

1: Operation Anaconda : America's first major battle in Afghanistan in SearchWorks catalog

Operation Anaconda took place in early March in the Shahi-Kot Valley and Arma Mountains southeast of Zornat, www.enganchecubano.com operation was the first large-scale battle in the United States War in Afghanistan since the Battle of Tora Bora in December

In post-Cold War conflicts, Canada "experienced a steep" and at times bloody "learning curve as it tried to develop new techniques to contain violence and restore functioning civil societies. It meant that they had to be trained, equipped, and prepared for combat just as much as they were for peacekeeping. Moving to Bosnia, Somalia, and Haiti a new peacekeeping partnership began to form. This required the assistance of soldiers and development organizations working hand in hand to achieve their rebuilding goals. These peacekeeping initiatives carried out by "Canadians and other NATO troops in Bosnia and elsewhere in the post-Cold War conflicts are similar and relevant to what they are carrying out in Afghanistan. The Canadian commitment was originally planned to last to October. Approximately 40 Joint Task Force 2 JTF2 assaulters were sent to southern Afghanistan in early December, although the Canadian public was not informed of the deployment, following the American declaration of a War on Terror. However, in Sean M. Regular forces arrived in Kandahar during January-February. Army units during Operation Anaconda. In the operation the team broke, and re-broke, the kill record for a long distance sniper kill set in the Vietnam War by a U. Marine, Staff Sergeant Carlos Hathcock. Other forces in the country provided garrison and security troops. The soldiers were conducting night-time training on a designated live-fire range, and the American pilots mistook their gunfire for a Taliban insurgent attack. Four Canadians were killed and eight were wounded in the friendly fire incident. Their deaths were the first Canadian deaths in Afghanistan, and the first in a combat zone since the Korean War. No coalition troops were killed or wounded during the attack. Operation Athena[edit] In August, the Canadian Forces moved to the northern city of Kabul where it became the commanding nation of the newly formed International Security Assistance Force. Canada dubbed this Operation Athena and a 1, strong Canadian task force provided assistance to civilian infrastructure such as well-digging and repair of local buildings. Stage one of Operation Athena ended in December and the fulfillment of the stated aim of "rebuilding the democratic process" in Afghanistan. This plays a huge part in the war in Afghanistan. In preparations, "soldiers needed to know as much as possible about local customs, culture, and politics, and about the nature and motivation of groups that might oppose the establishment of peace and order. In training for the mission the goal in Afghanistan was clear: Operation Archer[edit] Canadian soldiers fire an M mm Howitzer field artillery gun at Taliban fighting positions near the Sangin District Center. Operation Archer followed Athena beginning in February. By the spring of, Canada had a major role in southern Afghanistan, with Task Force Afghanistan being a battle group of 2, soldiers based at Kandahar. Canada also commanded the Multi-National Brigade for Command South, a main military force in the region. In May, the Canadian government extended Canadian military commitments to Afghanistan by two years, replacing earlier plans to withdraw soldiers in. Additionally, Foreign Affairs Canada stated that the commitment was more than just military, employing a "whole of government approach", in which a Provincial Reconstruction Team PRT, utilizing personnel from the military, Foreign Affairs, the Canadian International Development Agency and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, would provide a dual role of security as well as reconstruction of the country and political structure. Taliban resurgence[edit] Kandahar Provincial Reconstruction Team PRT during a patrol When the Canadian Forces returned to Kandahar after being deployed to Kabul in, the Taliban began a major offensive, and the Canadians were caught in the middle. After a spring in which a record number of attacks against Canadian soldiers had been set, which included six deaths to the CF, the Taliban in Kandahar and Helmand Provinces were massing. Operation Mountain Thrust was launched in the beginning of the summer in. Complex mud-walled compounds made the rural Panjwaii District take on an almost urban style of fighting in some places. Daily firefights, artillery bombardments, and allied airstrikes turned the tides of the battle in favour of the Canadians. After Operation Mountain Thrust came to an end, Taliban fighters flooded back into the Panjwaii District in numbers that had not been seen yet in a single area in the "post

Anaconda" war. Canadians launched Operation Medusa in September in an attempt to clear the areas of Taliban fighters from Panjwahi once and for all. The fighting of Operation Medusa led the way to the second, and most fierce Battle of Panjwahi in which daily gun-battles, ambushes, and mortar and rocket attacks were targeting the Canadian troops. The Taliban had massed with an estimated 1, to 2, fighters. The Taliban were reluctant to give up the area, and after being surrounded by the Canadian Forces, they dug in and fought a more conventional style battle. After weeks of fighting, the Taliban had been cleared from the Panjwahi area and Canadian reconstruction efforts in the area began. During the first week of the operation, massive Canadian artillery and tank barrages were carried out in a successful attempt to clear pockets of Taliban resistance. This rotation reflected a change in Canadian tactics, with emphasis on systematically clearing-holding-building in the districts of Panjwahi and Zhari , while also protecting Arghandab District and the Afghan-Pakistan border in the area of Spin Boldak. The focus was on intimately working with the Afghan army, police and civil administration to hold cleared areas rather than subsequently lose them to returning Taliban, as had previously occurred throughout the South and East. The extension of almost another three years had a focus on reconstruction and training of Afghan troops, and set a firm pullout date, calling for Canadian troops to leave Afghanistan by December. The population prefers a road to peace. Harry Tunnell IV, commander of the U. Canadian troops were then stationed primarily around Kandahar City and the surrounding districts. American troop surge and end of combat mission[edit] On 1 December U. In September , Conservative leader Stephen Harper pledged this, saying a decade at war is enough, after having extended the withdrawal deadline twice already. He acknowledged that neither the Canadian public nor the troops themselves had any appetite to stay longer in the war and said that only a small group of advisers might remain. In October the force was down to personnel from over and the withdrawal from Afghanistan was scheduled to be completed by March. A Provincial Reconstruction Team PRT is a unit introduced by the United States government to support reconstruction efforts in unstable states, performing duties ranging from humanitarian work to the training of police and the military. State Department official, one U. The NSP was "designed to re-generate local village councils and their ability to work for a common purpose, something sorely lacking after 25 years of focus on basic self-preservation. As the NSP grew, "power shifted away from drug lords and Taliban chieftains and back to Afghans" through the rebuilding of community and creating trust in the "power of good government. One of its main challenges was convincing its people that their future lies in good government and much had to be done. One of the tasks at hand was the organization and professionalism that needed to be added to the Afghan police. The problem that Canadians faced is that one day they may be dealing with Afghan police who assist with tracking down the Taliban, and the next a corrupt police force taking bribes from the Taliban and drug lords. In order to correct this Canadians used the RCMP to "train new police forces in war-shattered societies. After facing ten years of drought "CIDA focused development on getting wadis , karezes , canals, and more modern pipelines into the older fields so that farmers could radically increase crop production. The difficulty with farmers in this region is the fact that their interests coincide with the Taliban and local drug lords. Both these groups, "depend on a climate of fear and dependency in the countryside to support their lifestyles and their wars. This was evident as "Kandaharis took on much of the rebuilding process themselves. Despite the continued fighting and Taliban resurgence Kandahar was maintaining stability and beginning to prosper. The Manley Report recommended that the KPRT be given more funding and attention and be placed under civilian leadership instead. It was believed that it would create 10, seasonal jobs. As a result of these signature projects, "Within five years, more than six thousand schools have been rebuilt and six of thirteen million children are now in school. Roads and bridges have been repaired, new roads have been built, and new wells have been dug. Access to health clinics is vastly better than it was five years ago and the infant mortality rate is beginning to drop. Programs in rural transportation, safe drinking water, irrigation, and schools are among the twenty thousand projects that are now underway. For example, "More than sixteen thousand locally elected community development councils now dot Afghanistan, and elected leaders choose projects that meet their priorities. The purpose of which is for maritime patrol and enforcement near Afghanistan. The executive director of its civilian oversight committee noted in January that this had noticeably altered the spy agency and urged policy improvements to manage its

growing operations overseas. It usually contains around fifteen personnel and one Canadian International Development Agency official. On 31 August, New Democrat leader Jack Layton called for the withdrawal of Canadian troops from the south of Afghanistan, to begin immediately and soon afterwards pursue peace negotiations with the Taliban insurgents. He argued that the mission lacked clear objectives and measures of success, and that the counter-insurgency operation was undermining reconstruction in Afghanistan. Opinion amongst pundits and academics was generally divided along the ideological lines, with left-leaning media outlets and think-tanks being against the war, and right-leaning publications and institutes being supportive. Successive surveys conducted by various pollsters across the political spectrum suggest opposition to the war in the general public grew with time: At that point, Canada had lost 86 soldiers in the war. At that point, Canada had lost soldiers in the war. In Quebec, some parliamentarians refused to stand in honour of soldiers visiting the National Assembly. Some Canadians also participated in Red Fridays in honour of the soldiers.

2: The "Anaconda" and Washington Embarrassments (Mar 13,)

As of 2 March , Operation Anaconda was the largest combat operation in Afghanistan of the War on Terrorism that began after the attack on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon on 11 September

It is composed of two distinct areas, the Lower and Upper Shahi-Kot which run roughly parallel to each other. In the Lower Shahikot several imposing mountains dominate the landscape; chief among them is Takur Ghar at the southeastern end of the valley; to the northeast is Tsapare Ghar, dominating the northern entrance to the valley. During the Soviet-Afghan War , Mujahideen leader Malawi Nasrullah Mansoor was in charge of the valley and invited foreign jihadists to base themselves in the Lower Shahikot. Mansoor fortified the valley, digging trench systems, building bunkers and firing positions into the ridgelines, many of which would be put to effect during the operation. The Lower Shahikot bordered the Pakistani tribal lands where many al-Qaeda fighters were believed to have escaped to from Tora Bora. The signal intelligence also raised the possibility that high-value targets HVTs were present in the valley among which were Jalaluddin Haqqani and Saif Rahman. Major General Franklin L. The plan called for an attack on the valley, along with units positioned in the mountains to the east to prevent escape into Pakistan. The expectation was that fighters, as in the case of Tora Bora several months earlier, would flee in the face of an assault and that blocker groups would simply be able to round them up. Further air support was provided by U. TF Hammer consisted of AMF and special operators as the primary effort to assault the Shahi-Kot Valley; their objective was to enter the valley from the north, assaulting through the villages of Serkhankheyl and Marzak, where intelligence indicated that the enemy was concentrated, and channel fleeing enemy into the TF Rakkasan blocking positions. The Afghans had successfully defeated the Soviet Army twice in this valley, and were expecting events to pan out in a similar fashion. In the planning phase of the operation, the commander of Delta Force , LTC Pete Blaber ruled out any helicopter infiltration of AFOs into the area as not to alert the terrorists in the valley; in addition to AFOs conducting reconnaissance of routes into and around the valley on modified Polaris ATVs often in adverse weather conditions on difficult terrain , two teams codenamed India and Juliet with 3 and 5 operators respectively of highly experienced Delta operators from their squadrons Reconnaissance and Surveillance Troop climbed high into the mountains and gorges of the Shahikot, often in extreme weather conditions, to conduct environmental reconnaissance. Their vital intelligence was fed back to the AFO and would prove invaluable once the operation started. On February 28, on the eve of the operation, three AFO teams were covertly infiltrated into the valley, one codenamed Juliet was made up of 5 Delta operators with a signals intelligence specialist from the ISA , entered the valley on ATVs from the north, driving through the night in adverse weather conditions, eventually reaching a covert hide on the eastern side of the valley. Another team codenamed India, composed of three Delta operators and an attached ISA operator walked into the valley through the same conditions to a hide in the southwest of the valley, known as the "Fish Hook". If the DShK was not disabled before then it could shootdown Chinooks carrying the conventional forces, the SEALs planned to ambush the enemy in the pre-dawn darkness before the Rakkasans flow into the valley. However they were spotted by an Uzbek insurgent and a brief firefight ensued, killing 5 out of 7 foreign fighters, as another insurgent joined the firefight by firing a PKM , the team broke contact and brought in an AC which destroyed the enemy encampment with mm rounds. The road was in poor condition and difficulties ensued. Several soldiers were injured after their jingle trucks overturned, the commanders ordered the trucks to use their headlights, destroying any element of surprise. As TF Hammer continued, it suffered from a lack of unit cohesion because of the transportation difficulties. Grim 31 engaged the column, resulting in the death of Harriman and wounding several Afghan militia and U. This was due to a bomb getting stuck in the launch bay of the B-1B that was on its bomb run. The next aircraft in line waited for the B-1B to receive permission to jettison the bomb and go round again. During this time, both bombers plus the additional two FE planes claimed to have received a "knock off" call directing them to cease the bombardment. One of the FE pilots later acknowledged that this may have been a communication directing Grim to cease fire. This lack of air support demoralized the Afghans and frustrated the special forces. The Afghan fighters, in trucks, were

devastated by mortar fire registered in advance to strike fixed points on the road. The Afghans suffered forty or more deaths and injuries. At this point it became clear that Al Qaeda fighters had been expecting an attack. These assets were tasked instead to the TF Anvil troops. TF Rakkasan[edit] A U. The first shots rung out the infantry took up security positions around the HLZ as the Chinooks lifted off and departed. They came under fire almost immediately after landing on their way to their objectives, and remained pinned down by heavy mortar fire and locked in a fierce firefight throughout the day. Orbiting Apache helicopters attempted to suppress enemy mortar teams, but ran into a wall of RPG and Instead of fighters in the valley as expected, post assessment held that the area contained to 1, terrorists dug in on the high ground around the valley. The troops of the 1st Battalion, 87th Infantry Regiment in the southern landing zones LZs faced the heaviest fighting. The men on the floor of the valley then picked up and began to patrol north again moving another 50 or so meters when an RPG was fired off a low foothill to the east. This round closed in on around 10 men, including the two Australians and most of the American leadership, landing in the snow and mud right amongst them but failing to detonate. Ropel was later awarded the Bronze Star Medal with a Valor device for his actions. The expectation of very limited enemy indirect fire capability meant that only a single mm mortar was brought in the first wave. The Apaches destroyed some enemy positions harassing the U. The two Apaches were damaged early on in the day, one Apache was forced to return to base when an RPG destroyed its left-side Hellfire mount sending shrapnel through the airframe; as well as being peppered by small arms, further RPG rounds and DShK rounds one DShK round penetrated the cockpit narrowly missing the pilots. Throughout the day, the TACP forward air controllers and Special Forces teams that had infiltrated into the area the previous day assisted in calling in airstrikes from B-1 , B , F , F and F aircraft, inflicting heavy casualties on the Taliban and al Qaeda fighters, but by no means silencing them. After nearly having their position overrun, the men in the southern LZs were in a desperate position, pinned down all day and short of ammunition. Salvation came after dark in the form of an ACU Spooky gunship that unlike the faster-moving jets during the day, was able to loiter over the area and provide sustained firepower so the men could be airlifted out under cover of darkness; the group suffered 35 wounded two chinks of which were casevaced by PaveHawk CSAR choppers and none killed. Please help improve this article by adding citations to reliable sources. Unsourced material may be challenged and removed.

3: Canada in the War in Afghanistan - Wikipedia

Operation Anaconda took place in early March CIA paramilitary officers, working with their allies, attempted to destroy al-Qaeda and Taliban forces. The operation took place in the Shahi-Kot Valley and Arma Mountains southeast of Zornat.

And it was also the first operation in Afghanistan to involve a large number of U. During the period of March 2 – March 16, , the U. The valley was the scene of heavy fighting between the Russians and mujahadeen during the war in the s. The Taliban and al-Qaeda forces operated from the high ridges of the steep mountains and utilized a vast array of caves. There they used accurate and heavy fire from mortars and machine guns against the coalition forces. By the time the battle was over, the U. Hagenbeck decided to use conventional troops. The coalition troops consisted of elements of Task Force Dagger: The plan was for the Special Forces men and Afghans to sweep into the valley and the conventional infantry battalions to block their avenues of escape. Any fleeing al-Qaeda or Taliban forces that got away from the conventional units would then hit the outer ring of SF and Afghan troops. Things went awry from the start. They also had much better weapons, mortars and machine guns than previously thought. The Americans had spent a lot of time on the proper treatment of civilians for what they perceived to be a heavily populated target area. It turned out that virtually no civilians were left in the valley. They had almost all left, having been paid by the Taliban. The Afghan forces were met with heavy accurate mortar fire. Harriman was killed and several Afghans were wounded. The 10th Mountain Division met heavy fire from the dug-in enemy as they had the valleys below zeroed in due to their intimate knowledge of the terrain. The st troops were facing the same kind of battle. The advance slowed to a crawl as the fighting got intense. The next day Special Operations troops inserting by CHD Chinooks came under heavy fire by machine guns and rocket-propelled grenades. A quick reaction force of about 30 SOF troops came under heavy fire and were pinned down. But the Australians, operating high above the valley on the ridgelines, called in devastating AC gunship support as well as AH Apaches. By the night of March 4, the U. After that, the 10th Mountain troops were extracted. In all, there were 7 U. The next few days saw the U. A couple of Taliban fighters could slow the advance of an entire company in some locations. The Afghan troops under General Zia resumed their advance on March 6, with coalition aircraft providing a lot of close air support. Eventually, the bombing took its toll on the Taliban and they began to run low on ammunition. The tanks kept the Taliban snipers in their caves. By March 10, the Taliban numbers in the area dwindled down to about total. The Americans began withdrawing their troops back to Bagram air base. The truth probably lies somewhere in between. There were issues right from the beginning but in the end, the coalition forces pushed the Taliban out and killed nearly of their fighters. His record has since been broken but it was an incredible feat of marksmanship.

4: Operation Anaconda, Shah-i-Khot Valley, Afghanistan, March

Mar 2 U.S. invasion of Afghanistan: US conventional forces first deployed as part of Operation Anaconda Mar 3 Citizens of Switzerland narrowly vote in favor of their country becoming a member of the United Nations.

Al Qaeda Has U. Chicago Prof to Pro-Albanian Senator: Shah Mahood Popal, the Afghan deputy commander, believed it was self-preservation that stopped the Americans from launching a more decisive attack. That sounds like a tall tale. At least the Afghans who have fought alongside the American troops think so. For two weeks now, hundreds of U. Reinforcements kept being sent in all the time - both U. Yet not a word about additional casualties. Not a peep from our lapdog media about them, either. For 78 days and nights, we fought an air war flying tens of thousands of sorties. Only a lapdog reporter or a brain-dead citizen would buy the official Pentagon line today. Yet a poor performance of the American troops in the mountainous terrain of Eastern Afghanistan should surprise no one. Least of our Secretary of State, a former military man, who has evidently done a turn-about-face in his new job. Today, such attitudes are banal. Today, the Bush league hawks roam, reign and rain terror freely. Now, the truth and the American people are silenced, not just the peace doves. As you read the following excerpts from the European media, keep in mind that both the British and the French have their own troops deployed in Afghanistan. Which means their own military intelligence and their own war reporters. More than 1, Afghan troops rushed to the front line yesterday to take up the slack after the withdrawal of US troops from the mountains of eastern Afghanistan. The American military has described the withdrawal as a tactical reappraisal of their battleplan, but Afghan commanders told a different story of inexperienced American soldiers unable to advance through the unfamiliar mountains to track down al-Qaeda and Taleban foes. Shahi-Kot has been called the last bastion of al-Qaeda in Afghanistan, but there is evidence that other pockets of resistance still exist in provinces to the south. Commanders say that before Operation Anaconda began, there had been only a small number of al-Qaeda in the mountains. They were attempting to negotiate a surrender when the offensive began, bringing al-Qaeda forces from all over the south running to Shahi Kot to help in the battle. Former Taleban sources predict that the base could be the scene of the next operation against al-Qaeda. In other words, the U. What else is new? any South Vietnamese among our readers? Consider the excerpts from this French report, filed from Afghanistan, and also published in English by the "Dawn" newspaper in Pakistan: US making tall claims on fighting: French defence sources say that the allied bombing of Gardez has proved to be much less successful than official Washington sources have heretofore admitted. Firstly, he says, the surveillance of the pockets of resistance in and about Gardez,"has not been as effective as Washington would have it. Still, notes the French defence source, "we have taken part in more than twenty missions, and have dropped a dozen laser-guided kg bombs, but only when we were pretty certain of our objective". With the helicopter blades still turning, visibly relieved soldiers carrying huge backpacks and heavy machine guns hopped out and walked slowly toward their comrades. They spoke of staying awake at night and sleeping by day when it was warmer. There were cases of hypothermia, they said, and drinking water would freeze emphasis added by TiM. And now, we discover that our fighting men in the Afghanistan mountains were not even issued sleeping bags! This is incompetence laced with criminal neglect. How many troops did the Pentagon lose or injure because of it? It all goes to show us that the price of stupidity is infinite; that no amount of additional spending will protect this nation and our troops from incompetence of our leaders. Here an excerpt from a Mar. Women and children were among 14 people killed in a U. A wounded child survived and was reported in stable condition at a military hospital. Martin Compton said Tuesday. Their vehicle was attacked by two U. Officials at both the Pentagon and the Central Command, which is responsible for U. Officials said they did not know how many women and children were among the 14 killed, whether they were Afghans or the kind of vehicle attacked. The fighters attacked the vehicle after it left what Compton described as a compound known to be used by al-Qaida members. The compound was in Paktia province near the border with Pakistan and close to the Afghan village of Shikin, Compton said. Asked why the incident was not disclosed earlier, Compton said U. Pentagon officials have said that is important to counter propaganda by al-Qaida and their Taliban allies that the U. Rumsfeld said today that 16

Afghan fighters killed by American troops north of Kandahar last month were not members of the Taliban or Al Qaeda. While he described the deaths as "unfortunate," he issued no apology and said there was no reason for disciplinary action. In describing the results of the official inquiry into the Special Forces mission, Mr. Rumsfeld said the United States alone generated the intelligence that pointed to two compounds in the Hazar Qadam Valley as enemy garrisons. Evidence has been mounting that the two raids, carried out overnight on Jan. Some officials had speculated that the United States might have been duped into mounting the attacks by false information from rival warlords. A number of questions remained unanswered today " officials " Mr. Rumsfeld himself asked for clarification on some points from the United States Central Command " and certain details contradicted reports from villagers in Hazar Qadam, including assertions that 21 people died in the raid. And then there were strikes against purely civilian targets, such as some residential neighborhoods in Kabul that were hit in late October. It was the second time in as many days that missiles have accidentally hit homes and killed residents. Weeping families buried their dead hours after the morning bombardment, apparently aimed at Taliban targets to the north and east of Kabul. In Washington, Pentagon spokesmen had no immediate comment on the latest strikes and civilian casualties involved. It has stressed repeatedly that civilians are never deliberately targeted. An Associated Press reporter saw six bodies, four of them children. A wailing father hugged the dead body of his son, who looked barely 2. Bereaved women slapped themselves with grief. Three other people died near an eastern housing complex called Macroyan, witnesses said. You were walking in your sleep, and you fell down the well by your house, and I rescued you. Areas behind Taliban lines were also reported hit. Eight or nine civilians were killed - most of them in alliance-held areas, according to witnesses. David Hackworth, summed up the basic military doctrine of the cowardly war criminals who run the New World Order armies as follows: But for the number of victims, what makes such state terrorism any better than the Al Qaeda kind? Here is an excerpt: Al Qaida has U. According to Gul the Americans sent to infiltrate the mountain strongholds could speak the local language of Pashto, and some even had beards. But they were detected and captured. Afghanistan is no Hollywood. It is a traditional tribal society where even a dog from another tribe is noticed by everyone. Central Command spokesman, Charles Portman. The photos of the dead and injured Afghan children shown above were taken in the second half of October Some had been already published in earlier TiM Bulletins. Most are from Russian sources, as the U.

5: Operation Anaconda - Wikipedia

March 2, Historical Events - U.S. invasion of Afghanistan: Operation Anaconda begins, (ending on March 19 after killing Taliban and al Qaeda fighters, with 11 Western troop fatalities).

Hagenbeck, commander of the U. The mission involved about 2, coalition troops, including more than Americans, U. Operation Anaconda began before dawn on 2 March. The battle area occupied about 60 square miles. The terrain is rugged, and the peaks have many spurs and ridges. The base of the Shah-i-Khot Valley is approximately 8, feet in altitude. The surrounding mountain peaks rise to 11, to 12, feet. Only small juniper trees grow on the mountain slopes. The actual snow line began about feet above the valley floor. On the day battle began, the valley floor was sprinkled with small patches of snow. Temperatures hovered near 15 to 20 degrees Fahrenheit. The terrorists, who had come to the valley villages six weeks before the battle began, took control; prudently, most of the civilians left. Predator drones and other CIA intelligence assets spotted the enemy assembling in groups south of Gardez, but rather than immediately attacking, U. Special Forces teams were with each Afghan general to help coordinate operations. This noose of allied troops enclosed four specific combat zones. The two most significant zones were code-named Objectives Remington and Ginger. Reconnaissance forces slipped into the mountains a few days before the main attack was scheduled to begin on 27 February, but the operation was postponed 48 hours because of rainy, blustery weather. When the operation began, Zia ran into trouble. Retreating under mortar and rocket fire, the Afghan column stumbled into a second ambush to the rear. Elements of the U. Both units ran into heavy resistance. Allied special operations troops were tasked to block known routes of escape from the south and southwest, conduct reconnaissance, and call in air strikes. The commandos were to pinpoint rebels retreating from the large target area known as Remington. Scout sniper teams directly east of Marzak were watching two small canyons that ran out of the village. Just to the north of Marzak, a platoon-size element guarded a larger canyon that ran east out of the valley. In the south, intelligence units estimated that their two positions would possibly have to contain the most terrorist exfiltrators. They also had two blocking positions, one in a canyon running from the southeast of the valley and one running directly south. In the south, 82 men on the other two CHs arrived at two landing zones separated by about meters. To the south, troops landed at the base of an al-Qaeda stronghold and literally within a minute of being dropped off began taking sporadic fire as they moved to cover. A small ridgeline separated the landing zone from the source of fire. Some soldiers maneuvered to a small depression behind the ridge while others moved onto some small ridges to their south. After the first 10 minutes, al-Qaeda fighters left their caves and well-fortified positions to dump a heavy volume of fire onto the 10th Mountain Division. Once troops took cover, organizing and returning fire, they hunkered down for the hour battle of attrition. Grippe noted that more Afghan forces never arrived. Within five minutes, a B dumped its load and scored a direct hit on the mortar position, ending all movement. Later, the much-reduced al-Qaeda force came up the valley in twos or threes, firing some sniping shots but never mounting a serious threat to troops positioned on ridges on the eastern and western sides of the valley. A mortar ambush injured at least 12 U. Because they were wearing body armor, the shrapnel struck mostly their arms and legs. Private First Class Jason Ashline was struck by two bullets in the chest but survived because the rounds lodged in his vest. I was just surprised at the intensity of what I saw on the valley floor. We thought we were all going to die. Near midnight, all elements were extracted from the battle. As they were moving the command post to higher ground, they began taking fire. Charlie Company was also under fire from an al-Qaeda military compound about meters from where they had landed. Wiercinski described the fight: But instead, we did [killed] them. Captain Kevin Butler watched in frustration as the enemy ducked into caves seconds before supporting jets dropped their bombs. Moments later, the enemy popped back out to wave, throw rocks, then fire their mortars and heavy machine guns at U. As the F15s neared the caves, Butler ordered his own men to fire their millimeter mortars. When the enemy reemerged to taunt the U. Units of the 1st Airborne Division moved into the mountains north and east of Sirkankel to block mujahideen escape routes and, with Australian and U. Special Forces, blocked routes to the south. A new assault south along the high ground east of the valley

began on 3 March. The hilltop battle developed during a nighttime attempt to establish a new observation post overlooking a major al-Qaeda supply and escape route. Initial wire service reports were vague and confusing since few reporters accompanied the troops into combat. A head count showed that all but one of the team had managed to escape aboard the heavily damaged helicopter. The lone man not accounted for was U. Roberts, a door gunner. A man Special Forces team was dropped off. At , a third Chinook was hit while inserting more special operations forces near the site of the first incident. According to Joint Staff briefer U. Senior Airman Jason Cunningham darted out of the helicopter several times to pull others to safety and was hit by machine-gun fire while treating the wounded. Two Australian SAS teams, calling air strikes against the ring of attackers, saved the rescue group that was under intense fire from mortars, machine guns, and small arms. Spectre AC gunships dumped millimeter fire into mujahideen positions while Apaches shot up enemy vehicles moving toward the fight along the narrow mountain roads twisting up steep valleys. We thought when morning came they were going to do a ground assault. They were poised to overrun the [U. We gave everything we had to get those guys out. Next to be withdrawn was the 10th Mountain force. As the helicopters returned safely to Bagram Air Base, the sprawling hub of U. We body slammed them today and killed hundreds of those guys. Between 2 and 5 March, coalition air forces, using a mix of long-range bombers and tactical aircraft, dropped more than bombs, of which were precision munitions. The helicopters returned one or two hours later to refuel and head out again with fresh troops and supplies. Eventually, mechanical attrition took its toll on the aging armored vehicles as they made the 60mile drive from Kabul. As the armor column reached the battle zone on 9 March, driving winds and snow forced al-Qaeda holdouts to retreat into their caves. Apparently, by 10 March, complaints from local commanders prevented Afghan tanks from going any farther than Gardez. Local ethnic Pashtun commanders warned they would fight national army forces if the Afghan defense ministry, controlled by ethnic Tajik General Mohammed Fahim, did not withdraw troops joining the offensive. Meanwhile, on 7 March and early on 8 March, U. The clash seemed like a last, defiant gesture. With local terrorist forces severely hurt, U. Commander Abdul Mateen Hassankheil, who had 1, men fighting in Shah-i-Khot, was one of the critics: Khan denied that he had misled the United States and insisted that everyone in Gardez making accusations against him were al-Qaeda. Others in Gardez believed that Khan implicated his enemies as members of al-Qaeda so the United States would remove them. Fight and fall back. He was supposed to roll in. He took a couple of mortar rounds and took off. There were lots of weapons, mortar tubes. These guys were good with mortars. It makes them no less noble, no less brave, no less willing to get out and engage our common enemy, and General Zia has, make no mistake about it. I take exception to those folks who complain about what these people have done to get us to this point in the battlefield. You wear his shoes that he has worn for five months in this battlefield. This less-than-discreet officer also attempted to draw a parallel to the U. He pointed to the mid-December Tora Bora air campaign as a successful template, but he failed to mention that many al-Qaeda and Taliban leaders had slithered away during that period. Franks simply modified the Tora Bora tactics and sent in U. We will almost never have perfect intelligence information. I would not downplay the possibility that forces that moved into this area got into a heck of a firefight at some point that they did not anticipate. I think that is entirely possible. Zaps Al Qaeda Guides U. Marine Corps Major Ralph Mills said Roberts died of a bullet wound after surviving a fall from the helicopter. However, whether Roberts was alive when he fell, was left on the ground, or was shot out of the helicopter is still unknown.

6: List of military operations involving Australia - Wikipedia

Operation Anaconda, Shah-i-Khot Valley, Afghanistan, March

Operation Anaconda was part of the ongoing effort in Afghanistan to root out Taliban and al-Qaida forces holed up in the Pakitia Province area of the country. Operation Anaconda began late Friday evening on 1 March, in the mountainous Shah-i-Khot region south of the city of Gardez in eastern Afghanistan. Operations by US forces including the insertion of Special Operating Forces from several other nations to set up observation posts. The 10th Mountain Division and the 1st Airborne Division along with Afghan forces had units inserted into the objective area covering some 60 to 70 square miles. Rough terrain, an altitude of 8,000 to 12,000 feet, and a temperature in the evenings between 15 and 20 degrees Fahrenheit, made a very tough operating environment for soldiers. Al Qaeda troops entrenched along ridges and mountainside caves used heavy machine-gun, mortar and rocket-propelled grenade fire to immobilize allied Afghan forces and to pin down US soldiers as they disembarked from helicopters. Operation Anaconda, the largest reported American ground action to date in the Afghan war, was launched on Friday, 1 March. More than 11,000 US troops along with about 1,000 Afghan soldiers and troops from several coalition countries Australia, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany and Norway were involved. They attacked a concentration of several-hundred al-Qaida and Taleban fighters south of Gardez in eastern Afghanistan. The aircraft flying daily missions over the battlefield, 10 long-range bombers, 30 to 40 fighters and two to four AC gunships, were more than half the size of the force used in strikes across Afghanistan in the fall of 2001. More than 100 bombs and missiles had been dropped on targets during the first four days of fighting. US aircraft dropped bombs on Sunday, 3 March, more than twice as many as on Saturday, 2 March. As of 5 March over 100 bombs had been dropped. Army AH Apache attack helicopters were hit by enemy fire. By the end of continuous operations in late March, nearly 300 bombs had been dropped. On 17 March, Operation Anaconda concluded. A total of 8 American servicemen had been killed and 82 wounded in action. US troops had suffered at least eight dead and 40 wounded during the first four days of action in Operation Anaconda in early March. The deaths brought the total number of American troops killed in combat in Afghanistan to least ten, including one Special Forces soldier killed by a sniper and one CIA officer killed in a prison uprising in earlier actions. Friendly fire deaths were three killed in one incident by a bomb dropped from a US warplane. A total of 26 had been killed in accidents, including 21 killed in airplane or helicopter crashes, two in heavy-equipment accidents, one in a shipboard accident, one who fell overboard from a ship, and one from an accidental gunshot.

7: ANACONDA: A Flawed Joint Planning Process

accountâ€”the best availableâ€”of Operation Anaconda during March Operation Anaconda was the largest and longest (13 days) light infantry battle fought since Vietnam, as US, Canadian, Australian, and Afghani forces tried to seal off the Shar-i Kot Valley in eastern Afghanistan.

Andres and Jeffrey B. Army, David Marck, Jr. Over the last 5 years, Operation Anaconda has gained legendary status as a debacle. While the operation did experience problems, these problems did not occur for the reasons commonly given. The objective of the mission was to kill or capture Taliban and al Qaeda fighters based in the Shahi-Kot Valley. It succeeded at this task: However, this success occurred only after initial mistakes on the first day forced coalition ground forces to retreat from the valley and may have allowed al Qaeda leaders to escape to Pakistan. These and other problems stemmed from a flawed air-ground planning process that systematically excluded air component planners and leaders. In the months leading up to the operation, the combined joint task force CJTF made numerous decisions not to include experienced air component planners or their ideas for employing airpower. Similarly, while the CJTF communicated with ground commanders about the mission on nearly a daily basis for almost 2 months, joint leaders did not discuss the mission with the air component commander until 2 days before the scheduled D-Day. As a result, airpower was not properly integrated into the plan, contributing directly to a near reversal of fortunes during the first day of combat. Hagenbeck agreed to retract these charges when they were revealed to be inaccurate. Today, air component planners report that JFCs consistently fail to integrate lessons learned into planning processes until the last minute and that this often results in the vast network of Air Force, Navy, and Marine air, space, and cyber assets being underutilized or even unused in combat. The Services cannot correct this problem until they address its history and acknowledge that operations work best when all components are brought in at the start of the planning process and are fully represented in planning cells. This article explores why planning for Anaconda fell short. It is our hope that this critical analysis of Anaconda will begin an open debate that will be a first step toward fixing an air-ground planning process that remains broken. Instead, they found an enemy force 5 to 10 times larger than anticipated that was manning concealed positions with heavy weapons sighted on likely approaches and helicopter landing zones. Commanders called off even most of these strikes a few minutes into the bombing when a U. Ignorant of the plan until the last minute, and taking fire from enemy mortars, Afghan commanders lost confidence and retreated. American commanders cancelled the second wave of troops who were to reinforce the mountain passes. Intelligence suggested that hundreds of enemy combatants poured into the valley, and it is unclear if high-value al Qaeda leadership fled from the valley to nearby Pakistan at that time. With friendly forces under heavy, accurate fire, the JFC, General Hagenbeck, attempted to use his Apache attack helicopters to suppress enemy fire. Flying low over the mountain terrain in daylight, the vulnerable helicopters took intense fire, rendering them unable to provide sustained support. However, contrary to joint doctrine, joint force planners in Afghanistan had failed to integrate air experts into the planning effort. As a result, for the critical first 2 days of combat, controllers were unable to make full use of the airpower that orbited above the valley. Because planners had not requested a change to the standing rules of engagement ROE for airpower before the battle, aircraft could only engage targets on the ground in restricted circumstances. Attacking time-sensitive targets, such as al Qaeda personnel entering or leaving the valley, required lengthy real-time coordination with command staffs in the United States. Over the course of the battle, the Air Force, Navy, and Marines dropped more ordnance on the Shahi-Kot Valley than had been used during the previous 5 months in Afghanistan. On March 11, after more than a week of tough fighting, enemy resistance ended. The American toll stood at 8 killed and 48 wounded, while the enemy toll was confirmed dead and another probably killed. Planning Anaconda The problems with airpower integration at Anaconda began long before the battle. In early January, 2 months after the fall of the Taliban regime, reports filtered into U. Early estimates placed the number of enemy combatants between 1, and 2, A month later, Mulholland was asked to turn planning for the operation over to the 10th Mountain Division commander, General Hagenbeck, on the assumption that the division would be better than the

JSOTF's inability at integrating the large joint force. For obscure reasons, as the CJTF planned the operation, Generals Mikolashek and Hagenbeck, the CFLCC and JFC respectively, chose not to tell the CFACC, Lieutenant General Michael Moseley, about the operation during the months of planning and waited until 2 days before the scheduled D-Day to ask for his input, even though the land component commander discussed other matters with him almost daily and this was to be the largest planned operation in Afghanistan at the time. The joint air coordination element attached to Task Force Dagger had been executing air operations throughout Operation Enduring Freedom and had frequent contact with the 10th Mountain Division. Throughout January and February, they repeatedly requested that 10th Mountain Division accept the six- to eight-man tactical air control party TACP that the new joint task force would need to integrate planning with the air component. These appeals were declined. As a result, although it was going against joint procedures, the division argued it would not need airpower. Yet since the tiny TACP would have provided access to the integrated airpower of Air Force, Navy, and Marine assets in the region, a strong case can be made that it would have proven to be far more valuable to the division than the equivalent number of ground troops. Military education and training do little to emphasize the integration of airpower into joint operations beyond the tactical level. Army doctrine in particular tends to relegate airpower to a supporting role. This gives land commanders and planners the false impression that airpower will be available whether it is included in planning or not and fails to give them an accurate understanding of the useful effects that air, space, and cyber assets can bring to a battle when integrated into planning from the start. Whatever its causes, the failure to integrate the air component into the planning process for Anaconda led to cascading errors. The resulting errors in Anaconda fall into five major categories, each of which could have been avoided had the CJTF included the air component from the beginning of the planning effort. Poor Intelligence Preparation of the Battlefield. The problem with air and space intelligence preparation of the battlefield, however, was not purely mechanical. Even in the short time that the air component had to concentrate on the Anaconda area prior to battle, air and space collection assets managed to identify 22 enemy fighting positions and 40 cave entrances in the valley. Underestimating Airpower Deployment Time. Just as an army moves at the head of a logistical train, airpower too deploys with troops, supplies, and equipment needed to sustain operations. Failure to integrate air planners into the effort contributed to the mistaken belief that, even without preparation, the right mix of airpower would come together at the right place and time over the battlefield. Although the distances involved only mildly hampered long-range Air Force bombers, beginning the battle with land-based fighter aircraft deployed near the battlefield would have considerably improved both close air support response time and forward air controller capability. As it was, the air component moved its A-10 strike aircraft forward during the battle, but doing so was extremely difficult for diplomatic reasons, and they missed the crucial first 2 days of combat. Air Force refueling tankers would have benefited from more time as well. Tankers were critical to Anaconda because of the distances that attack aircraft flew to reach the battlefield and because aerial refueling allowed aircraft to orbit for hours over the battlefield providing oncall support to troops below. Without tankers, Navy fighters based on carriers miles away could not have reached the battlefield. The refueling of Anaconda support aircraft also had to be scheduled with other combat, intelligence, and transport refueling priorities throughout the Middle East. Basing and overflight rights for the bombers, fighters, tankers, and transports supporting operations in landlocked Afghanistan required additional setup time. Some of the heaviest fighting during Anaconda occurred while the Navy was replacing one of its carriers in the area and there was only one rather than the usual two carriers available for operations. This swap could have been rescheduled. Better coordination could have easily averted these missteps. While airpower is flexible and can deploy rapidly, like any other form of combat power, it is more effective if afforded sufficient time for planning. The third major error was the failure to build a robust means of coordinating between the land and air component during the battle. Over the years, the United States has developed intricate processes and organizations manned by highly trained Airmen to make close air support work. When properly set up, the process for requesting air support responds rapidly to the needs of ground troops. With a division headquarters rather than a corps headquarters forming its core, CJTF Mountain did not have the same robust capability for managing and prioritizing airpower that would reside in a corps-level Air Support Operations Center. Under

these circumstances, the division should have made substantial efforts to increase its air integration capability but did not. Left out of the planning effort, theater air leadership scrambled in the final days before Anaconda to cobble together a tactical air coordination system. Initially, CJTF Mountain did not realize that it lacked even the radio and satellite equipment needed to coordinate close air support. A number of quick-thinking Airmen rapidly established an ad hoc air coordination center, which became minimally functional only hours before Anaconda began and built a killbox plan by day four of the engagement. As a result, although close air support was extremely responsive and the average delay time was only 5 minutes across the entire operation, air planners have described the lack of fratricide as a miracle, and early in the battle there were far more aircraft in the sky than control networks on the ground could adequately use. Lack of Operational- and Strategic-level Coordination. A fourth error that could have been alleviated by involving the air component in planning was a lack of operational- and strategic-level coordination. The heart of theater-level airpower planning and execution is the CAOC, which allows the CFACC to exercise command and control over air- and space-based systems, provides a unified picture of the battlefield, and serves as a link between the strategic, operational, and tactical levels of war. This link is essential given the inherently global nature of air- and space power. Satellites, long-range bombers, and heavy transports are seldom under the direct control of battlefield commanders since they may be required in different theaters on different days. Knowing what information to collect and which assets are available to collect it, and then routing that information from sensors to users requires technology and organizations that are built into the CAOC. Tapping into CAOC resources and expertise would have called for senior-level coordination between the land and air components. By failing to make the CFACC aware of the operation until almost the last minute and only minimally coordinating even then, the CJTF blinded itself to some of the most important factors influencing the battle. The CJTF did not fully understand, for instance, when carrier aircraft would be available, how to utilize airborne ISR, what kind of diplomatic issues surrounded air basing, or how the limitations of theaterwide ROE prevented aircraft from descending below specific altitudes and required pilots to seek direct permission from USCENTCOM headquarters in Tampa before striking targets other than those associated with defensive close air support or in open engagement zones. Failure to Consider Airpower. If air leaders and planners had been included from the start of the Anaconda planning process, the entire concept of operations might have been different. According to the plan, Afghan forces were to move into the valley from the north and south, acting as hammers to drive enemy fighters into the mountain passes to the east. In this plan, Afghan fighters were to be used as conventional troops, which was a different role from previous battles where Afghans mainly mopped up after heavy bombing. SOF and air planners had been conducting operations in Afghanistan using indigenous forces for almost half a year. They understood that using untrained tribal fighters as a hammer against prepared enemy positions without extensive preparatory airstrikes was an overly optimistic course of action. Based on their experience at Tora Bora and elsewhere, SOF and air planners also understood that al Qaeda troops generally fought to the death. The CJTF brought in only eight Apache attack helicopters for air support under the assumption that the need for fixed-wing support would be minimal and that these assets would be available if needed. The Apache is a marvel of modern technology; however, it was ill suited for this mission. Its hovering-while-firing tactic made it a sitting duck for small arms fire. Like most helicopters, the Apache is highly vulnerable when operating close to the ground in mountainous terrain over concentrations of enemy infantry. The damage these aircraft sustained from ground fire confirmed this susceptibility. In addition, the plan underestimated the amount of airpower the operation would call for. In the end, winning the battle required hundreds of times more air-dropped ordnance than the helicopters could have provided. The plan called for only 30 minutes of airstrikes against 13 predetermined targets to soften up enemy positions. For instance, the air component had discovered dozens of potential targets and had, apparently unbeknownst to the JFC, recommended these to division planners. Moreover, gathering intelligence was not a stated objective of the mission, which aimed at killing or capturing al Qaeda leadership and followers, and a senior advocate could have pointed out that preparatory airstrikes were essential when using Afghan troops. Air planners could also have clarified that precision bombs are relatively inexpensive and that they were not in short supply. Finally, air planners could have advised that if surprise was important, a compressed and intense period of

strikesâ€™ less than the allocated 30 minutesâ€™ could have generated the desired effects.

8: OEF - Operation Anaconda

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9: Operation Anaconda, Began on This Date, March 2 - 10, in Afghanistan

Implications of Operations Anaconda and Harpoon. Publisher's Summary Long before it became "Obama's War, " the long-running conflict in Afghanistan was launched by President George W. Bush in retaliation for the 9/11 attacks on the United States.

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