located on the IPSA Pipeline Road twenty kilometers north of the Saudi Arabian border, were the remnants of the Iraqi 37th Armored Brigade from the 12th Armored Division. The 9th Armored Brigade, reinforced by survivors of the 50th Armored Brigade, held the center of the Tawakalna line. The 50th Brigade had been mauled in the security zone, as had some of the 37th. The remainder of these two brigades were located on the Tawakalna's southern flank. The 29th Brigade defended the right flank of the division's sector. The 29th Brigade had no other units protecting its right flank. Without such protection, American forces were free to attack it from the north without fear of encountering Iraqi units prepared to conduct an effective defense.

LEFT FLANK: THE BATTLE OF 73 EASTING (SOUTH)

The main battle began on the Tawakalna's (18th Mechanized Brigade's sector) left flank. At 3:30 pm on 26 February 1991, the US 2nd Squadron of the 2nd Armored Cavalry Regiment¹² arrived at the edge of the Tawakalna's operation zone and destroyed three T-72 tanks. A few moments later it ran right into a battalion strong point of the 18th Iraqi Mechanized Brigade. Strong points consisted of dug in vehicle and soldier fighting positions, wire, mines and prepared fields of fire. In most cases the Iraqi units were in the right place, but had not developed their positions as well as they should have. In what was later known as the Battle of 73 Easting,¹³ the 2nd Squadron attacked. It was a short, but violent battle. Iraqi vehicles exploded as 120mm rounds found their marks. US scout

11. 2nd Armored Cavalry Regiment, "2ACR Operations Summary 23 Feb-1 Mar 91," and Steve Vogel, "A Swift Kick: The 2d ACR's Taming of the Guard," *Army Times*, 5 August 1991, p. 30.

12. The 2d Armored Cavalry Regiment consisted of three ground squadrons (1st, 2nd and 3rd), an aviation squadron (4th) and a support squadron. Each ground squadron had three cavalry troops, a tank company, a self-propelled howitzer battery, and a headquarters troop. Each troop had 12 M3 cavalry fighting vehicles and nine M1 main battle tanks.

13. On US military maps, the ground is divided into 10,000 meter grid squares numbered from west to east. "73 Easting" refers to the vertical line that indicates 7,300 meters east from the beginning of the 10,000 meter grid square. This term was used by American soldiers since there were no other important terrain features in the area. See Scales, *Certain Victory*, p. 261; Vince Crawley, "Ghost Troop's Battle at the 73 Easting," *Armor* 100 (May-June 1991), p. 8; and Michael D. Krause, "The Battle of 73 Easting, 26 February 1991: A Historical Introduction to a Simulation" (Washington, DC: Center of Military History, 1991).

platoons followed the M1 tanks providing “scratching fires”¹⁴ to protect the US tanks from the Iraqi infantry. Just as the 2nd Squadron arrived at the rear of the battalion strong point the Iraqis launched a counterattack. While brave, it was ineffective. In 23 minutes one troop from the US squadron destroyed over half of the Iraqi battalion.¹⁵

The 3rd Squadron moved just to the south of the 2nd Squadron and attacked the southern portion of the same Iraqi strong point at about 3:30 pm.¹⁶ At 4:45 pm, the Iraqis launched a counter-attack against the US 3rd Squadron with a T-72 tank company. At 2,500 meters, they fired at the Bradley cavalry fighting vehicles.¹⁷ The range was too great and their rounds struck the earth just short of their intended targets. They were unable to get many more rounds off as M1 tanks bounded forward and, at about 2,100 meters, destroyed most of the Iraqi T-72 tanks.¹⁸

The US attack must have surprised the Iraqi battalion. The Iraqi crews were out of their tanks and infantry fighting vehicles because of the danger of air attacks, although the division commander must have had an idea that he was about to be attacked by a large force because his forward security forces and, one would hope, the Iraqi High Command or RGFC headquarters would have given him warning. The word, however, did not find its way down to the front-line battalions and, especially, the individual tank and fighting vehicle crews, since no one ordered the Tawakalna battalion to prepare for immediate battle. At best, the Americans’ attack speed was faster than the Tawakalna Division’s orders process. At worst, no one on the Iraqi staff thought of telling the front-line units to prepare. The US attacked the first positions so violently that the Iraqis never had time to get back into their vehicles. The Iraqi battalion, also, did not prepare its positions very well: obstacles were obviously not complete, and it had emplaced only a few of its mines.¹⁹ Based on their experience in the Iran War, Iraqi defensive positions have lots of mines, barbed wire and other obstacles to stop the attacker. They dig in their vehicles deep into the ground, with just the turrets exposed so the guns can acquire targets. Unfortunately, the Tawakalna Division was only able to develop partially its defenses. The

14. “Scratching fires” is a term used by soldiers to describe a friendly vehicle’s machine gun fires aimed at a friendly tank. The purpose of these fires is to kill or disperse enemy infantry who have climbed on the back of the friendly vehicle. Machine gun rounds can not penetrate US tanks.

15. Krause, “The Battle of 73 Easting,” pp. 11, 25. A cavalry troop has approximately 120 soldiers, 12 Bradleys (Cavalry fighting vehicles, which are infantry fighting vehicles with more space for ammunition) and nine M1 tanks. The Iraqi battalion had 39 infantry fighting vehicles and eight anti-tank guided missile carriers. There was at least one company (ten) of T-72 tanks cross-attached from the brigade’s tank battalion. In addition, there were 10–15 other tanks, most likely from the 12th Armored Division, helping to defend the sector. Total Iraqi personnel were approximately 530.

16. Krause, “The Battle of 73 Easting,” p. 20. Iraqi doctrine prescribed the launching of a counter-attack to drive back an attacker. This tank company was positioned in the rear of the forward battalion sector especially for this purpose. History, and Iraqi experience in the Iran War, show that an attacker is most vulnerable to defeat immediately after he has arrived at the objective. It was, however, a poorly coordinated attack without indirect fire support.

17. Both the US infantry fighting vehicle and the cavalry fighting vehicle were named “Bradley” in honor of General Omar Bradley.

18. Krause, “The Battle of 73 Easting,” p. 20; and Vogel, “A Swift Kick: The 2nd ACR’s Taming of the Guard,” p. 30.

19. Krause, “The Battle of 73 Easting,” p. 3.

reasons may be lack of time, the effect of coalition jet aircraft flying overhead, and/or lack of materials (such as mines or wire).

Franks' orders to Colonel Don Holder, the 2nd Armored Cavalry Regiment commander, were to avoid a decisive engagement. Holder's troops had successfully destroyed one Iraqi battalion strong point, but there were still at least six or seven more battalions waiting for the US regiment, which did not have the combat power to break through the Tawakalna's defenses. Holder, therefore ordered his squadrons to hold at their current positions and prepare to pass the 1st Infantry Division, which had moved behind the 2nd Armored Cavalry Regiment.²⁰

The fight in the 2nd Armored Cavalry Regiment's sector, however, was not yet over. Around 6 pm on 26 February, the character of the battle changed as dismounted Iraqi infantry, T-55 tanks and MT-LBs²¹ began a series of attacks on the 2nd Squadron's positions along the 73 Easting. Iraqi infantry, believing that darkness and poor visibility would protect them, charged towards the US troopers firing their AK assault rifles and RPG anti-tank rockets. The US 2nd Squadron's defensive firepower, however, stopped the Iraqi attacks. US TOW anti-tank missiles destroyed several trucks loaded with Iraqi soldiers. M1 tanks demolished T-55 and T-72 tanks long before they got within their own firing range. The squadron's mortar sections began firing airbursts at the Iraqi infantry causing them either to retreat or dig in. In several hours of combat, the US squadron knocked out at least two companies of Iraqi tanks. Hundreds of Iraqi infantry and their lightly armored transporters lay scattered on the floor of a small wadi, or dry stream bed, nearby.²²

Shortly before 10:30 pm, it was suddenly quiet across the thirty kilometers in front of the Iraqi 18th Mechanized and 37th Armored Brigades. The 2nd US Armored Cavalry Regiment held its fire as the 1st Infantry Division began its forward passage of lines. Passage lanes are clearly marked routes that the moving unit uses to pass through the stationary unit. These routes may be marked by various means, including pyrotechnics, reflective or white tape, and even simple road signs. In most cases, the entry and exit of the lane is manned by members of both the moving and stationary unit to minimize confusion. Because the attack had stopped, the Tawakalna commander probably thought he had stopped the American advance on his left flank. Nothing, however could have been further from the truth. Just as the soldiers of the 2nd Squadron were defending against the Iraqi counter-attacks, the 1st Infantry Division began its final move towards the 73 Easting.²³ American scouts on the forward line fired green star clusters to mark the exact passage lanes. Then, past tired 2nd US Cavalry soldiers and burning Iraqi T-72 tanks, the 1st US Infantry Division resumed the attack.²⁴

20. Interview by author of Frederick M. Franks, Alexandria, VA, 8 September 1995.

21. Soviet-made, tracked, armored personnel carrier.

22. Crawley, "Ghost Troop's Battle at the 73 Easting," pp. 9–10.

23. US Department of the Army, HQ 1st Infantry Division (Mechanized), Tactical Command Post, "1st Infantry Division Tactical Command Post Journal," 26 February 1991, entries 24, 29, 30; and Colonel Lon E. Maggart, "A Leap of Faith," *Armor* 101, (January-February 1992), p. 24.

24. Major General Thomas G. Rhame, "Interview by COL Richard M. Swain," 26 July 1991, Swain Papers, Combined Arms Center Historical Archives, Fort Leavenworth, KS; Steve Vogel, "Hell Night: For the

Now, instead of three armored cavalry squadrons, the 18th and 37th Iraqi Armored Brigades faced six heavy battalions of American tanks and infantry fighting vehicles and another six battalions of 155mm field artillery.²⁵ The Iraqis, however, did not run. Instead, they manned their vehicles and weapons systems against the US forces. In the 1st US Brigade sector all of the battalions used a single passage lane. Each unit had its own area of operations to keep it from becoming confused with other units and to ensure that each unit achieved the command's common objective. Since these were only imaginary lines on the ground, units often strayed into adjacent sectors. The first battalion (1-34 Armor) that passed through the passage lane ran into a battalion from the Iraqi 18th Mechanized Brigade, and Iraqi gunners were able to indentify two American vehicles and destroy them, killing one soldier and wounding five others. The American commander pulled his scouts back and moved his tank companies forward. The second American battalion (Task Force 2-34 Armor) that passed through the passage lane became momentarily lost because it was dark and its tanks (in spite of rumors about super technology) did not have compasses or directional aids built into the vehicles. The third battalion (Task Force 5-16 Infantry) was not yet through the passage lane.²⁶

In the south, the 1st Infantry Division's 3rd Brigade moved through three separate passage lanes, where each battalion almost immediately made contact with the Iraqi defenders and both sides started shooting at each other. The primary fighting force in this sector was two battalions of the 37th Iraqi Armored Brigade, defending the left flank of the Tawakalna. The assault of the 3rd US Brigade also caught many Iraqi tank crews on the ground in their shelters, probably hiding from American air and artillery attacks. Because they had not turned on their engines and were not, therefore, generating heat, the tanks did not show up on the Americans' vehicle-mounted thermal sights.²⁷ In many instances, American vehicles simply drove past the Iraqi positions. For the next few hours, bypassed Iraqi RPG-equipped anti-tank teams and dismounted Iraqi infantry fired at passing American vehicles, only to be destroyed by other US tanks and fighting vehicles following the initial forces.²⁸

As Iraqi RPG teams and T-55 tanks maneuvered to shoot the Americans in their vulnerable rear, some M1 and Bradley turrets swung back to engage their attackers. Responding to apparent enemy fire, friendly crews returned fire. When the confusing mêlée was over, the 1st Division tanks discovered that they had destroyed five of their own

2nd Armored Division (FWD) It Was No Clean War," *Army Times*, 7 October 1991, p. 15; and Maggart, "A Leap of Faith," p. 27.

25. Ground battalions came from the 1st Brigade, 1st Infantry Division (Task Force 5-16 Infantry, Task Force 3-34 Armor, and 1-34 Armor) and the 3d Brigade, 1st Infantry Division (Task Force 1-41 Infantry, Task Force 3-66 Armor, and 2-66 Armor). Field Artillery Battalions came from the 1st Infantry Division Artillery (1-5 Field Artillery, 4-3 Field Artillery, and 4-5 Field Artillery), the 210th Field Artillery Brigade that had been supporting the 2d Armored Cavalry Regiment (3-17 Field Artillery and 6-41st Field Artillery) and the three artillery batteries belonging to the 2d Armored Cavalry Regiment.

26. Maggart, "A Leap of Faith," pp. 27-28; and U.S. News and World Report, *Triumph Without Victory* (Random House: Times Books, 1992), pp. 368-69.

27. Vogel, "Hell Night," p. 15. Thermal sights identify targets that generate heat. In general, they are superior to any other night vision device. However, if there is no heat source, they are worthless.

28. Scales, *Certain Victory*, p. 284.

M1 tanks and four Bradleys. Six brigade soldiers perished in these attacks and thirty others were wounded.²⁹ Rather than “press the attack” as those at Central Command (General Norman Schwarzkopf’s headquarters) were demanding,³⁰ the brigade commander, Colonel David Weisman, decided to pull the battalions back, consolidate, and use his artillery to destroy the aggressive Iraqi infantry.³¹

The Iraqis had stopped the 1st Infantry Division’s initial push into their sector; but not for long. By 12:30 am on 27 February, the two attacking brigades of the 1st Infantry Division were positioned along the 75 Easting, 2,000 meters east of 73 Easting.³² For the next three hours they methodically crossed the remaining ten kilometers of their objective, called Objective Norfolk. The area encompassed the intersection of the IPSA Pipeline Road and several desert trails, as well as a large Iraqi supply depot. As they slowly advanced, M1 tank commanders acquired the thermal images of the Iraqi tanks, or infantry fighting vehicles, long before they were themselves spotted by the Iraqis. Platoon leaders, team commanders, and even battalion commanders issued unit-wide fire commands, causing the entire command to fire at Iraqi targets simultaneously.³³ By dawn, the 1st US Infantry Division controlled Objective Norfolk. The combined attack of the 2nd Armored Cavalry Regiment’s three squadrons and the Big Red One’s two leading brigades had destroyed the two Iraqi brigades (18th Mechanized Brigade and 37th Armored Brigade) on the Tawakalna’s left flank. Simultaneously with the fighting in the southern portion of its sector, the Tawakalna Division was under assault in the center of its line.

THE CENTER OF THE LINE

Soon after the Tawakalna Division Commander’s 18th Mechanized Brigade was engaged, the US attack spread to the center of his line. The Iraqi defense in this sector consisted of three mechanized battalions from the Tawakalna 29th Mechanized Brigade, and three armored and one mechanized battalion from the 9th Armored Brigade. In addition, there was at least one battalion of the 46th Mechanized Brigade from the 12th Armored Division. There is also evidence that at least one T-62 tank battalion, most likely from the 10th Armored Division, was also assigned to the Tawakalna in this sector.³⁴

29. Vogel, “Hell Night,” p. 16.

30. US Department of the Army, VII Corps Main Command Post (G3-Operations), “G3-Operations Journal,” 26 February 1991, entry # 28; and Tom Donnelly, “The General’s War,” *Army Times*, 2 March 1992, p. 16. Apparently, General Schwarzkopf had little idea of the intensity of the unit fight in the 7th Corps sector. Norman Schwarzkopf, *It Doesn’t take a Hero* (New York: Bantam Books, 1992), p. 540.

31. Vogel, “Hell Night,” p. 18.

32. US Department of the Army, VII Corps Main Command Post (G3-Operations), “G3-Operations Journal,” 27 February 1991, entry # 3.

33. Scales, *Certain Victory*, p. 291; and Colonel Gregory Fontenot, “Fright Night: Task Force 2/34 Armor,” *Military Review* 73 (January 1993), p. 47.

34. Steve Vogel, “Tip of the Spear,” *Army Times*, 13 January 1991, pp. 13, 16; and US Department of the Army, VII Corps G2, “100 Hour War,” p. 128; and, US Department of the Army, 7th Engineer Brigade, “VII Corps Iraqi Material Denial Mission,” Report to VII Corps Commander, 21 April 1991; and Major General Paul Funk, Interview by Colonel Richard Swain, 4 April 1991, Swain Papers, Combined Arms Center Historical Archives, Fort Leavenworth, KS. The “VII Corps Iraqi Material Denial Mission,” is a detailed listing of most Iraqi equipment encountered and destroyed by 7th Corps’ engineers prior to their departure from southern Iraq.

Approximately nine Iraqi battalions, therefore, faced the attacking 3rd US Armored Division's ten heavy battalions. In a space of only 270 square kilometers, Iraqi defenders massed over 160 tanks, 117 BMPs, and hundreds of other combat vehicle, and fighting systems.³⁵ Thousands of infantry men dismounted from their combat carriers.³⁶ Once on the ground, they constructed their dug in company strong points³⁷ and prepared to use their Sappers and RPGs to engage the attacking Americans. Finally, there were approximately a dozen field artillery batteries arrayed along the rear of the Tawakalna's operations zone in this sector. The Iraqi defenses were very thick and Major General Paul Funk, the 3rd Armored Division commander, had no soft or exposed Iraqi flanks to exploit in his attack. He attacked with his 2nd Brigade in the north, his 1st Brigade in the south, and his 3rd Brigade in the rear trailing the 1st Brigade.

The 1st US Brigade of the 3rd Armored Division moved in the south of the 3rd Armored Division's sector on a relatively narrow zone.³⁸ At 5:02 pm, 26 February, it ran into a battalion of the 9th Iraqi Armored Brigade.³⁹ The lead American company team, from Task Force 3-5 Cavalry, established a base of fire as two other company teams moved on line. Not inclined to assault hastily the center of this complex, the entire 3-5 Cavalry moved into firing positions and began to locate and shoot at Iraqi targets. Long-range tank and TOW fires, high explosive and DPICM rounds, and even COPPER-HEAD rounds ravaged the Iraqi 9th Armored Brigade's battalion strong points.⁴⁰ The Iraqi soldiers, however, continued to fight, preventing this American battalion from advancing any farther for the next 12 hours.⁴¹

In the dark, around 7:20 pm, a scout platoon from the brigade's left-flank battalion Task Force 4-32 Armor, identified a T-72 tank covered with infantry heading towards them from the southeast. In a short and confused fight, the scouts destroyed the tank and scattered its passenger infantry. Soon, a platoon of Iraqi T-72s supported by dismounted

Along with intelligence reports from units in contact, this document is superb evidence as to the composition and disposition of Iraqi units in the 7th Corps' area of operations.

35. These fighting systems included anti-tank guns, anti-tank missiles, air defense guns, air defense missiles, field artillery batteries, rocket launchers, infantry squads, machine gun squads, reconnaissance squads, and lightly armed armored personnel carriers.

36. Each Iraqi brigade had a strength of between 2,500 and 3,000 soldiers. On the one hand, the Tawakalna had absorbed stragglers from the 12th Armored Division and other units. On the other, there had been personnel losses from a variety of sources. A good guess is that the area occupied by these two Iraqi brigades contained around 6,000 soldiers with over half being capable of fighting like infantry. Because we do not have access to Iraqi records, we do not yet know these personnel statistics with any precision.

37. Each battalion strong point was organized into smaller company strong points. Each of these battle positions was supposed to be prepared for all-around defense, with individual soldiers and their equipment dug in into defensive bunkers and trenches. In addition, they should have had these positions reinforced by barbed wire, mines and other obstacles.

38. K. Weber and J. Aiello, "History of the Ready First Combat Team: First Brigade, Third Armored Division, Nov 1990-22 March 1991," n.d., report prepared for Commander, 3rd Armored Division, p. 8. 1st Brigade consisted of Task Force 4-32 Armor, Task Force 4-34 Armor, and Task Force 3-5 Cavalry.

39. *Ibid.*, pp. 8-9.

40. TOW stands for tube-launched, optically tracked, wire command-link, guided missile. It is fired from an M2 or M3 Bradley fighting vehicle against tanks and other enemy vehicles. DPICM stands for dual-purpose, improved convention munitions. These are canisters containing hundreds of small bomblets that are used against soft targets such as trucks, trench lines and enemy personnel. COPPERHEAD was the name given to an artillery round that was guided by lasers against enemy tanks and bunkers.

41. Scales, *Certain Victory*, p. 273.

infantry joined the fight. By 9:00 pm, Task-Force 4–32 Armor’s fight in this sector came to an end. It had made little progress in its zone and had shot up one of its own Bradley scout vehicles, killing two soldiers and wounding two more.⁴² The Iraqi line continued to hold.

The US 4/7 Cavalry Squadron, a unit working for the division commander and acting independently from the 1st Brigade, screened the division’s southern flank. Around 6:00 pm it ran into an Iraqi tank unit. Like other Iraqi defenders, the Iraqi unit, most likely a tank unit, was hastily dug in and was waiting for a fight. The 4/7 Cavalry’s Bradleys, however, were out of their element in such an engagement against Iraqi tanks. After more than an hour of fighting and making no progress, the 4/7 Cavalry began to pull back from the position where the Iraqis were dug in. In the confusion of the withdrawal, a US tank from an approaching unit fired at one of the Cavalry’s Bradleys, killing the gunner. Another 4/7 Cavalry vehicle was engaged by the US 2nd Armored Cavalry in the south. In the middle of this confusion, Iraqi fire hit and damaged nine of 13 M3 Cavalry fighting vehicles in addition to the two hit by friendly fire. Two soldiers of the 4/7 Cavalry were killed and 12 were wounded in the battle. When given the opportunity, the Iraqi Army could inflict serious losses on the attacking American forces.⁴³

The Iraqi 9th Armored Brigade had stopped the advance of the US 1st Brigade of the 3rd Armored Division. In 12 hours and despite overwhelming fire power, this American brigade had moved forward only four kilometers. That minor tactical success, however, had little effect on the battle’s overall outcome. Before 9:00 pm, Major General Funk determined that his main effort was in the northern portion of his sector of operations, and prepared a deliberate attack to destroy the Iraqi units in the 2d Brigade’s zone of operations.

Funk’s main effort was in the northern portion of his sector where the 2nd Brigade attacked. Waiting less than ten kilometers behind the 2nd Brigade, was the 3rd Brigade. Its four battalions were eager to get into the fight at the first opportunity.⁴⁴ Until 5:20 pm the 2nd Brigade moved in a wedge formation—with Task Force 4–8 Cavalry in the lead, Task Force 4–18 Infantry on the left and TF 3–8 Cavalry on the right—slowly through the Iraqi 29th Mechanized Brigade’s security zone, constantly fighting isolated Iraqi vehicles.⁴⁵ Like its counterparts in the adjacent sector, this brigade of Iraqis prepared its

42. *Ibid.*, pp. 273–274; US Department of the Army, 3rd Armored Division Staff, “Chronology of 3rd Armored Division Operation Desert Spear, 24 -28 Feb 91” n.p., n.d.; Weber and Aiello, “History of the Ready First Combat Team,” pp. 8–9; and Vogel, “Tip of the Spear,” pp. 14–16.

43. All vehicles were either driven away or ultimately recovered. The US soldiers were evacuated by medical personnel or on marginally damaged vehicles. See U.S. News and World Report, *Triumph Without Victory*, pp. 351–56; and Vogel, “Tip of the Spear,” p. 13.

44. A close study of the 3rd Armored Division’s operational chronology reveals that the 3rd Brigade maintained itself very close to the 1st Brigade and was obviously alert to what was going on in the sectors of the lead two brigades, and, when the order was given, passed through with speed and vigor. The commander, Colonel Rob Goff (who subsequently received promotions to brigadier and major general), was an aggressive, hard-charging commander.

45. Scales, *Certain Victory*, pp. 276–79.

defenses according to doctrine. Bunkers, dug in vehicles, and pre-planned fires, backed by determined soldiers, made a formidable defense.⁴⁶

Funk now ordered his divisional artillery to pound the Iraqi positions with all the indirect fire he had available.⁴⁷ Almost five battalions of artillery fired at identified and suspected targets in a nine square kilometer box. Then Funk ordered the launching of the 2–27 Attack Helicopter Battalion across the forward line of US troops and into the depths of the Iraqi operations zone.⁴⁸ At 10:00 pm the 2nd brigade's three battalions and supporting artillery undertook a coordinated combined arms attack. For the next four hours disciplined 2d Brigade tank and Bradley crews moved through the 29th Mechanized Brigade's operations zone.

US tank companies bounded forward by platoons, using their thermal sights and stand-off range⁴⁹ to engage Iraqi vehicles on their own terms. Out-ranged and unable to locate the source of the accurate fire they were receiving, the Republican Guard soldiers returned fire without any noticeable effect. Attack helicopters and multiple rocket launchers destroyed Iraqi artillery almost as soon as they fired. As the brigade line moved forward, Iraqi infantry forces emerged from their hiding places and tried to engage US tanks and infantry fighting vehicles from close range. These Iraqi soldiers had little chance of success as a line of infantry fighting vehicles, moving just behind the tanks, killed them with machine-gun fire.⁵⁰

The Iraqi 29th Brigade commander continued to resist the American advance. He directed several counter-attacks by armored and mechanized platoons and companies. Many of those were effectively targeted against the 2nd Brigade's left flank, but concentrated tank, Bradley, and artillery fire stopped these attacks before they could interfere with the 2nd Brigade's progress. It was a confusing *mêlée*, with rounds flying in all directions.⁵¹ By 2:00 am, 27 February, the 2nd Brigade had fought through the 29th Iraqi Brigade's first defensive echelon.⁵² The situation was now right for Funk to order the 3rd Brigade forward. That morning it passed through the 2nd Brigade's front line and

46. US Department of the Army, 2nd Brigade, 3rd Armored Division Staff, "2nd Bde 3AD History: Operation Desert Shield," n.p., n.d.

47. Fires may be either direct or indirect. Tanks, infantry fighting vehicles, etc. all shoot direct fire, in other words, they can see the target. All field artillery systems shoot indirect fire long-distance and they cannot see the target.

48. Kevin Smith and Burton Wright, III, *United States Army Aviation During Operations Desert Shield & Desert Storm: Selected Readings* (Fort Rucker, AL: United States Army Aviation Center, 1993), pp. 55–67; and, Scales, *Certain Victory*, p. 276.

49. US tanks had a greater killing range, especially at night, than the Iraqi tanks. The difference between these two ranges is the "stand-off distance" which allowed the US tanks to destroy Iraqi armor with little fear of being destroyed by the Iraqi tanks.

50. Swain's interview with Funk; US Department of the Army, 3rd Armored Division Staff, "Chronology of 3rd Armored Division Operation Desert Spear, 24 -28 Feb 91," n.p., n.d.; US Department of the Army, 2nd Brigade, 3rd Armored Division Staff, "2nd Bde 3AD History: Operation Desert Shield," n.p., n.d.; and, Scales, *Certain Victory*, p. 280.

51. US Department of the Army, 3rd Armored Division Staff, "Chronology of 3rd Armored Division Operation Desert Spear, 24 -28 Feb 91," n.p., n.d.; US Department of the Army, 2nd Brigade, 3rd Armored Division Staff, "2nd Bde 3AD History: Operation Desert Shield," n.p., n.d.; and US Department of the Army, VII Corps G2, "100 Hour War," pp. 120–21.

52. This was a complex battle that took place over a very wide sector. The description of the battle first looks at the southern portion with the 2nd Armored Cavalry Regiment and the 1st Infantry Division, then at the

started the 3rd Armored Division's attack at the rear of the Tawakalna Division, and beyond.⁵³

The 3rd Armored Division's battle against the Tawakalna illustrates that good tactics are just as important as good technology. Had Funk chosen to attack the Iraqi defenses without evaluating the enemy, deciding on a main effort, massing his forces and using his tanks, infantry fighting vehicles, attack helicopters and field artillery as they were designed, the outcome might have been different. At the same time that American units were overwhelming the Tawakalna's left and center, another heavy division assaulted its exposed right flank.

RIGHT FLANK (NORTH)

While most of the Tawakalna Division commander's attention was focused to his division's front, its right flank was about to be attacked by a fourth American unit, the 1st Armored Division. Major General Ron Griffith's primary military target had been the Medina Division about thirty kilometers farther east,⁵⁴ but one battalion of the Tawakalna's 29th Mechanized Brigade occupied positions in Griffith's 1st Armored Division's zone of operations.⁵⁵ That Iraqi battalion lay directly in the path of Colonel Dan Zanini's 3rd Brigade (one of Griffith's three maneuver brigades).⁵⁶

Zanini synchronized the fight to maximize his fire power and minimize battlefield confusion. Artillery, Apache attack helicopters and mechanized infantry fired their weapons at the Iraqi defenders in order to prevent them from returning accurate fire as one of his tank battalions (Task Force 1-37 Armor) began moving in the dark towards the Iraqi defenses. This battalion's forty-five M1A1 tanks moved abreast towards the Iraqis at less than ten kilometers per hour. About 1,000 meters behind the tanks moved the battalion's infantry company mounted on its Bradleys, to help destroy any threat to their rear. As the tanks moved forward, the overwatching infantry battalion began firing illumination rounds from its mortar platoon. The brigade commander then turned the fight over to the battalion commander, Lieutenant Colonel Ed Dyer.⁵⁷

As was the case with the entire Tawakalna division, the Iraqi soldiers fought hard. Many Iraqi tanks kept their engines off in order to defeat the American thermal sights.

central portion with the 3rd Armored Division. With each division, two brigades fought simultaneously. Within each brigade, two to three battalions fought simultaneously.

53. Swain's interview with Funk; US Department of the Army, 3rd Armored Division Staff, "Chronology of 3rd Armored Division Operation Desert Spear, 24 -28 Feb 91," n.p., n.d.; US Department of the Army, VII Corps Main Command Post (G3-Operations), "G3-Operations Journal," 27 February 1991, entries no. 2 and 15; and Smith and Wright, eds., *United States Army Aviation*, pp. 55-67.

54. This was east of their location and was the location of the right flank of the 29th Iraqi Mechanized Brigade. US Department of the Army, VII Corps Main Command Post (G3-Operations), "VII Corps SITREP (Situation Report) #40, 26 Feb 91,;" and, Richard M. Bohannon, "Dragon's Roar: 1-37 Armor in the Battle of 73 Easting," *Armor* 101 (May-June, 1992), p. 11.

55. US Department of the Army, VII Corps G2, "100 Hour War," p. 120.

56. US Department of the Army, HQ, 1st Armored Division, G3 Operations, "The Fight," n.p., n.d. This summary was prepared shortly after the end of hostilities.

57. Bohannon, "Dragon's Roar: 1-37 Armor in the Battle of 73 Easting," pp. 12-13; Scales, *Certain Victory*, p. 268.

Those vehicles were often located because of the strange white spots, the tank commander's head, seemingly suspended in thin air.⁵⁸ The Iraqi tanks that were not hit were able to turn their turrets and attack the M1s in their flanks and rear. Iraqi infantry moved in three to five second rushes in order to get close to attacking vehicles. Burning vehicles and explosions "washed out" the thermal sights and made it difficult for US forces to locate Iraqi tanks. In that confusion, the 29th Iraqi Armored Brigade knocked out four M1 tanks, wounding six US soldiers.⁵⁹

The Iraqi brigade, however, never had a chance. It was attacked by Task Force (TF) 1/37 Armor, the tank battalion with the best gunnery skills in the entire US Army.⁶⁰ When TF 1/37 had completed its assault, the Iraqi unit was in shambles. Because of luck, training, and the effectiveness of the Abrams' enhanced armor, there were no American fatalities. In the sector swept by the 1st Brigade, two Iraqi tank companies and one mechanized infantry company (approximately 24 T-72 tanks and 14 BMP infantry fighting vehicles) had become burning hulks.⁶¹

THE DEEP BATTLE⁶²

At the same time the American ground forces were demolishing the front line of the Tawakalna, US attack helicopters, jet aircraft, and artillery were simultaneously attacking the Iraqi division throughout the depth of its defensive zone. The primary targets included artillery batteries, command posts and supply depots.

As soon as the 2nd Armored Cavalry Regiment made contact with the Tawakalna Division around 4:30 pm, 26 February, the battle began. Artillery from the Regiment's field artillery batteries and the 210 Field Artillery Brigade pounded the second line of Iraqi troops. Those missions destroyed troops and supply installations and interfered with the Tawakalna's command and control.⁶³ The 2/1 Attack Helicopter Battalion, working for the 2nd Armored Cavalry Regiment, struck at artillery and support areas to the rear of the

58. Because the optical sights and vision blocks inside a tank give a very limited field of view, during light combat, tank commanders usually keep the upper portion of their body outside of the tank searching for enemy targets. Once the battle is joined, they "drop down" inside their turret and "button up" their overhead hatch.

59. Bohannon, "Dragon's Roar: 1-37 Armor in the Battle of 73 Easting," pp. 14-16.

60. D Company, 1-37 Armor was the Army's selection for the upcoming Canadian Army Trophy Competition. This was a demanding, NATO-wide tank gunnery competition. It was also armed with the latest M1A2 Abrams tank, with increased armor and improved fire control systems.

61. Bohannon, "Dragon's Roar: 1-37 Armor in the Battle of 73 Easting," p. 17; and, US Department of the Army, VII Corps Tactical Command Post, "Tactical Command Post Operations Journal," 27 February 1991, entry no. 19.

62. American doctrine emphasized that battle should be fought not only on the front lines, but carried to the depths of the enemy positions. These operations, beyond the front line of troops, were conducted by long-range artillery fires, attack helicopters, Air Force close air support aircraft, and electronic communications jamming equipment. Targets for these weapons included command and control facilities, reserve forces, field artillery and air defense batteries, and logistics facilities.

63. John Hillen, "2nd Armored Cavalry: The Campaign to Liberate Kuwait," *Armor* 101 (July-August 1991), p. 11.

Iraqi lines. It destroyed at least two artillery batteries and dozens of vehicles and support installations along the IPSA Pipeline road.⁶⁴

This assault continued until the 1st US Infantry Division passed through the 2nd Armored Cavalry Regiment. The 1/1 Attack Helicopter Battalion then attacked the 18th Iraqi Mechanized and 9th Iraqi Armored Brigade's second line of troops at 9:00 pm, on 26 February.⁶⁵ The attack prevented the Iraqi artillery from interfering with the 1st Infantry's passage of lines. From the time the 2nd Armored Cavalry Regiment made contact, on the night of 26 February, until the following morning when the 1st Infantry Division cleared Objective Norfolk, the Iraqi soldiers of the 18th and 37th Brigades received no respite from constant ground, artillery, and air attack.

The situation was the same in the US 3rd Armored Division zone of operations. Its constant pounding of Iraqi combat and combat service support units made Iraqi counterattacks, resupply or reinforcement almost impossible. Those incessant attacks destroyed Iraqi artillery, broke up units assembling for counter-attacks, and thoroughly disrupted Iraqi command and control. When the 3rd Brigade passed through at dawn on 27 February, there were no more Iraqi strong points to slow the attack. The Iraqi commander had no way of countering the effects of these deep attacks. He had no choice but to stand and fight or surrender. Most of the soldiers in this proud division, like its commander, fought and died.⁶⁶

CONCLUSIONS

Soon after the 1st Armored Division's attack started at 8 pm on 26 February, the 3rd Armored Division launched an attack just to the south of the 1st Division. One hour later, the 1st Infantry Division passed through the 2nd Armored Cavalry Regiment and captured all of Objective Norfolk. Franks slammed into the Republican Guards with a "three division fist,"⁶⁷ and defeated the Tawakalna Division by massing six brigades and an armored cavalry regiment against it, and flanking it to the north and south with two more brigades. Attack helicopters and long range artillery systems attacked the Tawakalna behind the front line defenses throughout the battle.

The Tawakalna division commander, who probably perished in the battle, never had an opportunity to maneuver, use reserves, or even use his artillery with any effect. His spirited defense, however, confirmed Frank's concern that the Republican Guard did not

64. There were about nine attack helicopter battalions subordinate to the 7th Corps. Krause, *The Battle of 73 Easting*, p. 3.

65. US Department of the Army, HQ 1st Infantry Division, "1st Infantry Division Commander's Report," daily report to Commander, VII Corps, 26 February 1991; and US Department of the Army, HQ 1st Infantry Division (Mechanized), Tactical Command Post, "1st Infantry Division Tactical Command Post Journal," 26 February 1991, entry no. 53.

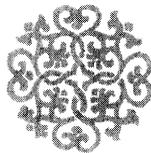
66. US Department of the Army, 3rd Armored Division Staff, "Chronology of 3rd Armored Division Operation Desert Spear, 24 -28 Feb 91," n.p., n.d.; US Department of the Army, 2nd Brigade, 3rd Armored Division Staff, "2nd Bde 3AD History: Operation Desert Shield," n.p., n.d.; and US Department of the Army, VII Corps G2, "100 Hour War," pp. 120-21.

67. Interview by Peter Kindsvatner with Frederick M. Franks, 11 April 1991, Office of the TRADOC Historian, Fort Monroe, VA.

center the battle already defeated. They did not run away, and fought with extreme bravery. American battle reports cite the bravery of the determined Tawakalna defenders. This division had good equipment. Unfortunately, they did not know how to use it fully. For example, they did not know how to employ their equipment to ensure that they had local security, allowing the 2nd Armored Cavalry Regiment to gain contact with them without discovery. The Tawakalna division was unable, regularly, to hit the targets at which they aimed with their tanks and anti-tank guided missiles. Seldom did the Tawakalna division effectively use their artillery or air defense artillery.⁶⁸

More important than problems in using equipment, the Tawakalna division was simply overwhelmed. It was the application of the US Army's Airland Battle doctrine,⁶⁹ executed by well-trained, equipped and motivated soldiers, that defeated the Iraqi forces. By dawn on 27 February 1991, the Tawakalna Mechanized Infantry Division had ceased to exist.

With the destruction of the Tawakalna Division, Franks was able to focus the combat power of the 7th Corps towards the other heavy divisions of the Republican Guard Forces Command. Although part of the Medina Division would stand and fight against the 1st US Armored Division, the Iraqi high command ordered the Hammurabi Division to start moving north, across the Euphrates River and away from the American attack in the west. The Tawakalna Division's defense gave the remainder of the Iraqi Army in Kuwait the time it needed to evacuate most of its mechanized forces to Basra.



68. There are no comments in any of the divisional duty logs or chronologies that indicate the presence of effective Tawakalna artillery fire. There are, also, no references to US attack helicopters or Air Force close air support aircraft being destroyed by the Tawakalna's air defense weapons.

69. The method used by the US Army to plan and fight the 1991 Persian Gulf War was based on US Department of the Army, *Operations, Field Manual 100-5* (Washington, DC: Department of the Army, 1986). It is a comprehensive method of warfare, based on military history, that integrated and synchronized all elements of the Army to achieve the nation's strategic objectives.