

# Joint Intelligence and UPHOLD DEMOCRACY

By THOMAS R. WILSON

**O**n September 18, 1994 U.S. Atlantic Command (ACOM) set in motion Operation Uphold Democracy, an airborne, amphibious, and special operations invasion of Haiti. A few hours after the invasion started the Carter agreement was signed in

Port au Prince, abruptly halting the kick-in-the-door operation and initiating a dramatic transition to a soft-landing option. This was flawlessly executed the next day as the 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain Division lifted off *USS Dwight D. Eisenhower* and alit at Port

au Prince International Airport. A few days later marines launched an amphibious landing at Cap Haitien from *USS Wasp*. The striking success of this operation was based on joint training, which contributed to the readiness and flexibility of our forces, and

adaptive joint force packaging, which facilitated the overall plan. It was also due to robust joint intelligence support, which dramatically demonstrated the progress of the intelligence community in meeting the needs of joint task force (JTF) commanders and components.

Much will appear in *JFQ* and other journals on joint force packaging for Haiti. This article focuses on lessons from the Persian Gulf War and Somalia, and how those lessons improved intelligence support for the joint warfighter. Specifically, it outlines how ACOM and its Atlantic Intelligence Command used training support, technology, and common tactics, techniques, and procedures (TTP) to support four JTF commanders in various Haiti contingencies.

## Background

Contingency planning for Haiti started with the ouster of President Jean Bertrand Aristide in September 1991, and accelerated



Combat Camera Imagery (Val Gemppis)

Securing the presidential palace, Port Au Prince.

## Summary

The success of Operation Uphold Democracy in Haiti was due to joint training, which contributed to the readiness of our forces, and adaptive joint force packaging, which facilitated the flexibility of our overall planning. It was also due to joint intelligence, which vividly demonstrated the progress that the intelligence community has made in meeting the needs of joint task force and component commanders in effective and efficient ways. The lessons learned from recent contingencies like the Gulf War and Somalia, and how these lessons have improved joint intelligence support, have made a deep impact on joint warfighting. In particular, the benefits that U.S. Atlantic Command and its Joint Intelligence Center (Atlantic Intelligence Command) have gained from technology, training, and common intelligence tactics, techniques, and procedures yielded the outstanding support which joint task force commanders received during four Haitian contingencies.

Amphibious Assault Ship *USS Wasp* off Haiti.



Special Boat Unit and SEALs doing recon off Cap Dame Marie, Haiti.

DOD (Gregory S. Cinelli)



82<sup>d</sup> Airborne Division departing for JTF-180.

DOD (Betty Tsosie)

U.S. Navy (John Sokolowski)

as the de facto government of Lieutenant General Raoul Cedras failed to comply with the terms of the Governors Island accord signed earlier that summer. JTF-120 was stood up on short notice in October 1993 to protect and evacuate American citizens and key Haitian nationals. Initially under Commander Cruiser Destroyer Group Eight, JTF-120 had five commanders over the next year and headquarters on four ships (*USS Nassau*, *Saipan*, *Wasp*, and *Mount Whitney*). Beyond providing protection and evacuation support, it was responsible for directing U.N. maritime embargo operations around Haiti.

The second JTF for the Haiti crisis was JTF-160, formed in June 1994 to handle the flow of Haitian migrants generated by deteriorating conditions on the island and the U.S. Government's suspension of direct repatriation. First activated on the hospital ship *USNS Comfort* in Kingston, Jamaica, JTF-160 quickly moved to Naval Station Guantanamo Bay because of the overwhelming

number of Haitian migrants. Commanded by a brigadier general from Marine Forces Atlantic, JTF-160 ultimately set up safe havens not only for some 15,000 Haitians but also for 30,000 Cubans.

By Summer 1994, as it became apparent that political initiatives would not lead to the return of Aristide, ACOM expedited planning for various military options. Operation plans (OPLANS) for nonpermissive forced entry (kick-in-the-door) and semi-permissive administrative entry (soft-landing) were developed. Both were planned as joint operations with the former, JTF-180, under the commander of XVIII Airborne Corps and the latter, JTF-190, under the commander of the 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain Division. Plan excursions existed for JTF-180 to be headquartered either afloat on *USS Mount Whitney* or ashore in Port au Prince and for JTF-190 to be shore-based. A combination of these plans was executed involving both commanders with headquarters afloat and ashore.

From an intelligence perspective, the key points are that all the JTFs described above had the same joint intelligence architecture, TTP manual, and interoperable dissemination system and equipment. This highlights the progress that has been made given past interoperability problems that plagued intelligence dissemination and the fact that the four JTF commanders (ranging from one- to three-star rank) represented three services (each with

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different-sized staffs and capabilities). Moreover, the commanders conducted planning and operations from varied locations in garrison and deployed, and from land and sea-based facilities.

#### Challenges and Initiatives

The above accomplishments take on greater significance when examined in the context of contingencies over the last fifteen years and related intelligence shortcomings. From Grenada to Panama, from the Persian Gulf to Somalia, the problems were often similar: service stovepipes and resulting inconsistent support, lack of interoperable equipment and procedures, and evidence that dissemination was consistently the biggest shortcoming. Frequently information

intelligence architecture provided flexibility to JTFs formed around different services

was collected in a timely manner and analyzed correctly only to get bogged down in a dissemination system that failed to serve customers. Desert Storm was characterized by many intel-

ligence successes, not the least of which was capturing valuable lessons for the future. Those lessons included joint intelligence architecture solidified in doctrine and given vitality by a standard TTP; equipment interoperability (vice nine secondary imagery dissemination systems that did not talk to each other); and an improved intelligence dissemination system.

After the Gulf War ACOM pursued a series of initiatives designed to meet intelligence challenges identified during that contingency. The initiatives can be divided into four major categories:

- ▼ theater-level joint TTP development
- ▼ training teams tailored for joint intelligence operations at JTF-level
- ▼ improved, flexible joint intelligence communications connectivity
- ▼ intelligence operations in joint exercises targeted at major failings.

While most of the initiatives had been begun, the shift in roles and missions under ACOM hastened progress. Intelligence operations across service lines became easier as Air Combat Command and Forces Command joined Atlantic Fleet, Marine Forces

Atlantic, and Special Operations Command Atlantic as ACOM components in 1993. Also, changes at the national level complemented ACOM initiatives, allowing quick and steady progress.

#### Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures

The intelligence architecture used by unified commands in supporting JTF commanders and component forces supported each of the JTFs discussed earlier. It also provided the flexibility to accommodate JTFs formed around different services in different home base or deployed locations. The publication of "Atlantic Tactics, Techniques, and Procedures (ATTP)" for joint intelligence support served as the cookbook for successful intelligence organization. Regardless of the size or the type of the JTF staff, ATTP provide JTF J-2s with principles, concept of operations, and information to organize and operate JTF J-2 staffs. Now in a third edition after testing in rugged exercise and contingency environments, ATTP were widely used by eight different J-2s directing intelligence operations in Haiti for JTF-120, -160, -180, and -190. While addressing the entire intelligence spectrum, ATTP emphasize support from theater-level JIC to JTF. This is particularly useful in determining joint and component augmentation requirements, organizing JTF-level JICs, facilitating interoperability, and accessing theater- and national-level data bases. ATTP fully complement national-level JTTP and detailed component TTP being developed. ACOM credits much of the intelligence success for Haiti operations to the fact that JTFs used a common document like the intelligence cookbook.

#### Training and Augmentation

While the production, distribution, and wide utilization of intelligence TTPs is considered an important contribution to success in Haiti, training assistance and augmentation from the unified command level was even more critical. With the new ACOM missions of joint force packaging and joint training, it was clear in 1993 that the mission of the Atlantic Intelligence Command (AIC) also would change. Accordingly, as a result of internal and external reviews of products and customers, AIC diverted 15 percent of its personnel to establishing a field support directorate. That organization,

with a primary mission of training and exercise support, was formed coincident with the stand-up of ACOM. Personnel manning the new directorate were drawn from within AIC and are experts in areas such as JIC watch standing, collections, targeting, order of battle analysis, automatic data processing (ADP) systems, and communications.

The AIC field support directorate provided nearly fifty intelligence augmentees for the four JTFs involved in the Haiti operations, as well as a few for component and embassy support. This concept had been tested with great success during Agile Provider in early 1994 and built on that foundation for Haiti. For example, a lesson learned during the exercise was that data processing and communications technicians were needed in greater numbers than some traditional specialties. Thus field support teams deployed to Haiti were heavy in those capabilities, especially among the more than thirty personnel who augmented JTF-180 on *USS Mount Whitney* and JTF-190 in Port au Prince. It is clear from exercises and the Haiti experience that theater augmentation for training and exercises pays intelligence dividends and that these training teams are well suited for operations. Even though a training role may detract from a theater JIC's traditional production capabilities, the benefits are worth the cost.

The Haiti JTFs were all supported by National Intelligence Support Teams (NISTs) drawn from the Defense Intelligence Agency, Central Intelligence Agency, and National Security Agency. NISTs can be requested by joint force commanders from CJCS and—on approval of the Secretary of Defense—tailored to meet operational requirements based on arrangements between theater J-2s and the Defense Intelligence Agency and J-2, Joint Staff. Teams have their own communications, access to the

Joint Worldwide Intelligence Communications Systems (JWICS), and generally have a Joint Deployable Intelligence Support System (JDISS) capability. In conjunction with theater JIC support teams, NISTs give JTF intelligence staffs access to national and theater-level analytical capabilities and data bases as well as their own analytical and col-

lection management capabilities. Designed for deployment in support of contingency operations, NISTs should be a feature of every theater-level joint exercise.

#### Extended Intelligence Connectivity

Since dissemination is a traditional intelligence weakness, extending improved intelligence connectivity was perhaps the most important new tool used for support of Haiti operations. Such connectivity is built around JWICS and JDISS which empower the intelligence-pull concept by linking consumers to theater and national data bases and capabilities via expanded communications bandwidth (JWICS) and interoperable dissemination equipment (JDISS). These two systems were developed after Desert Storm to address problems with service communications systems in theater which were service-oriented and lacked connectivity with either the other services or national level. JWICS connects the National Military Joint Intelligence Center (NMJIC) with combatant command JICs and a host of intelligence organizations. The system handles all types of data, imagery, and graphics, and allows video broadcasting. In conjunction with JDISS, JWICS extends capabilities to fixed and deployed tactical units as occurred in Haiti. JDISS offers access to data bases as well as voice, basic imagery analysis, and dissemination capabilities, and standard office automation and access to theater and national resources. JWICS and JDISS were combined, expanded, and sent down the chain of command via a video teleconferencing (VTC) and data exchange network which is known as the ACOM Net.

The ACOM Net was developed for and published in the ACOM implementation plan. It provides the theater with expanded, flexible connectivity with all components—Forces Command, Air Combat Command, Atlantic Fleet, and Marine Forces Atlantic—as well as staffs identified for regular training as JTF commands, namely, XVIII Airborne Corps, III Corps, Eighth Air Force, Twelfth Air Force, Second Fleet, and II Marine Expeditionary Force. This grew out of the *USS George Washington* experiment in 1992 and Ocean

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Venture '93, when leased commercial satellite communications gave operational commanders expanded communications bandwidth in a tactical environment. In both cases, sensitive compartmented information (SCI) and general service video teleconferencing and computer-to-computer data exchanges were facilitated. Moreover, deployed customers were able to manage the available bandwidth and JDISS equipment to expand seamless interfaces which that equipment provides. The ACOM Net was being built along those lines as the Haiti contingencies unfolded and JTFs were stood up.

From an intelligence perspective, the ACOM Net is completely interoperable with the SCI JWICS network, providing an extension or "tree-down" of JWICS to tactical commanders. For ACOM Net subscribers, a JWICS hub has been established at ACOM, along with other hubs for collateral video and data connectivity. Key operational com-

manders participating from their headquarters. The next day the President made the decision to launch Uphold Democracy.

The ACOM Net and JWICS provide the theater JIC and NMJIC with unique, interactive data and video connectivity with key commands farther down the chain of command than before. Intelligence problems and discrepancies are quickly sorted out, collection and analytical tasking is rapid and clear, and volumes of formal message traffic are eliminated as intelligence consumers can easily reach to theater and national capability. ACOM JDISS and intelligence VTC growth, from two and zero respectively in 1990 to 98 and 10 in 1994, permitted this extended connectivity—all significantly enhanced by TTP work and the augmentation capability previously discussed.

#### Joint Exercises

Annual joint exercises held in the years following Operation Desert Storm were marvelous proving grounds for equipment, procedures, and joint intelligence support concepts used for Haiti. For example, Ocean Venture '92 was the first exercise in which ACOM used the intelligence-pull concept of operations with extensive deployment of JDISS equipment among JTF commanders and components. It was also the command's maiden attempt at using a command-wide request for information (RFI) management system.

The experiment was not as successful as desired since it was manual, but it laid the basis for developing an automated RFI tracking system implemented in Ocean Venture '93. That system—an application of JDISS—was a winner and the backbone for RFI management for JTFs and components in Haiti. It is used across ACOM, providing efficient RFI tracking and response as well as saving thousands of messages annually.

Ocean Venture '93, with a small island campaign scenario, featured other joint intelligence firsts which were routine procedures by the time Uphold Democracy was executed. Among them were implementation of the ACOM on-line imagery bulletin



Satellite communications center.

manders (such as JTF-180 and TF-185 on *USS Mount Whitney*, JTF-190 in Port au Prince, TF-186 at Pope Air Force Base/Fort Bragg, TG-185.2 on *USS Wasp*, and JTF-160 in Guantanamo Bay), ACOM components, and supporting commands (viz., Transportation Command and the Defense Intelligence Agency/National Military Joint Information Center) were linked via SCI VTC. These networks provided communications for continuous JDISS connectivity. A dramatic demonstration of the JWICS/ACOM Net occurred on September 17, 1994 when the President, Secretary of Defense, and Chairman conducted a Haiti video teleconference from the NMJIC, together with CINACOM and all operational, component, and supporting

U.S. Marine Corps (Robert W. Oliver)

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board, the shared imagery repository and dissemination system; successful mating of JDISS and the Army Warrior intelligence system; demonstration of directed imagery exploitation in which JTF targeteers deployed on *USS Mount Whitney* viewed imagery manipulated at AIC; and use of *USS Mount Whitney* as a joint mobile command platform with afloat JIC serving the JTF commander. In fact, the JTF intelligence package on *USS Mount Whitney* for Ocean Venture '93 was largely duplicated (and enhanced) for JTF-180 on the same command platform. The only difference was that the commander of Second Fleet was replaced as JTF commander by the commander of XVIII Airborne Corps. Similar joint intelligence enhancements were exercised during Agile Provider '94, including the maiden use of AIC field support teams. All three exercises featured continued interactive enhancement of ATTP for joint intelligence support. Most importantly, over the three-year period commanders of Second Fleet, XVIII Airborne Corps, and II Marine Expeditionary Force had the opportunity to exercise as the JTF commander. The interaction of J-2 staffs in setting up JTF intelligence architecture and working with the theater JIC were valuable preparation for the Haiti operations.

The lesson to be learned is that exercises offer the best way to “push the envelope” without fear of failing. Joint and component intelligence enhancements should be tried in exercises first, reaching out to technology and advanced ideas that may not work perfectly but lay the groundwork for tremendous improvements when the stakes are high.

Many aspects of Uphold Democracy differed from past contingencies: employing the 10<sup>th</sup> Mountain Division from *USS Eisenhower*, Special Operations Forces from *USS America*, and the commander of XVIII Airborne Corps as a JTF commander with a command post on board *USS Mount Whitney*. Adaptive force packages offered operational commanders exceptional flexibility. They also facilitated strong C<sup>4</sup>I and intelligence capabilities as well as flexibility and redundancy as operations transitioned from afloat to ashore.

As the situation developed over the course of 1994, most of the early action was afloat. As the commander of JTF-120 rotated among a series of amphibious ships, the JTF J-2 was continually linked with the theater JIC, and ships engaged in embargo support provided the bulk of the collection capability. The afloat C<sup>4</sup>I and intelligence capability was multiplied as both JTF-180 and JTF-190 deployed to the area. Situational awareness by the JTF commanders (supported by the afloat JIC) was equally high on September 18 and 19 as decisions were made to launch the kick-in-the-door operation, then to halt the invasion, and finally to switch to the soft landing. Vigorous joint C<sup>4</sup>I and intelligence capabilities were maintained afloat as forces, intelligence personnel, and equipment flowed to Haiti from CONUS. As capabilities ashore were built up and the JTF-190 JIC became fully operational, the bulk of intelligence support responsibility gradually shifted ashore. The JTF intelligence backbone (built around Navy C<sup>4</sup>I equipment with joint and component personnel and augmented by joint equipment) was replaced by an intelligence backbone built around Army C<sup>4</sup>I equipment (also staffed by joint and component personnel and augmented by joint capability).

It is a tribute to the strides in joint intelligence that these transitions were made with relative ease. The training, dedication, and skill of intelligence professionals were responsible for success. Unlike contingencies in the past, intelligence personnel had the benefit of documentation on joint tactics, techniques, and procedures, and were very familiar with service intelligence organizations. Moreover, when called to serve on joint intelligence staffs, they could rely on joint training support and joint personnel and equipment augmentation. In addition, improved equipment interoperability and a dynamic, flexible intelligence data and video network should tremendously encourage operational commanders on the great potential for continued improvement in joint intelligence support. **JFQ**