Battle of Mogadishu:
Anatomy of a Failure

A Monograph
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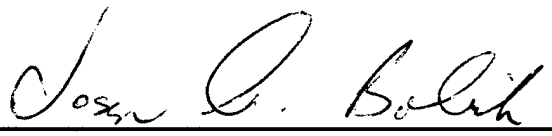

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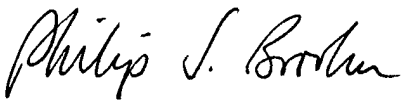

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ABSTRACT

BATTLE OF MOGADISHU: ANATOMY OF A FAILURE by MAJ Roger N. Sangvic, USA, 48 pages.

By applying Cohen and Gooch's model to the Battle of Mogadishu, this paper has shows that the failure of the TFR mission on 3-4 October 1993 was the result of a system failure. Secretary Aspin received far more blame than he deserved for making the decision. Misperception of the real impact tanks and APCs could have had on the overall mission is the real cause of this disproportionate blame. GEN Hoar and GEN Powell, in addition, bear as much responsibility as Secretary Aspin for the decision. Neither of these generals strongly advocated the deployment to Aspin even though the worsening situation on the ground merited their strong support. Both Hoar and Powell's approval recommendations can be characterized as luke warm. Aspin's real failure was of not being more critical of the conduct of the TFR operations. In light of Secretary Aspin's acknowledged concern over the number of similar operations conducted by TFR and his knowledge that the Administration was seeking a political solution, he should have notified MG Garrison of the policy shift though the JCS and CINCCENT and provided additional guidance on risk. Had Aspin either reassessed the risk of each TFR operation more thoroughly or done a better job coordinating the policy shift in light of the increased risks, it is likely that the three October raid would not have occurred.

While better policy coordination from the Secretary of Defense down to TFR could have prevented the 3 October 1993 raid from occurring, TFR did have all the means in Mogadishu to successfully accomplish the mission. However, overconfidence in TFR's capabilities and underestimation of the enemy's ability to find and attack TFR vulnerabilities were critical failures that led to a series of other failures. First, TFR did not request the AC-130s and extra platoon. Second, TFR conducted the 3 October raid without protecting its vulnerable helicopters. Third, TF planners failed to utilize all their available resources and integrate these resources into a plan that could be flexible enough to handle the threat and all the friction in this risky operation.

This paper demonstrates that TF Ranger's 3 October mission failed as a result of the organization, not the decisions of Secretary Aspin alone. As Cohen and Gooch observed, military misfortune is not merely the result of an individual mistake, but rather, the result of series of mistakes throughout a system. Ultimately, TFR and the system it was working in failed to anticipate and adapt.

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Introduction

Failure is something that most organizations have great difficulty dealing with. The military, as an organization, has an especially difficult challenge in dealing with failure because military failures normally result in more than lost debates, dollars, resources, or market shares. Military misfortunes result in lives being lost, soldiers being crippled and maimed, future policies being altered, and hard earned prestige and credibility diminished. These were just a few of the consequences of the failed U.S.-led effort to capture the Somali warlord, Mohammed Farah Aideed,[1] on 3-4 October 1993 in an effort to shore up the foundering United Nations Operation Somalia II (UNOSOM II). Regardless of how difficult failure is to deal with emotionally, understanding the nature of military failures is essential for the U.S. military to learn its hard gained lessons and develop systems to prevent the reoccurrence of similar failures. A detailed critical analysis of military failures like the Battle of Mogadishu is required to avoid emotionalism and the natural tendency to seek a simple cause for the failure.

Clausewitz advocated detailed critical analysis of a battle in order to understand it in its totality and complexity rather than analyzing many battles in only a superficial manner.[2] Clausewitz probably understood the complexity of war far better than most military theorists did. Although his perspective was mainly the Napoleonic campaigns of his era, his advocacy of critical analysis is just as valid for today's urban combat zones as it was for the fields of battle in his day. Critical analysis of the Battle of Mogadishu is especially important because U.S. forces may have to deal with combat circumstances similar to what Task Force Ranger (TFR) and the 10th Mountain Division's Quick Reaction Force (QRF) encountered in the U.S. Army's largest single fire fight since

Vietnam.[3] The events leading up to this battle provide an important case study of how decisions at the tactical, operational, and strategic level interacted to achieve the unintended end state -- a withdrawal of U.S. support for UNOSOM II, a future reluctance of the Clinton Administration to intervene militarily in places such as Rwanda, Haiti, and Bosnia, and an even greater aversion for U.S. troops to be under U.N. control in other risky operations.[4]

This monograph investigates the causes for the failure experienced by the U.S. military in attempting to capture the Somali warlord Mohammed Farah Aideed in Mogadishu, Somalia on 3 October 1993. Using the systematic Clausewitzian method laid out by Eliot A. Cohen and John Gooch in their book, Military Misfortunes: The Anatomy of Failure in War, this paper analyzes some of the key actions taken at the tactical, operational, and strategic levels that led to the failure of the Task Force Ranger (TFR) mission and ultimately the entire UNOSOM II operation. The key to this method of analysis is determining at what point in the Battle of Mogadishu[5] it became a military failure. Once this point is determined, the paper discusses if the requested tanks and Armored Personnel Carriers (APCs) could have prevented this failure given the established chain of command and the situation. While the focus of the paper is on the effect that the additional tanks and APCs could have had on the outcome to the Battle of Mogadishu; just as important, an analysis using Cohen and Gooch's methodology will also lead to the identification of other critical failures associated with this operation at all levels of war.

This type of critical analysis is necessary because too much emphasis has been placed on then Secretary of Defense Les Aspin's role in the failure of the Task Force

Ranger mission to capture Aideed and not enough effort has been placed on critically analyzing how all of the tactical, operational, and strategic decisions and actions led to the failure. Since it was widely perceived that Secretary Aspin lost his job as a result of his failure to approve tanks and APCs for Somalia in September 1993, many people infer that the tanks and APCs would have significantly changed the outcome of the battle and thus the success of UNOSOM II. That may not be the case. According to Cohen and Gooch, military misfortune occurs as a result of failures in systems and organizations, not simply because of one individual. By using Cohen and Gooch's method of analysis, this paper seeks to discover whether Les Aspin's disapproval was the critical lapse that led to the failed mission or whether there were a number of critical lapses in the system and organization that worked in concert to result in failure. To conduct this analysis, this paper discusses some of the key decisions made at the tactical, operational, and strategic levels that ultimately influenced what happened on the ground during those two days in October 1993. Through Cohen and Gooch's systematic analysis, this monograph determines what all the critical lapses/tasks were and if Secretary Aspin's decision not to approve additional tanks and APCs was one of them.

Cohen and Gooch's Methodology for Analyzing Military Misfortunes

Cohen and Gooch's methodology provides a comprehensive method of analyzing military misfortunes. Underlining their methodology is their belief that military organizations are complex, adaptive organizations. As such, misfortunes are the result of systemic and organizational failures that can be categorized in three ways: failure to learn, failure to anticipate, and failure to adapt.[6] Failure to learn is characterized by the organization's failure to apply lessons from the past. Failure to anticipate is the result of

failing to anticipate the future. Failure to adapt implies the inability of an organization to deal with the changing present.[7] Any two of these failures working together will result in an aggregate failure. All three failures combined will result in a catastrophic failure.[8]

In order to determine the roots of these failures, Cohen and Gooch advocate that military misfortunes be evaluated holistically; i.e., a "Clausewitzian Kritik." According to Cohen and Gooch, the Clausewitzian Kritik has three steps: "the discovery of facts, the tracing of efforts to causes, and the investigation and evaluation of means."[9] This analysis should include evaluation of what if scenarios to gain insight into what could have been. Finally, this method advocates a multi-layered approach that seeks to analyze the effects of all levels of decisions and actions on the failure.[10]

This paper uses this methodology to analyze the failure of the Battle of Mogadishu. The first step in the methodology is the discovery of the facts, determining what exactly happened. In this step, the paper discusses some of the pertinent background history leading to TFR's deployment and provides a detailed account of what happened on the 3-4 October mission. The second step is to determine the nature of the failure. In this step, counterfactual analysis is conducted to determine what was required for the battle to have been less than a failure. In other words, this step determines what needed to be accomplished for the mission to have been considered a success, or at least not a failure. This counterfactual portion of the analysis includes "what if" scenarios. The third step is to determine the "critical tasks" that went unfulfilled or were incomplete that led to the military misfortune. The fourth step is the "layered analysis" which examines all the levels of the organization and how they contributed to the failure. The last step is to draw up an "analytical matrix" to graphically depict the "pathways to

misfortune." The matrix shows how the failures at different levels relate to each other by identifying the critical path that led to military misfortune.[11] By using this entire method, this paper determines if the failure of the Battle of Mogadishu was the result of a failure to anticipate, to learn, to adapt, a combination of two these failures (an aggregate failure), or a combination of all three (a catastrophic failure). After revealing the nature of the U.S. failure in the Battle of Mogadishu, this paper concludes with some lessons that can be learned from analyzing the U.S. failure in the Battle of Mogadishu.

Discovery of Facts

The Discovery of facts must include a brief history of why Task Force Ranger was called to Somalia and what happened on 3-4 October. The pre-deployment history provides a context for what happened during the actual raid. It describes some of the policy decisions that inadvertently led to the TFR deployment. It recounts the U.N.'s unsuccessful attempts to capture Aideed, the use of AC-130s and their withdrawal, the escalation of violence by both sides, and the NCA's decision to send TFR. The detailed description of the actual battle is necessary to understand the timing of events as they relate to the ability of additional tanks and APCs to have prevented failure of the mission. The battle narrative also serves the purpose of illuminating various critical failures.

Why Task Force Ranger Was Called to Somalia

American involvement in Somalia goes back long before 1993. Before Somalia had become a factionalized failed state dominated by clan-based, competing warlords, the United States had supported the former dictator Siad Barre, whom Aideed had successfully overthrown in 1991.

The U.S. gave relatively little attention to Somalia until 1992 when the human suffering brought on by famine and fighting became headline news. American was focused on defeating Iraq in the Gulf War and on dealing with the aftermath of this defeat. The U.S. was more concerned with executing Operation Provide Comfort in Northern Iraq, addressing the potential nuclear threat in North Korea, deciding its role in the former Yugoslavia, deciding what NATO's role should be in the post-Cold War era, and using the Gulf War as a catalyst to bring about an improved peace agreement in the Middle East.[12]

On 4 May 1993 the United Nations Operation Somalia II (UNOSOM II) took over responsibility from UNITAF. UNOSOM II's mandate included the ambitious task of nation building while UNITAF had only been responsible for providing the conditions necessary for the distribution of humanitarian aide. UNOSOM was unprepared, in both organization and force levels, to assume the mission it was given under UNSCR #814. UNOSOM II had less combat power to impose its will on the warlords, and its staff was new and undermanned. Furthermore, planning, coordination, and implementation would be more difficult since not all the forces had worked together. Yet, UNOSOM II under Ambassador Jonathan Howe and Lieutenant General Cevic Bir embarked upon a path that would lead them into direct conflict with Aideed; a confrontation that the UNITAF leaders, Ambassador Robert Oakley and Lieutenant General Robert Johnston, had felt wise to avoid, even with their larger force and unified command.[13]

Tension began to increase almost immediately between UNOSOM II and Aideed's Somalia National Alliance (SNA). Ambassador Howe, UN Special Representative for UNOSOM II and hand selected by National Security Advisor Anthony

Lake for the position, tried to isolate and marginalize Aideed from the start.[14] This was in contrast to the engagement policy of Ambassador Oakley. Aideed increasingly felt that Howe and the U.N. could not be trusted to be fair brokers because of their policy of marginalization of him and unfair implementation of the Addis Ababa II Accords.[15] He used Radio Mogadishu to vent his growing antipathy for the UN. Among other things, he claimed that the UN had become Somalia's new colonists and incited his followers to resist the UN's nation building attempts.[16]

Concerned with Aideed's vitriol, Lieutenant General Bir directed some of his staff to develop some options as to how to shut down Aideed's radio station. With civilian Somali spies throughout UNOSOM II headquarters, it is likely that Aideed knew the UN was making plans to harm his organization.[17] So, when Pakistani forces on short notice arrived on 5 June 1993 to conduct authorized arms inspections at the SNA arms cache collocated at the radio station and other locations, Aideed may have believed that the Pakistanis were there to shut down his radio station, a major source of his power.[18] As a result of these fears, a desire to confront the UN, or both, Aideed ordered his SNA forces to conduct a series of coordinated attacks against the Pakistanis.[19] In these actions, Aideed's forces killed 24 and wounded 57 Pakistani troops and wounded one Italian and three American soldiers.[20]

On 6 June 1993 the United Nations Security Council unanimously passed Resolution #837 which basically declared war on Aideed in all but name. The resolution called for the investigation and prosecution of the individuals responsible for the Pakistani ambushes.[21] UNOSOM II had thus transitioned from its neutral role in peace enforcement to taking sides and fighting a counter-insurgency campaign.[22] UN

Ambassador Madeleine K. Albright, in consultation with Anthony (Tony) Lake and Ambassador Howe, hastily drew up the resolution. GEN Colin Powell was not consulted.[23] The National Security Council principals never discussed the policy implications of this resolution for U.S. involvement in Somalia.[24] The resolution would basically commit U.S. forces to fighting a counter-insurgency.[25]

Even so, Howe had the choice of how to implement the resolution since Aideed was not mentioned by name in the resolution. The day after the 5 June 93 SNA ambush of the Pakistanis, Howe began lobbying his old boss Anthony Lake, President Clinton's National Security Advisor, for the Delta Force to be sent to capture Aideed. He originally envisioned a small force that would deploy secretly and capture Aideed while he was still out in the open.[26] Failing to get Pentagon support for Delta, on 12 June 1993 Howe and Bir attempted to destroy Aideed's capabilities through three days of AC-130H, AH-1 helicopter attacks, and QRF raids on his acknowledged and unacknowledged weapon storage sites, chop shops containing thirty "technicals,"[27]and radio station.[28] The U.S. supplied the assets and support to conduct these attacks.

This phase of military operations against the SNA ended on 17 June 1993 when another significant escalation occurred. Here UNOSOM II mounted a major early morning cordon and search operation that nearly resulted in the capture of Aideed. The SNA warlord escaped by having his forces conduct a diversionary attack on the perimeter.[29] SNA conducted part of the attack from Digfer Hospital, a suspected but undeclared SNA weapons storage site. UNOSOM II forces returned fire on the SNA snipers on top of the hospital. But, in doing so, UNOSOM II damaged its own legitimacy

in the eyes of the international press.[30] Press coverage of the collateral damage from the U.S. supplied AC-130s used in the operation led to the gunships' recall from theater.

After failing to capture Aideed on 17 June 1993, Howe, with the concurrence of Lieutenant General Bir, Force Commander, UNOSOM II, and his deputy and Commander of U.S. Forces Somalia, Major General Thomas Montgomery, posted a twenty-five thousand dollar reward for information leading to the capture of Aideed.[31] In retrospect, the reward had the opposite effect to that which it was intended to have. SNA members considered the UN reward an insult because it was so small. The reward reinforced what Aideed told his clan members: the UN was interfering in Somalia's internal struggle. Instead of weakening Aideed, the small reward further unified Somali support for Aideed.[32] The U.S.'s redeployment of the AC-130Hs effectively gave Aideed another victory. The U.S. had in effect backed down by removing its biggest and most feared weapon.[33]

Without the psychological and military effect of the AC-130Hs, Howe decided that UNOSOM II forces should keep a low profile in Mogadishu and wait to see the effect of his award. Meanwhile, Howe continued to lobby his contacts in Washington, D.C. for Delta to be sent.

Many critics of UNOSOM II's performance believe that Howe made a mistake by putting a small reward on Aideed's head and then waiting to see the impact of this reward. Instead, critics contend that Howe should have used his position of strength after conducting the impressive 17 June 1993 cordon and search mission to get Aideed to negotiate.[34] Aideed was on the run and feeling the pressure of UNOSOM II. He had lost a significant amount of his arms and was afraid of the AC-130s.

Instead, UNOSOM II forces hunkered down and waited for the reward to produce Aideed. The elusive warlord, for his part, became more aggressive as UNOSOM remained more passive. UNOSOM became so focused on capturing Aideed that it was not able to focus on its political reconciliation tasks.[35] UNOSOM II had effectively become isolated in southern Mogadishu. By the beginning of July Aideed had started to increase the number of aggressive actions: ambushes, vehicular mines, helicopter attacks, rocket propelled Grenade (RPG) rounds fired, and mortar rounds fired.[36]

While UNOSOM II commanders waited, they faced an unity of effort problem with their contributing nations. Italy and Pakistan, two of the largest contributors to UNOSOM II, were satisfied with the amount of retribution paid to the SNA. Disagreement over the largely U.S. and Boutros Boutros-Ghali supported hunt for Aideed prevented UNOSOM II from achieving the needed unity of command and effort. Italian forces ultimately made separate peace with Aideed and the SNA.[37]

Howe rejected the idea of any resolution in Somalia including a criminal like Aideed. So, Howe continued in his efforts to seek additional forces to capture Aideed or to destroy his organization with the forces that were available to him. When the decision to send TFR to Somalia was first discussed in June 93, Ambassador Howe advised the National Command Authority (NCA) that the special operations force had a ninety percent chance of capturing General Aideed. Ambassador Howe's assessment was based upon the situation at that time; Aideed was not in hiding and UNOSOM II had not attempted to capture him. So, Howe believed that a small special operations unit could have easily conducted a covert night operation to capture a sleeping and unsuspecting

Aideed.[38] Powell and Hoar resisted any such deployment and were supported by the White House.[39]

In the meantime, Howe thought he had a chance to eliminate the most radical of Aideed's clan while they met in an SNA headquarters building known as the Abdi House on 12 July 1993. SNA moderates were supposed to be meeting at a different building at the same time.[40] Without any prior warning, Cobra helicopters fired 11 TOW missiles into the building and killed between 20 and 215 according to the International Red Cross.[41]

This UNOSOM II escalation had a number of unintended consequences. First, it caused the Italians to threaten to pull out of UNOSOM II. Second, instead of destroying Aideed's organization, it greatly strengthened it. Clan moderates and intellectuals who had supported a negotiated settlement with UNOSOM II were now firmly behind Aideed against UNOSOM II.[42] Third, the SNA increased its combat operations against the UN, specifically Americans.[43] Thus the attack against the Abdi House was a major turning point for UNOSOM II and the next step in the escalation that would lead to the deployment of TFR.

By 8 August 1993 it was evident that the SNA were focusing its attacks on Americans; Aideed had successfully used command-detonated mines to kill four Americans.[44] SNA command detonated mines wounded four more Americans on 19 August 1993. Two days later, on 21 August 1993, GEN Powell called Secretary Aspin and reluctantly recommended that the TFR be sent to Somalia. Powell was reluctant to sent TFR because he understood the risk involved in conducting such mission. Powell

felt that something had to be done given the increasing casualties inflicted by the SNA.[45] With Powell's opposition lifted, approval was swift.

Aspin concurred along with Warren Christopher and Anthony Lake. When Lake notified President Clinton the next day about the deployment, he did not object.[46] Aspin, however, "urged [Powell] that at the same time the visibility of the U.S. effort should be reduced."[47] Powell interpreted this to mean that TFR should be kept to the minimum force required. This was the guidance given to GEN Downing. MG Garrison advised GEN Downing that the mission could be accomplished without the AC-130s and the extra platoon for local security. MG Garrison had not requested the AC-130s during the time he had been in Somalia.[48] Since GEN Hoar was against the deployment from the beginning, he advocated sending only the necessary forces required to do the mission -- no more no less. The extra platoon for local security was outside the mission requirements of Task Force Ranger because local security was the responsibility of the Allies.[49]

By the time TFR was ordered to Somalia in the end of August 1993, the situation in Mogadishu had completely changed. Aideed was in hiding and knew TFR was in Mogadishu to capture him. By some accounts he was moving every two hours, changing his means of travel, wearing disguises, sleeping at a different locations each night.[50] To deal with the increased threat, GEN Downing recommended a larger force that included the deployed TFR, AC-130s, and an extra ground reaction platoon.

When the National Command Authority approved the mission based upon the recommendation of General Powell, it did so with the understanding that while TFR was conducting a high-risk operation in trying to capture Aideed there was no possibility of a

catastrophic failure.[51] The NCA supported the continuation of the missions without a serious reassessment of risks after each mission.[52]

What is apparent from this background narrative is that TFR's deployment was the last in a series of steps taken by the Clinton Administration to salvage the ambitious U.N. led mission in Somalia. The decision to deploy TFR had its roots in the Administration's support of UNSCR #837, which all but called for Aideed's arrest by name for ambushing the Pakistanis, and in its desire to limit resources for the Somali problem. As UNOSOM II proved itself not up to the task of confronting and capturing Aideed, the Administration, in the face of increasing casualties, decided to give TFR a try. The major policy problem was that the TFR's military actions were uncoordinated with any diplomatic effort. And as the next section of the paper will show, the military force alone was too little, too late.

What happened on 3-4 October 1993[53]

Having discussed the events leading up to the deployment of TFR, it is time to describe the TFR raid itself, specifically, the events leading to the successful Somali attack on Crash Site #2. The timing of the events is important to determine if additional tanks and APCs could have prevented Crash Site #2 from being over run and, thus, precluded the failure of the TFR mission. Understanding what happened is a prerequisite for determining the nature of the failure and identifying the critical failures.

With ominous foreshadowing in late September 1993, MG Garrison Commander of Task Force Ranger, predicted, "If we go into the vicinity of the Bakara Market, there's no question we'll win the gunfight. But we might lose the war."[54]

In its seventh raid since arriving in country on 26 August 1993 with the mission to capture Aideed, TFR launched a raid on a building in the heart of "Indian country," three miles from the TFR compound at the Mogadishu airport and near the Olympic Hotel in the vicinity of the same Bakara market that Garrison knew posed a great threat. To compensate for the inherent risks of conducting a daylight raid in Aideed's own backyard, Garrison for the first time "ordered his AH-6 "littlebird" attack helicopters to carry rockets as well to shoot any threatening Somali gunman rather than give them a chance to surrender."[55] Garrison knew how fast the Somalis had reacted to his previous six missions. He planned to further reduce risk by being on the target for only about one hour; speed equaled security.[56]

At 1300 MG Garrison received actionable intelligence from a Somali agent. The TFR's spy reported that Aideed's lieutenants would be meeting in a building on Hawlwadig Road a block over from the Olympic Hotel near the Bakara market, a densely populated SNA controlled area. The target house remained under constant surveillance, video and photography, by OH 58 helicopter and P-3 Orion spy plane as TFR prepared for the mission.[57] At 1540 two AH-6 gun ships flew over the target building for the final check. Immediately after this, four MH-6's touched down close to the building long enough for 16 delta soldiers to jump off and assault the target. Two MH-60 helicopters dropped off 30 more special operations soldiers to conduct close-in security and assist the assault team. Five minutes later four more MH-60 helicopters, carrying about sixteen Rangers each, arrived to provide outer security. Chalk One was led by 1LT Larry Perino, and CPT Mike Steele fast roped in at the southeast road intersection closest to the target building. Chalk Two led by 1LT Tom DiTomasso fast roped in at the northeast road

intersection closest to the target building. Chalk Three led by SFC Sean Watson fast roped in on Hawlwadig Road at the southwest road intersection. While still in the helicopter, Chalk Four started to receive fire. An RPG round exploded near the MH-60. Under fire SGT Matt Eversmann had his Chalk Four fast rope in about a block too far north of its intended drop point at the northwest corner road intersection. One of the rangers (PFC Blackburn) in Chalk Four missed the rope and crashed to the ground. Rangers started receiving fire almost immediately, earlier than in previous missions.

The ground convoy led by LTC McKnight arrived at the target building to load up the prisoners. LTC McKnight ordered that Blackburn be evacuated back to base, which should have been a five-minute drive with a cargo HMMWV and two gun mounted HMMWVs to provide security.[58] The column successfully fought through ambushes to save Blackburn, but another soldier (SGT Dominick Pilla) was killed in the process. Meanwhile, Chalk 4 had taken three more casualties, in addition to Blackburn, from the growing number of attacking Somalis.

Soon after Blackburn's medical evacuation convoy departed and the 24 prisoners started to get loaded in LTC McKnight's vehicle convoy, a MH-60 designated Super 61 was shot down at 1620 by an RPG and crashed about 300 yards from the target house. Super 61 had just finished trying to provide fire support with its on board snipers when it was hit by the RPG. Half of 1LT DiTomasso's Chalk Two and part of Chalk One ran to secure the crash site. During the movement several were wounded (1 seriously - dies at 2027 at Crash Site #1) and one was killed. 1LT DiTomasso's squad arrived at the crash site just after an MH-6 landed at Crash Site #1 to recover two wounded in action (WIA), the two pilots were killed in the crash (one of the WIA later died of wounds). 1LT

DiTomasso reestablished a perimeter around Super 61 to allow the wounded to be evacuated on the MH-6 and prevent Somali's from desecrating the bodies of the two dead pilots. Super 62 provided security overhead. Meanwhile at 1626, the Joint Operations Center (JOC) ordered the ground reaction force (GRF1), (LTC McKnight) to move with the assault force and prisoners to Crash Site #1 to collect the rest of his unit and the bodies of the dead pilots. (CSAR Team, DiTomasso's Chalk, CPT Steele's Chalk, and Delta soldiers total about 90)

Super 68 arrived at Crash Site #1 at 1628 with the combat search and rescue (CSAR) team. In the process, Super 68 was hit by an RPG and returned immediately to base.[59] Approximately 90 soldiers moved to secure Crash Site #1 while the CSAR team extracted only one of the dead pilots from the wreckage-the other could not be removed without additional equipment. The Somalis continued to conduct persistent attacks on the security perimeter while soldiers and helicopters kept them back until the relief column arrived the next morning.

At 1629, the 10th Mountain Quick Reaction Force (QRF) company was directed to depart the university compound and conduct a link up with TFR at the airport.[60] To get there, the QRF was ordered to take a long route to avoid SNA controlled areas. This took until 1724, nearly an hour.[61]

Meanwhile LTC McKnight began moving with his assault force, prisoners, and convoy to Crash Site #1 about 4 blocks away.[62] Although Crash Site #1 was only 300 yards away, LTC McKnight had not seen where the first helicopter had gone down and needed the assistance of the P3 Orion to direct the convoy to Crash Site #1 to secure the rest of his force. Before he could get to the first crash site, the Somalis used RPGs to

shoot down a third helicopter, Super 64, as it orbited to provide fire support for Crash Site #1. At 1640, Super 64 crashed about a half-mile south of Crash Site #1. The two pilots and crewmembers survived the crash and proceeded to set up security in the hope that help would soon arrive.[63]

Now, McKnight was directed to rescue the soldiers at Crash Site #2 after completing the same task at Crash Site #1. This may seem easy by the distances alone, but McKnight was receiving time-delayed directions from the P-3, when seconds counted. He was not able to talk directly to the P3 crewmember giving directions. As a result, he kept missing the correct turn.[64] Further complicating the route to the Crash Site #1 was the fact that the P3 was giving him directions that would help him avoid various roadblocks the SNA and Somalis were emplacing. In addition, McKnight had not told any of his other drivers where he was going so that if the lead vehicle got hit the convoy could continue.[65]

Confusing, late directions were compounded by steady, persistent attacks by the Somalis with rifles and RPGs -- especially when the convoy crossed any road intersection. Fog and friction were directly impacting on mission accomplishment. After 45 minutes of wandering through the hostile streets of the SNA, McKnight ended up - in front of the Olympic Hotel with too many casualties and too many damaged vehicles to successfully reach either crash site. This convoy would finally make it back to the airfield with many wounded, four killed in action (KIA) and three Somali prisoners killed.

By the time McKnight's convoy was ordered back to the airport (about 1715) an ad hoc ground reaction force (GRF2) (consisting of twenty-seven rangers, two 5-Ton

trucks, and six HMMWVs) had moved out from the airport to secure Crash Site #2 - Super 64.[66]

As GRF2, led by SSG Strucker, departed the compound at 1703, it was immediately ambushed. The GRF2 fought through and tried various routes to make it to Crash Site #2. An earthen berm blocked the first route. At 1720, a burning tire obstacle and Somali ambush prevented the GRF2 from reaching Crash Site #2. The rangers of GRF2 had gotten close enough for them to see one of the helicopter smoldering on a hill. Without any armor they could not fight through the ambush. While trying to find still another route GRF2 met up with GRF1 just north of K4 circle on Via Lenin. After cross-loading casualties from GRF1 to GRF2 vehicles and destroying one of the GRF1 disabled cargo HMMWVs with incendiary grenades, both the GRFs were ordered back to the airport.[67]

Meanwhile at 1727, a fourth helicopter, Super 62, was hit with a RPG and crash-landed at New Port. The C Company QRF, which had arrived at the TFR compound at 1710, was briefed on its mission to secure Crash Site #2 and at 1735 moved out to do so. Within ten minutes, the QRF got in its first fire fight south of K4 circle. At 1810 the QRF reported that it was pinned down at K4 circle. By 1830, the QRF was ordered to return to TFR compound.

By this time, it made sense to regroup and make a deliberate plan to rescue the soldiers at Crash Site #1. Crash Site #2 had already been over run by Somalis. By one reporters account, the helicopter crew and two Special Forces snipers, SFC Randy Shughart and MSG Gary Gordon, were able to keep the Somalis at bay for about two hours.[68] Given Gordon and Shughart were placed down by Super 62 ten minutes before it

was shot down at 1727, Crash Site #2 was secure until around 1917. Another reporter, who believes that Shughart and Gordon secured the sight for only 20 minutes, contradicts this timing.[69] That means Crash Site #2 was over run at 1737 if you use as a gauge when Super 62 was shot down. Given the extraordinary efforts TFR and the QRF made to secure Crash Site #2, it is unlikely that the QRF would have been recalled before Crash Site #2 was overrun. Therefore, it appears more likely that the second crash site was over run closer to 1737 than 1917 since the QRF was recalled before 1917.

Given the multiple unsuccessful attempts to rescue the soldiers in Crash Sites #1 and #2 and desiring that no more casualties be taken, MG Montgomery directed Brigadier General Giles to develop a deliberate relief plan. While the plan was being put together, one other soldier died of wounds received while moving to Crash Site #1. This deliberate relief effort would include about 70 vehicles -- Pakistani tanks, Malaysian APCs, 5-ton trucks and HMMWVs. By the time the relief column had completed its mission, at 0700 the next morning, two more Americans would die and several more would be wounded.

This antiseptic description does not express the incredible stress, danger, and range of emotions experienced by the participants. The purpose of this description is not to extol the bravery of the individual participants. If it were, there is much that could be written about it. The narrative's purpose is, instead, to recount the events that are important to understanding at what point in the battle failure occurred and whether enough time was available for additional tanks and APCs to have prevented that failure.

The Nature of the Failure

Having described the events leading to the deployment of TFR and the actual events of the raid, it is time to analyze these events to determine the nature of the failure.

In order to do this, it is necessary to determine what actions should have been taken at each level for something other than failure to be achieved. Determining these actions will lead to understanding the overall military failure so that this can be further analyzed to determine the specific critical lapses that occurred.

Overall, the Battle of Mogadishu is considered a failure because images of an American prisoner of war (POW), televised pictures of dead soldiers being dragged through the streets of Mogadishu, and the high number of casualties highlighted the Clinton Administration's lack of a coherent policy in Somalia. The lack of a viable strategy for Somalia was further reinforced to Congress when Secretary Aspin and Secretary Christopher briefed them in the aftermath of the battle.[70] In the end this unanticipated, intense battle resulted in President Clinton announcing an early pullout of U.S. support for UNOSOM II regardless of whether or not the UNOSOM II objectives had been achieved. Although serious policy failures had a part in TFR's disproportionate effect on the fate of U.S. policy toward Somalia, tactical and operational decisions had an equally important role in what happened during the battle. There were opportunities at these levels to have changed the end result of the Battle of Mogadishu and, thus, the overall failure of the U.S. policy in Somalia.

Tactically, one can argue that it was a success. TFR successfully captured 24 suspected supporters of Aideed, including some of his Lieutenants. In the fight to secure two helicopter crash sites, it had significantly hurt Aideed's warfighting ability by killing 300 - 1000 of Aideed's militia men and wounding about a 1,000 more. The cost for TFR and the 10th Mountain QRF was 18 dead, 78 wounded, 1 POW, five downed MH-60's, and numerous damaged vehicles.

After the 3-4 October 1993 battle with TF Ranger and the 10th Mountain QRF, Aideed called a unilateral cease-fire. According to LTG Anthony Zinni, who met with Aideed and his militia leaders soon after, they were visibly shaken by the incident and did not want the fighting to continue. They had had enough.[71] This suggests that the Battle of Mogadishu provided the U.S. an excellent opportunity to declare victory and to compel Aideed cooperate with UNOSOM II. Instead, Clinton chose to build up troops, set a deadline to get out (1 Mar 94), give the U.N. a chance to negotiate a political settlement, and avoid further military confrontations.[72] This option would have the appearance of strength and resolve (more troops) but would in reality cut losses by pulling out in four months. It basically admitted that Somalia was a failed policy.

Operationally, the Task Force Ranger raid could be considered a failure. The national policy for Somalia was to keep pressure on Aideed with TFR while seeking a political solution at the same time; the intent of the policy was not to escalate the conflict but to limit causalities. The more casualties U.S. forces received in Somalia, the greater the Congressional cry to pull out of Somalia. The problem was that Secretary Aspin failed to communicate this dual approach for dealing with Aideed to TFR through the JCS and CINCCENT.

But, at what point in the battle did the mission fail? Was it the number of American soldiers killed and wounded? Was it the number of American helicopters shot down? How many casualties would have been considered acceptable? Was the image of the bodies of dead soldiers being desecrated on national television? Was it the image of a captured and beaten Army pilot on national television symbolic of the mission's failure?

TFR would have been considered a success had it not conducted the 3-4 October mission and had Ambassador Howe successfully negotiated a cease-fire with Aideed. This was definitely achievable since Aideed had sent numerous messages that he was willing to negotiate. TFR had been successful in applying pressure to Aideed and his SNA organization.[73]

TFR would have achieved success had the 3 October raid been conducted with no helicopters being shot down. Had no helicopters been shot down, TFR could have extracted the 24 Somali prisoners, increased the pressure on Aideed to negotiate with the UN, probably lost less than six soldiers, and received far less press coverage. The semi-covert nature of the operation would have limited the negative press and, thus, prevented a policy crisis for the Clinton Administration.

TFR could have achieved limited success at a higher cost had only the first helicopter crashed. In this case, five to seven more soldiers might have been killed depending on whether the GRF1 would have found Crash Site #1 and been able to extract the pilot's body without the help of the 10th Mountain Division QRF. Again, the semi-covert nature of the operation would have limited the negative press and, thus, prevented a policy crisis for the Clinton Administration.

TFR could even have achieved an even more limited success after the second helicopter crashed had GRF1, the second GRF, or the QRF been able to secure the site before it was overrun. This would have prevented the Somalis from capturing the American pilot and desecrating bodies of the killed soldiers at Crash Site #2. Both of these events, as carried into the homes of millions of Americans, shocked an unsuspecting public and Congress into realizing that the environment in Somalia had

changed dramatically. The last time most American heard news of Somalia, it was that the U.S. was leading an effort to stop a famine. Seeing Americans being abused by these same Somalis caused everyone to question what had happened to change the situation so drastically.

Operationally, the TFR mission became a near complete failure when the second helicopter crash site could not be secured and was overrun. This allowed the Somalis to use the captured pilot and dead bodies as a political weapon. With the help of the news media, what had been intended as a covert operation would be under the scrutiny of the nation and world.

Strategically, the TFR mission was a failure because the Clinton Administration did not have a coherent policy for Somalia. The Administration had failed to gain Congressional support for its strategy to go after Aideed. It had failed to explain to the American public why we supported a policy that marginalized the warlords in general and Aideed in particular. It had failed to sell its policy for hunting Aideed to the American public. As a result, America and Congress were shocked at the level of violence the U.S. forces were involved in. Any possibility to take advantage of the tactical victory was lost at this level in the days following the raid.

This lack of a coherent policy became evident to congressional members when Aspin and Christopher briefed them immediately following the 3 October raid. Aspin basically solicited congressional members for ideas of where to go next. They were completely unimpressed with Aspin's and Christopher's command of the policy.[74] This unimpressive performance made Congress even more skeptical about the ability of the Administration to formulate a coherent policy in Somalia.

With no coherent strategy for a long-term solution in Somalia, the Clinton Administration would have had a difficult sell to Congress and the American public to reinforce Somalia sufficiently to impose order to the level achieved under UNITAF. Public opinion polls only supported the temporary increase in forces in Somalia. With Senator Robert C. Byrd (D-WV) calling for U.S. troops to be pulled out by 1 December 1993, President Clinton accomplished all he could in keeping U.S. forces in Somalia until the end of March 1994.[75] In addition, with a large Bosnia commitment lurking over the horizon, the Administration realized that the Somalia effort would require far greater resources than the U.S.'s limited interests warranted.[76]

The overall nature of the failure at the strategic level is one of policy. The Clinton Administration never clearly articulated a coherent policy for Somalia to Congress or the American public. The Administration attempted to achieve success in Somalia using an almost exclusively military solution to an inherently political problem.[77] Eventually the Administration realized that a more diplomatic approach was necessary, but it did not change its orders or guidance to the commanders in the field.

The nature of the failure at the tactical and operational levels was that the capture of Aideed's lieutenants was accomplished with an unacceptable cost in human life, casualties, and bad press. The Administration's intent was to conduct the mission with minimum casualties on both sides and as discretely as possible. The raid failed to accomplish the Administration's intent of a low-cost, discrete operation.

All the critical lapses discussed in the next section are related to the policy coordination failure at the strategic level or to the unacceptable casualty rates and public

exposure at tactical level. Had failure been avoided at either of these levels, overall failure could have been avoided.

Critical Tasks/Critical Lapses

All the critical lapses that resulted in the overall failure of the Battle of Mogadishu can be categorized into five broad areas: command, control, communications, and coordination; understanding the enemy; net assessment; allocation of resources; and leading and planning. All these categories, except "net assessment," should be self-explanatory. Net assessment is the overall understanding of how enemy's plan and capabilities match up with the friendly force's plan and capabilities.[78] These categories of critical lapses occurred at varying degrees at the strategic, operational, and tactical levels.

The purpose of this section is to discuss what the specific critical lapses were and why they are considered critical. In general, all these critical lapses contributed to the overall nature of the failure.

Part of the policy failure was caused by a critical lapse in coordination. Specifically, Secretary Aspin made a critical error in not informing MG Garrison through the JCS and CINCCENT that the National Security Council (NSC) had decided that the primary strategy would be to seek a diplomatic solution with Aideed. Since the greatest success would have been achieved had the raid not occurred, calling off the mission entirely would have resulted in the highest level of success. Failure could have been avoided had the NCA informed Garrison that the snatch operation was in support of the Aideed negotiations and, therefore, that he should limit mission risk as much as possible. This would have been the reasonable course of action to take given the NSC's consensus decision at the end of September 1993 to seek negotiation with Aideed (which Aideed

wanted because of the pressure TFR had put on him) and to simultaneously try to capture him to keep the pressure on him to negotiate. Pressure could have been kept on him by continuing the numerous profile flights that kept him on the move every two hours.[79] Had Aspin appreciated the possibility of catastrophic failure in the mission, Aspin could have recommended to the NSC that real missions be held in abeyance while keeping profile flights going. Aspin might have realized these increased risks if he or is staff had been more closely monitoring each mission.[80] Finally, Secretary Aspin could have requested a formal policy review to reassess the overall policy before the 3 October raid.[81]

The next level of success could have been achieved had no helicopters been shot down. To prevent any of its helicopters from being shot down, TFR needed to understand the enemy threat. Based upon the previous week's downing of a UH-60 flying 130 knots, rooftop level, at night, it was clear that UH-60s were vulnerable to RPG fires.[82] During the sixth raid on 21 September 1993 that captured Osman Atto, about fifteen RPGs were fired on TFR helicopters.[83] This meant that the Somali's were trying to attack the TFR helicopters. Therefore, TFR needed to protect the helicopters the best they could. TFR apparently did not appreciate the SNA capabilities or overestimated its own for a critical lapse in net assessment.

These lapses in understanding the enemy and net assessment led to the next critical lapse in leading and planning. TFR failed to develop a plan and execute an operation that protected its tactical decisive point -- its helicopters. MH-60, the most vulnerable helicopter, was kept in orbit within Somali RPG range for forty minutes (1540-1620) after the initial assault and security forces were moved into the target area. While the ground force was coming under sporadic fire, no crisis existed on the ground

that required MH-60s to be used in the ground support role. AH-6s with mini-guns or MH-6s with snipers could have been used instead if necessary. MH-6s and AH-6s are much smaller, faster, more maneuverable, and would have been much more difficult for the Somalis to hit with RPGs.

After the first MH-60 went down four blocks from the target building there was another chance to avoid catastrophic failure. Even though MG Garrison knew he had only one CSAR team and a contingency plan for only one helicopter going down, he persisted in putting the RPG-vulnerable MH-60 in harms way to support the ground force and CSAR team at Crash Site #1 (Super 61) although MH-6 and AH-6s with mini-guns, rockets and snipers were available.

Super 64 was shot down twelve minutes after Super 68 (CSAR) was shot and damaged inserting the CSAR team at Crash Site #1. TFR failed to adapt its tactics to the threat they were facing. Two weeks after Somalis tried to shoot RPGs at the helicopters on Osman Atto, a week after the 10th Mountain Division's UH-60 was shot down with RPGs while flying 130 knots rooftop level at night, one hour after RPGs are spotted and nearly hit the insertion birds, twenty minutes after Super 61 is shot down, twelve minutes after Super 68 is shot down and yet Super 64 is still flying in range of RPGs. Why was there no immediate action by MH-60s to get out of RPG range when they first came under RPG fire or when one MH-60 got shot down? Super 68 had to conduct the risky insertion of the CSAR team. After this insertion, however, evidence suggests that there was not any immediate action drill to move the other MH-60s out of RPG range.

TFR could have planned a more successful mission with its available resources. As mentioned earlier, it was a planning error not to anticipate that Aideed would focus his

RPGs on the larger, slower, less maneuverable MH-60s. There were several planning errors made concerning the need to protect this decisive point better.

Here are some additional actions that TFR could have planned with its existing resources to increase its chances for success. First, if the new threat had been acknowledged TFR could have configured a second CSAR team to secure a second crash site and/or formed another GRF that could have been standing by. These actions could have prevented Crash Site #2 from being overrun. Second, McKnight could have had the ability to speak directly to the EP-3 and avoid confusing directives. Third, TFR could have coordinated for the QRF to be at the airfield at all times and included it in the contingency planning so that they could have either launched immediately to Crash Site #2 before the SNA were able to react or been pre-positioned closer to the target area to be ready to secure the second crash site. Given Crash Site #2 was secured for at least one hour by the crew and the two SF snipers and was less than three miles away from the Mogadishu airport, had the QRF been better integrated into the TFR operation, it is possible that the QRF could have secured Crash Site #2 before it was overrun.

Even though it appears that TFR had all the necessary resources to successfully accomplish the mission, allocation of resources still needs to be considered another critical lapse. Had AC-130s been part of the force package that was sent to support TFR, it is less likely that MH-60s would have been needed to provide fire support and, thus, expose themselves to RPG fires. In this case, there might have been no losses of MH-60s. But this would have required TFR to change the way it operated. It is reasonable to believe that the AC-130s could have provided additional cover for the MH-60s if they still were needed to operate within RPG range. But it is unlikely that the AC-130 would

have been able to eliminate the threat from ground fired RPGs. Nevertheless, AC-130s would have reduced the likelihood that the MH-60s would have been shot down.

Even if one MH-60 had been shot down, AC-130s could have been used to secure Crash Site #1 without any help from MH-60s and thus would have prevented the Super 64 from being shot down. The AC-130 could have provided suppressive fire that could have prevented the Super 68 CSAR helicopter from being hit.

In addition, AC-130s could have provided the direct fire support and directions to McKnight's GRF to get directly to Crash Site #1. Liaison officers in the AC-130s could have talked directly to LTC McKnight without the time delay and confusion of multiple directions going through the JOC first. Using the JOC as an intermediary with directives caused confusion, frustration, and added casualties. The AC-130s could have provided the necessary firepower to prevent Somalis from putting obstacles in the way of McKnight's convoy and thus speeded his arrival at Crash Site #1 and reduce casualties. Even if Super 64 had been shot down as well, the AC-130s could have secured the Crash Site #2 for hours and given time for the GRF1, GRF2, or the QRF to reinforce and secure the crash site. Here too the AC-130s could have secured a route for these reaction forces to get to the Crash Site #2 and prevented Somalis from constructing obstacles. AC-130s could have even given TFR enough time to get tank and Armored Personnel Carrier (APC) support from the Pakistanis and Malaysians.

Had Secretary Aspin approved the request for four M1s and 14 M2s on the 27 September 93, MG Montgomery intended to use them to augment the QRF.[84] This armor could have been ready to go on the 3 October raid and would have been used.[85] Given that the QRF was not actively incorporated into the contingency planning for the TFR

missions, however, it is unlikely that these armor forces would have. Therefore, like the QRF, the armor force would have had to waste nearly an hour to move from the University compound to the airport and would have had little time left to secure the second crash site. TFR would have needed to incorporate the armor team into its contingency plans for it to have had a high probability of securing Crash Site #2 in time.

Had the AC-130s been available, however, it is likely that Crash Sites #1 and #2 could have been secured indefinitely. This would have given the standard QRF or armored QRF enough time to secure the sites and avert total failure.

As stated above, the first critical lapse was a lack of policy coordination. Although Lake stated "The policy was never to stop trying to get Aideed," Aspin understood that the "policy was to move to more diplomatic efforts but snatch Aideed on the side if you can".[86] This change in policy was never relayed down to TFR. With negotiation becoming the lead strategy, Garrison might not have even conducted the high-risk mission, especially if he knew he had known he could have achieved success simply by pressuring Aideed and avoiding the highest risk operations.

The next critical lapse was not understanding the enemy's capability to shoot down TFR helicopters. This underestimation of the enemy's capabilities and the success of previous TFR missions led to the critical lapse of net assessment. These lapses, in turn led to insufficient allocation of resources and planning.

Layered Analysis

Now that all the critical failures have been addressed, the next step is to conduct layered analysis. This analysis will look at three separate levels that impacted on the overall failure of the Battle of Mogadishu. The strategic level includes President Clinton,

his National Security Advisor Anthony Lake, Secretary of State Warren Christopher, Secretary of Defense Les Aspin and CJCS General Colin Powell. This level made the critical decision to emphasize a diplomatic solution to Somalia. All players at this level knew or should have known about the change in policy, yet this subtle policy change was not conveyed to MG Garrison through GEN Hoar.[87]

It also was at this level that force limitations were placed upon TFR as a result of underestimating the capabilities of the SNA and not recognizing the potential for catastrophic failure. Colin Powell translated Les Aspin's guidance of minimum footprint in Somalia to mean no AC-130s and no extra platoon even though the AC-130s would not be stationed in Somalia. Powell was reluctant to sent the AC-130s because the collateral damage they caused had produced some bad press coverage.[88] The combination of these two assets could have prevented the entire mission from failing--if AC-130s had been used for fire support instead of the MH-60s. This is also the level that MG Montgomery's request for four M1s and fourteen M2s met with disapproval. Although the Secretary of Defense ultimately said no to the request because it was counter to the administration's policy of drawing down U.S. presence and letting the U.N. take the lead, General Colin Powell, General Hoar, and MG Montgomery did not strongly argue for necessity of having the tanks despite the fact that the security in Mogadishu had changed so radically for the worse. They failed to properly articulate the necessity for having these assets in Mogadishu. The request did not give adequate justification for making an exception to drawdown policy. The request did not relate the need for armor to support for the TFR operation for which it would have been used.[89] As the Senate report and the JCS study concluded, tanks may have been helpful but not decisive in preventing the

failure of the mission.[90] Failure to properly resource MG Garrison with the AC-130s and an extra platoon and MG Montgomery with the M1s and M2s may have resulted in the overall failure in the mission.

President Clinton did not conduct an overall policy review with the Principals of the NSC until after the 3 October raid. A comprehensive policy review could have reviewed the increased risks to TFR and, thus, led to a mission change for TFR that would have reduced its operational risk. The policy review also could have led to a better-integrated military and diplomatic policy. TFR's military operations were not coordinated with the limited diplomatic effort. The NSA Tony Lake failed to accomplish this. Finally, Secretary Aspin and General Powell did not conduct a detailed risk assessment after each Ranger mission.[91] Cessation of the missions or the addition of AC-130s and additional reaction units could have eliminated or, at least, reduced the risks

The operational level includes GEN Hoar, CINCCENT, and GEN Downing CINCSOC. At this level GEN Hoar bears the greatest responsibility for not ensuring unity of effort between MG Garrison and MG Montgomery. He was the only one that had the authority under the Goldwater-Nichols Act of 1986 to coordinate these efforts.[92] He failed to become actively involved in ensuring that the QRF was integrated into the TFR operation to compensate for the loss of the extra Ranger platoon. He failed to be sensitive to the increased risks TFR was taking after six similarly executed missions. He failed to assess the increased vulnerability of TFR after the 10th Mountain Division's UH-60 helicopter was shot down on 25 September 1993. Hoar did not advocate strongly on behalf of MG Montgomery's request. His endorsement cited both the positive and negative aspects of deploying the additional armor. Overall, he presented a slightly better

than neutral endorsement of the request. He was not adamant about the critical need for these assets.[93] He should have made the argument for the armor's use in the QRF to support TFR. Both Hoar and Downing let TFR begin the operation with no AC-130s and no extra platoon. The combination of the failure to coordinate actions in Somalia between TFR and QRF and the failure to resource properly TFR and the QRF were critical mistakes that resulted in the overall failure of the 3 October TFR mission. Had better coordination and resourcing taken place at this level, it is likely that far fewer U.S. casualties would have been sustained and unlikely a second crash site would have occurred or, if occurred, would have been overrun.

The tactical level includes the commanders on the ground in Somalia MG Garrison, MG Montgomery, and LTC McKnight. It is at this level that most of the critical failures occurred. The key critical failures revolve around a combination of overconfidence in the TFR's capabilities and underestimating the enemy's capabilities. The combination of these two critical factors led to critical failures in allocating limited resources, establishing effective command and control procedures, and planning for contingencies. These failures led to the deaths of eighteen Americans and seventy-eight more wounded, and five helicopters being shot down -- two in enemy territory.

MG Garrison did not want the AC-130s and extra platoon to be removed from his force package. Instead of holding firm on the need for the complete package he had trained and rehearsed with before arriving in Somalia, he relented to the pressure and accepted the mission without the AC-130s and the extra platoon which would have given TFR added flexibility and firepower.[94] In hindsight, not approving the full TFR package was a critical failure. But, this was understandable given Garrison's limited knowledge

of the SNA and Aideed. As the SNA adapted and modified its response to the TFR tactics, however, Garrison should have realized that he needed to keep the MH-60 out of RPG range and arrange for additional firepower to compensate. He could have requested the AC-130s, additional AH-6s and MH-6s, and the extra platoon had he perceived the increased threat. Garrison ultimately failed to anticipate the enemy's reactions and to adapt to the enemy's increased lethality.

Even though TFR was operating with a sub-optimal force, its planning staff did not make effective use of those assets that were available. The 10th Mountain Division QRF was not in place and briefed up at the start of the mission. TFR only had one CSAR helicopter and no additional GRF ready to go besides the one with the mission to secure the prisoners at the target site. No prior coordination was ever made for allied armor support.[95] MH-60s were kept in orbit within SNA RPG range after Somali tactics were confirmed in Osman Atto raid (Mission #6) and Somali success with RPGs against Blackhawk helicopters was demonstrated a week later. Hitting this helicopter was more difficult than an orbiting MH-60 in the daytime in the middle of an attack. Even after two helicopters were shot down that day, the plan or standard operating procedure did not call for MH-60s to get out of RPG range.

Linked to the poor contingency planning were the failures in command and control. There were no plans for EP-3s to talk directly with the ground commander, LTC McKnight.[96] He needed that capability to avoid getting lost. Here's where the AC-130 could have been especially effective. As Lee A. Rysewyk opined, "[The AC-130s] would have given excellent fire support and would have been able to vector GRF1 to either crash site instead of just driving in circles and collecting casualties."[97] AC-130s

habitually communicate directly with the fire support elements organic to the Ranger ground force.[98] All transmissions going through the JOC caused confusion and proved ineffective for the fast paced nature of urban combat. The JOC only delayed the time critical directions being given by the EP-3 to McKnight.[99] GRF1 commander, LTC McKnight, may have made his job more difficult by deciding to rely on directions from above and not making his own mission plan with the other vehicle commanders. The convoy, in retrospect, may have been more successful using their own inherent initiative and knowledge of the location of the crash site since it was only four blocks away rather than using the EP-3 to try to give directions through the JOC in the midst of a chaotic fight.[100] Finally, TFR did not sufficiently use the capabilities of the 10th Mountain Division QRF; lack of prior training, coordination, and integration prevented their timely employment.[101]

The tactics used by the helicopters throughout the operation demonstrated overconfidence. These tactics assumed that they were not as vulnerable to RPG fires as the 10th Mountain Division helicopters even though TFR helicopters were flying during the day in the middle of a battle, and they were supporting a relatively small target area where RPGs could be mass fired onto the helicopters' path.

Although retrospectively not sending the AC-130s and extra platoon can be determined as a critical failure, was there evidence at the time that suggested TFR needed the full force package? The evidence suggests that it was a judgment call. Although the AC-130s and extra platoon certainly would have been useful for all the missions, TFR successfully executed the first six missions without them. But none of these missions were in the middle of SNA territory in the middle of the day. TFR raid #6 was conducted

in the day but on the outskirts of SNA territory. Only Delta soldiers were on the ground capturing Osman Atto. Other Rangers were standing by to provide assistance if necessary.[102] CPT James Lechner, the fire support officer (FSO) for TFR, provides insight to TFR's assessment of the operation and the risk in conducting future missions.

> This mission led us to a number of conclusions. The assault element had remained on the ground just under an hour. Based upon previous missions, we had determined that the SNA could not react effectively if we stuck to about one hour on the ground. This mission confirmed this for us. We also concluded that we could strike anywhere in Mogadishu and complete our mission successfully. I had observed from my position that our aircraft had been under light fire over the target. As it turned out, the Somalis had directed at least 15 RPG rounds and numerous small arms at our helicopters. I rashly believed, based upon enemy proficiency and the capabilities of our pilots and aircraft, that we were relatively impervious to ground fire. I maintained this belief even after the following week when one of the helicopters flying "Eyes over Mogadishu" was brought down by an [sic] RPG, killing three Americans.[103]

Even if the AC-130s and the extra platoon were not necessary for the first six TFR missions, Mission #6 on 21 September 1993 and the downed helicopter on 25 September 1993 provided sufficient evidence of SNA desires and capabilities to shoot down U.S. helicopters.[104] Before the 3 October raid there was sufficient evidence to suggest that the risk to future TFR operations was increasing. Further, TFR would need to modify its tactics and/or request additional support to mitigate the risk.

Given the demonstrated threat to helicopters from RPGs, it is reasonable the MG Garrison should have ordered more significant changes to his tactics for the 3 October 1993 raid than simply adding rockets to the AH-6s and loosening the ROE. At a minimum, MG Garrison should have requested the AC-130s and the extra platoon. After Mission #6, the downed helicopter, and the intense fight given to the QRF at the crash site, he had justification to request them.

The SNA threat to TFR helicopters and the increased ferocity of SNA attacks should have prompted TFR planners to further modify its tactics to protect its center of gravity - its helicopters. This could have been achieved by replacing the MH-60s with AC-130s and/or more AH-6s. This would have minimized the RPG threat to the task force's most vulnerable aircraft while maintaining adequate firepower. Since the multiple downed helicopter scenario posed the greatest danger to any mission, planners should have had other ground reaction forces ready at the start of each mission. Once the first helicopter was shot down, there was no immediate action drill to move MH-60s out of threat range of RPGs; MH-60s were used for non-essential fire support. Only one CSAR helicopter was planned. The QRF was not fully integrated into the planning although they could have been. The QRF, at the University compound, only left for the airport after the first helicopter went down. As stated earlier, if TFR had taken the SNA more seriously, TFR would have integrated the QRF more thoroughly into the operation. Rehearsals would have been conducted with all three QRF companies.[105]

Even within the constraints of the QRF's other missions, the QRF company on call could have always been collocated with TFR. Having a separate reaction force was in the original concept of the operation. This was supposed to be the mission of the additional platoon that was cut from the TFR. Garrison could have reorganized to create the additional ground reaction force from organic assets as well as conducted more effective coordination with the QRF.

This planning and coordination problem was a reflection of the command and control problems at this level. There was no one on the ground in Mogadishu to coordinate the operations between MG Montgomery and MG Garrison. The CINCCENT

was back in Tampa, Florida. While General Hoar monitored the two operations he did not coordinate and integrate them, which was his responsibility under Goldwater-Nichols.[106] Still, nothing prevented MG Garrison from better integrating and utilizing MG Montgomery's QRF.

It appears that TFR suffered from too much confidence and not enough circumspection. The SNA had demonstrated their intent and capability to shoot down Blackhawk helicopters within two weeks of the ill-fated 3 October mission. The SNA had demonstrated their intent and capability to quickly mass attacks against the forces sent to secure the downed helicopter. TFR knew it was going into the heart of SNA territory during the day. In part because of its overconfidence, TFR failed to recognize the threat and to adapt to them.

On the contrary, TFR was confident it could successfully conduct its mission anywhere in Mogadishu - day or night.[107] It planned almost entirely for success. TFR soldiers carried no water although the temperature was over a hundred degrees Fahrenheit. They carried no night vision devices or contingency loads. They carried no extra batteries for their radios.[108] TFR had no additional ground reaction force or CSAR team to deal with the second helicopter crash.[109] This overconfidence contributed to many of the other tactical failures. TFR did not sufficiently integrate the QRF into its plan. TFR did not significantly modify its tactics to avoid the RPG threat. TFR did not request the AC-130s and extra platoon to deal with the increasing threat. TFR did not develop a plan to deal with enough contingencies.

This layered analysis suggests that opportunities for success existed at each level. Decisions made on the strategic and operational levels had direct impact on the failure of

the mission. Critical failures at these levels did not, however, condemn the 3 October 1993 mission to failure. Critical failures at the tactical level, in underestimating the SNA's capabilities and TFR's own vulnerabilities, in overestimating its own capabilities, and in failing to properly resource and plan for contingencies, ultimately ensured the failure of the 3 October raid.

Discussion of the Analytic Matrix

Having presented at what level the critical failures occur, this section discusses the pathways to misfortune. The first primary pathway to misfortune begins at the strategic level with the President. When President Clinton decided to pursue a political solution at the end of September, he never ordered the TFR missions to end though he thought he had.[110] In fact, Anthony Lake, President Clinton's National Security Advisor, believed the TFR missions complemented the new diplomatic initiative.[111] According to Aspin, "The Pentagon's understanding of the policy was to move to more diplomatic efforts but snatch Aideed on the side, if you can."[112] Given this understanding, Secretary Aspin failed to modify the mission orders of MG Garrison. Senate testimony confirms that Aspin did not change MG Garrison orders to capture Aideed. This evidence suggests that Aspin did not inform MG Garrison through the J3 and CINCCENT that the policy focus had changed to a more diplomatic approach than a military one.[113]

The Matrix

Critical Tasks/ Command Level	Command, Control, Communications and Coordination (Adapting)	Understanding the Enemy (Anticipating)	Net Assessment (Anticipating)	Allocation of Resources (Anticipating and Adapting)	Leading and Planning -- (Adapting)
Strategic Level President	Critical Failure: Failed to articulate a coherent policy for Somalia to both Congress and the American public.	Failure: Did not understand capabilities and determination of Aideed and his SNA forces	Failure: Did not consider the potential for catastrophe.	Failure: None.	Failure: Did not conduct overall Somalia policy review with NSC Principals.
National Security Advisor	Critical Failure: Dual track of negotiating with and capturing Aideed decided but not coordinated with the CINCs and TFR.	Failure: Did not understand capabilities and determination of Aideed and his SNA forces	Failure: Did not consider the potential for catastrophe.	Failure: None.	Failure: Did not effectively integrate military and diplomatic instruments of power.
Secretary of Defense	Critical Failure: Did not communicate to TFR through CINCCENT that capturing Aideed was the supporting effort.	Failure: Did not understand capabilities and determination of Aideed and his SNA forces.	Failure: Did not consider the potential for catastrophe.	Failure: Disapproved CDR U.S. Forces Somalia request for 4 M1s and 14 M2s. Gave guidance to CJCS to keep TFR's footprint in Somalia to a minimum.	Failure: Did not conduct an effective, timely risk assessment after each TFR mission.
Chairman JCS	Critical Failure: Did not properly communicate to NCA down side of mission failure to NCA.	Failure: Did not understand capabilities and determination of Aideed and his SNA forces.	Failure: Did not consider the potential for catastrophe.	Failure: Required TFR to conduct his mission without AC-130s and the extra ground reaction platoon.	Failure: Did not conduct an effective, timely risk assessment after each TFR mission.
Operational Level CINCCENT	Failure: Did not coordinate TFR and U.S. Forces Somalia. Did not ensure unity of command for all assets required to complete the mission. Did not question vulnerability of TFR helicopters based upon TFR mission #6 and downing of 10th MTN UH-60.	Failure: Did not fully understand capabilities and determination of Aideed and his SNA forces. Underestimated the SNAs capabilities.	Failure: Did not consider the potential for catastrophe.	Failure: Required TFR to conduct his mission without AC-130s and the extra reaction platoon.	Failure: Did not involve himself in the planning process even though it was his responsibility for integrating all actions in his theater. Did not conduct an effective, timely risk assessment after each TFR mission.
CINCSOC	Failure: None.	Failure: Did not fully understand capabilities and determination of Aideed and his SNA forces.	Failure: Did not consider the potential for catastrophe.	Failure: Wanted mission bad enough that accepted the mission without full rehearsal force even though decision violated the principle of "fight as you train."	Failure: None.
Tactical Level Task Force Ranger Commander	Failure: Failure to adapt -- Did not coordinate for QRF to be integrated into training and operations to replace the canceled extra ground reaction platoon. Failure: Did not allow for or plan for EP-3s to directly communicate with the Ground Force Commander. All communications had to be relayed through the JOC.	Critical Failure: Underestimated SNA capabilities to use RPGs to shoot down UH-60s. Underestimated total number of SNA militiamen and supporters. Did not fully understand capabilities and determination of Aideed, his SNA forces, and followers. Did not view the SNA as a thinking, learning, adapting, organization.	Critical Failure: - Made unquestioned assumptions about SNA capabilities and intentions. Leaders and planners were overconfident in TFR's own capabilities after six previously successful mission without any downed aircraft, mass resistance, or significant casualties. Planners discounted the enemy's capabilities to shoot down helicopters.	Failure: Accepted the mission without full rehearsal force even though decision violated the principle of "fight as you train." Critical Failure: Failure to Adapt -- Did not ask for AC-130s even after UH-60 shot down with an RPG..	Critical Failure: Failure to anticipate and adapt -- Commanders and planners failed to operationalize the plan and prepare for sufficient contingencies. TFR failed to protect its decisive point: helicopters. TFR had no immediate action drill to get MH-60s out of RPG range after first helo shot down. No AC-130s were requested to suppress ground fire and replace the more vulnerable helicopters.

Given GEN Hoar's opposition to the TFR mission, had he heard of the policy change it is likely that he would have directed that the mission to be called off entirely or, at least, that it be limited. Had MG Garrison received such guidance, it is unlikely that he would have attempted the 3 October mission. Though his mission adjustments were ultimately inadequate, Garrison realized that the mission posed more risks than those previously undertaken did. Secretary Aspin's failure to communicate this essential policy information led directly to the order to launch the high-risk mission that ended in failure.

The second primary pathway to misfortune originates at the tactical level, but this time with TFR. Here MG Garrison and his staff completely underestimated the SNA's capabilities in five important ways. First, TFR underestimated the SNA's capabilities to use RPGs to shoot down their MH-60's. Second, TFR assumed, based on the previous six missions conducted outside the SNA stronghold, that the SNA's most likely course of action would be to retreat, followed by probing, sniping from crowds, and shooting a few RPGs.[114] TF Ranger was unprepared for the immediate volume of fire - especially the large number of RPGs fired. Third, TFR underestimated the total number of SNA militia and supporters; some indications of SNA strength and determination could have been found in the 2-3 hour fire fight with the SNA by the QRF to recover the bodies and the equipment of the helicopter a week prior to the 3 October mission. Fourth, TFR did not appreciate the capabilities and determination of the SNA militiamen and supporters. Fifth, TFR did not view the SNA as a thinking, learning, adapting organization that could analyze the previous similar six missions and come up with a counter strategy.[115]

These underestimations suggest that TFR failed to anticipate the actions of the SNA militia and its supporters. Failure to anticipate what the enemy can and will do is

only one half of the next critical failure. These underestimations of the SNA must be understood in the context of how TFR viewed its own capabilities and vulnerabilities. TFR's underestimation of the SNA's capabilities directly contributed to the next critical failure: net assessment.[116]

Net assessment requires one to accurately assess the enemy's capabilities with regard to one's own plan and capabilities. It requires an honest analysis of what the enemy can and will do and how what the friendly does will counter it. Proper net assessment should come out of the wargaming step of the Military Decision Making Process (MDMP).[117] In the case of the Battle of Mogadishu, the combination of unquestioned assumptions about the SNA's capabilities, overconfidence in their own capabilities and intentions, and underestimation of their own vulnerabilities led to TFR's critical failure in net assessment. The essential task of net assessment required TFR to objectively analyze the enemy's capabilities, intentions, and determination to anticipate how the SNA and local people would react.

As stated previously, TFR leaders and planners failed in this part of the net assessment. This limitation was further exacerbated by a corresponding overconfidence in their own capabilities. They had become overconfident after successfully completing six missions without any downed helicopters, mass resistance, or significant casualties.[118] Three of the previous six missions had been conducted during the day.[119] Even TFR Mission #6, where 15 RPGs were fired at the helicopter without effect, reinforced the perception of invulnerability to the TFR.[120] The downing of the 10th Mountain Division's UH-60 a week before the ill-fated 3 October raid did not even register an alarm. It appears that TF Ranger pilots, considered by many to be the best trained in the

world, were still confident of their abilities and did not change their tactics significantly for the 3 October raid nor did planners augment the TF with additional ground reaction force capability. Any major reservations about conducting a daylight raid by the TFR pilots appear to have been minimized after the big success on Mission #6 in the daylight. TFR had captured Aideed's number two man, financier Osman Atto, without a scratch. After the success of Mission #6 the TF Ranger FSO concluded, "[W]e could strike anywhere in Mogadishu and complete our mission successfully....I rashly believed, based upon enemy proficiency and the capabilities of our pilots and aircraft, that we were relatively impervious to ground fire."[121]

This overconfidence led TFR to conclude that its inherent resources were sufficient and the original request for AC-130s would not have to be reassessed. MG Garrison confirmed this in his Senate testimony where he stated, "I did not submit a request for the AC-130s once we were over there -- I don't believe I ever considered it."[122]

The cumulative effect of failing to anticipate enemy capabilities and friendly vulnerabilities resulted in a failure to request or coordinate for sufficient forces to deal with the dynamic battlefield and the inevitable effects of friction. These critical failures were the responsibilities of the TFR commanders and planners. Their failure to anticipate the SNA's potential to shoot down the MH-60s in the daytime led to a plan that was doomed to failure. Had TFR planners recognized the threat to their MH -60s, they would have made significant changes to their plan. GEN Hoar, GEN Downing, and MG Garrison all realized that there was a possibility of a helicopter being shot down. GEN Downing stated in his Senate testimony, "Hoar and I were not concerned about losing a

helo[sic]. The folks in DC were --they wanted to avoid press coverage." MG Garrison and his planners must have realized a downed helicopter was a possibility given they rehearsed how to secure a downed helicopter, and they had some limited contingency plans to deal with that eventuality. Based upon how the battle unfolded, it is apparent that the commander and his planners were not sensitive enough to the tactical, operational, and strategic implications of such a downing and its resulting casualties.[123] Had TFR commander and his planners done a better mission analysis and been more sensitive to these implications, they would have taken greater precautions to prevent such an eventuality. In retrospect, it is obvious that the TFR commander and his planners failed to operationalize their plan. They failed to link strategic objectives and concerns to the tactical plan. Right or wrong, the NCA was concerned with downed helicopters, and the TFR operations should have reflected those concerns by limiting the exposure of helicopters to RPG fires.

Aggregate Failure

The failure of the 3 October TFR raid was the result of a failure to anticipate and adapt. These two failures are linked. SNA actions prior to the 3 October raid demonstrated their capability of shooting down TFR helicopters with RPGs. In retrospect, it is clear that the SNA would have the same capabilities when TFR launched its daylight mission on 3 October. TFR largely discounted these intentions and capabilities based upon the success they achieved in the previous six missions. This overconfidence was unjustified in light of GEN Hoar's realization that the Osman Atto raid nearly ended in disaster.[124] TFR took the wrong lessons from their successful capture of the Atto. GEN Hoar admitted he never contemplated the possibility that something on

the magnitude of 3 October would ever occur.[125] This combination of underestimating the enemy's capabilities and their own vulnerabilities as a result of overconfidence led to planning that could only deal with the best case scenario.

TFR's failure to adapt was caused by a planning failure. A key part of the planning process is the wargaming process where friendly and enemy actions and reactions are analyzed to determine potential branch and sequels to an operation. TFR commanders and planners failed to modify their tactics, techniques, and procedures to prevent helicopters from being shot down. Once the first helicopter was shot down, commanders failed to take appropriate immediate actions to prevent other helicopters from being hit with an RPG. Planners failed to have an additional branch which incorporated a ground reaction force or 10th Mountain QRF ready to deal with the second helicopter crash in the most timely manner. Planners neglected to adapt to the changing threat when they failed to request the less vulnerable AC-130s. These aircraft could have provided the necessary fire support and psychological shock for TFR to be more flexible and adapting.

As discussed earlier, with AC-130s TFR could have secured both helicopter sites and helped GRF1, GRF2, and the QRF arrive in time to secure both crash sites by providing suppressive fire, preventing obstacle construction, and providing timely directions.

The Battle of Mogadishu provides an example of an aggregate failure: Failure to anticipate and adapt. The failure to anticipate adequately the intentions and capabilities of the SNA to shoot down TFR helicopters with RPGs lead to the failure to adapt. By not fully appreciating the true vulnerability of TFR helicopters, planners could not see the

inadequacy of their own contingency plans. Their plan, short of organic fire power not vulnerable to RPGs and a ready ground reaction force, could not deal with more than one helicopter being shot down. Had TFR anticipated SNA capability better and not been so overconfident in its own capability, it could have been better prepared in equipment, tactics, techniques, and procedures (TTP), and contingencies plans. Better preparation in these areas would have enabled TFR to adapt better to the SNA threat.

Conclusion

This analysis has shown that it is possible but unlikely that the 4 M1s and 14 M2s that Secretary Aspin disapproved in late September 1993 would have changed the outcome of the ill-fated 3-4 October TFR raid. These tanks and APCs could have insured limited success for TFR had they been launched immediately to Crash Site #2 from their intended base on the University compound. While possible, it is unlikely, given TFR's overconfidence and assessment of SNA capabilities, that a QRF with tanks and APCs would have been better integrated into the TFR 3 October mission. With this closer coordination, the tanks and APCs would not have had to report to the Mogadishu Airport before deploying. Elimination of this hour delay would have permitted the armor to arrive in time to secure Crash Site #2 and, thus prevent the capture of downed pilot and the desecration of dead Americans on national television.

By applying Cohen and Gooch's model to the Battle of Mogadishu, this paper shows that the failure of the TFR mission on 3-4 October 1993 was the result of a system failure. Secretary Aspin received far more blame than he deserved for making the decision not to send the requested tanks and APCs. Misperception of the real impact tanks and APCs could have had on the overall mission is the real cause of this

disproportionate blame. GEN Hoar and GEN Powell, in addition, bear as much responsibility as Secretary Aspin does for the decision. Neither of these generals strongly advocated the deployment to Aspin even though the worsening situation on the ground merited their strong support. Both Hoar and Powell's approval recommendations can be characterized as luke-warm. Aspin's real failure was of not being more critical of the conduct of the TFR operations. In light of Secretary Aspin's acknowledged concern over the number of similar operations conducted by TFR and his knowledge that the Administration was seeking a political solution, he should have notified MG Garrison of the policy shift though the JCS and CINCCENT and provided additional guidance on risk. Had he done so, it is likely that the three October raid would not have occurred.

Secretary Aspin made an even more serious mistake by failing to reassess the risk of each TFR operation and accepting GEN Hoar's explanation that the each mission was different from the others. Secretary Aspin stated in his Senate testimony, "We were worried about the repetition of Ranger raids. It looked to us like each raid was a cookie cutter of every other raid. GEN Hoar assured us that each raid was different and they were using feints (signature flights) on a daily basis. But we were worried."[126]

In reality, Secretary Aspin's concerns were well founded. Helicopters had to be used for every mission day or night to provide fire support. The assault forces used helicopters to get to the objective five out of the six missions. The assault forces used helicopters four out of the six previous missions to get off the objective.[127] So from the SNA perspective, the Ranger's reliance on helicopters had set a pattern.[128] Aspin's failure was in not being more critical of the conduct of the TFR operations.

In light of Secretary Aspin's acknowledged concern over the number of similar operations conducted by TFR and his knowledge that the administration was seeking a political solution, he should have notified MG Garrison of the policy shift and provided additional guidance on risk. Secretary Aspin's critical failure was his failure to inform MG Garrison through JCS and GEN Hoar of the Administration's decision to emphasize a political solution over a military solution. This directly led to the decision to launch the mission.

While better policy coordination from the Secretary of Defense down to TFR could have prevented the 3 October raid from occurring, TFR did have all the means in Mogadishu to successfully accomplish the mission. However, overconfidence in TFR's capabilities and underestimation of the enemy's ability to find and attack TFR vulnerabilities were critical failures that led to a series of other failures. First, TFR did not request the AC-130s and extra platoon. Second, TFR conducted the 3 October raid without protecting its vulnerable helicopters. Third, TF planners failed to utilize all their available resources and integrate these resources into a plan that could be flexible enough to handle the threat and all the friction in this risky operation.

This paper demonstrates that TF Ranger's 3 October mission failed as a result of the organization, not the decisions of Secretary Aspin alone. As Cohen and Gooch observed, military misfortune is not merely the result of an individual mistake, but rather, the result of series of mistakes throughout a system. Ultimately, TFR and the system it was working in failed to anticipate and adapt.

[1] There are a number of spellings for Mohammed Farah Aideed. This paper will follow the most common spelling. Aideed is also spelled Aidid.

[2] Eliot A. Cohen and John Gooch, Military Misfortunes: The Anatomy of Failure in War (New York: The Free Press, 1990), 44-45 and Carl von Clausewitz, On War, (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1976), 156-157.

[3] Wayne M. Hall, "Military Intelligence in the XXIst Century," lecture given to the CGSC Military Intelligence Officers in Bell Hall, Fort Leavenworth, KS: Eisenhower Hall, Fort Leavenworth, KS: 25 August 1998.

[4] These conclusions about the impact of the Battle of Mogadishu is taken from Mark Bowden, "Blackhawk Down: Background: A Defining Battle Leaves Lasting Scars." The Philadelphia Inquirer. (No Date) - [On-line] available http://home.phillynews.com/packages/somalia/ nov16/rang16.asp. These same conclusions, however, have been made by numerous other writers and scholars.

[5] According to accounts written by members of TFR, the Battle of Mogadishu is also known as the Battle of the Black Sea. According to Mark Bowden, the same battle is known by the Somalis as Ma-alinti Ranger or The Day of the Rangers. The anniversary of the battle is now a annual day of celebration of the victory for the Somalis of Mogadishu. Mark Bowden. "Blackhawk Down: Background: A Defining Battle Leaves Lasting Scars." The Philadelphia Inquirer. (No Date) - [On-line] available http://home.phillynews.com/packages/somalia/nov16/rang16.asp.

[6] Eliot A. Cohen and John Gooch, Military Misfortunes: The Anatomy of Failure in War (New York: The Free Press, 1990), 26.

[7] Ibid., 27.

[8] Ibid.

[9] Ibid., 45.

[10] Ibid.

[11] This methodology is paraphrased from ibid., 46.

[12] Elizabeth Drew, On the Edge: The Clinton Presidency (New York: Touchstone, 1995), 315-337. In this section of her book, she presents a White House that is not focused on the events of Somalia. The Administration was focused on other more pressing matters.

[13] This paragraph is summarized from William J. Durch, ed., "Introduction to Anarchy: Humanitarian Intervention and 'State-Building' in Somalia," in UN Peacekeeping, American Policy, and the Uncivil Wars of the 1990s (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1996), 335-341. More information on the transition between UNITAF and UNOSOM II can be found in Robert B. Oakley and John L. Hirsch, Somalia and Operation Restore Hope: Reflections on Peacemaking and Peacekeeping, (Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1995), 111-114 .

[14] Durch, "Introduction to Anarchy: Humanitarian Intervention and 'State-Building' in Somalia," 341.

[15] Aideed's perception is inferred from ibid. and Robert B. Oakley and John L. Hirsch, Somalia and Operation Restore Hope: Reflections on Peacemaking and Peacekeeping, 111-114.

[16] Aideed's use of Radio Mogadishu to disseminate propaganda against UNOSOM can be found in ibid., 332, 342 and Daniel P. Bolger, Savage Peace: Americans at War in the 1990s, (Novato, CA: Presidio Pressy, 1995), 299.

[17] Bolger, 300.

[18] Durch, "Introduction to Anarchy: Humanitarian Intervention and 'State-Building' in Somalia," 342.

[19] This discussion of the events leading to the inspection of the weapons storage site is taken from Durch, "Introduction to Anarchy: Humanitarian Intervention and 'State-Building' in Somalia," 341-342.

[20] Ibid., 343.

[21] Bolger, 300.

[22] Zinni, Anthony (General), Director of Operations for United Task Force Somalia (UNITAF) between November 1992 and May 1993 and Assistant to the Special Envoy, Somalia (Ambassador Oakley) in October 1993 in negotiations with Aideed for a truce and the release of captured TFR pilot Michael Durant, "Ambush in Mogadishu: Interview General Anthony Zinni," interview by Frontline-Online (unknown time and place), (3 October 1998) - [OnLine] available http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/ambush/interviews/zinni.html.

[23] U.S. Congress, Senate, Committee on Armed Services, Memorandum For Senator Thurmond and Senator Nunn, From Senator Warner and Senator Levin, Subject: Review of the Circumstances Surrounding the Ranger Raid on October 3-4, 1993 in Mogadishu, Somalia, Dated September 29, 1995 (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1995), 41.

[24] Drew, 319. According to Elizabeth Drew, there was not a Principals meeting held on Somalia until after the Battle of Mogadishu took place.

[25] Anthony Zinni (General), "Ambush in Mogadishu: Interview General Anthony Zinni," interview by Frontline-Online (unknown time and place), (3 October 1998) - [OnLine] available http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/ambush/interviews/zinni.html.

[26] Michael Sheehan, Deputy Assistant Secretary Bureau of International Organization, Department of State and formerly Ambassador Jonathan Howe's Chief of Staff during his assignment to UNOSOM II, interview by author, 30 November 1998, by phone from Fort Leavenworth, KS.

[27] "Technicals" refer to vehicles, usually pickup trucks that have air defense artillery gun or other heavy machine-gun mounted on them. Somali militiamen or bandits operate the vehicles.

[28] Durch, "Introduction to Anarchy: Humanitarian Intervention and 'State-Building' in Somalia," 343.

[29] Ibid., 344.

[30] Thomas J. Daze, Centers of Gravity of United Nations Operation Somalia II (Fort Leavenworth, KS: U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, 1995), 133.

[31] Durch, "Introduction to Anarchy: Humanitarian Intervention and 'State-Building' in Somalia," 344.

[32] Daniel P. Bolger, Savage Peace: Americans at War in the 1990s (Novato, CA: Presidio Pressy, 1995), 303.

[33] Most of the commanders in Somalia were aware of the psychological impact of having AC-130s in country. U.S. Congress, Senate, Committee on Armed Services, Memorandum For Senator Thurmond and Senator Nunn, From Senator Warner and Senator Levin, Subject: Review of the Circumstances Surrounding the Ranger Raid on October 3-4, 1993 in Mogadishu, Somalia, Dated September 29, 1995 (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1995), 28-32.

[34] Durch, "Introduction to Anarchy: Humanitarian Intervention and 'State-Building' in Somalia," 344.

[35] Ibid.

[36] United Nations, Note by Secretary General, S/1994/653, 1 June 1994, Annex 4 as depicted in Durch, "Introduction to Anarchy: Humanitarian Intervention and 'State-Building' in Somalia," 340.

[37] Durch, "Introduction to Anarchy: Humanitarian Intervention and 'State-Building' in Somalia," 345-346.

[38] Sheehan, 1998.

[39] U.S. Congress, Senate, 24-28.

[40] Sheehan, 1998.

[41] Durch, "Introduction to Anarchy: Humanitarian Intervention and 'State-Building' in Somalia," 346.

[42] This idea that the attack had the effect of strengthening Aideed is taken from Mark Bowden, "Blackhawk Down: Analysis" The Philadelphia Inquirer (No Date) - [OnLine] available http://home.phillynews.com/packages/somalia/dec14/analysis14.asp.

[43] After the Abdi House raid, the SNA increased its mortar attacks and started using command detonated anti-vehicle mines. United Nations, Note by Secretary General, S/1994/653, 1 June 1994, Annex 4 as depicted in Durch, 340.

[44] Durch, "Introduction to Anarchy: Humanitarian Intervention and 'State-Building' in Somalia," 346.

[45] Powell justified sending TFR in his Senate testimony. U.S. Congress, Senate, 26-27. How the actual decision was made is described in Drew, 321-322.

[46] Drew, 321-322.

[47] Ibid., 321.

[48] U.S. Congress, Senate, 28.

[49] U.S. Congress, Senate, 28-29.

[50] This account of how Aideed was attempting to avoid capture is taken from James O. Lechner, A Monograph of Combat Operations in Mogadishu, Somalia Conducted by Task Force Ranger, (Fort Benning, GA: U.S. Army Infantry School, 19 September 1994), 10.

[51] The idea that GEN Powell was instrumental in the NCA's decision to send TFR is taken from Elizabeth Drew, 321-322. The idea that the NCA must have known the operation was high risk is inferred from Powell's previous reluctance to support the deployment and his Senate testimony, U.S. Congress, Senate, 26-27. The idea that the NCA was not aware of any catastrophic failure on the order of TFR is inferred from the reaction of President Clinton in Drew, 326 and the fact that even GEN Hoar never

contemplated that anything like the 3 October fire fight would occur, U.S. Congress, Senate, 39-40.

[52] U.S. Congress, Senate, 50.

[53] Unless otherwise noted, the events described in this section are summarized from Mark Bowden, "Blackhawk Down," The Philadelphia Inquirer. (No Date) - [OnLine] available http://home.phillynews.com/ packages/somalia/sitemap.asp.

[54] Rick Atkinson, "The Raid That Went Wrong: How an Elite U.S. Failed in Somalia," The Washington Post, January 30, 1994, A27.

[55] Ibid.

[56] The goal of an hour on target is taken from Lechner, 14.

[57] Mark Bowden, "Blackhawk Down: Background: A Defining Battle Leaves Lasting Scars," The Philadelphia Inquirer, (No Date) - [OnLine] available http://home.phillynews.com/packages/somalia/nov16/rang16.asp.

[58] Lechner, 19.

[59] Lee A. Rysewyk, Experiences of Executive Officer from Bravo Company, 3d battalion, 75th Ranger Regiment and Task Force Ranger during the Battle of the Black Sea on) 3-4 October 1993 in Mogadishu, Somalia (Fort Benning, GA: U.S. Army Infantry School, May 1994), 10.

[60] U.S. Quick Reaction Force, Falcon Brigade, 10th Mountain Division Summary of Combat Operations on 3 October 1993, n.p.

[61] Bolger, 320-321.

[62] Mark Bowden, "Blackhawk Down: Chapter 12: Left, Right, Left - Lost and Bloody," The Philadelphia Inquirer, (No Date) - [OnLine] available http://home.phillynews.com/packages/somalia/nov27/ default27.asp.

[63] Rick Atkinson, "Night of a Thousand Casualties: Battle Triggered U.S. Decision to Withdraw From Somalia," The Washington Post, 31 January 1994, A10, A11.

[64] Bowden, Chapter 12.

[65] Ibid.

[66] Rysewyk, 11.

[67] Ibid.

[68] Mark Bowden, "Blackhawk Down: Ask the Author; Round 4." The Philiadelphia Inquirer, (No Date) - [OnLine] available http://www3.phillynews.com/packages/somalia/ask/ask4.asp. After extensive interviews and research, Mark Bowden believed that Crash Site #2 was secured for about two hours by Randy Shughart and Gary Gordon. This does not make sense given the timing of the recall of the QRF in its initial effort.

[69] Atkinson, 31 January 1994, All.

[70] Drew, 327-328.

[71] Zinni, 8 of 10.

[72] Drew, 326-327.

[73] Samuel Butler, formerly G-3 staff officer during UNOSOM II and worked with Liaison Officer to Task Force Ranger. Interview by author, 29 November 1998, by phone from Fort Leavenworth, KS.

[74] Drew, 327-328.

[75] Oakley and Hirsch, 132.

[76] The author inferred this from the Clinton policy discussion in Drew, 326-327.

[77] U.S. Congress, Senate, 26.

[78] This idea of net assessment is taken from Cohen and Gooch, 127.

[79] Butler, 1998.

[80] Senator John Warner (R-VA) concluded that the Clinton Administration did not oversee TFR in a "timely, effective manner." U.S. Congress, Senate, 8.

[81] GEN Powell believed that an overall policy review should have been conducted long before the 3 October raid. U.S. Congress, Senate, 41.

[82] Durch, "Introduction to Anarchy: Humanitarian Intervention and 'State-Building' in Somalia," 363.

[83] Lechner, 14.

[84] U.S. Congress, Senate, 32-37.

[85] Ibid.

[86] Drew, 324.

[87] President Clinton believed that he had called off the TFR missions before the 3 October raid. His lieutenants did not understand that he had. There was obviously a problem with communication. Drew, 335.

[88] U.S. Congress, Senate, 31.

[89] Conclusions about the lack of chain of command justification for the tank request is deduced from the testimony given in U.S. Congress, Senate, 32-36.

[90] U.S. Congress, Senate, 48-49.

[91] Although Aspin and Powell are not mentioned by name in the Congressional assessment, they, as well as GEN Hoar, were ultimately responsible for overseeing the TFR operations. U.S. Congress, Senate, 50.

[92] This idea is taken from Geoff Babb, instructor for United States Army Command and General Staff College, interview by author, 30 November 1998, at Bell Hall, Fort Leavenworth, KS.

[93] Drew Meyerowich, (Major, USA), a resident student of the United States Army Command and General Staff Officers Course, interview by author, 1 and 4 September and 6 December 1998, conducted on the phone and in person at Eisenhower Hall, Fort Leavenworth, KS. MAJ Meyerowich was the QRF company commander responsible for rescuing the Rangers at the Super 61 crash site northeast of the Olympic Hotel. Drew was the Commander, C Company, 2-14 Infantry Battalion, 10th Mountain Division (LI).

[94] Rysewyk, 14. Rysewyk concurs that the extra platoon would have increased the flexibility in conducting the mission and reduced the need for coordination with the QRF and thus the unity of command problems associated with the coordination.

[95] U.S. Congress, Senate, 32.

[96] Bowden, Chapter 12.

[97] Rysewyk, 14.

[98] Luck, Gary (Major, USA), former member of the Ranger Regiment. Interview by author, (no date), Fort Leavenworth, KS. AC-130s habitually train and talk directly to the fire support elements organic to the Ranger ground force.

[99] Bowden, Chapter 12.

[100] Since LTC McKnight did not have as good of a situational awareness as the command helicopters and EP-3, it made sense at the time to follow the direction from his

commanders in the sky. According to Bowden, they were trying to vector them away from the ambushes and roadblocks but were unaware of the type of intense firefight McKnight and his convoy were engaged. Once McKnight became misoriented by the untimely directions, he had to totally rely on the flawed directions through the JOC from the EP-3. According to Luck, 1998, the command and control (C2) helicopter, which did have direct communications with McKnight, must have delegated direction giving responsibility to the EP-3 since the C2 helicopter had to monitor the rest of the battle and did not have the perspective nor surveillance capabilities of the EP-3. At the time the EP-3 did not habitually operate with the Ranger Regiment.

[101] Meyerowich, 1998. According to Meyerowich, TFR always had the QRF on alert when it conducted its missions. TFR, however, did not conduct reaction training with the QRF. TFR conducted only one link-up training event with one of the three QRF companies. While this level of coordination was sufficient in the past missions, it proved insufficient on 3 October. On that day the QRF company was not sufficiently briefed to launch its mission from its own compound nor was it prepositioned closer to the target site to react quickly. It had to deploy the TFR headquarters location at the airport before launching. Thus, wasting about an hour and giving the SNA more time to prepare roadblocks and ambushes.

[102] Mission #6 is described in Lechner, 13-14.

[103] The UH-60 was shot down at night, flying rooftop level, at 130 knots. The QRF fought the SNA for 2-3 hours to secure the Crash Site and protect the dead soldiers and equipment.

[104] U.S. Congress, Senate, 40. In retrospect, GEN Hoar admits that Mission #6 nearly ended in disaster and that he had shut down the operation before 3 October.

[105] Meyerowich, 1998. According to Drew Meyerowich, TFR conducted only one link-up training exercise with the QRF prior to the 3 October raid.

[106] Babb, 1998.

[107] Lechner, 14.

[108] Bowden, Background.

[109] Bowden, Chapter 8.

[110] Drew, 324.

[111] Ibid.

[112] Ibid.

[113] U.S. Congress, Senate, 44.

[114] Rysewyk, 7. "The militia's most probable course of action would consist of fleeing the immediate area threatened by UNOSOM II or TF Ranger forces. They would then tend to filter back toward the action as the mission progressed . Any mission gathered hundreds of curious, bored onlookers who had nothing better to do. Sniping would soon pick-up, many times coming from crowds or behind women or children. This would escalate to more bold actions and even an RPG or two. No significant battles where both sides were decisively engaged had occurred, except where the 24 Pakistanis were killed. Aideed's most dangerous course of action would b a synchronized attack on the airfield, combining mortars, technical vehicles, and organized squads."

[115] The idea of thinking of organizations as thinking, learning, adapting is taken from M. Mitchell Waldrop, Complexity: The Emerging Science at the Edge of Order and Chaos, (New York: Touchstone, 1992), 9-13 and Peter M. Senge, The Fifth Discipline: The Art and Practice of The Learning Organization, (New York: Currency, 1994), 12-14.

[116] The idea of the importance of net assessment as a contributing factor to military failures is taken from Cohen and Gooch, 127-128.

[117] Field Manual 101-5, Staff Organization and Operations, (Washington D.C.: HQ Department of the Army, 1993), 5-16 – 5-24. More information on the wargaming process can be found here.

[118] U.S. Congress, Senate, 87.

[119] Ibid., 41.

[120] Lechner, 14.

[121] Lechner, 14.

[122] U.S. Congress, Senate, 30.

[123] This sensitivity to the strategic implications of helicopters been shot down and high casualties should have come out in the mission analysis step of the MDMP.

[124] U.S. Congress, Senate, 40.

[125] Ibid., 39.

[126] Ibid., 41.

[127] Rysewyk, C-1/C-2.

[128] Haad, (Captain), one of General Aideed's sector commanders during the Battle of Mogadishu, "Ambush in Mogadishu: Interview Captain Haad," interview by Frontline-Online (unknown time and place), (3 October 1998) - [OnLine] available http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/ frontline/shows/ambush/interviews/haad.html.

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