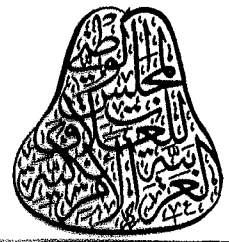


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Five Pillars of Peace: A Blueprint for Achieving Peace and Stability in the Central Region

by

***General J.H. Binford Peay, III
Commander-in-Chief, U.S. Central Command***

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T A B L E O F C O N T E N T S

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**by General J.H. Binford Peay, III
Commander-in-Chief, U.S. Central Command**

Foreword by Dr. John Duke Anthony

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Foreword

Fewer and fewer Americans are unaware of the United States Central Command (CENTCOM). Day after day CENTCOM helps protect important U.S. interests in 19 African, Arab, Middle Eastern, and Southwest Asian nations. In its geographic Area of Responsibility (AOR), the Command is key to U.S. strategic goals of enhancing regional peace, security, and stability.

The Command's roles in helping to end the 1980-88 Iran-Iraq war, in reversing Iraq's aggression against Kuwait in 1990-91, and in thwarting a potential renewal of Iraq's threats to Kuwait in October 1994 and again in August 1995 are monumental achievements. They stand as major landmarks in U.S. and allied conflict ending, conflict prevention, and peacekeeping operations over the past decade. Countless millions witnessed how CENTCOM was front and center in the internationally concerted action to end the threats that these conflicts posed to regional and global well-being.

On the fifth anniversary of Desert Shield and Desert Storm, it is appropriate to stop, step back, and look at CENTCOM's present and future roles in what is often cited as one of the world's most dangerous neighborhoods. Americans and countless other millions who depend upon the Command's effectiveness stand to benefit through learning more about how CENTCOM relates to their needs, concerns, and interests.

It is in this context that the U.S.-GCC Corporate Cooperation Committee publishes the views of CENTCOM's Commander, General J. H. Binford Peay III (US Army). The setting in which General Peay shared his analysis of CENTCOM's past achievements and his views regarding the Command's present and future prospects was the Fourth Annual U.S. Mideast Policymakers Conference, September 17-18, 1995, at the George C. Marshall Foundation in Lexington, Virginia. General Peay is a 1962 graduate of the Virginia Military Institute (VMI), which is also located in Lexington. Indeed, the Institute is situated adjacent to the Foundation and, together with the National Council on U.S.-Arab Relations, was one of the Conference's three co-hosts.

The Committee, its secretariat, its 26 member companies (see listing herein), and other firms that co-sponsored the event are fortunate to have been present at the creation of these conferences. They are also pleased to have been involved in their planning and implementation ever since. As any of the participants will attest, these gatherings have rapidly evolved to occupy a unique niche among events intended to hone the skills of analysts, policymakers, and policy implementors. They have become "must attend" events for a growing number of professionals responsible for dealing effectively with one of the most perennially vexatious "how" questions of all: how best to achieve U.S. and allied foreign policy objectives in the Middle East.

Many U.S. Mideast policymakers acknowledge that one of their recurring nightmares involves the quest, often elusive, of how best to deal with the Gulf's and the eastern Mediterranean's strategic and geopolitical landscapes. It was in this context that General Peay was asked to keynote the 1995 Conference, the focus of which was "New Directions for Regional Peace

and Security." In offering a detailed set of analyses of the challenges at hand and his suggestions for how they might best be solved, ameliorated, or just better addressed and managed, the General characteristically went beyond what one is likely to find in the mainstream media or, indeed, anywhere else.

General Peay's paper is an original contribution to the all too limited body of literature and knowledge on the subject. It is cogently reasoned and eloquently expressed. Where necessary, like the forces who have served and continue to serve under his command, it is hard-hitting and pulls no punches. It is also fair and prudent throughout, and, in several places, bold and visionary.

The General lays out, for the generalist and specialist alike, not only what it will take to meet the tasks of the moment and the immediately foreseeable future. He focuses with equal clarity on what must transpire if CENTCOM is to help carry the U.S. into the 21st century with its core interests in the GCC region, in the Gulf as a whole, and in the AOR more broadly, intact, if not also somewhat stronger and healthier than at present.

The Committee presents this monograph in the spirit of all its other publications, programs, and activities, as a contribution to the national dialogue on American interests and involvement in the GCC region.

Dr. John Duke Anthony
President and CEO, National Council on U.S.-Arab Relations and
Secretary, U.S.-GCC Corporate Cooperation Committee

**Five Pillars of Peace:
A Blueprint for Achieving Peace and Stability in the Central Region**

by General J.H. Binford Peay
Commander-in-Chief, U.S. Central Command

I. INTRODUCTION

The theme of this year's U.S. Mideast Policymakers Conference — "The United States and the Middle East: New Directions for Security and Peace" — bears directly on the mission of United States Central Command (U.S. CENTCOM). Like all U.S. policymakers and policy-implementors, U.S. CENTCOM confronts very tough, seemingly intractable challenges in the region. Yet, amidst the many perils to peace and stability in the region are great opportunities for economic relationships, political partnerships, and diplomatic cooperation. We are at a crossroads where visionary leadership, innovation, and imagination can make the difference between success and failure. The United States, in cooperation with its allies in the region and elsewhere, must staunchly resist the opponents of peace, spoilers of cooperation, and aspiring hegemonies who are willing to engulf the Middle East in conflict and terrorism to achieve selfish territorial and political ambitions.

The men and women of U.S. Central Command understand the importance of national commitment and remain ever vigilant. It was most recently hammered home when, on the afternoon of October 6, 1994, Central Command learned that two Iraqi Republican Guard divisions were moving southward from garrisons near Baghdad to assembly areas in the Euphrates river valley. With these reinforcements, Iraq could threaten Kuwait with eight divisions, their lead brigades positioned only fifteen miles from the border. Bellicose rhetoric, the massive scale and tempo of troop mobilizations and deployments, uploaded ammunition, the high state of readiness of their air defenses, and a score of other indicators pointed to the possibility of a repeat of the August 1990 invasion. Though unable to predict Saddam Hussein's intentions, Central Command determined that Iraq was capable of attacking Kuwait with five divisions within seven days.

The President acted quickly, directing the Secretary of Defense and Central Command to take immediate action to deter and, if necessary, block an Iraqi offensive. We modified existing plans and orchestrated the deployment in an operation code-named Vigilant Warrior.

On October 10, four days after the crisis began, Iraq announced the withdrawal of reinforcing Republican Guard divisions. This gesture occurred just as the first U.S.-based aircraft began arriving at airfields in the Gulf and as lead companies of the 24th Infantry Division began moving to tactical assembly areas to link up with Kuwaiti Brigades and units of other Gulf Cooperation Council states. The immediate crisis was defused. To emphasize the American commitment to support the security of regional friends and to ensure that Saddam Hussein did not reverse his decision, U.S. Central Command continued to flow forces into

the area. By the end of October, U.S. forces in the Gulf swelled to include the aircraft carrier USS George Washington, 2,000 Marines stationed aboard the USS Tripoli Amphibious ready group, four Aegis missile cruisers, reinforced Air Force squadrons totalling 275 aircraft, nearly a battalion equivalent of Special Operations troops, and two Army brigades of the 24th Infantry Division. An additional 700 aircraft and 60,000 troops stood by for deployment orders in the U.S. U.S. and coalition resolve had convinced Saddam Hussein that the risks of confrontation were too high. The speed with which the U.S. deployed and positioned a lethal armada made clear to Iraqi leaders and others in the region that the U.S. and its partners would staunchly resist another round of invasion, conquest, and bloodshed.

Our success in Vigilant Warrior and in a succession of other military operations over this past year says much about U.S. Central Command. Vigilant Warrior in the Gulf during the Fall of 1994, Operation United Shield in Somalia during the Spring of 1995, in which we oversaw the withdrawal of United Nations forces from that troubled land, Vigilant Sentinel in the Fall of 1995, in which we once again stood firm against Iraqi belligerence — all are testimony to the depth of U.S. CENTCOM's understanding of the paradoxical dynamics of its vast area of responsibility. Larger than the continental U.S., it stretches from the Horn of Africa and Egypt through Jordan and the Gulf states to Afghanistan and Pakistan and includes the Red Sea, Gulf of Aden, Gulf of Oman, and the Arabian Gulf. And, although these nations share many cultural and religious traits, they are singularly and collectively unique.

Our understanding of these lands and peoples has been attained through years of detailed planning, extensive joint and combined training, and painstakingly developed relationships with regional friends. These factors have guided the development of Central Command's theater strategy — a strategy that contends with the demands of the region today, and, hopefully, well into the next century.

II. GEOPOLITICAL DYNAMICS AND THREATS

Maintaining security and stability in the Gulf region is integral to the economic well-being and political stability of the entire world. Sixty-five percent of the world's proven oil reserves are located in the region, from which the U.S. imports 22% of its energy resources, Western Europe imports 43%, and Japan imports 68%. Some experts predict that these import percentages will increase by 10% over the next decade. Much of this oil must transit through narrow straits or choke points and can therefore be easily interdicted by hostile powers in the region. This oil trade produces a vibrant economic relationship between the U.S. and Middle Eastern states that includes an array of commercial activities, ranging from military hardware to construction, health services, and consumer goods.

Our nation has several vital interests in the region: maintaining the free flow of oil at stable and reasonable prices; ensuring freedom of navigation and access to commercial markets; assuring the security of American citizens and property abroad; and promoting the security of regional friends in the context of a comprehensive Middle East peace. Clearly, other American interests include promoting respect for human rights, countering drug traffickers, advancing economic development, opposing proliferation of weapons of mass destruction,

and defeating terrorism.

A host of challenges imperil these interests in an area that encompasses several fault lines of conflict:

- Rich in culture and history, the region is the birthplace of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam and is home to 427 million people making up seventeen different ethnic groups, 420 tribal groupings, six major languages, and hundreds of dialects.
- It is a region of stark contrasts in wealth and stability where on any given day there are 14 internal or external conflicts; where millions of people struggle daily to obtain their next meal, acquire clean water, secure shelter, get educated, and earn a living; where a population explosion heightens frustrations and rivalries.
- It is a region in which Egypt confronts significant internal threats from political and religious extremists — extremists who receive money, weapons, and sanctuary from Sudan, a nation that is sponsoring terrorism and unrest throughout the area.
- It is a region in which Pakistan, seeking to exploit new commercial opportunities with the Central Asian Republics, must compete with Iran for access to ancient trade routes, contend with civil war in Afghanistan, and come to grips with its knotty, historic dispute with India — a dispute that threatens to escalate from border frays to weapons proliferation and a new round of war.
- And it is a region where Iraqi and Iranian virulence undermine regional peace and stability.

Though it lost more than half of its conventional military might in the 1991 Gulf War, Iraq has reorganized its forces and has cannibalized spare parts to amass a sizeable army. As the crisis of October 1994 demonstrated, it has the capability to mobilize and move large numbers of forces quickly to threaten Kuwait and Saudi Arabia. Furthermore, the scope of that nation's military-industrial complex still remains a mystery, even after numerous U.N. inspections. These considerations underscore that lifting U.N. sanctions against Iraq will certainly lead to its rearmament.

In the fifteenth year of its revolution, Iran is competing with Iraq for dominance in the Gulf. Its large oil reserves, significant number of well-educated engineers and technicians, and considerable population endow it with the means to overcome internal unrest and economic malaise to attain its ambitions. Iran has undertaken an extensive weapons development program and is purchasing submarines, attack aircraft, and anti-shiping missiles. Armed with these tools, it has underwritten political and Islamic extremists worldwide, militarized disputed islands near the Strait of Hormuz, and attempted to sabotage the peace process.

Tensions emanating from Iraqi and Iranian activities, combined with other seething regional problems, are inflamed by the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Nations throughout the world, including Iraq and Iran, have been hard at work during the last sev-

eral years trying to steal, buy, produce, and fabricate ballistic and cruise missiles, as well as chemical, biological, and nuclear weapons. The difficulty of their quest is lessened by the willingness of nations such as Russia, the former Soviet Republics, North Korea, and China to sell advanced weaponry to anyone with hard cash. This situation is rendered more worrisome by the ease with which older systems can be improved through purchases of "off-the-shelf" technology.

As the terrorist strike in Japan during the Spring of 1995 revealed, producing and disseminating poison gas to intimidate populations is relatively easy. On a larger scale, chemical processing plants, common throughout the region, can produce tons of poison gas. Even more horrifying are biological weapons, which can strike a general population indiscriminately with viruses, bacteria, and toxins. Employment of either of these weapons can decimate unprotected civilians, paralyze governments with fear and indecision, and erode coalition resolve.

The possible future inclusion of nuclear weapons in the arsenals of nations ensnared in long-established clashes raises the specter of bloodier conflicts. Such conflicts could spiral out of control, inflicting massive casualties on feuding parties and spilling war into neighboring states.

The central region's tension, combined with advances in weaponry, present ominous challenges for the U.S. and its regional friends. As potential foes continue to procure sophisticated weapons and harden and conceal their command and control, launch, storage sites, and research and development, U.S. and coalition military forces will have greater difficulty finding and striking these facilities when required.

III. U.S. CENTCOM THEATER STRATEGY

Devising a theater strategy that secures our nation's interests in this regional setting is a formidable undertaking. Innovative ways must be found to conduct operations over lines of communication stretching more than 7,000 miles between the U.S. and the Gulf. A potential adversary like Iraq, conversely, is only a few hours driving time from Kuwait City and its surrounding oil facilities — roughly the distance between Richmond and Baltimore. Operational plans have to account for limited formal agreements and the absence of alliances with regional states. Associated operations and policies must manifest a sensitivity to regional cultures. U.S. forces must be able to defeat adversaries that range from insurgents to modern mechanized armies, navies, and air forces, and must remain sufficiently versatile to contend with terrorists, drug traffickers, environmental disasters, epidemics, and famine. They must be able to do all of these things in some of the world's most rugged terrain and harshest climates.

Surmounting these challenges demands that our nation exercise strategic leadership. The U.S. remains the world's preeminent global power. Peace-loving nations look to us for leadership. Adversaries fear us. Most important, in my view, we are the only nation capable of leading.

Within U.S. Central Command, we carry out routine, near-term tasks in this arena, while also orienting, focusing, and adapting for the long term. We are advancing into the next century with a clear strategic vision: to be a flexible and versatile Command — trained, positioned, and ready to defend the nation's vital interests, to promote peace and stability, to deter conflict, to conduct operations spanning the conflict continuum, and to be prepared to wage unrelenting, simultaneous joint and combined operations to achieve decisive victory in war.

To meet the challenges of the central region, U.S. CENTCOM pursues a strategy that stresses cooperative relationships and coalitions with regional partners. It capitalizes on personal relationships established over the last half-century and fortified during Desert Storm. While we retain the capability to act unilaterally to defend America's interests, our long-term goals are best achieved by working with regional friends in partnerships and coalitions. Cooperative relationships, in turn, provide access that protects our interests and furnishes the operational capabilities needed to deploy and employ military forces in the region.

We establish military partnerships and build coalitions by advancing a long-term and flexible three-tiered approach to deterring aggression. The first tier, "national self defense," calls for each nation to bear primary responsibility for its own defense. In times of heightened regional tensions, friendly nations would band together to provide the second tier, "collective defense." In the third tier, U.S. and other extra-regional allies would assist regional states in deterring conflict and defending common interests. The focus of these activities is collective responsibility that promotes regional security and stability.

These concepts underlie a theater strategy comprised of five central elements or pillars: power projection, forward presence, combined exercises, security assistance, and readiness to fight.

The first pillar, power projection, involves those activities and qualities of the American armed forces that support the rapid movement of extra-regional forces into the central region and that postures them for combat. Transporting our forces vast distances to the central region requires aircraft like the C-5 and C-17 and sea lift like the fast roll-on/roll-off transport ships. Meeting stringent deployment time schedules entails access to a series of foreign airfields and seaports. Reducing the window of vulnerability to U.S. and friendly forces arrayed in defensive positions means drawing on military hardware and supplies loaded on ships located in overseas anchorages, such as Diego Garcia in the Indian Ocean. Sustaining our forces quickly over long distances requires split-based logistic operations and constant asset visibility. Through these assets and techniques, as well as those planned in the coming years, U.S. CENTCOM is able to reduce formidable time-distance hurdles to project military force into the region.

The second pillar, forward presence, is the most visible demonstration of U.S. commitment. With few permanently assigned forces, U.S. CENTCOM relies on limited forward presence to deter conflict, enhance access to regional states, and support the transition from peace to war.

Every day, sailors and marines under the command of U.S. Naval Forces Central Command and Fifth Fleet are serving aboard carriers, cruisers, submarines, and aircraft in the perilous waters of the Arabian Gulf. They show the flag daily conducting frequent naval exercises to demonstrate American naval prowess to friend and foe, enforcing freedom of navigation in narrow channels and vital choke points, and rappeling in the middle of the night onto rolling decks of merchant ships to enforce U.N. economic sanctions against Iraq. Over 12,000 such boardings have been carried out since August 1990.

The sailors and marines are joined by airmen serving in Joint Task Force Southwest Asia. Under the auspices of Operation Southern Watch, they secure the skies over southern Iraq, carrying out operations to prevent the wholesale slaughter of Iraqi Shiites by Saddam Hussein's marauding bands. More than 48,000 sorties have flown over southern Iraq since August 1992.

At the same time, U.S. Army mechanized forces carry out exercises along the Kuwait-Iraq border as part of Operation Vigilant Sentinel, an operation designed to deter Iraqi hostilities. All of our forces are supported by Army air defenders operating forward positioned Patriot batteries to counter would-be aggressors, convincing them of the folly of employing ballistic missiles against regional friends and signaling to our partners that we will be there when they need us.

And in desolate mountains and deserts, young special forces troops are training friendly military forces: honing combat skills; molding leaders; building military units that can defend their nations — acting, in many instances, as the first line ambassadors of America abroad. They are a forceful demonstration of American resolve that offers hope and friendship to hundreds of thousands.

These images are real. They are powerful and inspiring.

Forward presence extends beyond forward positioned forces. It includes prepositioning ashore of equipment of all of our armed services in the region. Such prepositioning complements strategic lift and prepositioned equipment afloat, reduces deployment challenges, enhances the deterrent effect of our forward positioned forces, and strengthens our access to regional states.

The most prominent feature of this effort is the Army mechanized brigade set of equipment located in Kuwait. Work is progressing to place a second brigade set of equipment in another Gulf state and concepts are being explored to position a third brigade set elsewhere in the region. Completion of this effort sometime at the decade's end will provide us a mechanized division set of prepositioned equipment ashore, greatly strengthening U.S. operational flexibility.

The third pillar — combined exercises — enriches the others. On a routine basis, U.S. Marines hit the beach with regional troops on amphibious operations. U.S. Army tank crews speed across blistering desert sands, teaching gunnery to regional armored units. U.S. Special Operations A-Teams provide instruction on de-mining to African engineer outfits. U.S.

sailors hone the mariner skills of regional navies. U.S. Air Force and Navy pilots practice strike and reconnaissance operations with regional counterparts. And staffs of senior U.S. military commands work hand-in-hand with regional partners to advance interoperability and their expertise in coalition operations. Exercises such as these facilitate power projection, reinforce forward positioned forces, sharpen the warfighting skills of U.S. forces and those of regional friends, broaden access, foster military-to-military relationships, and stimulate development of coalition warfighting procedures.

Closely associated with combined exercises is the fourth pillar, security assistance. This includes the sale of modern weapons, such as the M1 tank, Patriot air defense missile, and F-16 aircraft. It involves the transfer of excess military equipment, such as trucks and radios. It means educating regional military leaders at U.S. service technical schools and war colleges. And it provides for U.S. training teams that instruct on new equipment purchases. These efforts in combination promote the legitimate self-defense needs of regional friends.

In the fifth and final pillar, readiness to fight, we produce detailed operational plans, establish procedures for deploying rapidly during crisis, and train battle staffs to perform high-tempo joint and multinational operations. We do these things through rigorous staff work, high-level command post exercises, and the full range of activities undertaken in the first four pillars.

Functions embedded in each of these pillars reinforce the foundation of our theatre strategy — military-to-military relationships and regional access — which is essential to deter conflict and to fight and win in the central region. We are guided in our work by the conviction that access once lost is not easily regained.

IV. DETERRENCE AND WARFIGHTING IN THE CENTRAL REGION

Activities undertaken within this strategic framework reflect the conviction that deterring conflict and fighting are elements of a continuum: that deterrence is not achieved by rattling empty sabers or through thinly disguised bluffs. Deterrence is gained by convincing potential adversaries that the risks of committing acts of aggression are unacceptably high. We do this by maintaining premier joint and combined forces, possessing the national will to use those forces when necessary, and communicating that national resolve to employ force to potential adversaries. While the American military must be sufficiently versatile to deal with the full range of conflicts, it must focus on being victorious in high-intensity war. It is our conviction that units, leaders, and troops that can accomplish this feat possess the fundamental skills and flexibility to handle other missions.

When called upon, U.S. forces located in the continental U.S. and elsewhere in the world will rapidly mobilize, deploy, link-up with prepositioned equipment, and join with forward positioned U.S. and coalition forces. In times of heightened tensions, we will exploit all sources of intelligence to continuously survey the enemy and to detect, track, and gain early warning of troop movements. We will disperse friendly forces to lessen their vulnerability to enemy strikes. We will employ camouflage and deception to deny the enemy precise loca-

tions of critical facilities. Forces will wear chemical protective clothing and receive antidotes to minimize their vulnerability to enemy weapons of mass destruction. And the Command will prepare to conduct joint and coalition operations.

With the outbreak of hostilities, we will exploit our battlefield advantages to detect the enemy at extended ranges, achieve an unprecedented synergy of operations, and strike ruthlessly. The cascading, continuous beating unleashed by the combination of air, sea, and ground attacks will knock out early warning and intelligence; cripple command and control; debilitate logistics; crush forward positions; pound reserves; immobilize forces; paralyze decision-making; and ultimately collapse military formations and the will to fight.

What is often poorly understood by the public is that our success in deterring a future conflict hinges on our nation's preparedness to fight. Our readiness to fight, in turn, rests on our success in carrying out the five-pillar theater strategy.

V. CONCLUSION

As we reflect on the Command's accomplishments, we take pride in our successes in securing America's vital interests in the central region. Our five pillar strategy provides a realistic roadmap for contending with regional instability and unpredictable foreign leaders. It balances a need to maintain a limited presence abroad with the capability to unleash punishing blows against aggressors. We establish the relationships and infrastructure in peacetime that are needed during crisis and war. Activities that we undertake today promote our strong desire for peace and stability, deter aggression, limit the intensity of conflict should deterrence fail, and, when required, ensure that we can fight and win decisively.

As this process continues, U.S. policymakers will be challenged to delve into complex regional issues, to explore new possibilities, to uncover innovative approaches to old problems. We at U.S. Central Command look forward to learning from the dialogue with regional friends and strategic partners. And, as we continue to learn, we will enhance our strategy. We will remain resolute. Our mission and vision are clear. Success requires that we remain flexible and versatile. Victory in peace and war require that we have the qualities that declare to the world that we are prepared to do what must be done to win anywhere — today and tomorrow.

Editor's Note:

*This paper, **Five Pillars of Peace: A Blueprint for Achieving Peace and Stability in the Central Region**, is adapted from the keynote address delivered by General J.H. Binford Peay III, Commander-in-Chief of U.S. Central Command, at the Fourth Annual U.S. Mideast Policymakers Conference, held September 17-18, 1995 at the George C. Marshall Foundation in Lexington, Virginia. The conference was co-organized by the George C. Marshall Foundation, the Virginia Military Institute, and the National Council on U.S.-Arab Relations. The U.S.-GCC Corporate Cooperation Committee, publisher of this and other Occasional Papers devoted to examining aspects of the U.S.-GCC relationship, was one of the conference sponsors.*

PROFESSIONAL PROFILE

GENERAL J.H. BINFORD PEAY III, USA, is the Commander-in-Chief, U.S. Central Command (U.S. CENTCOM) at MacDill Air Force Base, Florida. General Peay's initial troop assignments were in Germany and Fort Carson, Colorado. During two tours in the Republic of Vietnam, he served as a Firing Battery Commander in the 4th Infantry Division and later as a Field Artillery Battalion Operations Officer with the 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile). After returning to the U.S., he served as a Field Artillery Branch Assignments Officer with the Army Military Personnel Center in Washington, D.C. Assigned to Hawaii in 1975, General Peay commanded the 2nd Battalion, 11th Field Artillery, 25th Infantry Division.

After attending the U.S. Army War College, General Peay served as Senior Aide to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. During this time, he was also the Chief of the Army Initiatives Group in the Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations and Plans, U.S. Army. Following was service as Assistant Chief of Staff, Director of Plans and Training, I Corps, and Commander, 9th Infantry Division Artillery, both assignments at Fort Lewis, Washington. In 1985 he was reassigned to the Army Staff as Executive to the Chief of Staff, U.S. Army. From 1987-88, he served with the Screaming Eagles as Assistant Division Commander, 101st Airborne Division at Fort Campbell, Kentucky, and from 1988-89 as Deputy Commandant, Command and General Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. In 1989 General Peay assumed command of the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) and led the Division throughout Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm. Promoted to the rank of Lieutenant General, he was assigned as the Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations and Plans, Department of the Army, and Senior Army Member, United Nations Military Committee, from 1991-93. In 1993, he was promoted to the rank of General and appointed the 24th Vice Chief of Staff of the U.S. Army. He assumed his present position as Commander-in-Chief, U.S. Central Command, on August 5, 1994.

Awards and decorations which General Peay has received include the Army Distinguished Service Medal with 2 Oak Leaf Clusters, the Silver Star, the Defense Superior Service Medal, the Legion of Merit with Oak Leaf Cluster, the Bronze Star Medal with 3 Oak Leaf Clusters, and the Purple Heart. He has also received the Meritorious Service Medal with 2 Oak Leaf Clusters, several Air Medals, and the Army Commendation Medal. General Peay received his M.A. from George Washington University and his B.S. in Civil Engineering from the Virginia Military Institute. His military education includes completion of the Field Artillery Officer Basic and Advanced Courses, the U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, and the U.S. Army War College.

FACT SHEET

United States Central Command

Background: The United States Central Command (U.S. CENTCOM), located at MacDill Air Force Base Tampa, Florida, is the administrative headquarters for U.S. military affairs in 19 countries of the Middle East, Southwest Asia, and Northeast Africa, including the Arabian Peninsula. The command was established by President Ronald Reagan in January 1983 as the evolutionary successor to the Rapid Deployment Joint Task Force.

Mission: U.S. CENTCOM supports U.S. and free-world interests by assuring access to Mid-east oil resources, helping friendly regional states maintain their own security and collective defense, maintaining an effective and visible U.S. military presence, and by projecting U.S. military force into the region, if necessary.

Structure: Over the last decade, U.S. CENTCOM has matured into a truly unified joint service command. Day-to-day, there are 800 people from all services assigned to U.S. CENTCOM headquarters. If needed, the command draws on personnel from the operating forces of each service. Component commands are: the U.S. Army Forces Central Command (ARCENT), U.S. Central Command Air Forces (CENTAF), U.S. Marine Corps Forces Central Command (MARCENT), U.S. Naval Forces Central Command (NAVCENT), and the U.S. Special Operations Command Central (SOCCENT).

Area of Responsibility (AOR): U.S. CENTCOM's AOR includes 19 countries of diverse political, economic, cultural, and geographic make-up. Europe, Asia, and Africa join in the AOR to form a unique and complex region. Three of the world's major religions have roots there: Christianity, Judaism, and Islam. The AOR is an area larger than the continental United States. It stretches some 3,100 miles east to west and 3,400 miles north to south. The topography includes mountain ranges with elevations over 24,000 feet; desert areas below sea level; and temperatures ranging from below freezing to over 130 degrees. The 19 countries within the AOR are: Afghanistan, Bahrain, Djibouti, Egypt, Eritrea, Ethiopia, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Kenya, Kuwait, Oman, Pakistan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Somalia, Sudan, the United Arab Emirates, and Yemen.

Strategic Importance: The region contains more than 70 percent of the world's oil reserves. Its security is vital to the economies of the United States and its allies. The AOR also sits astride the major maritime trade routes which link the Middle East, Europe, South and East Asia, and the Western Hemisphere. Ships plying these routes, and the maritime choke points of the Strait of Hormuz, the Suez Canal, and the Bab al-Mandeb, carry the petroleum products that fuel the economies of our European and Asian Allies.

The GCC Countries in their Regional Setting

