



Joint
Advanced
Warfighting
Program

INSTITUTE FOR DEFENSE ANALYSES

**Seizing the Peninsula, a Vignette from
The Battle for Fallujah
An Education and Training Resource Guide**

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January 2011

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IDA Document D-4286

Log: H 11-000519



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About this Publication

This work was conducted by the Institute for Defense Analyses (IDA) under contract DASW01-04-C-0003, Task CB-8-2516 and Aj-8-2465, "The Battle of Fallujah - Success in the Urban Battlefield," for the Director, Joint Center for Operational Analysis, Joint Forces Command. The views, opinions, and findings should not be construed as representing the official position of either the Department of Defense or the sponsoring organization.

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Preface

The authors would like to thank members of the review committees that provided their expertise throughout the life of the project: Brigadier General John Smith, USA, Retired, Colonel Scott Feil, US Army, Retired; Mr. Karl Lowe; Mr. Stan Horowitz; Dr. John Fletcher; Dr. Robert Richbourg; Mr. Fred Hartman; and Mr. James Kurtz.

Special thanks to the Multi-National Force–Iraq, Multi-National Corps–Iraq, the 5th Special Forces Group, the Multi-National Force–West commands and staffs and all the military and civilians, Coalition and Iraqi, that provided resources and took time out of their busy schedules. In particular thanks to the 5th Special Forces Group, Combat Camera, and 3rd Light Armored Reconnaissance Battalion who provided the majority of video and photographs for this project.

The project could not have been completed without the support of Lieutenant Colonel Bob Kelley, USA, Retired, and the Special Forces Operational Detachment team leaders and members. Additional thanks to Colonel Rick Wright, USA, Retired; Colonel Thomas Greenwood, USMC, Retired; Mr. Tom Milani; Ms. Helen Robertson; and Mr. Chas Henry. They will see their contributions embedded throughout this work.

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Executive Summary

The town of Fallujah—40 miles west of Baghdad—has challenged authority throughout its history, revolting against the Ottomans during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, against the British Mandate in 1920, and even threatening Saddam Hussein himself.

The Coalition's experiences in Fallujah were no better. On 31 March 2004, four US contractors were ambushed in Fallujah. Charred remains of the brutally beaten bodies were hung from the ramparts of the old North Bridge. During a savage demonstration, Fallujans cheered.¹

Marines in Al Anbar province were ordered, via Operation VIGILANT RESOLVE, to assault the city and find the perpetrators. During the next month, mounting Iraqi national, regional, and international pressures would force the Coalition to stop the assault and withdraw from Fallujah.

By mid-2004, Fallujah was a haven for insurgents, used to manufacture improvised explosive devices, hide caches, and generate the spiritual force that inspired the insurgency nationwide. Fallujah also became the in-country nucleus for insurgent information operations.

Operation AL FAJR—the second Battle for Fallujah in November 2004—was a hard-fought, Coalition-led combat assault to clear the city of insurgents and restore Fallujah to its rightful residents. The central narrative of the assault is told in the heroics of Marines, Soldiers, Sailors, and Airmen committed to supporting each other and completing the mission. However, there is a lesser-known, but compelling, story of how the Coalition developed and worked with the Iraqis to apply lessons from the strategic to the tactical levels as they set the conditions for and executed AL FAJR.

Together, this publication and accompanying DVD, provide a tactical vignette that links to operational and strategic themes in the areas of strategic communications, information operations, political-military dynamics, and partnership development. Those themes are just as important at the tactical level as they are at the strategic level. The purpose of this Education and Training Resource is to provide trainers and educators with a source for engaging stu-

¹ Colin Freeman, "Horror at Fallujah," *San Francisco Chronicle*, 31 April 2004.

dents in discussing those themes. The tactical vignette that best illustrates that effort is from Phase II of the battle, Enhanced Shaping, and focuses on the seizure of the peninsula and hospital west of the city.²

² The storyline itself was published as “Appendix F: Battle Reconstruction,” to IDA Paper P-4455, *The Battle for Fallujah*, by Dr. William Knarr and Major Robert Castro, September 2009 and approved for public release; distribution unlimited. This document differs from that paper in that it provides that storyline in a multi-media DVD and, within this document, a way for centers, schools, and other organizations to integrate this publication and the DVD into their programs.

1 Introduction

Fallujah—a Sunni town of about 259,000 people—lies 40 miles west of Baghdad. A major stop along the smuggling route from Syria and Jordan to the Iraqi capital, Fallujah has challenged authority throughout its history, revolting against the Ottomans during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, against the British Mandate in 1920, and even threatening Saddam Hussein himself. Fallujah has long been known as a renegade city. Untamable.

The Coalition’s experiences in Fallujah were no better. On 31 March 2004, four US contractors were ambushed in Fallujah. Charred remains of the brutally beaten bodies were hung from the ramparts of the old North Bridge. During a savage demonstration, Fallujans cheered, and someone held a sign underneath one of the bodies that read *Fallujah is the cemetery for Americans*.³

Although the Marines in Al Anbar province cautioned against hasty action that could play into the insurgents’ hands, they were ordered, via Operation VIGILANT RESOLVE, to assault the city and find the perpetrators. During the next month mounting Iraqi national, regional, and international pressures would force the Coalition to stop the assault and withdraw from Fallujah. They would cede control of Fallujah to the Fallujah Brigade—an *ad hoc* organization consisting of Saddam-era Iraqi military leaders, Fallujah residents, *Jundi*,⁴ and insurgents—was lauded by the Iraqis as “Fallujans securing Fallujah.”

By mid-2004, Fallujah was a haven for insurgents, used as a sanctuary to manufacture improvised explosive devices (IEDs), hide caches, and generate the spiritual force that inspired the insurgency nationwide. Fallujah also became the in-country nucleus for insurgent information operations (IO). Studio-quality media and propaganda were created and distributed via networks to regional, national, and international audiences.⁵ *Fallujah* conjured visions of violent extremists, torture chambers, and beheadings.

³ Colin Freeman, “Horror at Fallujah,” *San Francisco Chronicle*, 31 April 2004.

⁴ Arabic word for Iraqi soldiers.

⁵ MajGen Richard Natonski, Commander, 1st Marine Division (1st MARDIV) interview with the authors, Camp Pendleton, California, 9 Dec 2005.

Operation AL FAJR—the second Battle for Fallujah in November 2004—was a hard-fought, Coalition-led combat assault to clear the city of insurgents and restore Fallujah to its rightful residents. The central narrative of the assault is told in the heroics of Marines, Soldiers, Sailors, and Airmen committed to completing the mission and supporting each other. However, there are a number of lesser-known, but compelling, vignettes of how the Coalition worked with the Iraqis to apply lessons from the strategic to the tactical levels as they set the conditions for and executed AL FAJR.

This Education and Training Resource—publication and DVD—presents one of those vignettes. It occurred on 7 November 2004, D-Day, during Phase II of the battle, Enhanced Shaping, and focuses on the seizure of the peninsula and hospital west of Fallujah. It links the tactical to operational and strategic themes in the areas of strategic communications, IO, political-military dynamics and partnership development and emphasizes that those themes are just as important at the tactical level as they are at the strategic level.

Project Background

The US Joint Forces Command, Joint Center for Operational Analysis (JCOA) and the Joint Advanced Warfighting Program⁶ (JAWP) sponsored the study of the Battle for Fallujah. The study explored the operational and strategic lessons from Operation AL FAJR with emphasis on how the Coalition developed and worked with the Iraqis and applied lessons from the first battle for Fallujah as it set conditions for AL FAJR, and the impact Operation AL FAJR had on the Iraqis and their January 2005 elections. That study, completed in September 2009, drew upon more than 100 interviews, to include GEN George W. Casey, Commander, Multi-National Force–Iraq (MNF-I); the former Iraqi Prime Minister, Dr. Ayad Allawi; members of the MNF-I, Multi-National Coalition–Iraq (MNC-I), Multi-National Force–West (MNF-W), and Iraqi Security Forces (ISF); and Fallujah residents. The study highlighted a number of areas:

- The importance of relationships, team-building and partner development,
- Political-military dynamics and how success requires that each support the other, and
- The difficulty and importance of properly focused strategic communications and information operations.

⁶ The JAWP is governed by a Board of Directors that approves JAWP tasks. The Board includes representatives from the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition, Technology, and Logistics; the Under Secretary of Defense for Policy; the Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; and the Commander US JFCOM.

A Tactical Event with Operational and Strategic Implications

Although the Coalition led the planning and execution of AL FAJR and bore the brunt of combat operations, the fledgling Iraqi Government and ISF contributed where Coalition Forces were less capable, and—for certain actions, some would contend—incapable. Examples include setting the political conditions regionally and nationally for Operation AL FAJR, finding caches, identifying and exploiting foreign fighters, and searching sensitive areas like mosques. At the heart of each of those examples is cultural nuance—not only within Iraq, but regionally and internationally.

Additionally, the orchestration of ISF tactical operations yielded strategic successes when Coalition Forces may have won a more efficient tactical victory but without the strategic benefit. The 36th Commandos' seizure of the Fallujah Hospital on 7 November 2004, as the opening action of AL FAJR, was such an operation—a tactical event with strategic implications. Although there were a number of candidate vignettes, the seizure of the Fallujah Hospital was selected for reconstruction for the following reasons:

1. The Fallujah hospital was both a high value and a high payoff target.⁷ It was a significant insurgent information operations node during Operation VIGILANT RESOLVE in April 2004. The purpose of seizing it during AL FAJR was to deny the enemy the opportunity to use it again for IO purposes.
2. It signaled the beginning of Operation AL FAJR. The 36th Commandos, supported by 5th Special Forces Group (SFG) advisors, provided an IO opportunity to showcase an Iraqi capability.⁸ This worked better than had been hoped. The seizure was first aired by Al Jazeera—a news service unfriendly to the Coalition and Iraqi Government—making it even more credible, certainly more credible than if aired by Western-based news services only.
3. It was a joint and combined operation. Led by the Marine 3rd Light Armored Reconnaissance (LAR) Battalion, Task Force Wolfpack included a Marine LAR and straight-leg infantry company, Marine psychological operations (PSYOP) and civil

⁷ For targeteers, it's appropriate to say High Value Target (HVT) or High Payoff Target (HPT). An HVT is a target the enemy commander requires to successfully complete his mission. An HPT is a target whose loss to the enemy will significantly contribute to the success of the friendly course of action. Joint Publication 1-02.

⁸ This puts a different twist on article 15 of T.E. Lawrence's "Twenty-seven Articles," *Arab Bulletin*, 20 Aug 1917: "Do not try to do too much with your own hands. Better the Arabs do it tolerably well than that you do it perfectly. It is their war and you are to help them, not to win it for them." He was probably emphasizing developing the Iraqis as a capability; today we have also to consider the Iraqi "face" and the IO implications.

affairs teams, a Bradley unit from the 2nd Brigade Combat Team of the Army's 2nd Division (2BCT/2ID), an Army Sapper detachment including Armored Combat Earthmovers (ACE) from the 44th Combat Engineers, as well as the Iraqi 36th Commandos and elements of the Army's 5th SFG. Additionally, it included close air support from the US Navy and the Marines.

4. This vignette best exemplified the importance of relationships, team-building, and partner development; political-military dynamics and how each supports each other; and the difficulty and importance of strategic communications and IO.

AL FAJR's success did not just happen. It took concentrated effort at all levels to understand and apply the lessons from VIGILANT RESOLVE. That effort is reflected in the development, train-up, planning and execution of the hospital and peninsula seizure.

Reconstruction

The Institute for Defense Analyses is known for reconstructing events in simulation for historical analysis, leadership development, and experimentation. Examples include “‘73 Easting”⁹ from the first Gulf War and “Mazar-e Sharif: The First Victory of the 21st Century” from Operation ENDURING FREEDOM.¹⁰ Although its scope is far narrower than those, one of the goals for the Battle for Fallujah project was to reconstruct a significant tactical event with strategic implications using multimedia—including gaming technologies—in lieu of simulation as an element of the overall reconstruction.

Many people think of a reconstruction as an application to portray tactical events. However, if done right, critical tactical events can be woven together to reflect their operational and strategic implications. One example is using the 36th Commandos, an Iraqi capability, to seize the Fallujah Hospital as the first engagement of AL FAJR, an engagement publicized nationally in both Iraq and the United States, and internationally.

The purpose of the reconstruction was to give leaders, teachers, and trainers¹¹ a training and education resource that presents select events, themes and lessons in a way that is relevant to a wide audience, accommodates different teaching and learning styles, minimizes student and

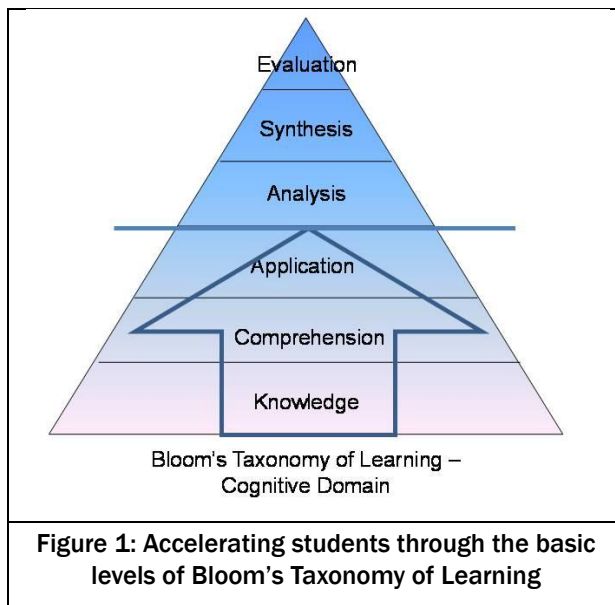
⁹ Jesse Orlansky and Jack Thorpe, eds., *73 Easting: Lessons Learned from Desert Storm Via Advanced Distributed Simulation Technology* IDA Document D-1110 ((Alexandria, VA: Institute for Defense Analyses, April 1992).

¹⁰ William Knarr and Robert Richbourg, *Learning from the First Victory of the 21st Century: Mazar-e Sharif (Revised), An Educational/Training Resource Guide* IDA Document D-4015 (Alexandria, VA: Institute for Defense Analyses, January 2010).

¹¹ They may be the same person—*teacher* will be used for all users such as educators, trainers, leaders, facilitators.

teacher preparation times, maximizes participation, and efficiently sets the conditions for engaging critical thinking skills. The result accomplishes that in several ways:

1. Based on a compelling story line, it links tactical events to operational and strategic themes, so it is as relevant to non-commissioned officers as it is junior and flag officers.
2. The multimedia approach uses different presentation methods and provides different perspectives to accommodate different learning and teaching styles.¹²
3. It minimizes teacher/student prep time by providing all necessary material organized so that all student work is done in class; so that the teacher, or designee, is the facilitator and discussion points are identified and easily accessible on the DVD—there are no collateral or complementary study materials unless directed by the teacher.
4. Designed for seminar discussion, it capitalizes on small-group learning dynamics that encourage collaboration and participation.
5. As a result of items 2–4 in this list, it accelerates students as a team, through the *Knowledge*, *Comprehension* and *Application* levels of Bloom's Taxonomy,¹³ (Figure 1) and therefore sets the conditions for analysis, synthesis and evaluation, i.e., engaging critical thinking skills.¹⁴



Commentary on items 1, 3 and 5 in the above list follows.

¹² R.E. Mayer, ed., *The Cambridge Handbook of Multimedia Learning* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

¹³ Richard C. Overbaugh and Lynn Schultz, *Bloom's Taxonomy* (Old Dominion University) <www.odu.edu/educ/roverbau/Bloom/blooms_taxonomy.htm> accessed 23 April 2011.

¹⁴ "Critical thinking is the intellectually disciplined process of actively and skillfully conceptualizing, applying, analyzing, synthesizing, and/or evaluating information gathered from, or generated by, observation, experience, reflection, reasoning, or communication, as a guide to belief and action" [shortened from the original]. Michael Scriven and Richard Paul "Critical Thinking as defined by the National Council for Excellence in Critical Thinking," 8th Annual International Conference on Critical Thinking and Education Reform, Summer 1987, found <www.criticalthinking.org/aboutct/define_critical_thinking.cfm>.

Levels of War

The interrelationship among the levels of war is more apparent in this type of conflict¹⁵ than in a conventional conflict. Although initially reflected as discrete elements (left side of Figure 2), relevant to different military organizational levels, the lines blur as the war becomes less conventional and actions at the tactical level take on strategic implications.

Figure 2 depicts the evolution of discrete (left side) to interrelated levels (center) and provides examples (right) of areas—political, cultural, alliances, IO—that can be traced from the strategic to the tactical. For example, IO had political and cultural implications and conversely, political and cultural sensitivities helped form IO strategies. Another example, according to GEN Casey, was when Allawi’s emergency decree—a political action—made positive identification of insurgents much easier, thereby affecting rules of engagement (ROE) at the tactical level. As such, it is as relevant to NCOs as it is to flag officers.

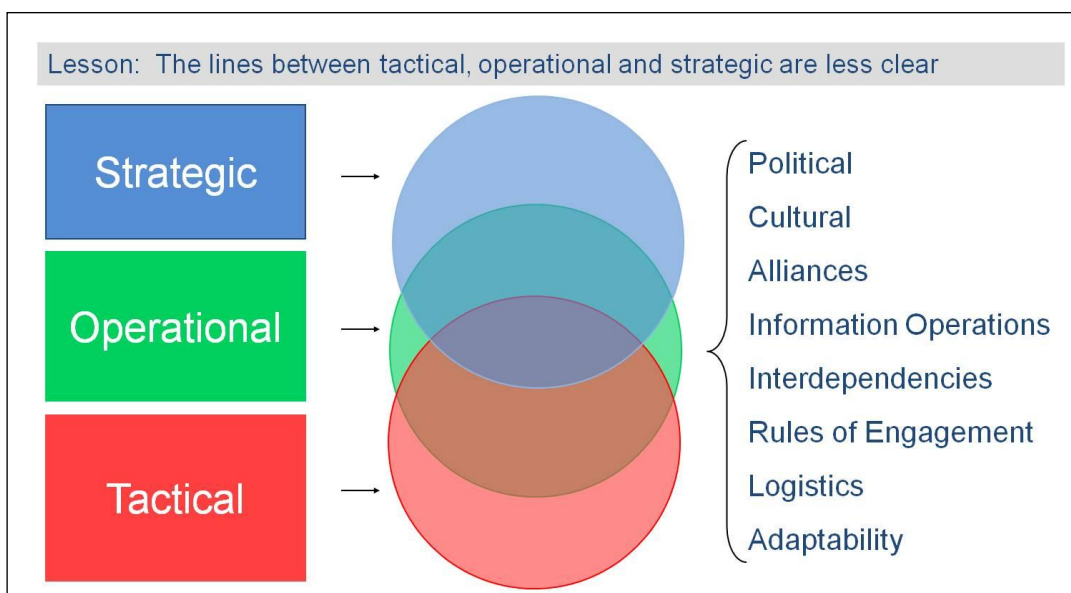


Figure 2: Levels of War—The Blurring of Lines

Learning Efficiencies

Recall college seminars, Command and Staff College, War Colleges or comparable levels of education. A common denominator was the amount of reading assigned at night—a lot! After a while, one month, two months, some people read the assignments, some did not, and during the period of instruction, you could tell who they were.

¹⁵ Counterinsurgency

This resource does not depend on students reading the material the night before the period of instruction. It is provided *during* the period of instruction. The vignette is shown, or after each segment, as selected by the teacher, the seminar as a whole discusses the implications.

Although this resource does not necessarily eliminate prep time, it does reduce it by providing all the necessary material and suggested, readily accessible discussion points to stimulate discussion/collaboration. Having said that, it also has growth potential by accommodating teacher/student leads and input for additional themes and discussion points and by allowing the students to use the guide on their own to explore lines of inquiry not pursued in the class.

Since all, or at least most, of the work is envisioned to be conducted in class, the students start the period at the same level and are provided the material during the period. In a small group setting, the teacher can involve each student in the discussions and can coach them through the various levels of learning—knowledge, comprehension, and application, and even further, analysis and synthesis.¹⁶

How to Use this Guide

This publication suggests an approach to centers, schools or organizations for integrating the DVD material into their programs. The storyline—both Background and Vignette—can be used to convey a number of themes but it focuses on Strategic Communications/Information Operations as one example. It also can be used as a separate seminar to focus on a single topic as reflected in this Guide, or parts of it can be used to supplement other courses and material. It does that through its structure, by segmenting the storyline and using discussion points, both of which are described later.

Document Structure

This introduction provides the conceptual framework for this Education and Training Resource Guide. The next chapter describes the DVD structure, and the third chapter provides the practical applications of the material and suggests how a teacher might use the material. Appendix A presents a chronology of events during 2004 for context. The multimedia DVD is located in the envelope at the inside of the back cover.

¹⁶ This is not stand-alone material, it still requires some type of facilitation to lead the small-group discussions.

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2 Product Description: DVD

The purpose of this chapter is to describe the structure and contents of the DVD. The site map in Figure 3 best illustrates the structure.



Figure 3: DVD Site Map

The DVD is organized into five sections: Background, Organizations & People, the Vignette—Seizing the Peninsula, the Site Map, and the Reference Library. Those sections can be accessed from the top banner or by clicking on the relevant box located on the second level of the line and block chart. All of the dark green boxes link to their relevant sites. Each is discussed below.

Background

This section addresses events of 2004, from the chaos early in the year through the summer transition to the setting of conditions in the fall for Operation AL FAJR and the elections.

The section runs 16:52 minutes and contains 14 segments (see Figure 4). Each segment runs anywhere from 45 seconds to 1:45 minutes. The importance of segmenting the storyline is addressed later as we suggest an approach to using this material to facilitate small group discussion. The following is an overview of the Background section—summarizing each segment and presenting select screen captures.

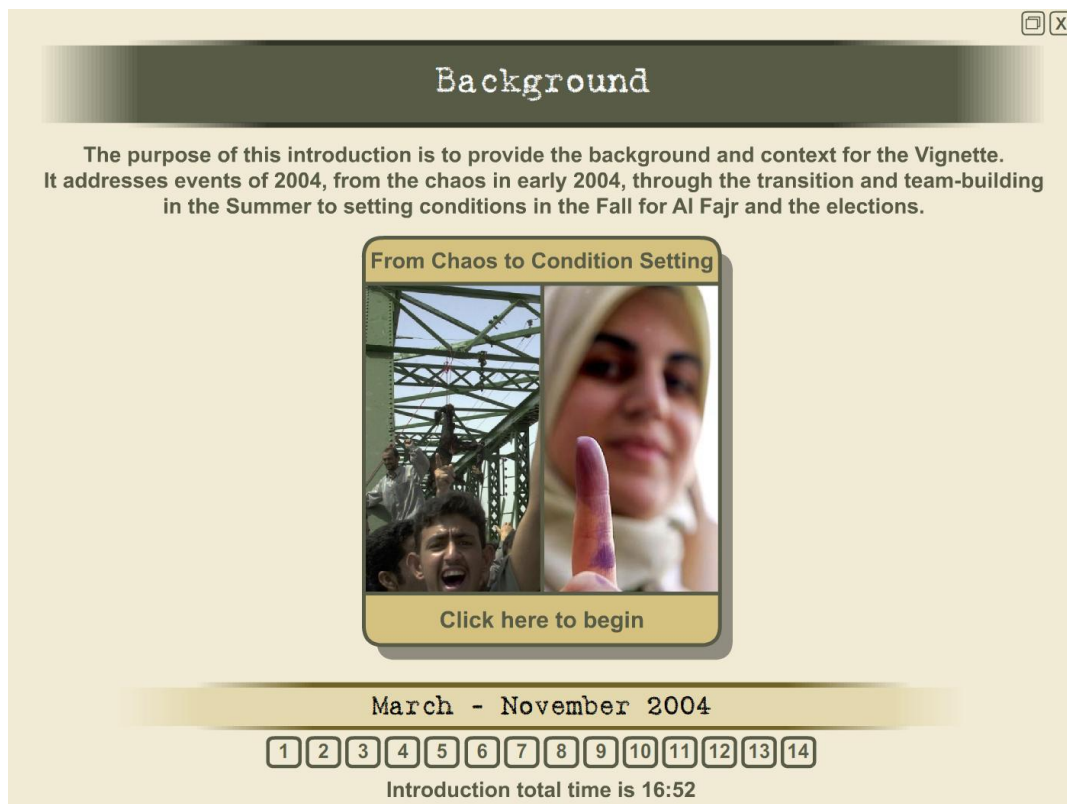


Figure 4: Background

Segments 1–5: Chaos

Segments 1–5 address the chaos from March to May 2004 in Iraq in general and Fallujah in particular. Segment 1 begins with the Blackwater incident in March 2004. The insurgents struck at a very critical time—during the Transfer of Authority (TOA) between the 82nd Airborne Division and the I Marine Expeditionary Force (I-MEF).

To make matters worse, Fallujah wasn't the only fight at the time. Segment 2 addresses the Mahdi Militia and Shia reaction to actions taken by the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) actions against Muqtada al-Sadr: Al-Sadr's Mahdi Militia revolted in Sadr City, Karbala, Najaf, and Al Kut, while elements of the Iraqi Civil Defense Corps (ICDC), primarily Shi'a, refused to support the Coalition and fight the Militia.¹⁷ During April 2004, 30 percent of the ICDC *Jundi*—about 10,000 of the 33,000—didn't show up for work. Some switched their allegiance to the insurgency or the Militia.

In Segment 3 (see Figure 5), Lieutenant Colonel Joe L'Etoile, G3, 1st Marine Division describes the operational and strategic implications of events during that period.

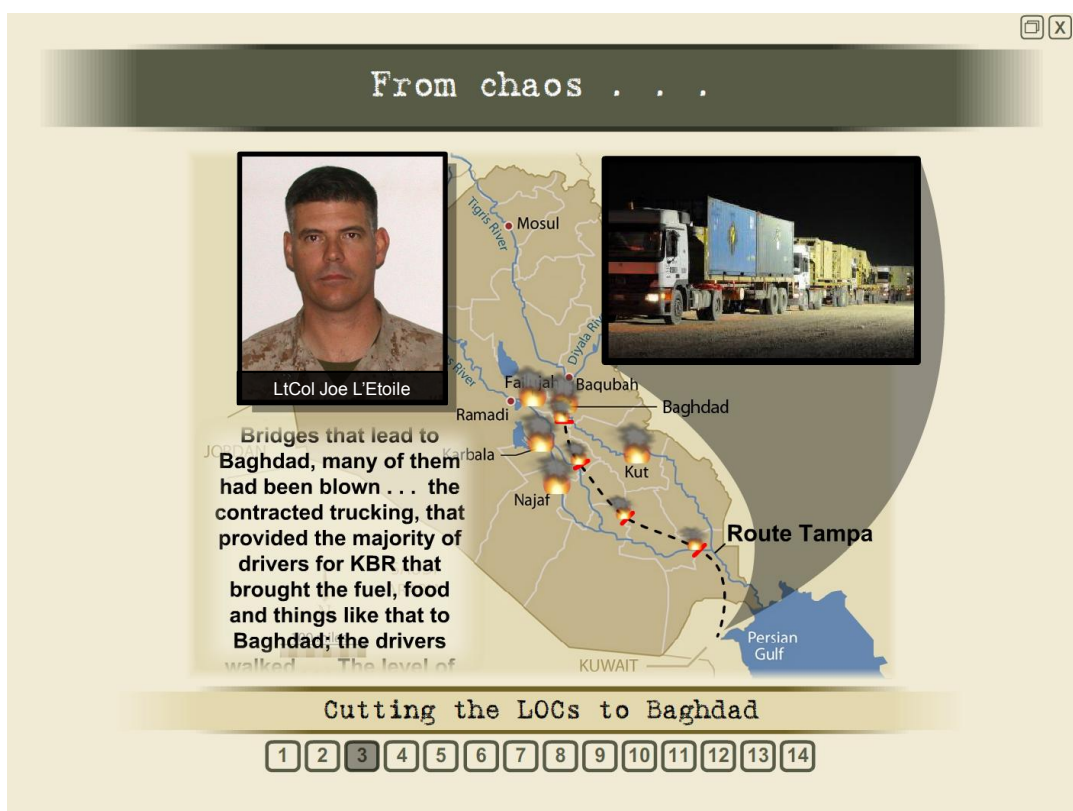


Figure 5: Segment 3—Cutting the Lines of Communications to Baghdad

¹⁷ All of these actions were legitimate, but the timing was not opportune. Actions included 1) 28 March, the CPA shut down Muqtada al-Sadr's newspaper, *Al Hamza*, for "inciting violence"; 2) 2 April, the Coalition arrested a key al-Sadr lieutenant, Mustafa al-Yacoubi, for the murder of Ayatollah Abdul Majid al-Khoei in June 2003 in Najaf; 3) 5 April, the CPA issued an arrest warrant for Muqtada al-Sadr for the murder of Ayatollah Abdul Majid al-Khoei in June 2003.

Coupled with force rotations, revelations at Abu Ghraib, Spain's withdrawal from the Coalition, and dysfunctional relations among the Coalition organizations and Iraqi Governing Council (Segments 4 and 5), a dismal picture is painted and reflected in Prime Minister Allawi's comment on the state of affairs:¹⁸

As we went to June, everything was boiling throughout the country...the reason was a lack of vision and a lack of real consultation with the Governing Council and Security Committee. I think half-hearted and half-cooked measures were taken on the operations. On the political front, the landscape was confused with no attempt to link the political landscape with the insurgency.¹⁹

Segments 6–8: Transition

A number of military and government transitions perpetuated and intensified the chaos that characterized the first part of 2004. Segment 6 addresses the transitions that occurred (Figure 6).

Those transitions, however, brought a new team, additional resources, a campaign plan, and an objective: successful elections on 30 January 2005. Upon establishing the US Embassy in Baghdad, Ambassador John Negroponte arrived as the senior US civilian leader to work with GEN George Casey, the new MNF-I commander. The two men met in Washington beforehand, where they discussed an initial strategy and recognized the value of building relationships. According to Casey:

The military and civil side had to work together, so we agreed on the one-team, one-mission concept...and that 'one team, one mission' had to include the Iraqi government. We set out to help make this Interim Iraqi Government successful.²⁰

Segment 7 describes events in August in Najaf. Muqtada al-Sadr again roused the Shia community, primarily his Mahdi Militia in Najaf, and tested the new Iraqi government. As the situation heated up, Casey asked himself, "How can we help this new Iraqi Government succeed?"

We set out in Najaf to help the Iraqi Government achieve its first success. We told ourselves this could be a unifying event for this new government...it was really an

¹⁸ One of the Coalition members from the 2nd Brigade, 1st Cav Division described the environment as one of "despair." The very people the Coalition had come to save were now turning against it. There were no friendly Iraqi faces.

¹⁹ Prime Minister Ayad Allawi, interview with Dr. William Knarr and Major Robert Castro, 6 Feb 2006, Baghdad, Iraq.

²⁰ General George Casey, interview with Dr. William Knarr and Major Robert Castro, American Embassy, Baghdad, 6 Feb 2006.

opportunity for Prime Minister Allawi to demonstrate his strength as a leader, and he really did.²¹



Figure 6: Segment 6—Transition: May—August 2004

Although, like in April, this was another crisis reaction, the operation in Najaf turned out to be a success for the Coalition and the Iraqis—one that provided much needed experience for the IIG and ISF as the Coalition prepared to head back into Fallujah.

During this time, Fallujah worsened, and by late July 2004, the city was infested with insurgents. The Fallujah Brigade was characterized as a failed experiment.²² According to Dr. Rubai'e (see Figure 7, Segment 8), the Iraqi National Security Advisor, the Marine assault, withdrawal, and subsequent handoff of Fallujah's security to the Fallujah Brigade was a turning point in the war because it signaled that the insurgents could repel the Coalition. He relates that Al Jazeera's reporting during April emphasized the news coming from Fallujah and

²¹ Casey interview, 6 Feb 2006. Some would credit Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani, Iraq's most prominent Shia cleric and resident of An Najaf, for negotiations with Sadr, but Casey thought it was less important who got credit than that "The government came together, they had a crisis; they solved the crisis together with our help. And they came out of it a winner, that was an important element going into Fallujah."

²² Lieutenant General James Conway in, "Failed Strategy in Falluja?" CNN.com, 14 Sept 2004.

perpetuated the myth that Fallujah was untamable and renegade, “After that, the bad guys entrenched themselves in the city, and the city was a symbol, even among the Arab world.”²³



Figure 7: Segment 8—Fallujah had become a symbol

Segments 9–11, Strategic Communications and Information Operations

During September–December 2004, Coalition Forces and the IIG focused on setting conditions for the January 2005 election. Eliminating insurgent sanctuaries was critical to nationwide elections. Topping the list was Fallujah.

The Coalition and IIG were sensitive to the failures and successes of the preceding year. Two major lessons were in the areas of strategic communications and IO. Both had been dismal failures during VIGILANT RESOLVE. The Coalition and Iraqi Government needed to address several questions as they prepared for AL FAJR: How do we retain the IO initiative? How do we ensure the freedom of our IO and control the enemy’s use of it?

²³ Dr. Rubai’e interview with Dr. William Knarr and Major Robert Castro, 29 Jan 2006, Baghdad, Iraq.

In Segment 9, GEN Casey emphasizes the political-military dynamics inherent in the situation and Allawi's central political role in setting the conditions for military action:

This was political-military interaction and how the political side sets up military success....This was a joint Coalition-Iraqi operation, and the IIG [Allawi] had the lead on selling it to the Iraqi people...had the lead on selling it to the countries of the region, because it was regional pressure that caused the first Fallujah to really come unglued.²⁴

Fortunately, Allawi understood his media mission and—according to Casey, Brigadier General Erwin “Erv” Lessel, USAF, Director of Strategic Communications (STRATCOM) at headquarters MNF-I, and others—was good at it. Figure 8 is a screen capture from Segment 9, during which Allawi discusses his plan to “maintain coverage throughout the Arab world.”

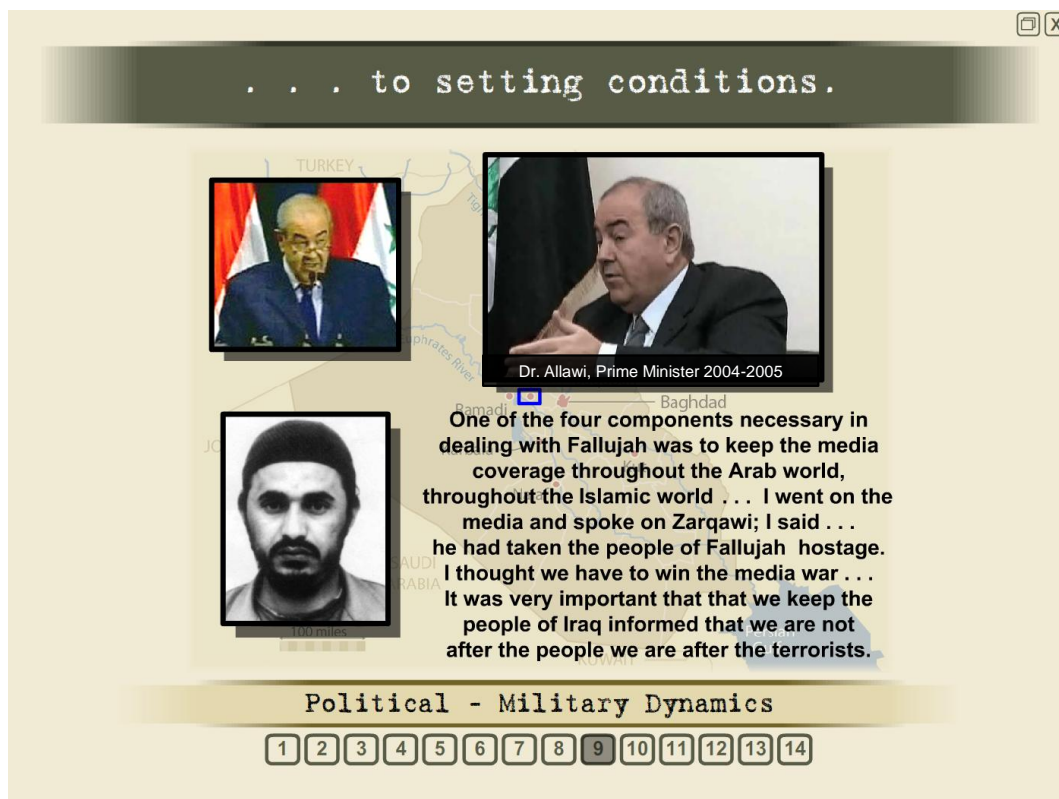


Figure 8: Segment 9—Maintaining Media Coverage Throughout the Arab World

²⁴ Casey interview, 6 Feb 2006.

BrigGen Lessel, who was responsible for both public affairs and IO, explained his responsibilities: (1) ensuring effective strategic communications for MNF-I, (2) working strategic communications on an interagency level, and (3)

helping the Iraqi Government do strategic communications. The Iraqi media didn't know how to do interviews, they weren't familiar with the free press, they didn't know how to ask questions during interviews...we ended up helping the Iraqi Government establish a communications directorate.²⁵

Lessel worked closely with Allawi's staff to coordinate media events and releases.

In Segment 10, Lessel provides an excellent example of IO—renaming the 2nd battle for Fallujah, Operation AL FAJR. Originally called Operation PHANTOM FURY, Lessel recognized—as did Casey and Allawi—the negative implications of a US moniker:

We went back to the IIG and said, 'What would you call this?' They responded 'Operation AL FAJR, New Dawn.' Lexicon was very important...cultural aspects we have to think through from an IO standpoint, it's what you say...who says it, when you say it, and to what audiences.

Lieutenant General Thomas Metz, Commander, MNC-I understood the necessity of IO as well, and in Segment 11, vows not to lose that contest again. In preparation for AL FAJR, he developed what he called *the IO threshold*. The purpose of the IO threshold was to

...enable the MNC-I commander to visualize a point at which enemy information-based operations (aimed at international, regional, and local media coverage) began to undermine the Coalition forces' ability to conduct unconstrained combat operations.²⁶

This didn't mean the Coalition couldn't cross the IO threshold, but it did mean that when it did, it had to complete the operation within days and hours.²⁷

While Allawi was the spokesman at the strategic and national levels, Lieutenant General Abdul Qadir, the Iraqi Ground Force (IGF) Commander during AL FAJR, prepared to work hand-in-hand with Lieutenant General Sattler, the First Marine Expeditionary Force (I-MEF) Commander, to address operational and tactical issues with the media at the Rotunda at Camp Fallujah.

²⁵ Brigadier General E.F. Lessel, USAF, interview with Dr. William Knarr, Washington, DC, 28 Dec 2005.

²⁶ LTG Thomas Metz and LTC James Hutton, "Massing Effects In the Information Domain: A Case Study in Aggressive Information Operations," *Military Review* (May–June 2006): 2–12.

²⁷ Metz and Hutton, "Massing Effects," 6.

Segments 11–14: Applying Lessons from April, Shaping the Battlefield and Developing the Plan

At Segment 11,²⁸ LTG Metz also says he vowed that Operation AL FAJR would not be a crisis reaction like VIGILANT RESOLVE and operations to quell the Shia uprising in April/May had been. Conditions were being set, including increased troop levels to secure critical areas of the country.

I based almost everything on the lessons I learned in April...an attack into Fallujah could potentially create another uprising around the country, and so it was a total Corps operation....The Corps focused on resources and getting the plan for the whole country, everything from border closings to doubling stockages of class III and V.²⁹

The number of Coalition and Iraqi forces involved in the main assault force and adjacent areas was far more robust (see Figure 9, Segment 12) than those available for VIGILANT RESOLVE.³⁰ During VIGILANT RESOLVE, four Marine battalions were eventually committed to the fight. Although four under-strength Iraqi battalions were available, only elements of the 36th Commando Battalion remained to fight.³¹

During AL FAJR, the ISF would field elements of the 1st Iraqi Intervention Forces (IIF) Brigade (headquarters and three battalions), the 3rd Brigade of the 5th Iraqi Division (headquarters and two battalions), the 36th Commando Battalion, and small platoons of Iraqi Specialized Special Forces (SSF) to support the Marine battalions.³² However, the Iraqi on-hand strength was less than might be expected. For example, Lieutenant Colonel Yassir Haziz Muqmad, commander of 4th Battalion, 1st IIF Brigade was authorized a force of 759 personnel, but had only 300 soldiers on hand for AL FAJR.³³ Most Iraqi battalions were at 50–60 percent strength—crucial to computing combat power.

²⁸ Segment 11 is the bridge from MNF-I and above to MNC-I and below. The bridging topic is IO.

²⁹ Lieutenant General Thomas Metz, USA, telephone interview with Dr. William Knarr, 19 Dec 2005. Metz was Deputy Commander CJTF-7, Feb–May 2004, and Commander, MNC-I, May 2004–Feb 2005. Classes of Supply III and V refer to petroleum, oils, lubricants (POL) and ammunition, respectively.

³⁰ Coalition forces available to VIGILANT RESOLVE consisted of a Regimental Combat Team with, eventually, four Marine battalions committed to the city.

³¹ The 505th and 506th Iraqi Civil Defense Corps Battalions refused to deploy and the 2nd Battalion of the 1st Brigade was ambushed during its road march to Fallujah and refused to continue after the ambush. See IDA Paper P-4455, *The Battle for Fallujah*, by Dr. William Knarr and Major Robert Castro, September 2009 pp 22-23 for a more detailed explanation.

³² The Iraqi brigade headquarters elements were present, and in some cases participated in planning, but control of the Iraqi battalions was vested in the Coalition.

³³ A major weakness at the operational and strategic levels was payday. There was no direct deposit, so every payday, the Iraqi Soldiers took their paychecks home. This meant at least one-third were always gone.

In addition to the ASTs, 1st MARDIV provided liaison elements to ISF units to help coordinate operations and provide support. Communications between the ISF and Coalition Forces were crucial, and these liaison teams helped maintain this link.

During Segment 13 (see Figure 10), MajGen Richard Natonski, Commander, 1st Marine Division, and Lieutenant Colonel David Bellon, former Intelligence Officer for Regimental Combat Team 1, describe how intelligence drove operations and, in-turn, how kinetic and non-kinetic operations drove intelligence collection.

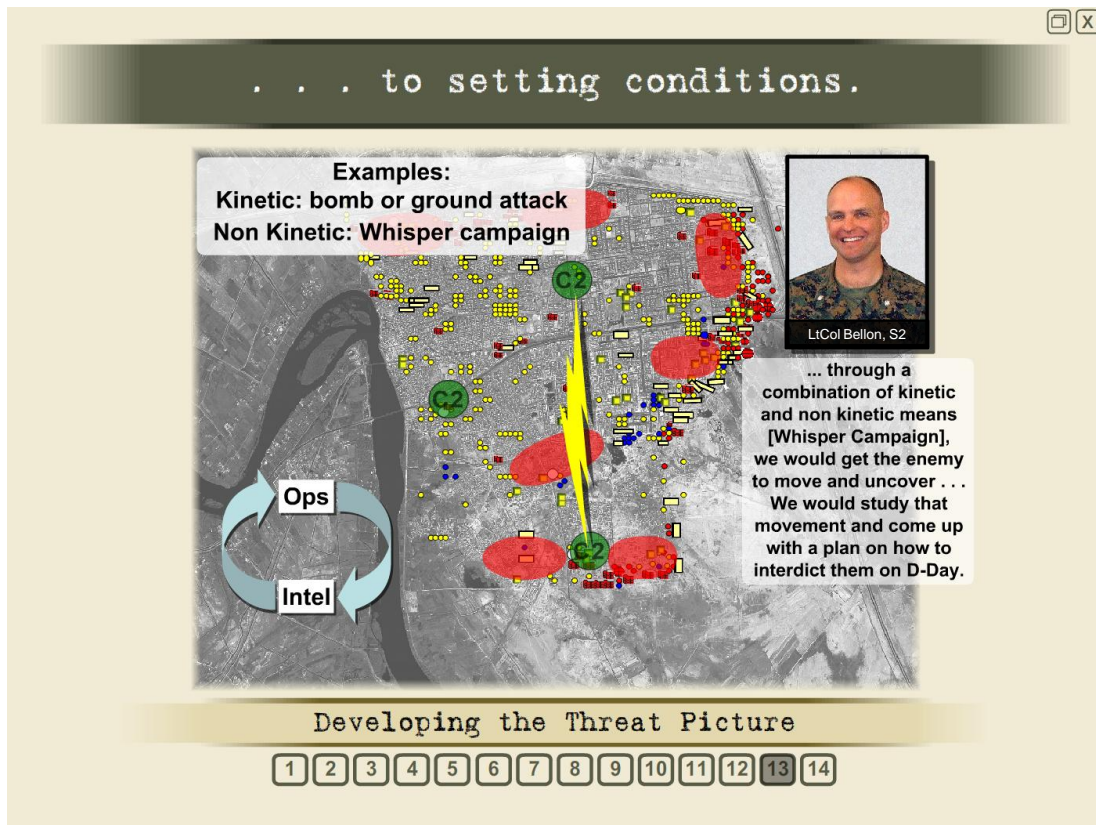


Figure 10: Segment 13—Developing the Threat Picture

The 1st MARDIV’s mission was to attack in zone “to destroy anti-Iraqi forces in Fallujah in order to establish legitimate local control.” The Commander’s intent was to eliminate Fallujah as an insurgent sanctuary, set conditions for local control of the city, and support the MNF-I effort to secure the approaches to Baghdad. AL FAJR comprised five phases; Phase II is the subject of the Tactical Vignette and will be discussed next.

- I. Preparation and Shaping
- II. Enhanced Shaping—The Vignette

III. Decisive Offensive Operations

IV. Transition

V. Transfer of Control

Vignette: Phase II, Enhanced Shaping, D-Day, 7 November 2004

If you get to the tactical Vignette by clicking the labeled icon on the home page, the lead-in begins automatically. Or, if you decide to watch the Background section first, you can start the tactical Vignette by clicking on the button that appears at the end of Segment 14.

The lead-in to the Vignette begins with a CBS Newscast (Figure 11) of the first Western media airing of the beginning of the battle of Fallujah, Operation AL FAJR and then stops. We did this for several reasons: To gain the students attention, to set the stage for the Tactical Vignette, and to provide an opportunity to discuss strategic communications and IO before moving through the Vignette.

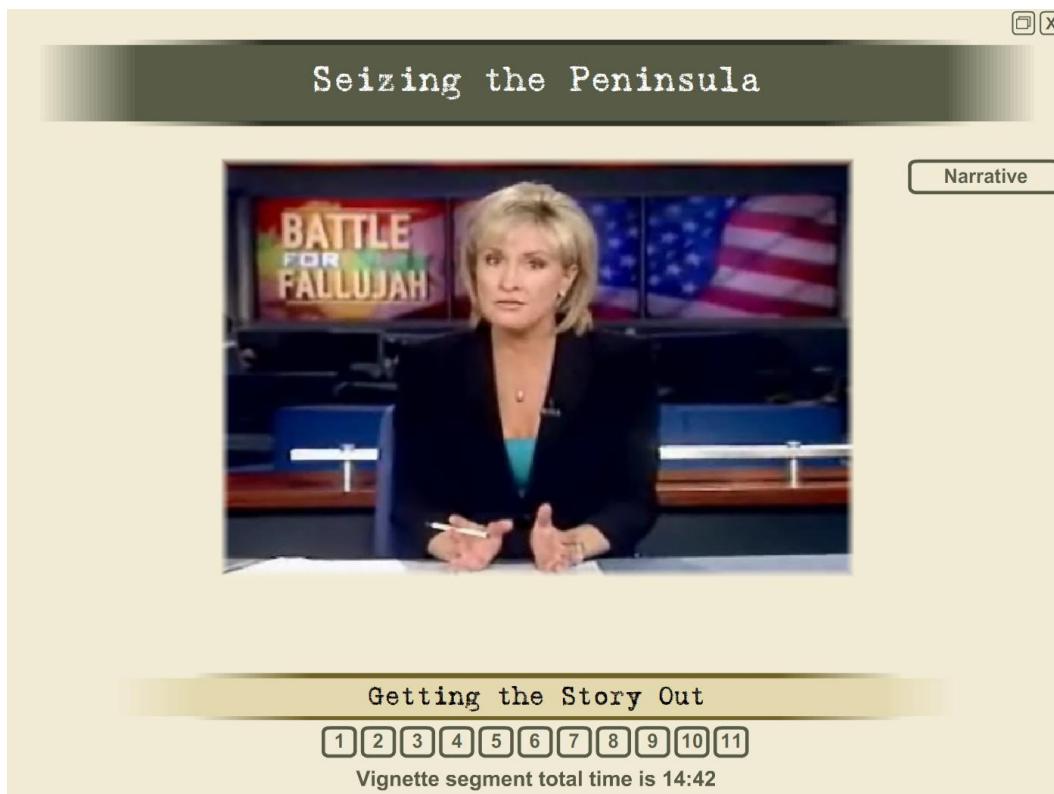


Figure 11: Segment 1—Lead-in to the Vignette, CBS Newscast

To start the Vignette, click the button that appears or click on the Segment 1 button at the bottom of the screen.

Segment 1: Isolating the City

The Segment begins with MajGen Natonski (Figure 12) describing opening actions in, “Isolating the city.”

That day of the seventh... That is when we actually commenced the total isolation of the city. From an electronic perspective, we cut the power in the city... We knew what nets to jam that we could disrupt their command and control; their frequencies that control the IEDs.

And that’s when the Blackjack Brigade set up their positions on the east and southern portion of the city. We brought our joint fires to bear. Physically we moved our forces into their attack positions.

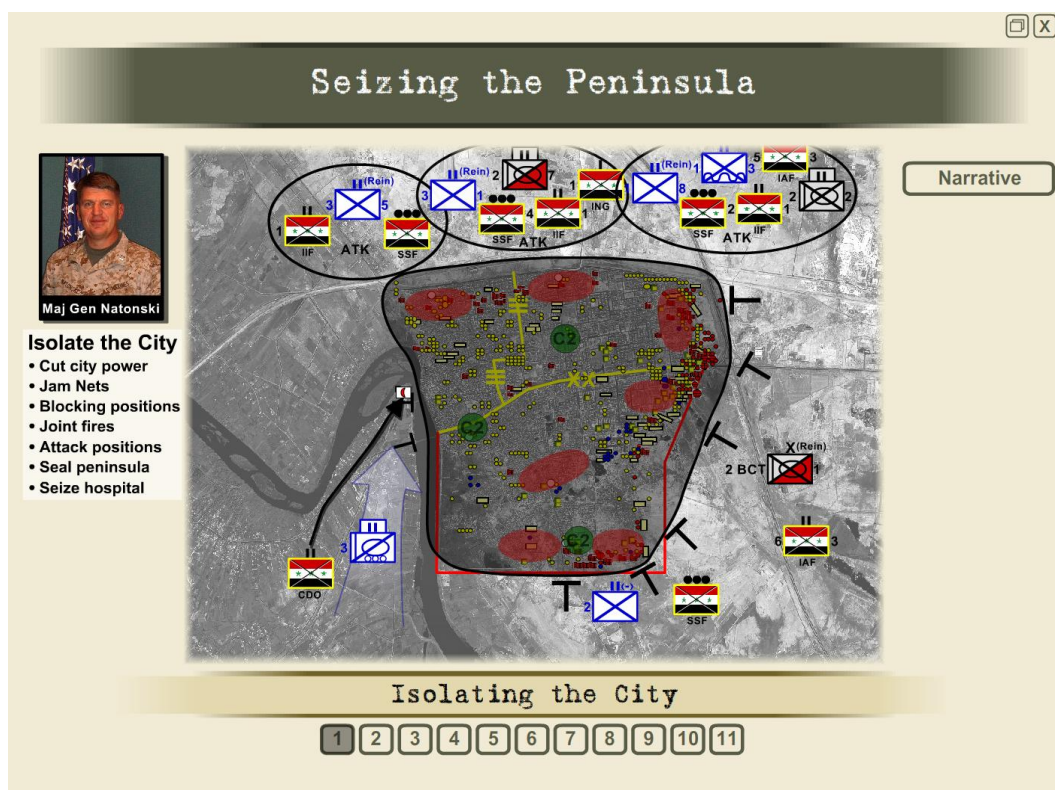


Figure 12: Segment 1—Isolating the City

He goes on to address the peninsula:

We commenced the peninsula attack to block the two bridges. We wanted the hospital because that had been a command and control node. The first offensive action

in Operation AL FAJR was conducted by the 36th Commandos. We wanted to project an Iraqi show.³⁴

Segments 2 and 3: Seizing the Peninsula

The 3rd LAR, commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Stephen Dinauer, became Task Force Wolfpack, (task organization presented in Figure 13 and also Segment 2). They would be responsible for securing the peninsula and setting the conditions for the 36th Commandos to seize the hospital.

Some of the attachments were unexpected add-ons and were coordinated as the planning developed. Charlie Company 1-9 (C/1-9) Infantry is a good example. When the unit arrived, COL Patton, Commander, 2BCT/2ID in Ar Ramadi asked Dinauer if he needed anything; Dinauer suggested a company of Bradleys. He got 15 Bradleys and 4 M1A1s.

The 113th Combat Service Support Company, a unit normally in direct support of a regiment, was invaluable in providing logistics to the task force because it minimized the logistical dependence on the RCT-1 that received its support from Camp Fallujah, on the other side of the city.

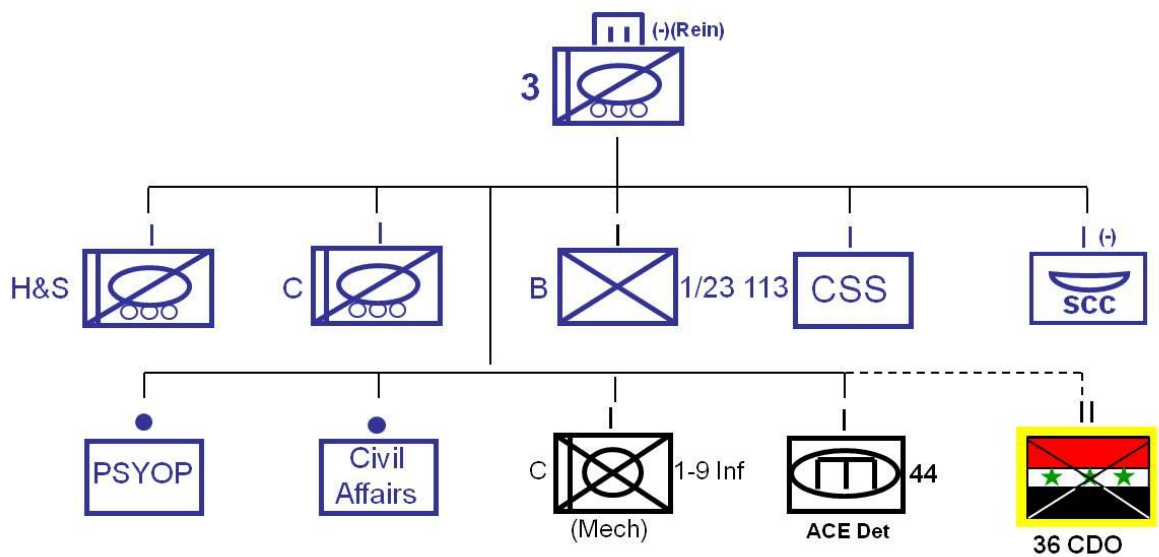


Figure 13: Task Force Wolfpack Organization

³⁴ Major General Richard Natonski, interview with Dr. William Knarr and Major Robert Castro, Camp Pendleton, California, 9 December 2005.

During Segment 2, LtCol Dinauer discusses his mission:

The mission was to secure the hospital, and the two bridges, thereby isolating the peninsula and removing the hospital as a means of propaganda for the enemy. And possibly using it for us for things such as civil affairs, treating wounded civilians, and prosecuting fires into the city in support of the maneuver elements coming north to south.³⁵

LtCol Dinauer continues to discuss the line of march and then the attack onto the peninsula to seize the three objectives: the two bridges and the hospital (see Figure 14, Segment 3).



Figure 14: Segment 3—Seizing the Peninsula

Segments 4 and 5: The Significance of the Hospital and the Information Operations Plan

During VIGILANT RESOLVE, the insurgents had used the hospital as a command and control node, which contributed to their IO success by providing a platform to disseminate disinformation. Denying them that platform and conduit was the reason for seizing it. In addition,

³⁵ Lieutenant Colonel Stephen Dinauer, interview with Dr. William Knarr, Newport News, Rhode Island, 10 May 2006

the 36th Commandos, an element of the Iraqi Special Operations Forces, took the lead and gave the IIG and Coalition an effective IO feed.

During Segment 4, BrigGen Lessel and LtCol Dinauer discuss the significance of the hospital and how seizing the hospital was part of the IO plan.

Segment 5 discusses the embedded media, combat camera, and the use of helmet-mounted cams by the Special Forces team of advisors that accompanied the 36th Commandos.

Segments 6 and 7: Seizing the Hospital, the Plan and Execution

As the 3rd LAR secured the peninsula, and set up blocking positions on the North and South Bridges leading from the peninsula to Fallujah, the Commandos and 5th SFG advisors entered the hospital area at 2200 with two assault forces—Company Team A and B. Segment 6 describes the plan, the rehearsal by the 36th Commandos and their SF advisors.

Assault Team A was tasked to clear Sector A and Assault Team B, Sector B. Both teams announced their mission status as they secured the various buildings and synchronized their actions at the phase lines.

At 2200, Kirk Spitzer, CBS News, with video camera rolling, followed Assault Team A of the Iraqi forces as they entered the main entrance of the hospital complex.

Segment 7, Figure 15, reflects the execution of the plan. In particular, it details Assault Team B's clearance on the east side of the hospital. SSG Bassett, the combat cameraman, accompanied Assault Team B, capturing footage of the 36th Commandos as they entered the hospital and cleared their sector.

By 2300 the 36th Commandos had secured the hospital and moved staff members and ambulatory patients into the corridor. In addition to finding several foreign fighters and wounded insurgents, they confiscated weapons, computer hard drives, and other material and brought it to various collection points for exploitation.



Figure 15: Segment 7—Seizing the Hospital

Segment 8: Getting the Story Out

After midnight the embedded media were given the “Okay” to contact their news organizations and pass their reports. In Segment 8, CBS reporter Kirk Spitzer explains his guidelines as an embed and the reaction of his editor to the news that the assault on Fallujah has started:

Under the ground rules we are not allowed to report any upcoming operations, we are not allowed to discuss any upcoming operations with our editors or anyone back home. So my editors knew who I was with and they knew we might do something related to the Fallujah campaign but they really had no clue at all as to what I was doing or where, specifically until I called . Around 1 AM local time I called our Bureau Chief in Baghdad and told him, hey, I’m with this SF group and Iraqi commandos, we just seized the main hospital compound in Fallujah and I have some video, do you need it? He had a cow, he said, “Oh my God, you mean the Fallujah operation has begun?” I said, “Yeah, yeah, yeah, definitely, this is the first operation of the campaign.” He said, “Oh my God, get it back to us now, get it back right away, instantly, if you send it right now we can get it on the evening news Sunday night US time.”

At 0200, Spitzer uploaded the video to CBS news facilities via his laptop, satellite, and file transfer protocol link. After doing so, he went to the hospital parking lot to broadcast the raw video to London where it would be edited and rebroadcast back to CBS in New York.

Segment 9: Sealing the East Side of the Bridge

Meanwhile, outside, 3rd LAR continued to improve their positions with the Sappers from the 44th Engineer Battalion blocking the entrance and exit to the north bridge (Figure 16). In Segment 9, Dinauer describes the activity:

ACEs went forward with stuff already in their buckets. They went to the middle of the bridge, lifted the bucket, pushed the dirt out, and then the sappers, with wire, went and were wiring this stuff in. They were taking sporadic small arms fire. I was up there on the North Bridge with the sapper platoon sergeant, and out of the darkness you can hear that old bridge just rumbling as the ACE comes creaking back; then on either side are Army sappers, a real motivating sight to see. They just laid this obstacle and no one was going to get through there.

They even put a sign on the front, we tried to be very direct, that said, “If you come across this barrier you are going to be shot.” We didn’t want any ambiguity on what the purpose of that was.



Courtesy 5th SFG

Figure 16: Seen using night vision device.

1. North Bridge, 2. ACE on the bridge, 3. ACE on the road to the bridge

Segment 10: Regional News

Several hours later, as the 36th Commandos, accompanied by Bassett, moved through the doctor’s lounge in the middle of the hospital, they paused in front of a television. There, they saw themselves conducting the operation (Figure 17) they had completed just hours earlier. Surprised, they turned to Bassett for an explanation. Bassett didn’t know how Al Jazeera was obtaining the video; he only knew it wasn’t his. The 5th SFG personnel thought Al Jazeera had

intercepted it as Spitzer was transmitting to London.³⁶ Although Allawi had kicked the network out of Iraq during the summer of 2004, Al Jazeera's airing of AL FAJR combat operations was an exclusive for the Iraqi and regional audience. Spitzer's footage aired on US national news channels that same day as an exclusive for the US audience.

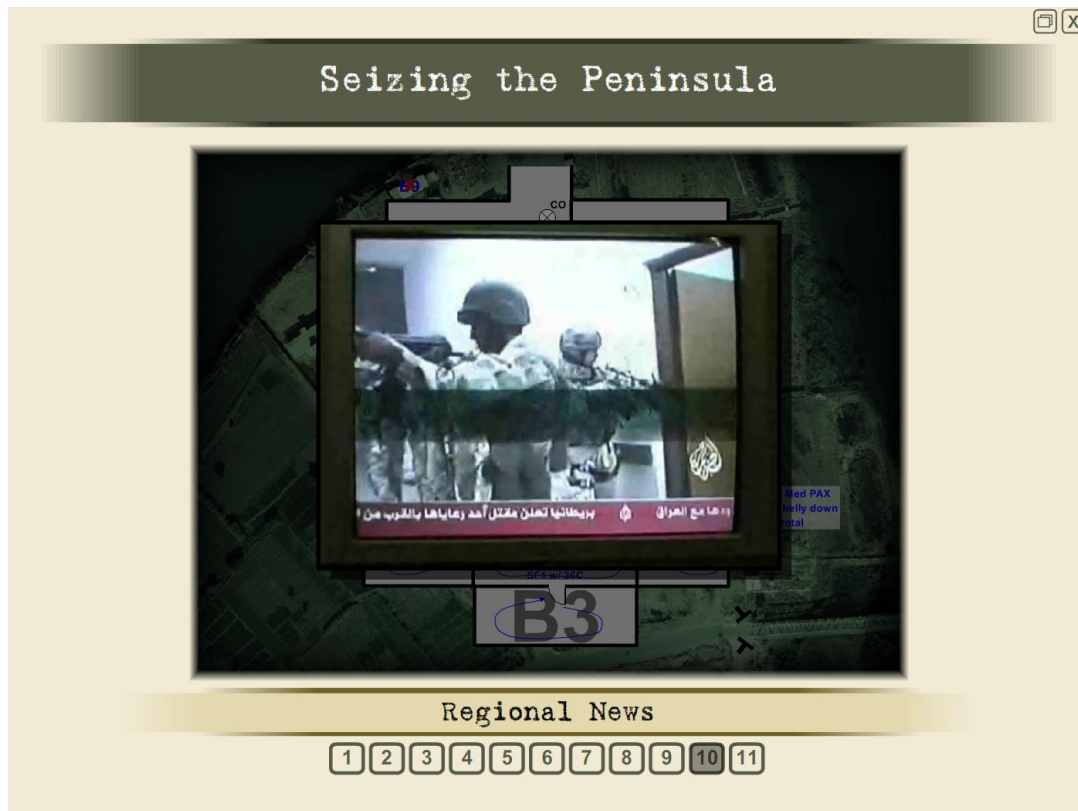


Figure 17: Segment 10—The 36th Commandos see themselves on Al Jazeera Regional News

Segment 11: *Al Fajr*—Dawn

Throughout the night and following day, Task Force Wolfpack engaged insurgents across the river with organic as well as rotary- and fixed-wing support (Figure 18).

³⁶ Anonymity is a necessity for many ISOF operators; more than 20 of these soldiers were assassinated during 2003–09. In November 2004, many of the ISOF operators' family and friends did not know they were in the military, let alone assaulting Fallujah. News media was allowed to embed with SF only if they agreed to censor names and faces of SF and ISOF Soldiers. CBS agreed. Their plan was for Kirk Spitzer to transmit raw footage to London, where they would blur out the faces, and then pass the footage to New York. Al Jazeera apparently pirated and broadcast the uncensored feed. This put ISOF Soldiers' lives at risk; many were upset over the broadcast.



Video courtesy of 5th SFG

Figure 18: Sequence of photos show F-14s/JDAMS targeting insurgents on the east side of the Euphrates

Richard Oppel, Jr., a *New York Times* journalist embedded with the 36th Commandos in the hospital, describes the significance of the battle on the peninsula:

A few hundred yards away [from the hospital], an important strategic, as well as symbolic, battle was playing out: American troops, fighting to secure the western end of the two bridges across the Euphrates River, received intense fire from fortified insurgent positions on the east side of the river. One of the bridges was the scene of the grisly episode on March 31, when Iraqis hung the charred and dismembered bodies of at least two of four American security contractors who had been killed from the bridge's spans.³⁷

Elements of RCT-1 had penetrated south through the Jolan and past the bridge on the east side and within a week, LtCol Dinauer greeted Colonel Michael Shupp, Commander, RCT-1 on that infamous bridge from Fallujah (Figure 19), an important icon of the insurgency.

Although the Vignette stops at this point, the story continues in depth and breadth through accounts of participants. Those accounts and supporting information are provided in the Organizations and People and Reference Library sections discussed next.

³⁷ Richard Oppel, Jr., "Attack by Joint Force: Early Target of Offensive is Hospital," *New York Times*, 8 November 2004.

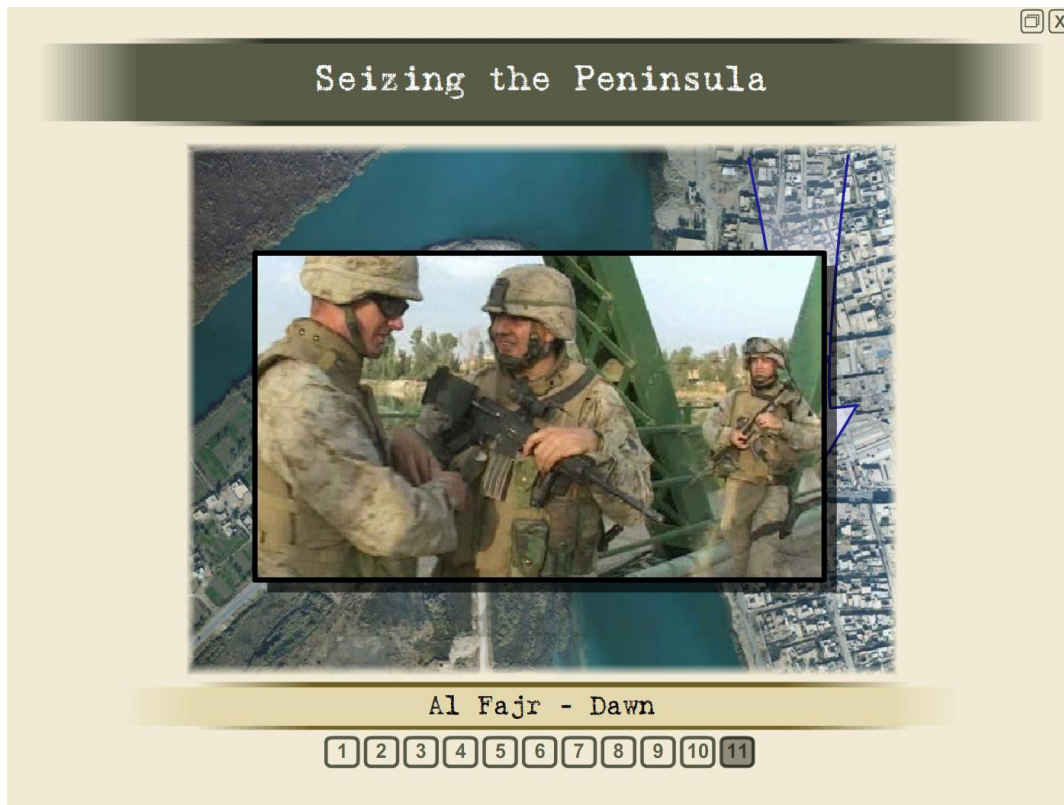



Figure 19: Segment 11—As Coalition Forces secure the both sides of the Euphrates, Commanders meet on the infamous bridge to Fallujah

Organizations & People

This section of the DVD (see Figure 20) consists of a line-and-block chart of organizations that participated in or supported Operation AL FAJR. They are listed under their parent organizations before the task organization. To see the task organization, click on the white box in the lower right corner.

A shaded box indicates that we interviewed someone from that organization for the Fallujah project. A blue tab indicates a link to additional material for those relevant to the vignette. As an example, if you click on GEN Casey or Prime Minister Allawi, another window will appear with highlights from the interview, a link to the transcript, and, for some, an audio or video link. The line-and-block chart can be expanded by clicking the arrow button  at the bottom left of the chart.

Links on the left side of the screen essentially repeat the links to those blue tabbed boxes. Exceptions include an additional link to Mr. Saif Rahman, Chief of Staff to the Speaker of Parliament. Mr. Saif was negotiator during VIGILANT RESOLVE. There are also links to Mr. Kael Weston, State Department representative in Fallujah; Mr. Kirk Spitzer, CBS News em-

bedded reporter; and Mr. Ahmed Mansur, al Jazeera reporter, interviewed by Ms. Amy Goodman on “Democracy Now.”

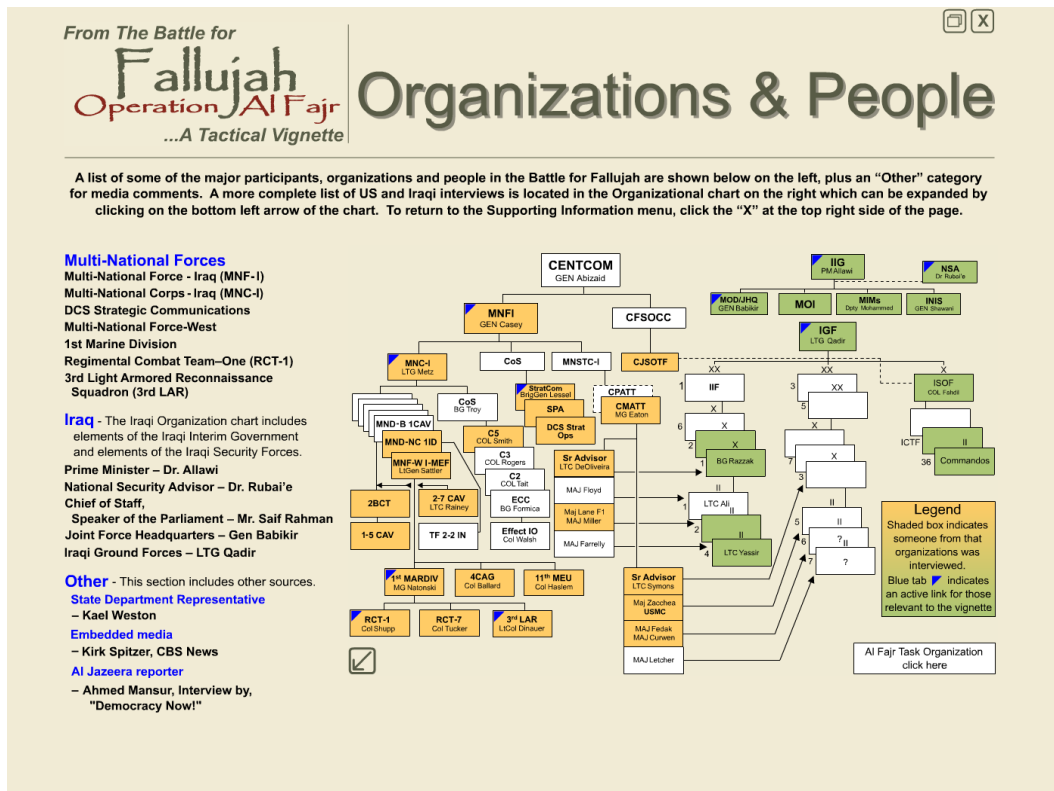


Figure 20: Organizations and People

Site Map

The site map was displayed at Figure 3. Its uses will be discussed in the next chapter.

Reference Library

The Reference Library Section includes References, Chronology, Glossary and Public Information. Public information lists the authors, credits, IDA publication and copyright information. The Glossary includes a list of acronyms. The Chronology serves as a reference for dates, times, and events. The Reference section lists unclassified source material. It includes The United Nations Security Council Resolutions relevant to 2004; Congressional Joint Resolution, 16 October 2002, Authorization for use of Military force Against Iraq Resolution of 2002; the CPA's Orders; the recently declassified MNF-I Campaign Plan published in August 2004; and the recently declassified MNF-I Campaign Progress Review (5 Months), 12 December 2004. There are also links to various transcripts from the Organizations & People section.

3 Education and Training Approach

The purpose of this chapter is to offer an approach to using, “A Vignette from the Battle for Fallujah.” Drawn from Phase II of the battle, it is a tactical vignette that links to operational and strategic themes in the areas of strategic communications, information operations, political-military dynamics, and partnership development. In addition, teachers may add, or even replace those with ones they find more relevant to their area of study.

This chapter, as an example, focuses on strategic communications and information operations (SC/IO) as an area of discussion throughout the narrative—from Background through the tactical Vignette. We selected SC/IO for several reasons: Combined, SC and IO demand students address the differences in each and complementary aspects of both; SC and IO have become high priority subjects in the past several years with expectations that they will remain so; SC/IO were major factors in 2004 due to the way they contributed to the Coalition’s failure during VIGILANT RESOLVE in April and successful completion of AL FAJR seven months later.

In the following example, we have highlighted SC/IO’s potential discussion points throughout the narrative in the Vignette, by Segment. The Background section (14 segments) and the Tactical Vignette (11 segments) were separated into segments for several reasons: they load quickly because the files are small; chronologically they provide a complete and continuous storyline; separately, they each provide convenient topical areas (as you mouse over the segment numbers the titles appear); and using an electronic index, the segments are easy to find and access to reflect various discussion points.

Strategic Communications/Information Operations

As a foundation for discussion, the definitions for SC and IO should be provided up front. Strategic communications is:

(DOD) Focused United States Government efforts to understand and engage key audiences to create, strengthen, or preserve conditions favorable for the advancement of United States Government interests, policies, and objectives through the use of coordinated programs, plans, themes, messages, and products synchronized with the actions of all instruments of national power. Also called SC.³⁸

³⁸ Joint Publication 1-02.

Information operations is:

The integrated employment, during military operations, of information-related capabilities in concert with other lines of operation to influence, disrupt, corrupt, or usurp the decision-making of adversaries and potential adversaries while protecting our own.³⁹

Using SC/IO as the theme, let's review each segment in the Background and Vignette Sections of the DVD and list potential SC/IO discussion points. As the group discusses the relevance of SC/IO, they should also discuss whether the example neatly fits into SC or IO. Although elements of SC/IO can be seen in all of the segments, only the compelling ones (in bold) will be addressed below and reflected in the electronic index, to be discussed later. Each segment starts with its title, a short description, and then suggested discussion points. In some areas [in brackets], brief solutions are offered for the discussion points and leads are provided to other themes.

Background

Segment 1, Blackwater Ambush/Operation VIGILANT RESOLVE. On 31 March 2004, four US contractors were ambushed in Fallujah. Charred remains of the brutally beaten bodies were hung from the ramparts of the old North Bridge. During a savage demonstration, Fallujans cheered, and someone held a sign under one of the bodies that read *Fallujah is the cemetery for Americans*.⁴⁰

Although the Marines in Al Anbar province cautioned against hasty action that could play into the insurgents' hands, they were ordered to assault the city and find the perpetrators. The operation was called VIGILANT RESOLVE.

Discussion Point 1.a. How did real-time media/video of this incident influence decision making? Who dominated the news during the first battle of Fallujah in April 2004?

Discussion Point 1.b. Was VIGILANT RESOLVE an appropriate name?

Discussion Point 1.c. What signal did the Iraqis' refusal to fight in Fallujah send to the rest of the world? ["Why did they refuse to fight?" could be asked in the Partnership development/Combined Operations theme.]

³⁹ Secretary of Defense Memorandum, "Strategic Communications and Information Operations in the DoD," dated 25 January 2011. According to the memorandum, the previous definition lacked the reference to the information environment and placed too much emphasis on the core capabilities.

⁴⁰ Colin Freeman, "Horror at Fallujah," *San Francisco Chronicle*, 30 April 2004.

Segment 2. Shia Uprising. To make matters worse, Fallujah wasn't the only fight at the time. About the same time as VIGILANT RESOLVE, actions taken by the CPA against Muqtada al-Sadr enraged the Shia community: al-Sadr's Mahdi Militia revolted in Sadr City, Karbala, Najaf, and Al Kut, while elements of the Iraqi Civil Defense Corps (ICDC), primarily Shia, refused to support the Coalition and fight the Militia. During April 2004, 30 percent of the ICDC *Jundi*—about 10,000 of the 33,000—didn't show up for work. Some switched their allegiance to the insurgency or the Militia.

Discussion Point 2. [Note that the discussion points are keyed to the segment; if there is more than one discussion point, they are numbered 2.a., 2.b., 2.c. and so on] What CPA actions started the Shia uprising? What were the implications?

Segment 3. Cutting the LOCs to Baghdad [there are no compelling discussion points for this segment relevant to SC/IO].

Segment 4. Force Rotations—Abu Ghraib—Spain.⁴¹ Revelations of prisoner mistreatment at Abu Ghraib prison.

Discussion Point 4. When did the Abu Ghraib scandal surface? What were the implications [fueled the insurgent IO campaign and eroded US credibility in Iraq and the International arena]? How was it used by the insurgents?

Segment 5. Everything Boiling throughout the Country. The insurgent SC/IO contributed to this environment; however, no discussion points are offered here.

Segment 6. Transition: May–August 2004. This period brought a new team, additional resources, a campaign plan, and an objective: successful elections on 30 January 2005. Upon establishing the US Embassy in Baghdad, Ambassador John Negroponte arrived as the senior US civilian leader to work with GEN George Casey, the new MNF-I commander. The two men met in Washington beforehand, where they discussed an initial strategy and recognized the value of building relationships.⁴²

Discussion Point 6.a. Was the CPA transition to a Department of State mission correctly portrayed in this segment?

⁴¹ On 11 March, a coordinated series of bombings against Madrid's commuter train system killed 191 people and injured 1,755. Although the bombing did not occur in Iraq, it affected Spain's commitment to Iraq. Spain would withdraw its forces by May 2004, quickly followed by Honduras, the Dominican Republic, and the Philippines.

⁴² Casey interview, 6 Feb 2006.

Discussion Point 6.b. Compare the CPA's treatment of the Iraqi Governing Council (IGC) to GEN Casey's inclusion of the Iraqi Interim Government (IIG). How did the IIG's responsibilities change from that of the IGC? How did it change in regards to Strategic Communications?

Segment 7. Najaf. Muqtada al-Sadr again roused the Shia community, primarily his Mahdi Militia in An Najaf, and tested the new Iraqi government. As the situation heated up, Casey asked himself, "How can we help this new Iraqi Government succeed?"

Discussion Point 7. Why was it necessary to depict operations in Najaf as an Iraqi success? How did they do that? What role did the Iraqi Government and ISF play in those operations?

Segment 8. Fallujah becomes a symbol. According to Dr. Rubai'e, the Iraqi National Security Advisor, the Marine assault, withdrawal, and subsequent handoff of Fallujah's security to the Fallujah Brigade was a turning point in the war because it signaled that the insurgents could repel the Coalition. He relates that Al Jazeera's reporting during April emphasized the news coming from Fallujah and perpetuated the myth that Fallujah was untamable and renegade, "After that, the bad guys entrenched themselves in the city, and the city was a symbol."⁴³

Discussion Point 8.a. Fallujah became a symbol, but a symbol for who?

Discussion Point 8.b. In what ways did this symbol contribute to the insurgent cause? Spiritual? Recruitment of Iraqis? Foreign fighters?

Discussion Point 8.c. How did Fallujah as a symbol influence Coalition decision-making?

Segment 9. Political-Military Dynamics. GEN Casey emphasized the political-military dynamics inherent in the situation and Allawi's central political role in setting the conditions for military action in Fallujah:

This was political-military interaction and how the political side sets up military success....This was a joint Coalition-Iraqi operation, and the IIG [Allawi] had the lead on selling it to the Iraqi people...had the lead on selling it to the countries of the region, because it was regional pressure that caused the first Fallujah to really come unglued.⁴⁴

Discussion Point 9.a. How were foreign influences portrayed?

⁴³ Rubai'e interview, 29 Jan 2006.

⁴⁴ Casey interview, 6 Feb 2006.

Discussion Point 9.b. Why did the IIG have the lead on selling it to the Iraqis and the countries of the region?

Discussion Point 9.c. What was GEN Casey referring to when he said *because it was regional pressure that caused the first Fallujah to really come unglued?*

Segment 10. Strategic Communications. Fortunately, Allawi understood his media mission and—according to Casey, Lessel, and others—was good at it. In this segment Allawi discusses his plan to “maintain coverage throughout the Arab world.”

Additionally, Lessel, MNF-I Director of STRATCOM, responsible for both public affairs and IO, explained his responsibilities: (1) ensuring effective strategic communications for MNF-I, (2) working strategic communications on an interagency level, and (3) helping the Iraqi Government do strategic communications. Toward these ends, Lessel worked closely with Allawi’s staff to coordinate media events and releases.

Discussion Point 10.a. Note that BrigGen Lessel as director of STRACOM was responsible for IO as well as SC. What are some of the challenges associated with controlling both? Is SC just another form of propaganda?

Discussion Point 10.b. What kind of problems did the Coalition have developing the Iraqis’ SC capability? [Note that this also applies to partner development.]

Discussion Point 10.c. What example did Lessel cite as an excellent application of IO? [Renaming the second battle for Fallujah operation AL FAJR. Originally it was called Operation PHANTOM FURY] Is this IO or SC?

Segment 11. Lessons from April 2004. LTG Metz, Commander, MNC-I indicated that one of the lessons he learned from the April fight was understanding the necessity of IO, and he vowed not to lose that contest again. In preparation for AL FAJR, he developed what he called the IO threshold.

Discussion Point 11. What is the IO Threshold?

Segment 12. Representing and Resourcing. Allawi was the spokesman at the strategic and national levels.

Discussion Point 12.a. Who represented the MEF and the Iraqi Ground forces? [LTG Abdul Qadir, the Iraqi Ground Force (IGF) Commander during AL FAJR, worked hand-in-hand with LtGen Sattler, the I-MEF Commander, to address operational and tactical issues with the media at the Rotunda at Camp Fallujah.] Why was this important?

Discussion Point 12.b. Was there any other partnering for meeting the media below the MEF level?

Segment 13. Developing the Threat Picture. MajGen Natonski, Commander, 1st Marine Division, and LtCol David Bellon, former Intelligence Officer for Regimental Combat Team 1, described how intelligence drove operations and, in turn, how kinetic and non-kinetic operations drove intelligence collection.

Discussion Point 13.a. The Coalition used several techniques to understand enemy location and intent. What were they and how did they use them?

Discussion Point 13.b. What was the Whisper Campaign?

Segment 14. Developing the Plan. [In reality, developing the plan included major SC/IO considerations which are reflected and discussed as the Vignette is presented; however, none are highlighted in this segment.]

Vignette

Once the teacher or the computer operator clicks on the Vignette button on the home page, the Lead-in to the Vignette will automatically begin and then stop; it does not feed automatically into Segment 1. This is done for several reasons: to gain students' attention; to permit a pause to introduce seminar objectives and supporting information such as the definitions of SC/IO, to discuss target audiences, and to set the stage for the Vignette.

Lead-in. The Vignette starts with a CBS Newscast on the first Western media airing of the beginning of the battle of Fallujah, Operation AL FAJR.

Discussion Point Lead-in (Li). Who was the audience for this news clip? What other audiences needed to be addressed? How could we have done that? [These questions become important when recalling some of the lessons of April 2004 and the first battle of Fallujah. As an example, according to Dr. Rubai'e, Fallujah became a symbol and Al Jazeera dominated the news emanating from Fallujah. As a result, according to Casey, the first Fallujah came unglued.]

To start the Vignette, the user clicks on the button for Segment 1 along the bottom of the screen or on the button that appears at the end of the Lead-in.

Segment 1. Isolating the City. MajGen Natonski described the Coalition's actions on 7 November. They included efforts to employ "information-related capabilities...to influence, disrupt, corrupt, or usurp the decision-making of adversaries."

Discussion Point 1.a. What were those actions? [From an electronic perspective, they cut the power in the city to degrade their communications and jammed command-and-control nets as well as the frequencies that controlled their IEDs.]

Discussion Point 1.b. Why did he want to seize the hospital? [We wanted the hospital because it had been a command-and-control node for the insurgents during the April fight.]

Discussion Point 1.c. Who led the assault on the hospital and why was it important? [The first offensive action in Operation AL FAJR was conducted by the 36th Commandos. We wanted to project an Iraqi show.]

Segment 2. Seizing the Peninsula. Task Force Wolfpack was responsible for securing the peninsula and setting the conditions for the 36th Commandos to seize the hospital.

Discussion Point 2.a. As part of his mission statement, LtCol Dinauer reiterated the seizure of the hospital. Why did he say it was important? [Removing the hospital as a means of propaganda for the enemy and possibly using it for us for things such as civil affairs, treating wounded civilians...]

Discussion Point 2.b. What assets were attached to or under TACON [tactical control] of Task Force Wolfpack that would support their IO mission? [In addition to the 36th Commandos, they had a PSYOP team and civil affairs team.]

Segment 3. Seizing the Peninsula (cont'd)

Segment 4. The hospital—Significance. In this segment BrigGen Lessel at MNF-I, LTG Metz at MNC-I and LtCol Dinauer at the Task Force discussed the significance of the hospital and how seizing the hospital was part of the information operations plan.

Discussion Point 4. How is each perspective the same? How does each perspective differ? [Everyone from Allawi and Casey to the SF Captain on the ground advising the 36th Commandos understood the mission and reason for it. The difference in perspectives is reflected at the various levels. Lessel: For counter propaganda, it was not by coincidence that the first target captured in November was the hospital, this was a good example of kinetic operations supporting non-kinetic communications efforts. Metz: The strategic piece is dominated by IO; the seizure of the hospital was a tactical operation for the purposes of IO; Dinauer: To deny the insurgents use of the hospital for propaganda and for us to use it to treat bonafide wounded civilians and in the larger civil affairs effort.]

Segment 5. Supporting the IO Plan. Segment 5 discusses the embedded media, combat camera, and the use of helmet-mounted cameras by the Special Forces team of advisors that accompanied the 36th Commandos.

Discussion Point 5.a. Lieutenant Colonel Kelley talked about “powering down.” What did he mean by that? What are some of the issues that are currently associated with “getting the story out?”

Discussion Point 5.b. At the beginning of the vignette, we talked about the different audiences. What audiences are we accommodating? Which ones aren’t being addressed? [This may be deferred until later—but the Iraqi audience is only being covered at the MEF and above levels. Recall that Al Jazeera was kicked out of the country by Allawi because of their reporting during Fallujah I. Although not indicated in the material, LTC Kelley requested an Al Jazeera embed but was denied.]

Segment 6. Seizing the Hospital—the Plan.

Segment 7. Seizing the Hospital. Although not highlighted, there are events worthy of mention. At 2200, Kirk Spitzer, with video camera rolling, followed Assault Team A of the Iraqi forces as they entered the main entrance of the hospital complex on the west side. Staff Sergeant Bassett, the combat cameraman, accompanied Assault Team B, capturing footage of the 36th Commandos as they entered the hospital and cleared their sector on the east side.

By 2300 the 36th Commandos had secured the hospital and moved staff members and ambulatory patients into the corridor. In addition to finding several foreign fighters and wounded insurgents they confiscated weapons and computer hard drives and took them with other material to various collection points for exploitation. Those hard drives can be a valuable source of information.

Segment 8. Getting the story out. After midnight the embedded media were given the “Okay” to contact their news organizations and pass their reports. In Segment 8, Kirk Spitzer explained his guidelines as an embed and the reaction of his editor to the news that the assault on Fallujah had started.

Discussion Point 8.a. What were the ground rules for embeds? [Under the ground rules they were not allowed to report or discuss any upcoming operations and not allowed to report until given the go-ahead]

Discussion Point 8.b. What equipment would you expect embeds to bring with them?

Note: Kirk Spitzer (transcript and video clips) provided a good account of responsibilities, equipment, and the importance of embeds at the Organizations and People section.

Segment 9. Sealing the east side of the bridge.

Segment 10. Regional News. Several hours later, as the 36th Commandos, accompanied by Bassett, moved through the doctor’s lounge in the middle of the hospital, they paused in front of a television. There, they saw themselves conducting the operation they had completed hours earlier. Surprised, they turned to Bassett for an explanation. Bassett didn’t know how Al Jazeera was obtaining the video; he only knew it wasn’t his.

Discussion Point 10.a. How did Al Jazeera obtain the video material? [5th SF personnel said it was pirated.]

Discussion Point 10.b. What was the “anonymity” issue? [Had this been processed through CBS, 36th Commando and SOF faces and names would have been censored before release. This is for their personal protection and that of their families.]

Discussion Point 10.c. Who got the news coup? Al Jazeera or CBS?

Discussion Point 10.d. Who got the IO coup? Coalition or insurgent? What audience was addressed here?

Segment 11. Al Fajr—Dawn. Throughout the night and following day, Task Force Wolfpack engaged insurgents across the river with organic as well as rotary- and fixed-wing support. Richard Oppel, Jr., a *New York Times* journalist embedded with the 36th Commandos in the hospital, described the significance of the battle on the peninsula.

Discussion Point 11. What was the significance? [A few hundred yards away from the hospital was the bridge where the bodies of Blackwater contractors had been hung.]

Electronic Index to Discussion Point Segments

We’ve covered one of the themes as an example. But how are those discussion points accessed? There are a couple of formats that could be used: site map or matrix.

Site Map

The Site Map provides a format for identifying and accessing relevant discussion points. Figure 20 shows the Site Map used to display the locations of SC/IO relevant material. This Site Map is accessed from the “Site” box on the primary “Site Map” page. When the user

mouses over the box, the SC/IO site map box will appear. The user then clicks on that box and the SC/IO site map opens.

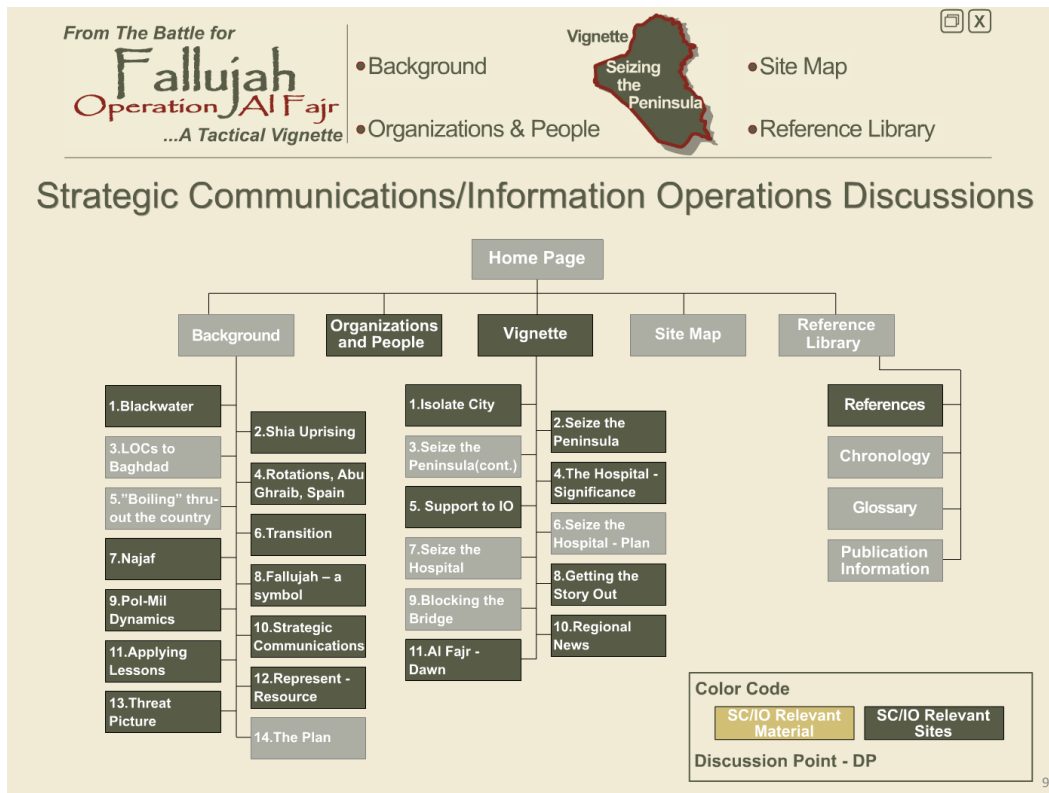


Figure 20: SC/IO Site Map Reflecting SC/IO-Relevant sites

As the user mouses over those SC/IO relevant sites, SC/IO relevant material is reflected in the form of suggested discussion points. An example of that is reflected in Figure 21. Not all are shown here, but each one of the shaded boxes contains suggested discussion points. Clicking on those discussion points will then take the user to that segment.

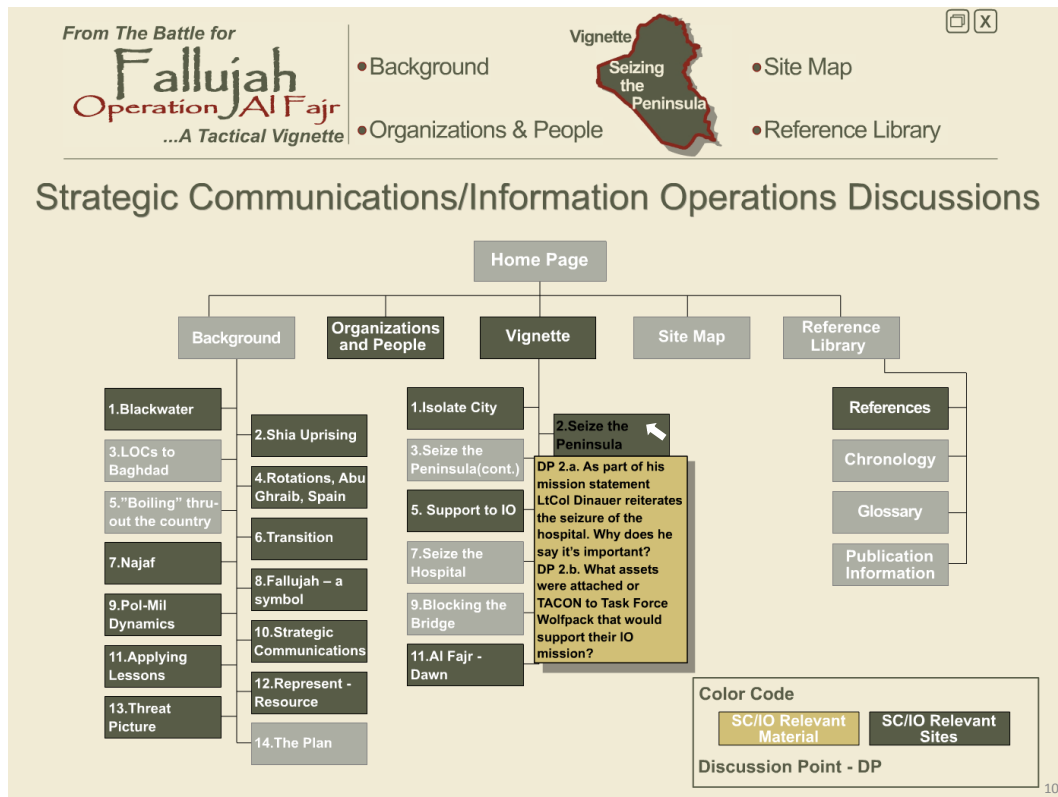


Figure 21: SC/IO-Relevant Material Site

Matrix

Although we've opted to use the Site Map to access relevant material in response to discussion points, another method is to use a matrix (see Figure 22). Envision a matrix with the narrative segments (Background and Vignette) down the left and themes across the top. The value of this method is that it could also be used as a work sheet by small group members to list examples of various themes. As a segment of the narrative is being shown, the student can list their thoughts under the various themes or they could even develop new themes.

Themes Segments	Strategic Communications/ Information Operations	Political – Military Dynamics	Partner Development/ Combined Operations	Strategic to Tactical Linkage
1. Blackwater Ambush	- How did real time media/video of this incident influence decision making?	- What was the relationship among the CPA, IGC and military?	- What happened to the ICDC; the Taji unit? - What Coalitions action(s) contributed to the Ambush?	- How can such a minor tactical action have strategic effects? Other examples?
2. Shia Uprising	- What started the Shia uprising? - What were the implications?	- What were the pol-mil dynamics and why were they important?	- What happened to the ICDC? Why? - How was Iraqi Army effected by cultural makeup?	- Was the Coalition risking a two-front War?
3. Cutting the LOCs to Baghdad		- Did insurgent actions result in an Operational Isolation?		- Did these actions result from a larger plan?
4. Force Rotations-Abu Ghraib – Spain	- When did the Abu Ghraib scandal surface? - What were the implications? How was it used by the insurgents?	- Why did Spain withdraw? - Was withdrawal linked to the Madrid bombings?	- What impact did Abu Ghraib have on partner development?	- How can risk associated with force rotations be mitigated?
5. Everything Boiling thru-out the country		- Allawi speaks of “half cooked measures,” what is he referring to?		- What does “rush to transfer authority” mean at tactical level?
6. Transition: May-August 2004	- Was CPA to a DOS Mission, correctly portrayed ? - Can IO “cover” force rotations?		- What did Allawi do to bolster the security forces?	- Did MNF-I have the right objective (successful elections)? Why?
7. Najaf	- Why was it necessary to depict as Iraqi success?	-Sistani or Allawi success? Does it matter?	- What Iraqi security forces participated? - What were the concerns?	

Figure 22: Segment/Theme Discussion Points, extract

Summary

This Education and Training Resource Guide offers the educator an approach to use the DVD. It capitalizes on the narrative segments as topical areas, provides suggested discussion points, and incorporates a tool for immediately accessing discussion point relevant segments through a site map, an electronic index. It also provides a worksheet that could be used by the teacher or student in developing and organizing discussion points as well as new themes.

Appendix A: Abbreviations & Acronyms

ACE	Armored Combat Earthmover
AST	Advisory Support Team
Brig Gen	Brigadier General–US Air Force
BrigGen	Brigadier General–US Marine Corps
BG	Brigadier General–US Army
BCT	Brigade Combat Team
Capt	Captain, US Marine Corps or US Air Force
Cav	cavalry
CBS	Columbia Broadcasting System
CENTCOM	US Central Command
CJTF-7	Combined Joint Task Force 7
COL	Colonel, US Army
Col	Colonel, US Marine Corps or US Air Force
CPA	Coalition Provisional Authority
DP	Discussion Point
G-3	Operations Staff at Army Division and Marine Expeditionary Force Headquarters
GEN	General, US Army
Gen	General, US Marine Corps or US Air Force
ICDC	Iraqi Civil Defense Corp
IDA	Institute for Defense Analyses
IED	improvised explosive device
IGC	Iraqi Governing Council
IGF	Iraqi Ground Forces
IIF	Iraqi Intervention Forces
IIG	Iraqi Interim Government
ING	Iraqi National Guard
IO	information operations
ISF	Iraqi Security Forces
JAWP	Joint Advanced Warfighting Program

JCOA	Joint Center for Operational Analysis
LAR	Light Armored Reconnaissance
LOC	Lines of communications
LTC	Lieutenant Colonel, US Army
Lt Col	Lieutenant Colonel, US Air Force
LtCol	Lieutenant Colonel, US Marine Corps
LTG	Lieutenant General, US Army
LtGen	Lieutenant General, US Marine Corps
MAJ	Major, US Army
Maj	Major, US Marine Corps or US Air Force
MajGen	Major General, US Marine Corps
MARDIV	Marine Division
MEF	Marine Expeditionary Force
MG	Major General, US Army
MNC-I	Multi-National Corps–Iraq
MNF-I	Multi-National Forces–Iraq
MNSTC-I	Multi-National Security Transition Command–Iraq
MSR	main supply route
NCO	non-commissioned officer
PSYOP	Psychological Operations
RCT	regimental combat team
ROE	rules of engagement
SFG	Special Forces Group
SFODA	Special Forces Operational Detachment Alpha
STRATCOM	Strategic Communications Directorate
TOC	tactical operations center
UNSCR	United Nations Security Council Resolution
USJFCOM	United States Joint Forces Command
VBIED	vehicle-borne improvised explosive device

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Appendix C: Chronology of 2004 Events

January–March, Operation IRAQI FREEDOM II Major Force Rotations

- 2 Mar, Ashoura massacre, 271 killed
- 8 Mar, Interim Iraqi constitution signed
- 11 Mar, Madrid Bombing
- 28 Mar, CPA closed Sadr's Baghdad newspaper
- 31 Mar, Blackwater contractors killed in Fallujah

April, “April Uprising,” Fears of a Sunni/Shia collusion

- 2 Apr, One of al-Sadr's lieutenants arrested
- 4 Apr–1 May, Operation VIGILANT RESOLVE (Fallujah I)
- 5 Apr, CPA announces Iraqi arrest warrant for al-Sadr in connection with the murder of a Shi'a cleric the previous year
- Late Apr, photos released of Abu-Gurayb
- 25 Apr, Bremer warns of situation in An Najaf
- Spain begins withdrawing from Iraq (An Najaf)
- 30 Apr, Siege of Fallujah ends at the urging of Iraqi politicians; Fallujah Brigade formed

May

- 4–22 May, 1/1AD(-) fights Mahdi Militia for Karbala
- 15 May, CJTF-7 inactivates and MNF- Iraq activates
- 17 May, IGC President Izz al-Din Salim killed by car bomb in Baghdad

June

- 8 Jun, UNSCR 1546 adopted
- 20 Jun, IIF established.
- 28 Jun, CPA turned over sovereignty to the IIG

July

- ICDC re-designated the ING
- Sadr tensions in Sadr City as well as An Najaf (Building since April)

August

- 4 Aug, Campaign Plan published
- 2–14 Aug, Coalition and ISF defeat Mahdi Militia in Al Kut
- 5–27 Aug, An Najaf, Operation PACIFIC GUARDIAN
- 19 Aug Iraqi National Assembly elected and seated

October

- 1–4 Oct, Samarra, Operation BATON ROUGE
- 23 Oct, Massacre of Army recruits; Allawi blames Coalition for the massacre

November

- 8 Nov–23 Dec, Operation AL FAJR (Fallujah II)
- 28 Nov, Militants storm police station in Samarra

December, Setting conditions for the elections

- Operations conducted in Sunni Triangle and Triangle of Death (south of Baghdad) and Mosul
- 29 Dec, ING to be incorporated into Iraqi Army on Jan 6

2004: Chaos, Transition, Setting Conditions

Chaos, Reaction (Jan-May)

- **Troop issues**
 - Major Force Rotations
 - Iraqi forces refuse to fight in Fallujah
 - Iraqi Civil Defense Corps (ICDC) loses 10,000 Jundi in April to Desertions (40% of the force), 10% of force supported the insurgents
 - Coalition Rules of Engagement (ROE)
 - No Theater reserve
 - 1st Armored Division extended
 - Coalition: Spain withdraws troops
- **Two Major Fronts**
 - Sunni Triangle with Fallujah I, Vigilant Resolve
 - Insurrection in the Shia areas of Sadr City, Karbala, Najaf, Al Kut
- **Conflicting relationships – Iraqi perspective**
 - CJTF-7 - CPA [Dr. Allawij]
 - CPA - IGC [Dr. Rubai'e]
- **Abu-Gurayb fuels insurgent Information Operations (IO)**
- **Insurgents attain strategic surprise in April – May 2004**

Transition (May-Aug)

- Combined Joint Task Force-7 to Multi National Force and Corps – Iraq
- Iraqi Governing Council to Interim Iraqi Government
- Sovereignty changed from Coalition Provisional Authority to Iraqi Interim Government – new Iraqi Government tested in Najaf
- Coalition Provisional Authority to US mission
- GEN Casey & Ambassador Negroponete's transition – Red Team, plan, and "team" concept
- Objective: 30 January 2005 elections

Setting the Conditions (Sep-Dec)

- Build up to Al Fajr – Applying the lessons
- Forces Available
 - Close the borders
 - Logistics
 - Minimize non combatants in Fallujah – Information Operations (IO)
 - Reconstruction
 - Capture the IO initiative – pre-empt
 - Set conditions for January elections

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REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE

Form Approved
OMB No. 0704-0188

Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 1 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing this collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden to Department of Defense, Washington Headquarters Services, Directorate for Information Operations and Reports (0704-0188), 1215 Jefferson Davis Highway, Suite 1204, Arlington, VA 22202-4302. Respondents should be aware that notwithstanding any other provision of law, no person shall be subject to any penalty for failing to comply with a collection of information if it does not display a currently valid OMB control number. **PLEASE DO NOT RETURN YOUR FORM TO THE ABOVE ADDRESS.**

1. REPORT DATE (DD-MM-YY) January 2011		2. REPORT TYPE Study (Final)		3. DATES COVERED (From - To) September 2010—January 2011	
4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE <i>Seizing the Peninsula, a Vignette from The Battle for Fallujah, An Education and Training Resource</i> (includes the Guide and the DVD)				5a. CONTRACT NO. DASW01-04-C-0003	
				5b. GRANT NO.	
				5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NO(S).	
6. AUTHOR(S) Dr. William (Bill) Knarr, Task Leader Major Robert Castro, USMC; Mr. John Frost; Colonel Tracy King, USMC; Mr. Mark Nutsch; Ms. Dianne Fuller; Ms. Carolyn Leonard; Ms. Mary Hawkins; Major General Thomas Jones, USMC, (Ret); Colonel George Mauldin, USA, (Ret)				5d. PROJECT NO.	
				5e. TASK NO. CB-8-2516 & AJ-8-2465	
				5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER	
7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) Joint Advanced Warfighting Program Institute for Defense Analyses 4850 Mark Center Drive, Alexandria, VA 22311-1882				8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NO. IDA Document D-4286 Log no. H 11-000519	
9. SPONSORING / MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) Joint Center for Operational Analysis US Joint Forces Command 116 Lake View Parkway Suffolk, VA 23435 (757) 203-7618				10. SPONSOR'S / MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S) Joint Center for Operational Analysis	
				11. SPONSOR'S / MONITOR'S REPORT NO(S).	
12. DISTRIBUTION / AVAILABILITY STATEMENT Approved for public release; distribution is unlimited.					
13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES Unclassified					
14. ABSTRACT Operation Al Fajr-the second Battle for Fallujah in November 2004-was a hard-fought, Coalition-led combat assault to clear the city of insurgents and restore Fallujah to its rightful residents. The central narrative of the assault is told in the heroics of Marines, Soldiers, Sailors, and Airmen committed to supporting each other and completing the mission. However, there is a lesser-known, but compelling story of how the Coalition developed and worked with the Iraqis to apply lessons from the strategic- to the tactical levels as they set the conditions for, and executed Al Fajr. This Education and Training Resource, consisting of a publication and DVD, presents a tactical vignette that links to operational and strategic themes in the areas of strategic communications, information operations, political-military dynamics, and partnership development. It emphasizes that those themes are just as important at the tactical level as they are at the strategic level. The tactical vignette that best illustrates that effort is from Phase II of the battle, Enhanced Shaping, and focuses on the seizure of the peninsula and hospital west of the city. The purpose of this Resource is to provide trainers and educators with a rich source of material for presenting and engaging students in discussing those themes.					
15. SUBJECT TERMS Fallujah, information operations, strategic communications, education, training					
16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF:			17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT UU	18. NO. OF PAGES 60 pp w/DVD	19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON BG John M. Murray Director, Joint Center for Operational Analysis USJFCOM
					19b. TELEPHONE NUMBER (with Area Code) (757) 203-7618
a. REPORT Unclassified	b. ABSTRACT U	c. THIS PAGE U			